

THE
SMARTKIDZ
CLUB

Registry ID: 4197696

#Building confident kids



Annual Report
2025

Promoting African values,
culture, morals and building
life skills for our children



CONTENTS

- 
- 2 Executive Summary
 - 4 Land Acknowledgment
 - 5 Statement from the Executive Director
 - 8 Vision
 - 9 Mission
 - 10 Our Core Values
 - 11 Our Impact
 - 12 Message from the Board Chair
 - 14 Annual Events Report
 - 20 Intergenerational Engagement:
Strengthening Wellbeing Across Generations
 - 24 A year of connection, creativity, and shared
wisdom
 - 28 Celebrating Heritage, Building Community
 - 31 SCuBA Program Community Workshop
Delivery Report (2025)
 - 36 Funders & Partners



Executive Summary

In 2025, SmartKidz Club delivered a dynamic range of programs focused on supporting the holistic development of children aged 5–11 while strengthening community connections across generations. Through a combination of cultural education, wellness initiatives, creative expression, and academic preparation, the organization provided meaningful and engaging experiences for children and families.

Programming was delivered across Edmonton, Alberta and Halifax, Nova Scotia, with additional virtual sessions extending access beyond these locations. Between July and October, eight structured events were successfully implemented, including summer camps, wellness-focused programs, creative workshops, academic readiness sessions, and intergenerational activities.

The Summer Camp programs in Edmonton and Halifax served as a cornerstone of the year, offering culturally grounded, hands-on learning experiences that fostered creativity, confidence, and cultural awareness. Complementary programs such as Health Moves and Wisdom in Our Hands reinforced the importance of physical health, mental wellbeing, and



community connection, including meaningful engagement between children and seniors.

SmartKidz Club's hybrid delivery model—combining in-person and virtual programming—proved effective in increasing accessibility while maintaining strong participant engagement. Programs aligned with key seasonal periods, ensuring relevance and consistent participation.

Across all initiatives, several key outcomes were observed: increased cultural awareness among participants, improved readiness for the academic year, enhanced opportunities for creative expression, and strengthened community relationships. Intergenerational programming also contributed to reducing social isolation among seniors while fostering mutual learning and respect between age groups.

Overall, the 2025 program year reflects SmartKidz Club's continued commitment to delivering inclusive, culturally responsive, and development-focused programming. The organization remains well-positioned to build on this foundation, expand its reach, and deepen its impact in the year ahead.

Land Acknowledgment

Smartz Kidz Heritage Club respectfully acknowledges that our programs and activities take place on Treaty 6 Territory, the traditional and ancestral lands of the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene, and Nakota Sioux peoples.

We recognize the deep histories, cultures, and contributions of Indigenous communities who have stewarded this land since time immemorial and continue to do so today. Throughout 2025, we remained committed to fostering respect, inclusion, and cultural awareness within our programs, while continuing our journey of learning and reflection in support of truth and reconciliation.

As an organization dedicated to empowering children through cultural education and creative expression, we strive to honour Indigenous perspectives and create spaces where all children can learn, grow, and celebrate the diversity of heritage and identity.

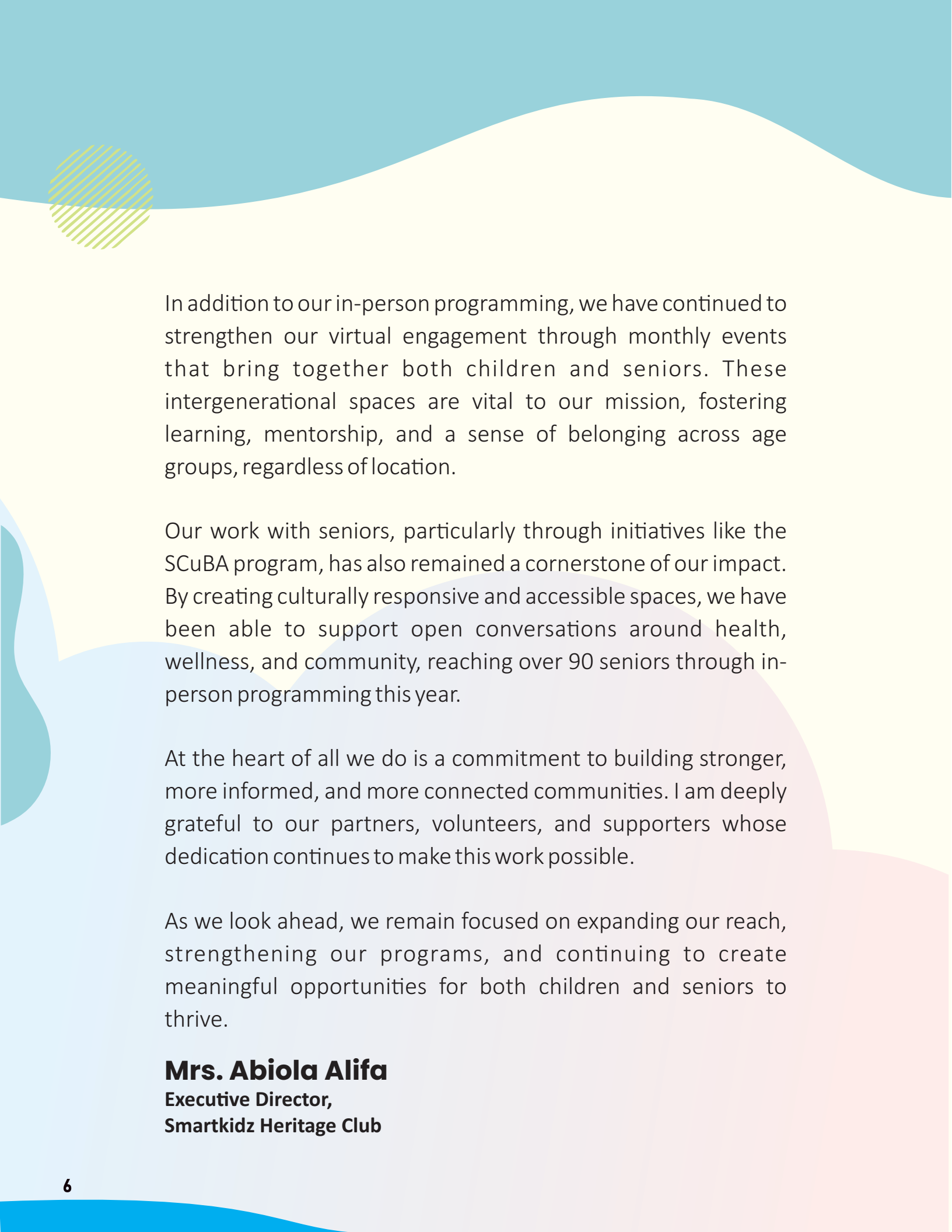


Statement from the Executive Director

This past year has been one of growth, impact, and deepened community connection for Smartkidz Heritage Club. I am incredibly proud of the work we have accomplished and the lives we have touched across our programs.

One of our key highlights was the successful delivery of our summer school programs in Edmonton and Halifax, where we welcomed approximately 100 children across both locations. These week-long programs created safe, engaging, and culturally enriching spaces for children to learn, build confidence, and connect with their heritage and one another. The energy, creativity, and joy we witnessed throughout the week reaffirmed the importance of investing in our young people.

Across all our programming, we remain intentional about advancing African culture through the celebration of fashion, language, music, and food. These elements are not only expressions of identity but also powerful tools for education, pride, and community connection, especially for children growing up in the diaspora.



In addition to our in-person programming, we have continued to strengthen our virtual engagement through monthly events that bring together both children and seniors. These intergenerational spaces are vital to our mission, fostering learning, mentorship, and a sense of belonging across age groups, regardless of location.

Our work with seniors, particularly through initiatives like the SCuBA program, has also remained a cornerstone of our impact. By creating culturally responsive and accessible spaces, we have been able to support open conversations around health, wellness, and community, reaching over 90 seniors through in-person programming this year.

At the heart of all we do is a commitment to building stronger, more informed, and more connected communities. I am deeply grateful to our partners, volunteers, and supporters whose dedication continues to make this work possible.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on expanding our reach, strengthening our programs, and continuing to create meaningful opportunities for both children and seniors to thrive.

Mrs. Abiola Alifa
Executive Director,
Smartkidz Heritage Club



WHO WE ARE

The Smartkidz Heritage Club (Smartkidz) is a registered Not for Profit Organization established to promote educational activities, build life skills, and endear kids to the African Heritage.

OUR WHY

Smartkidz Heritage Club was established with a vision to empower children through cultural education, life skills development, and mentorship, all while fostering a deep appreciation for African heritage. Recognizing the importance of cultural identity and community connection, the organization aims to provide children, particularly those from African and multicultural backgrounds, with opportunities to explore their heritage, build confidence, and develop essential life skills for their future success.

VISION

Our vision is to be the leading organization where children and families come to learn, celebrate, and embrace the richness of African culture. We aim to create a world where every child, regardless of background, feels connected to their heritage and empowered to shape their future with confidence, creativity, and compassion.

MISSION

Our mission is to empower children through cultural education, life skills development, and mentorship, while fostering a deep appreciation for African heritage. We provide engaging programs and interactive experiences that celebrate diversity, creativity, and unity, all while nurturing a strong sense of identity in the next generation. Through our community-driven initiatives, we strive to cultivate trust, empathy, and responsibility, ensuring that children grow with the values and skills they need to succeed in a global society.

OUR BELIEFS

At smartkidz we believe that a clear sense of “who you are” makes it easier to connect with other (similar) people and groups. People (Kids) with a strong identity often stand out more and are more memorable. Identity also helps us to make decisions and to know how to behave

OUR CONVICTION

A people's cultural heritage and natural history are precious and unique. Culture and its history encompasses morals, beliefs, and aims. They form a people's national identity and our conviction is that it is essential to preserve our cultural heritage to maintain our identity.

Our Core Values are:

1. Trust

We build strong, openness, and accountability in everything we do. Trust is the foundation upon which we nurture growth and connection.

2. Teamwork

We believe in the power of collaboration. By working together as a united team, we maximize our impact, share knowledge, and create a supportive environment where everyone contributes to the success of our programs and initiatives.

3. Creativity

We encourage creative thinking and self-expression in all of our activities. From arts and crafts to storytelling, we inspire children to explore their imaginations, problem-solve, and discover innovative ways to celebrate their culture.

4. Multiculturalism

We celebrate diversity and embrace the rich cultural tapestry of our community. By honoring and respecting all cultures, we create an inclusive space where everyone, regardless of background, can learn from and contribute to the shared experience.

5. Cultural Responsibility

We are dedicated to preserving and promoting the African cultural heritage, ensuring that future generations understand, appreciate, and carry forward their cultural legacy with pride and responsibility.

6. Unity

We foster a sense of belonging and togetherness, both within our Smartkidz community and in the broader world. We believe in the strength that comes from unity, where individuals work in harmony toward common goals and shared values.

7. Honor

We encourage creative thinking and self-expression in all of our activities. From arts and crafts to storytelling, we inspire children to explore their imaginations, problem-solve, and discover innovative ways to celebrate their culture.

Our Impact

Education

The SmartKidz club provides a medium for children to get educated on a wide array of important subject matters spanning outside typical academic curriculum.

Heritage

Through our series of activities, the SmartKidz club has helped bring club members closer to the African Heritage through African stories, dishes and cultural activities.

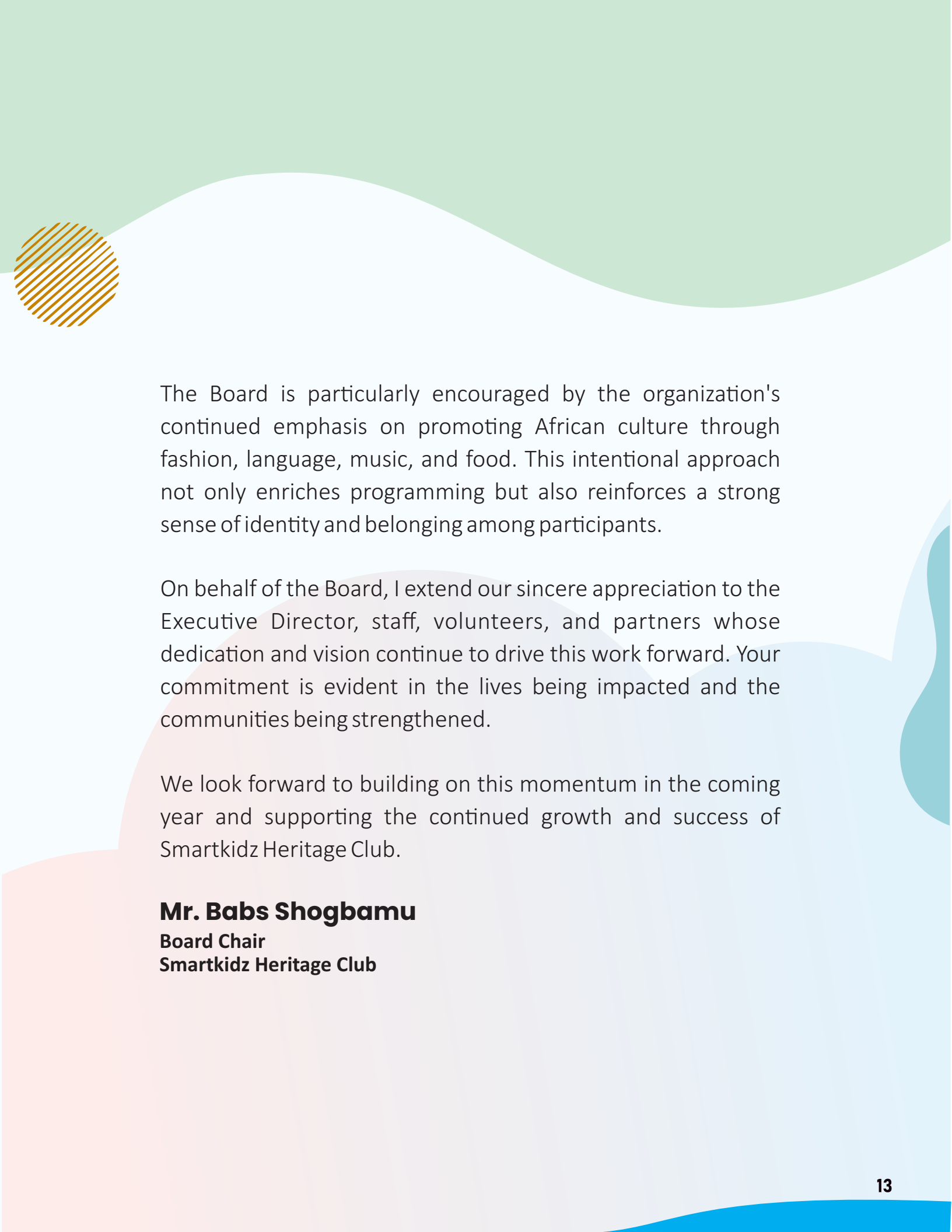


Message from the Board Chair

It is with great pride that I reflect on another impactful year for Smartkidz Heritage Club. Our organization continues to grow in both reach and relevance, delivering programs that strengthen community, celebrate culture, and empower the next generation.

This year, we were especially pleased to see the successful expansion of our summer school programming into both Edmonton and Halifax. Across these two cities, we welcomed approximately 100 children into week-long, immersive learning environments that combined education with cultural enrichment. These programs are a clear reflection of our commitment to providing safe, engaging spaces where children can grow in confidence, creativity, and cultural identity.

Beyond these in-person events, Smartkidz Heritage Club has continued to demonstrate consistency and innovation through its monthly virtual programming for children and seniors. These sessions play an important role in maintaining connection across communities and generations, ensuring that learning and engagement remain accessible year-round.



The Board is particularly encouraged by the organization's continued emphasis on promoting African culture through fashion, language, music, and food. This intentional approach not only enriches programming but also reinforces a strong sense of identity and belonging among participants.

On behalf of the Board, I extend our sincere appreciation to the Executive Director, staff, volunteers, and partners whose dedication and vision continue to drive this work forward. Your commitment is evident in the lives being impacted and the communities being strengthened.

We look forward to building on this momentum in the coming year and supporting the continued growth and success of Smartkidz Heritage Club.

Mr. Babs Shogbamu

Board Chair

Smartkidz Heritage Club



Annual Events Report

Overview

In 2025, SmartKidz Club continued to deliver a wide range of programs designed to support the growth and development of children aged 5–11. Our programming focused on more than just academics, it brought together cultural learning, wellness, creativity, and social development in ways that were engaging and accessible.

Programs were delivered both in person and online, with in-person activities taking place in Edmonton, Alberta and Halifax, Nova Scotia. Virtual sessions allowed us to stay connected with families beyond these locations and ensured that more children could participate regardless of distance.



Program Delivery Summary

Between January and December 2025, SmartKidz Club delivered twenty structured events. These included summer camps, wellness programming, academic preparation sessions, creative workshops, and intergenerational events.

Programming was intentionally scheduled around key times of the year, such as summer break and the back-to-school season. This helped ensure that families could easily participate and that the programs aligned with their needs during those periods.

Key Programs and Outcomes

Summer Camp Programs (Edmonton & Halifax)

The summer camps were a highlight of the year and served as the foundation of our programming.

Children participated in a mix of cultural activities, arts and crafts, storytelling, outdoor play, and introductory language learning. The African-themed approach helped children connect with culture in a fun and meaningful way.

These camps created a space where children could build friendships, learn through hands-on experiences, and develop a stronger sense of identity and confidence.



Wisdom in Our Hands (Intergenerational Event)

This event brought together children and seniors in a shared space focused on creativity and conversation.

Through simple craft activities and guided discussions, participants were able to connect across generations. Seniors shared their experiences and perspectives, while children engaged with curiosity and openness.

The event helped strengthen relationships within the community and reinforced the importance of learning from one another.

Health Moves Program

Health Moves focused on supporting both physical and mental wellbeing in an engaging and culturally relevant way.



Children took part in African dance and movement sessions, along with age-appropriate conversations about health and wellness. The program emphasized the importance of staying active while also helping children understand how to care for their overall wellbeing.

Back-to-School Virtual Event

This online session was designed to help children and families prepare for the new school year.

The session covered practical strategies for getting ready for school, along with encouragement and motivation to help children feel confident as they returned to the classroom.

Delivering this program virtually made it accessible to more families and allowed participation from different locations.

Thanksgiving Crafts (Virtual)

This seasonal virtual session gave children an opportunity to stay engaged creatively from home.

Participants followed along with guided craft activities connected to the Thanksgiving theme. The session provided a simple but meaningful way for children to express themselves and stay connected to the program outside of in-person events.

Delivery Model

In 2025, SmartKidz Club continued to use a hybrid model that combined in-person and virtual programming.

In-person sessions allowed for hands-on learning, social interaction, and deeper engagement, while virtual sessions provided flexibility and helped us reach a wider audience. This balance allowed us to maintain strong participation while adapting to the needs of families.

Strategic Achievements

Over the course of the year, SmartKidz Club successfully delivered programming across two provinces, strengthening its presence in both Edmonton and Halifax.

We maintained steady engagement by offering programs that were relevant to the time of year and responsive to community needs. Our continued focus on culturally grounded programming also helped distinguish our work and build stronger connections with families.

Key Insights

Several important insights emerged from this year's programming. Cultural programming continues to be a strong draw for families and plays an important role in engagement. Programs that combine learning with fun and creativity tend to have the highest participation.

We also saw the value of offering both in-person and virtual options, as this increased accessibility and allowed more families to stay involved.

Recommendations for 2026

Looking ahead, there are opportunities to build on this momentum. Expanding virtual programming could help us reach more participants across different regions. Introducing more opportunities for parent involvement may also strengthen overall impact.

There is also a need to better track program outcomes through simple tools such as feedback forms and participation data. Finally, developing more advanced or returning-level programs could help retain participants as they grow with the organization.

Conclusion

The 2025 programming year reflects SmartKidz Club's ongoing commitment to creating meaningful, engaging, and culturally relevant experiences for children and families.

By combining education, creativity, and wellness in both in-person and virtual settings, the organization continues to build a strong and connected community where children can learn, grow, and thrive.



Intergenerational Engagement: Strengthening Wellbeing Across Generations

In 2025, Smartz Kidz Heritage Club continued to build on its commitment to intergenerational programming by intentionally integrating seniors into its core activities, including dance, wellness sessions, and regular cultural programming. Rather than creating separate spaces for different age groups, the organization has made it a priority to bring generations together in meaningful and consistent ways.



Throughout the year, seniors participated alongside children and youth in shared spaces that encouraged connection, movement, and open conversation. Dance programs, in particular, became a powerful point of connection. Seniors joined in both traditional and contemporary dance activities, contributing their cultural knowledge while also benefiting from the physical movement and social interaction. These sessions created a joyful and inclusive environment where age was not a barrier, but a bridge.

In addition to dance, seniors were actively involved in wellness and mental health-focused sessions. These gatherings addressed important topics such as isolation, emotional wellbeing, and the importance of staying socially connected. Delivered in a culturally familiar and respectful way, the sessions created safe spaces where seniors could share experiences,

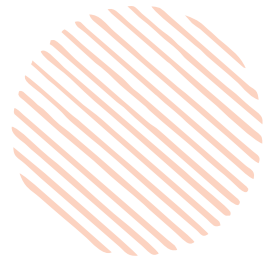




reflect, and support one another. Being part of a larger, mixed-age group also helped normalize these conversations and reduce stigma around mental health.

One of the most significant outcomes of this approach has been the reduction of social isolation among participating seniors. Many reported that being regularly included in programs gave them a renewed sense of belonging and routine. Instead of feeling disconnected, they became part of an active and supportive community where their presence was valued.

The intergenerational model also allowed seniors to take on meaningful roles as mentors and cultural knowledge holders. Through informal conversations and shared activities, they passed on stories, traditions, and life experiences to younger participants. At the same time, youth brought energy, curiosity, and openness, creating a reciprocal relationship that benefited both groups.



For many seniors, these interactions had a positive impact on their emotional wellbeing. Engaging with children and youth brought a sense of joy and purpose, while also helping to maintain cognitive and social engagement. The simple act of showing up, participating, and being seen as an important part of the community contributed to improved confidence and overall wellbeing.

Younger participants also gained valuable lessons through these interactions. They developed a deeper respect for elders and a stronger understanding of the importance of community, culture, and shared responsibility. These experiences helped foster empathy and connection across generations.

By making intergenerational engagement a consistent part of its programming, Smartz Kidz Heritage Club has created a community model that supports both social connection and holistic wellbeing. The organization continues to demonstrate that when seniors are meaningfully included, and when generations are given opportunities to engage with one another, the result is a stronger, healthier, and more connected community.



A year of connection, creativity, and shared wisdom

Seniors Games and Crochets

Laughter, connection, and friendly competition filled the room as approximately 30 seniors gathered for our Seniors Games and Crochets event. The day created a welcoming space where seniors could relax, socialize, and enjoy meaningful moments together through games and creative activities. Conversations flowed naturally as participants shared stories, encouraged one another, and strengthened friendships old and new.

The crochet activities provided a calming and engaging outlet for creativity while helping participants connect through shared skills and interests. Beyond the games and crafts, the event became a reminder of the importance of community spaces that reduce isolation and promote emotional well-being. It was a joyful afternoon that celebrated active living, connection, and the value of creating opportunities for seniors to come together.

Learning from an African Tale

Stories have a unique way of connecting generations, preserving culture, and passing wisdom from one heart to another. During Learning from an African Tale, approximately 20 children from Nigeria, Halifax, and Edmonton gathered to listen as seniors shared rich African stories, myths, and traditional tales filled with important life lessons.

As the stories unfolded, children were transported into worlds of courage, kindness, wisdom, and resilience. Beyond entertainment, each tale carried meaningful values and teachings that encouraged reflection and learning. The event created a beautiful bridge between generations and communities, allowing children to connect with cultural traditions while learning lessons that remain relevant in everyday life.

Through storytelling, our seniors became teachers and cultural ambassadors, ensuring that treasured traditions continue to inspire younger generations.





Thanksgiving Crafts

Creativity and gratitude came together during our Thanksgiving Crafts event as children expressed appreciation through art and heartfelt words. Participants enthusiastically designed handmade cards and created beautiful pieces filled with poetry and thoughtful messages for their parents and loved ones.

The room was filled with excitement as children carefully selected colours, decorations, and meaningful words to express their feelings. More than a craft activity, the event encouraged emotional expression, creativity, and reflection on the importance of gratitude and family.

The handmade cards became treasured keepsakes and reminders that simple acts of kindness and appreciation can create lasting memories.

Seniors Connection & Craft Making

Our Seniors Connection and Craft Making event provided a warm and welcoming space where seniors came together to build relationships, share experiences, and enjoy hands-on creativity. Participants engaged in meaningful conversations while creating crafts that encouraged self-expression and collaboration.

The event highlighted the importance of social connection and community engagement among older adults. Through laughter,



storytelling, and shared activities, participants strengthened bonds and created a sense of belonging. The day served as an important reminder that creativity can be a powerful tool for bringing people together and supporting emotional well-being.

Wisdom in Our Hands

Wisdom in Our Hands celebrated the beauty of knowledge-sharing and the value of learning through experience. This special event created opportunities for participants to engage with seniors and learn practical skills, stories, and lessons shaped by years of wisdom and lived experiences.

The gathering encouraged intergenerational connection by creating moments where knowledge was shared naturally through conversation, demonstration, and participation. The event reinforced an important message at the heart of Smart Kids Heritage Club: wisdom grows stronger when it is shared.

Participants left inspired, reminded that every generation has something meaningful to teach and something valuable to learn.

These moments continue to strengthen our mission of building bridges between youth and seniors while celebrating culture, connection, and community.



Celebrating Heritage, Building Community

At Smart Kidz, we believe that culture is more than history — it's living, breathing, and evolving through the people who carry it. This year, our heritage programs for seniors and children have brought traditions to life while building bridges across cultures and generations. From teaching African languages to showcasing traditional fashion, every activity has been a chance to connect with our roots and strengthen the bonds that hold our community together.



Summer camps in Edmonton and Halifax 2025 African-Themed Summer Camp

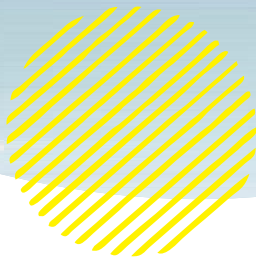
In 2025, The SmartKidz Club successfully delivered its African-Themed Summer Camp, an engaging cultural and educational program designed to build confidence, creativity, and global awareness among children.

The program reached 100 children across two locations, expanding access and participation:

- **Edmonton**
- **Halifax**

Each session followed a structured daily schedule, with delivery designed to accommodate participants across multiple time zones:

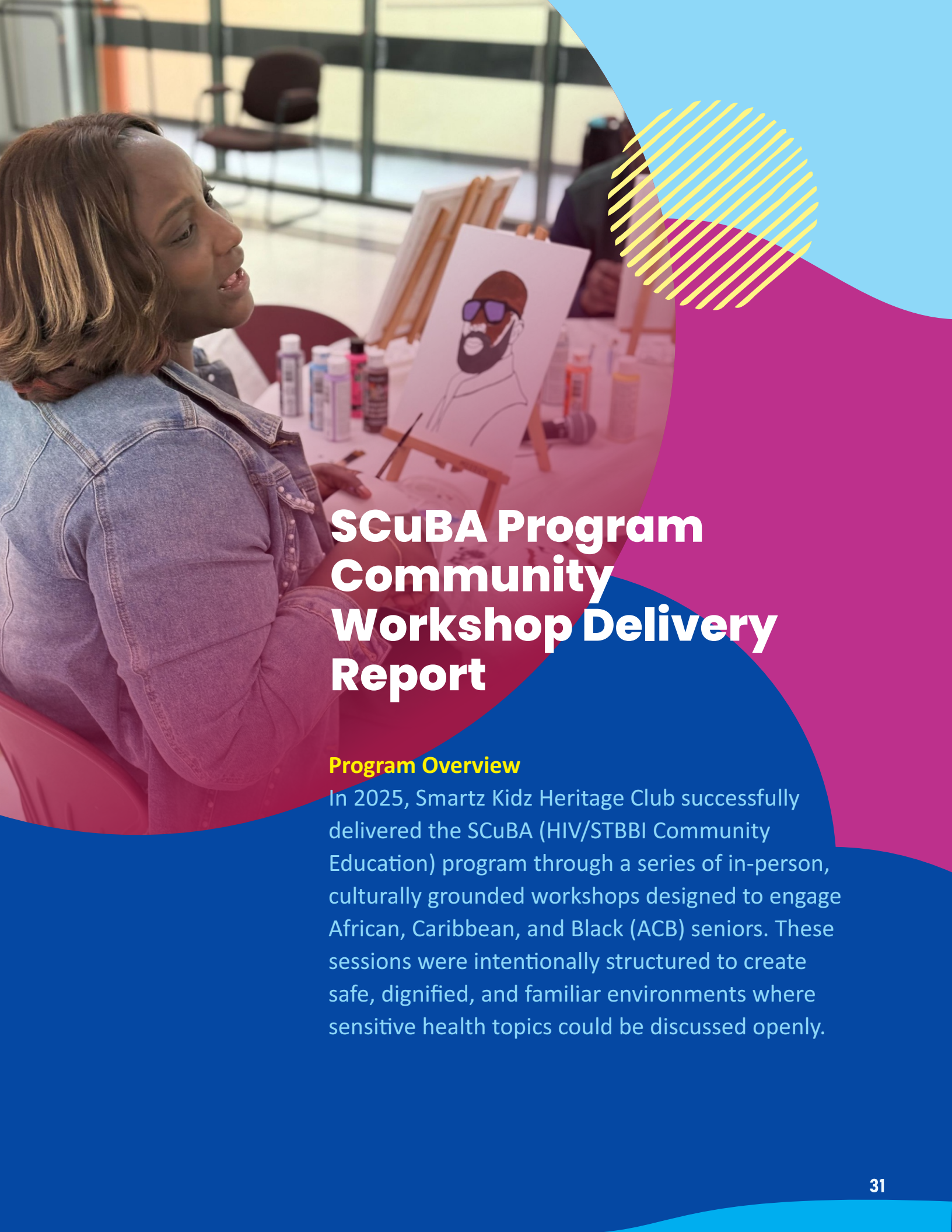
- **10:00 AM MST**
- **12:00 PM EST**
- **1:00 PM AST**
- **6:00 PM WAT**



Participants engaged in a diverse range of hands-on and culturally immersive activities, including fashion design, cooking, soap making, and dance, alongside introductory learning in Yoruba and Igbo languages. The program also incorporated outdoor play and recreational activities, creating a balanced environment that supported both learning and social development.

Through these experiences, children developed greater cultural awareness, practical skills, and self-confidence, while building meaningful connections with peers. The camp provided a dynamic platform for creativity, identity exploration, and cross-cultural understanding.

This initiative contributed to The SmartKidz Club's mission of building confident kids, reinforcing its commitment to nurturing well-rounded, globally minded young leaders.

A woman with short brown hair, wearing a denim jacket, is seated and looking towards a painting on an easel. The painting is a portrait of a Black man with a beard and sunglasses. The background shows a workshop environment with various art supplies and other people. The image is overlaid with a large blue and pink graphic on the right side, featuring a yellow circular pattern with diagonal lines.

SCuBA Program Community Workshop Delivery Report

Program Overview

In 2025, Smartz Kidz Heritage Club successfully delivered the SCuBA (HIV/STBBI Community Education) program through a series of in-person, culturally grounded workshops designed to engage African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) seniors. These sessions were intentionally structured to create safe, dignified, and familiar environments where sensitive health topics could be discussed openly.



By integrating wellness-based activities with health education, the program prioritized accessibility, cultural relevance, and peer connection. All activities were delivered in alignment with the approved project objectives, ensuring meaningful community impact.

Program Highlights

Wisdom in Our Hands: Craft & Conversation Workshop

This session engaged 25 seniors, primarily aged 55 and older, in a hands-on soap-making activity combined with guided health discussions.

The workshop created a relaxed and supportive setting where participants could engage in meaningful conversations about sexual health, HIV awareness, and common misconceptions affecting older adults. The use of a familiar, creative activity helped reduce barriers to participation and encouraged open dialogue.

Key Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of HIV risks among seniors
- Reduction of stigma surrounding sexual health in later life
- Strong peer-to-peer engagement and knowledge sharing
- Greater comfort discussing previously taboo topics

Participants noted that the informal, activity-based format made it easier to engage, ask questions, and reflect on their health and wellbeing.



Health Moves: Movement, Wellness & Education

The Health Moves session brought together 30 seniors in a trusted community church setting, combining physical activity with health education.

The session began with gentle, senior-friendly movement exercises, followed by a facilitated discussion on HIV prevention, aging, and holistic wellness. Hosting the event in a familiar and accessible venue contributed to increased comfort and participation.

Key Outcomes:

- Reinforced the connection between physical and sexual health
- Improved understanding of HIV testing & healthcare access
- Increased engagement through a non-clinical, wellness-focused approach
- Strengthened community trust and participation

Participants described the session as energizing and empowering, appreciating the respectful and age-affirming delivery of information.

Food for Nutrition: Expanding Reach and Impact

The final session extended the program's reach to over 36 seniors locally and internationally, including participants from Canada and Nigeria.



This session focused on nutrition, health education, and HIV awareness, delivered through a culturally inclusive lens. A guest health expert provided clear and compassionate education on HIV transmission, prevention, and living well with HIV.

Participants engaged in open dialogue, asked questions freely, and addressed misconceptions in a stigma-free environment. The session emphasized resilience, accurate information, and community support.

Overall Impact

Across all sessions, the SCuBA program reached more than 90 seniors through community-centered programming.

Program Outcomes:

- Increased knowledge of HIV/STBBI prevention and transmission
- Reduction in stigma and myths within the senior community
- Enhanced confidence in discussing sexual health and wellness
- Strengthened peer networks and community connection
- The integration of culturally familiar activities with health education proved highly effective in engaging participants and supporting meaningful learning outcomes.



Conclusion

The SCuBA workshops demonstrated that combining creative, wellness-based programming with health education is a powerful approach to engaging ACB seniors. Participation exceeded expectations, and feedback indicated strong levels of engagement, learning, and community connection. These initiatives not only improved awareness but also fostered safe spaces for dialogue, reduced stigma, and empowered seniors to take an active role in their health and wellbeing.

Smartz Kidz Heritage Club remains committed to building on this momentum and continuing to deliver culturally responsive, accessible, and community-driven programming.

Funders & Partners

We sincerely thank our funders for your generous support over the past year. Your partnership has been instrumental in advancing our work and expanding our impact, enabling us to serve our community effectively. We are grateful for your trust and commitment, and we look forward to continuing this important work together.

The logo for Canada, featuring the word "Canada" in a black serif font with a small Canadian flag to the right.The logo for HIV EDMONTON, featuring the word "HIV" in a large, bold, black sans-serif font with a red vertical bar and a black triangle to the right, and the word "EDMONTON" in a smaller, bold, black sans-serif font below it.The logo for the Black Business Initiative (BBI), featuring the words "Black Business Initiative" in a green sans-serif font above the letters "BBI" in a large, bold, black sans-serif font, and a red and yellow stylized logo to the right.



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CONTACT US

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