

FALL 2021 EDITION

Family Ties

The Bonaparte First Nation's "Bringing Our Spirits Home" journey in late June, which started with a canoe trek. See and read more about it inside.



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SECWÉPEMC
CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

WHO WE SERVE

Indigenous families and children living in the seven Secwépemc communities and Kamloops area. This includes: • Adams Lake • Bonaparte • Kamloops • Neskonlith • North Thompson • Skeetchestn • Whispering Pines/Clinton

Secwépemc Child and Family Services

MAIN OFFICE LOCATION

300 Chilcotin Road

Kamloops

URBAN OFFICE LOCATION

285 Seymour Street

Kamloops

WELLNESS OFFICE LOCATION

#3-275 Seymour Street

Kamloops

Mission Statement

Secwépemc Child and Family Services Agency delivers a standard of care for children and their families that is rooted in cultural practice and that genuinely acknowledges the importance of families and communities. The Agency seeks to create an environment that is inclusive and safe.

QWEQWENTSÍN
(GRATITUDE PRAYER)
Tqeltkúkwpí7,
Creator,

Kukwstéc-kuc re pyin te sit'qt
Thank you for today

Kukwstéc-kuc ren k'wséltkten-kuc
Thank you for my family/relatives

Kukwstéc-kuc te xwexwéyt te stem
Thank you for giving us everything we need

Kukwstsétsemc
Thank you

New Faces New Places

Meet some of the newbies who have recently joined the agency



SIMONE PAUL
Receptionist
WHERE ARE YOU FROM? Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc



KIYA GIESBRECHT
Mental Health Clinician
WHERE ARE YOU FROM? Abbotsford



NICKI WOLFENDEN
Family Preservation Caseworker
WHERE ARE YOU FROM? Gitxsan Nation, grew up in Hazelton



NATASHA BILLY
Float Caseworker
WHERE ARE YOU FROM? Fountain Band (Xaxli'p)



CRYSTAL BULLOCK
Aboriginal Supported Infant Development/ Aboriginal Supported Child Development Dual Consultant
WHERE ARE YOU FROM? Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc



LISA PETEL
Direct Support Worker
WHERE ARE YOU FROM? Born and raised in Ashcroft and Cache Creek



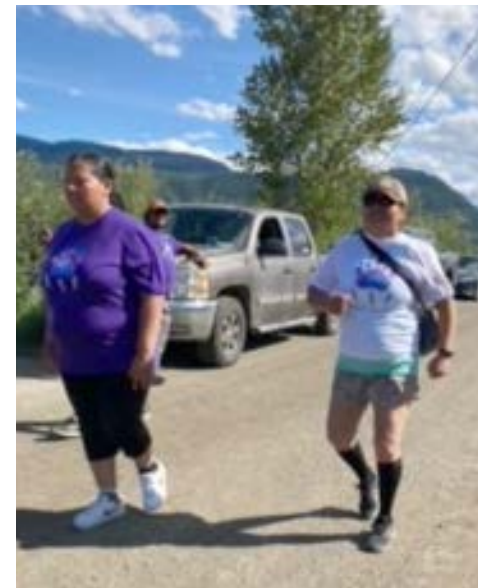
KRISTEN McEACHERN
Admin. Assistant
WHERE ARE YOU FROM? I am Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) and European heritage, and my family are members of the Fort William First Nation



STACEY ARCHIE
Human Resources Assistant
WHERE ARE YOU FROM? Ts'esqcen (Canim Lake), and I reside in Tk'emlups te Secwepemc

THE 215: WE TOOK TIME THIS SUMMER TO JOIN OUR PARTNER COMMUNITIES IN BRINGING HOME THE ONES WHO MADE IT AND THE ONES WHO DIDN'T

TAKING THE LONG WAY HOME FOR THE CHILDREN



The Bonaparte First Nation set out on a two-day “Bringing Our Spirits Home” journey in late June, which started with a canoe trek from Lafarge Bridge in Kamloops. After a stop at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School and Pioneer Park, a convoy made its way to the Cache Creek Community Hall and then a Sacred Fire back at Bonaparte.



The Adams Lake Indian Band hosted “Walking Our Spirits Home” in early June — a 3-day trek from Kamloops to Chase. The goal was to call back spirits from Residential Schools and being the healing journey.

MEET MADDY McCALLUM



Dancing through life's ups and downs, including cancer and being homeless as a teen, this Métis woman strives to be an inspiration to others

Q: What brought you to the agency?

The day I moved here, there was all these job postings and people were like, 'You need to apply for this job. You need to apply. You're perfect for this job.' I said, 'I don't want a job. I have my career.' And they insisted, so I applied and I got the job. The Creator sends you down a path for a reason, and I said, 'OK, Creator, I trust where you're taking me.' And I'm really glad in the role as Transition Coordinator. When I see the young people, and they hear my story is similar, I said, 'OK, I know my Creator put me in this role.' And I don't know how long I'm here. I don't know what the path or the journey because I'm a listener, and I really trust where the Creator guides me.

My First Nations workers in school would always tell me, 'You're gonna do something with your life. Right now it's hard. But you're not this person that you're being on the street.' Because, of course, I had to protect myself do all these things, trying to have a tough exterior. But they always told me, 'You're gonna do something.' And I said, 'I'm not even good enough to do anything.' Yvonne Chartrand, who I call my mom, is one of my many moms on this journey. She runs a Métis contemporary dance company called "V'ni Dansi". She's the first one who saw something in me.

Q: Tell us about dance and how it became such a big part of your life

I've always been a dancer since I was little. They say I came out dancing. And in my community in northern Saskatchewan, a Métis settlement, I was told as a kid to dance like the elders. I had to dance in the parades. I had to dance in the community dances. I never got to play but I now know they were preparing me. It all really started when I met Yvonne, who was friends with my dad. She asked my dad if I was a dancer, because she had seen me jumping on the trampoline. And she then asked me to come and 'jig' (jigging is a traditional Métis dance that has its roots in French, Irish and Scottish dancing) in one of her shows, and then she invited me for a couple other shows, and then from there it kind of organically happened.

Q: And that led to bigger opportunities?

Yeah, that's when it got bigger. And I started to go on stages and to conferences, and be invited to talk to groups and schools. And I'm a part of a modeling agency that just started, Supernaturals Modeling. But even before that, people would ask me, 'Hey, Maddy, want to come and model my clothes?' And it's mostly for Indigenous designers. And I said, 'Sure why not?' For me, everything I do is about sharing the energy, even through a photo. I know they say we should live in a world where we don't need to be resilient, but we do, unfortunately. So it's to show that strength through the images and show young Indigenous youth from my community that if they want this, they can do it. I was once a little bush kid who didn't think I was gonna do anything. And I'm doing it all.

Dancing through all of that, it was the only time I felt free and normal. I wasn't the foster kid. I wasn't the street kid. I wasn't the messed up kid. I was just me. I was Maddy the Dancer.



Q: You said that dancing saved your life more than once. How?

Anytime when I was a kid, when there was things going on, I was the kid dancing at the dance parties that used to come to the north, or the community dances. I was the kid that was out there by myself. For me, it was my freedom. No trauma could come near me. No sadness, no, nothing. It made me so happy. And it helped me through all of my traumatic childhood experiences. And then into my teen years I didn't dance as much because I was homeless. Dancing through all of that, it was the only time I felt free and I felt normal. I wasn't the foster kid. I wasn't the street kid. I wasn't the messed up kid. I was just me. I was Maddy the Dancer.

And then into my 30s, I ended up with cancer, and had a major surgery at 35 and I danced through it. I have a documentary coming out called *Dancing Through*. And it's about how I dance through the whole experience and how it's been my medicine. It has been amazing.

MORE ABOUT MADDY

SAY magazine article
<https://www.saymag.com/>

Documentary website
<https://www.dancingthrough.org/>

<http://www.madelainemccallum.com/>

Q: Tell us a bit about your background

I went through a lot of stuff when I was a kid. I needed to leave my Métis community in Northern Saskatchewan so I hitchhiked to Alberta at 12 years old and found my dad. He was shocked when I was there. He's my greatest teacher and my best friend. I cannot live far from him. But he was on this journey to healing his experience with Residential Schools. Then he brought me to Mission, which wasn't the ideal place to be living. He was with a partner and I left him and I've been on my own ever since I was 13. That's why being here, it's familiar. I see the young people here and I'm like, 'That was me.' I know what you're doing. I know where you're going. I know what that feels like. **Continued on following page....**

DR. CINDY BLACKSTOCK AWARD

2020 WINNER CULTURAL INTEGRATION TEAM LEADER LYLE THOMAS

In 2018, with Dr. Cindy Blackstock's permission, a Distinguished Service Award was created in her honour. Dr. Cindy Blackstock is tireless in her vision of improving the conditions for Indigenous children and families, notably in education, health care, and child protection. The Dr. Cindy Blackstock Service Award is given to an employee in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the children and families that are served by Secwépemc Child and Family Services and in appreciation for their commitment/dedication towards realizing Dr. Blackstock's vision for all First Nations children. This year, the third recipient of the Cindy Blackstock Award is Cultural Team Leader, Lyle Thomas.

Here's what **Renee Narcisse, Elder Coordinator**, said about Lyle in her nomination: "Lyle Thomas is a great source of information for anyone who comes across his path. He has so much knowledge of our Secwépemc culture and is willing to share it with anyone who asks. With the help of others, he has created a powwow for the children and works tirelessly to ensure that no one is forgotten. He works at building community relations by hosting barbecues and is there to support when called upon, whether in the urban community or within the Secwépemc Nation.

Lyle is above anything fair to those that he deals with, and he will assist whether it is a cultural issue or if a person is having trouble to understand issues that they may be dealing with. I have had the great fortune to work alongside Lyle for the past two and a half years and I learn something new all the time. He is committed to making situations better for everyone that he comes across. I always tell him, 'You will probably forget more about culture than I will ever know.' I am proud to work beside him and to learn from him. He makes coming to work fun and we always have a good chuckle in the morning. We support each other personally as well as professionally, and he makes me want to be a better person, to work harder for the people. I can go on forever about how having Lyle as a colleague has benefited our colleagues. I could go on forever, however, I hope that this is enough to put Lyle in the running for the Dr. Cindy Blackstock Award. He is a true role model for everyone."



From Lyle Thomas: "Receiving our agency's Dr. Cindy Blackstock Award is a great honour for me. I've been at the agency for 11 years, first as a family support worker for my first year and a half, then working on our Cultural Integration Team. I have remained on this team for the past 10-plus years, both as a Cultural Worker and then as Team Leader.

"This position is extremely important to me. When I am working with children, caregivers, community members and staff, I want everyone to know their roots. Once you know where you come from, then you can look into yourself and your heart and know who you are and where you belong. "Receiving the Dr. Cindy Blackstock Award shows that the SCFSA recognizes and values the importance of family teachings, experience and life skills in helping our children, youth, community members, caregivers and staff understand and grow into the individual they are meant to be."

The recipient of the 4th Annual Dr. Cindy Blackstock Service Award was announced at October's Annual General Meeting and will be featured in the next newsletter.



Della's Bread and Buns Recipe

Courtesy Elder Della Fellhauer
Whispering Pines Indian Band

One medium bowl and one large bowl needed. Make sure they are oil free or recipe won't turn out! Wooden spoon also works best.

INGREDIENTS

Small bowl

1.5 cups of warm water
1 tbsp brown sugar, stir
1 tbsp yeast

Large bowl

2 cups of warm water
2 tbsp brown sugar
1 tsp sea salt
1 egg
4 cups of flour and stir
2/3 cup olive oil

DIRECTIONS

Stir small bowl, yeast should have risen.

Add small bowl to large bowl and stir until it's a smooth texture. Add 4 more cups of flour, will be sticky batter. Add 6 more cups of flour, if needed add 2 more cups. Dough should be elastic like texture, start folding with your hands from the top of the bowl to the back, turn bowl and continue folding, dough should still be warm to work with.

Let rise up to an hour.

Oil muffin or bread pans. Bake at 400 degrees for 20 minutes and let cool.