



Secwépemc
Child & Family Services Agency

2020/21

ANNUAL REPORT

The page features a decorative background. The left side has a white background with a grey diagonal stripe pattern. The right side is a photograph of white, fuzzy seed pods on green stems, with a bright sun visible in the upper right corner.

Our Mission Statement

Secwépemc Child and Family Services collaborates and advocates for the well-being and cultural continuity and connection of children to their families and communities by honouring the legacy of our Secwépemc ancestors and our Secwépemc Nation.

Our Vision Statement

Secwépemc Child and Family Services works in collaboration with Secwépemc communities to deliver family services that strengthen the family unit and uphold Secwépemc laws and are guided by Secwépemc values.



Our Guiding Values

Respect: We believe that respect is earned and is demonstrated by having an open mind, listening generously and being calm and supportive in our interactions with one another and the Secwépemc people we serve. Respect is honouring our relationships through acceptance, genuineness, and authenticity. It is Yecweminte, “for everything in life.”

Courage: We are courageous in allowing ourselves and others to be vulnerable in order to grow and pursue positive change. We act courageously as advocates on behalf of Secwépemc children and families to assist them in overcoming obstacles and promoting their well-being and the well-being of future generations.

Honesty: We are passionate and speak from the heart, being true to our spirit and accepting who we are. We are transparent and accountable and will engage in difficult conversations to advance our purpose and values in a consistent fashion.

Love: We act out of love for the people we serve by conducting ourselves in a caring and empathetic manner. We show love through our teachings and spiritual practices, and through generosity and kindness recognizing we are all emotional beings.

Humility: We believe in practicing humility, knowing that Secwépemc traditional values have taught us that everyone is equal and to be valued. We recognize and give credit for the good work of others, apologize when we err and keep the legacy of our children at the forefront of our work.


Wisdom: We gain wisdom from our Secwépemc stories; to stay grounded in our culture and acknowledge that everyone has a gift to share. We understand and accept our strengths and weaknesses, know what we have to share and always pursue what is in the best interest of our people.

Truth: Our truth is based on the Creator’s teachings; it is grounded in our Secwépemc laws. We are truthful with ourselves serve by following our laws and supporting our truth with factual information and real events.

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A photograph of a child's hand reaching out towards a plant in a field of tall grass. The background is a soft-focus green field. A semi-transparent yellow circle is positioned behind the text. The bottom of the image features a decorative pattern of diagonal grey and white stripes.

Our team has been honored to witness families growing stronger and parents becoming more confident in their parenting skills, leading to the positive change in the children's attachment with their parents.

Member Nations



Cstélen (Adams Lake)

Kúkpi7 Cliff Arnouse
PO Box 588, Hillcrest Road
Chase, BC V0E 1M0
Phone: 250.679.8841



SIMPCW FIRST NATION
People of the North Thompson River

Simpcw

Kúkpi7 Shelly Loring
PO Box 220
Barriere, BC V0E 1E0
Phone: 250.672-9995



Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc

Kúkpi7 Rosanne Casimir
#200-330 Chief Alex Thomas Way
Kamloops, BC V2H 1H1
Phone: 250.828.9700



Pellt'iq't (Whispering Pines/Clinton)

Kúkpi7 Michael LeBourdais
615 Whispering Pines Drive
Kamloops, BC V2B 8S4
Phone: 250.579.5772



St'uxwews (Bonaparte)

Kúkpi7 Randy Porter
2689A Sage Hill Rd, Hwy 97 N
Cache Creek, BC V0K 1H0
Phone: 250.457.9624



Skeetchestn

Kúkpi7 Ron Ignace
330 Main Drive
Savona, BC V0K 2J0
Phone: 250.373.2493



Sk'atsin (Neskonlith)

Kúkpi7 Judy Wilson
PO Box 318
Chase, BC V0E 1M0
Phone: 250.679.3295





SCFSA acknowledges, with deep respect and gratitude, that our work takes place on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Secwépemc speaking Peoples. We recognize the past, present, and future generations of the Secwépemc Peoples who help us as stewards of this land, as well as honour and celebrate this place. We honor our connection to this land and the teaching and healing that it offers.



President's Report



This last year was unprecedented in numerous respects and our organization had to contend with challenges the likes of which we have not seen before. Bolstered by the support of the communities we serve, our staff at Secwépemc Child and Family Services Society (SCFSA) faced this extraordinary uncertainty head on and consistently rose to the occasion. Embracing creativity and innovation, they continued to deliver culturally appropriate, effective and compassionate services that support the strength and resilience within our communities for generation.

This past year unfolded against the backdrop of announcements and implementation of the most sweeping reforms to Indigenous child, youth and families services Canada has ever seen. Proudly, the Secwépemc Nation has been on the forefront of these changes through the Stsmemelt project and Simpcw's pursuit of jurisdiction. As a Board we are delighted with the way in which our agency has stepped up to support our communities in upholding our laws and standing up our own decision-making processes that strengthen our families. We are also taking a technical role provincially as part of the ongoing transformation of the system to ensure equitable funding to uphold and implement First Nations jurisdiction in B.C. As part of the transition to jurisdiction, the Board has been exploring what future governance and service-delivery models could look like and how, as the system evolves, the role of SCFSA will as well.

2020-2021 marked the first year of implementation of the SCFSA's new 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. Progress was made on our top initiatives and the impact of the agency's collective efforts are clear in the results through the year in reducing and, for most of our communities, eliminating the need to bring children into foster care. One of the most extreme challenges the agency and our communities are facing is providing intensive support and care for our most at-risk youth in terms of mental health, addiction services, and housing. By the end of Fiscal Year 2 communities were in the process of reducing the number of children in care with SCFSA to "zero." This was done through collective work between agency staff and our communities. This reflects the dedication and expertise that everyone on the SCFSA team brings with them to their roles every day.

SCFSA has become a leading First Nations-run child, youth and family service agency in the province and we have supported capacity building within our communities and other agencies across B.C. We are honored to have a relationship of reciprocity with our 7 Secwépemc member bands and are well aware that our greatest success lies in that relationship and the guidance of the communities we serve.

One of our greatest accomplishments this past year was the submission of our agency workplan to Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), which included the plan for funding and implementation of extensive prevention services right in our communities. The development of prevention services in partnership with SCFSA and our communities means a substantial increase in the size of our organization to support shared services. This also requires an increase to the agency's overall physical footprint. This year the board and agency leadership successfully negotiated multi-year funding with ISC to support a major capital project and finalized the new building design. The next phase in the capital planning process is the development and construction.

By far the biggest challenge we faced last year, and perhaps the most significant ever in the history of our organization, was the COVID-19 pandemic. SCFSA's innovative spirit shined through as we all learned quickly to navigate a new world of virtual connections. Our staff worked tirelessly alongside our communities to support us in managing the strain and stress our children, youth and families were experiencing. SCFSA worked closely with our communities to meet the increased demand on our staff in community and at the same time support wellness within SCFSA.

At SCFSA we pride ourselves on being by your side. Never has this been truer than in 2020-21. As we reflect on this past year, both now and in the years and decades to come, everyone in the SCFSA family — including our member communities — can be proud of the role they played and the difference they made.

Secwépemc Child and Family Services Board of Directors 2020/2021

Carmen Hance

President, Simpcw

Councillor Marshall Gonzales

Vice-President, Skeetchestn

Councillor Brandy Chelsea

Secretary, Cstélen

Councillor Fay Ginther

Treasurer, Neskonlith (Sk'atsin)

Chief Michael LeBourdais

Director, Pelltiq't (Whispering Pines/Clinton)

Councillor Jeanette Jules

Director, Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc

Angie Thorne

Director, St'uxwtews (Bonaparte)

Councillor Alison Green

Director, Simpcw

Vacant

Director, Skeetchestn

Vacant

Director, Cstélen

Carol August

Director, Neskonlith (Sk'atsin)

Orla LeBourdais

Director, Pelltiq't (Whispering Pines/Clinton)

Hilda Green

Director, Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc

Recognition of Previous Directors

Michael Ikwumonu

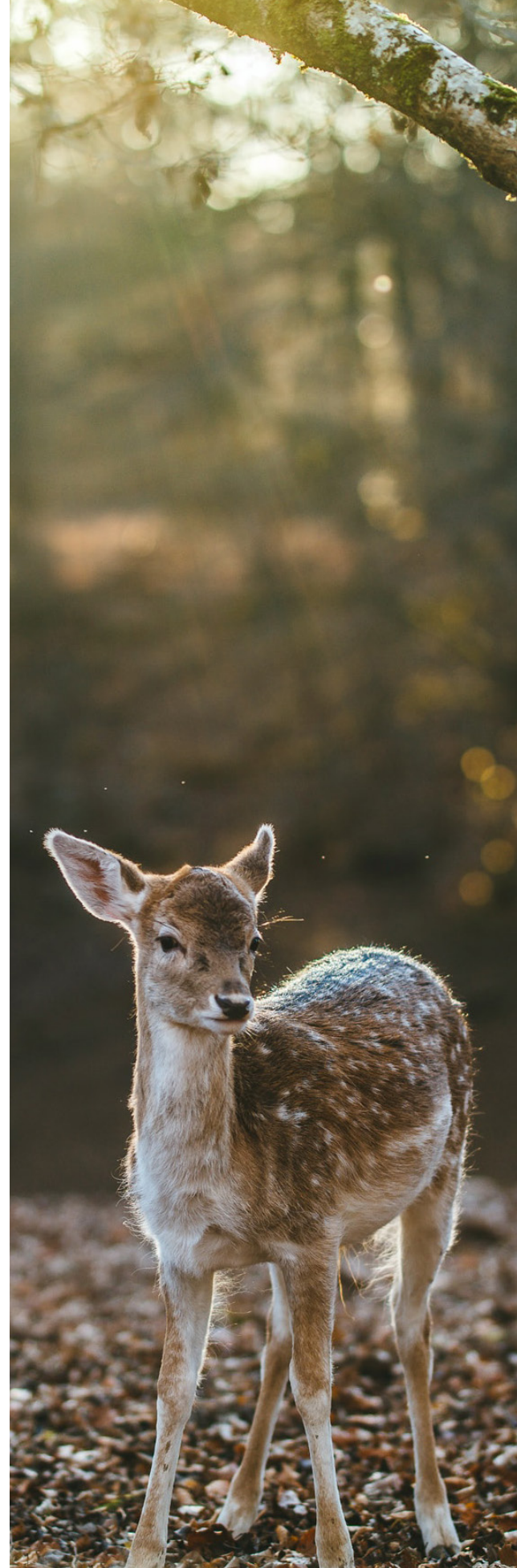
Director, Skeetchestn,
(off board February 2021)

Jolene Anderson

Director, Cstélen
(off board September 2020)

Boysie Porter

Director, St'uxwtews
(off board March 2021)



Fiscal Year 2020/21 Organizational Chart

TK'EMLÚPS TE SECWÉPMC, SIMPCW, SKEETCHSTN, NESKONLITH, ADAMS LAKE, BONAPARTE, WHISPERING PINES/CLINTON



Message from the Executive Director

This past year has been incredibly busy, and we have made significant headway in improving services to the seven communities we serve and the urban Aboriginal population in Kamloops. Although there was an expectation that the pandemic would hold back our service delivery, we have found that we are busier than ever. Everyday our team provides services that respect and support the inherent authority of our Indigenous nations and families to provide care and protection for our children based on culture, tradition, values, beliefs, and customs.

Our team of dedicated staff continues to grow almost monthly. Recruitment remains in full swing as we continue to build and sustain capacity. We have worked hard on a recruitment and retention plan as well as an updated orientation process. Our Human Resources team prioritizes the recruitment of Secwépemc Nation members as well as recruiting for candidates who demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of our Secwépemc service delivery model and approach to child well-being.

Our senior leadership team has been busy growing our infrastructure. We have worked closely with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to partner on a capital project that will meet the needs of our seven communities and provide the necessary space for SCFSA to deliver our services. We have hired a new community engagement team to support SCFSA in engaging our communities in developing policies that align with their developing laws and to build meaningful relationships. One major project that was started this year is the creation of a Secwépemc Framework of Practice to ground our services in Secwépemc culture and guide our practice. We are very proud that ISC provided the Agency with a low-risk rating in all categories (governance, planning, financial management, program management and overall rating), attesting to the strength in the governance and leadership team within the Agency.

SCFSA is committed to partnering with our seven-member bands to build capacity in Prevention services and the outcomes have been momentous. Community Prevention funding helped many of our partner communities with initiatives related to engaging in healthy relationships and

preserving families. This has created opportunities for creative and effective programming that support poverty reduction, community connections, and family connections.

Internally, one of our significant preventative initiatives is the Out of Care Options, which ensures that children who require out-of-home care remain with their families without having to enter care. This process has significantly reduced the rate of removal on reserve for our seven communities. Our goal for 2021-22 is to have communities that have zero children in the care of SCFSA. A significant factor in preventing children from entering care is reducing caseloads and providing social workers with the opportunities to build meaningful and strong relationships with our band representatives. Another area where we are seeing great success in preventing children from entering care is through early intervention with the help of our Early Years program support services to families with infants, toddlers, and younger children. Our continued work with our communities and service delivery partners on shared priorities and goals will contribute significantly to ongoing systemic changes.

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Other ways in which SCFSA is supporting our communities and the urban population include creating an Intensive Youth Support Team and opening an accessible location in Kamloops North Shore that includes an integrated practice team that will support mental health and work to prevent and reduce addiction and sex trafficking. We have fully implemented our Signs of Safety practice model. We have expanded our Cultural Integration team to work alongside our communities to implement cultural nights in our seven communities to help youth in care connect to culture, family and community. We have developed several cultural initiatives that improve practice, support children, youth, and families, and uphold Secwépemc ways.


Our Board of Directors remains committed and dedicated to making informed governance decisions, and Directors meet monthly and as needed. The ongoing growth of our organization has been filled with critical decisions at every turn and they have thoroughly considered options and provided direction. The Board has strengthened the

knowledge and practice through governance training and breathing life into the governance committees to streamline decision-making and share the workload. They finalized the five-year strategic plan in July and completed a thorough review of the constitution and bylaws.

SCFSA is expected to continue evolving as we move to implement the recommendations from our member communities and gain certainty in working alongside our communities to implement the changes resulting from Canada's "An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth, and families", which came into effect on January 1, 2020.

Finally, I want to hold my hands up in honour of our staff and Band representatives for their tireless work and deep commitment to improving the conditions for Indigenous children, families, and the communities we serve.

Yvonne Hare, Executive Director



SCFSA is committed to partnering with our seven-member bands to build capacity in Prevention services and the outcomes have been momentous.

Associate Director's Message

Associate Director: Lisa Brown

In collaboration with the Agency's Programs Managers, this role oversees Agency practice, assists in Agency programming, and ensures practice aligns with the Agency's Strategic Plan, as well as provincial and federal legislation.

Working alongside our seven member communities and urban families, we are guided and inspired to support and provide planning and programming through the SCFSA Framework.

Over the past year, agency teams have demonstrated creativity, resiliency, and commitment to service provision during the challenges of a global pandemic.

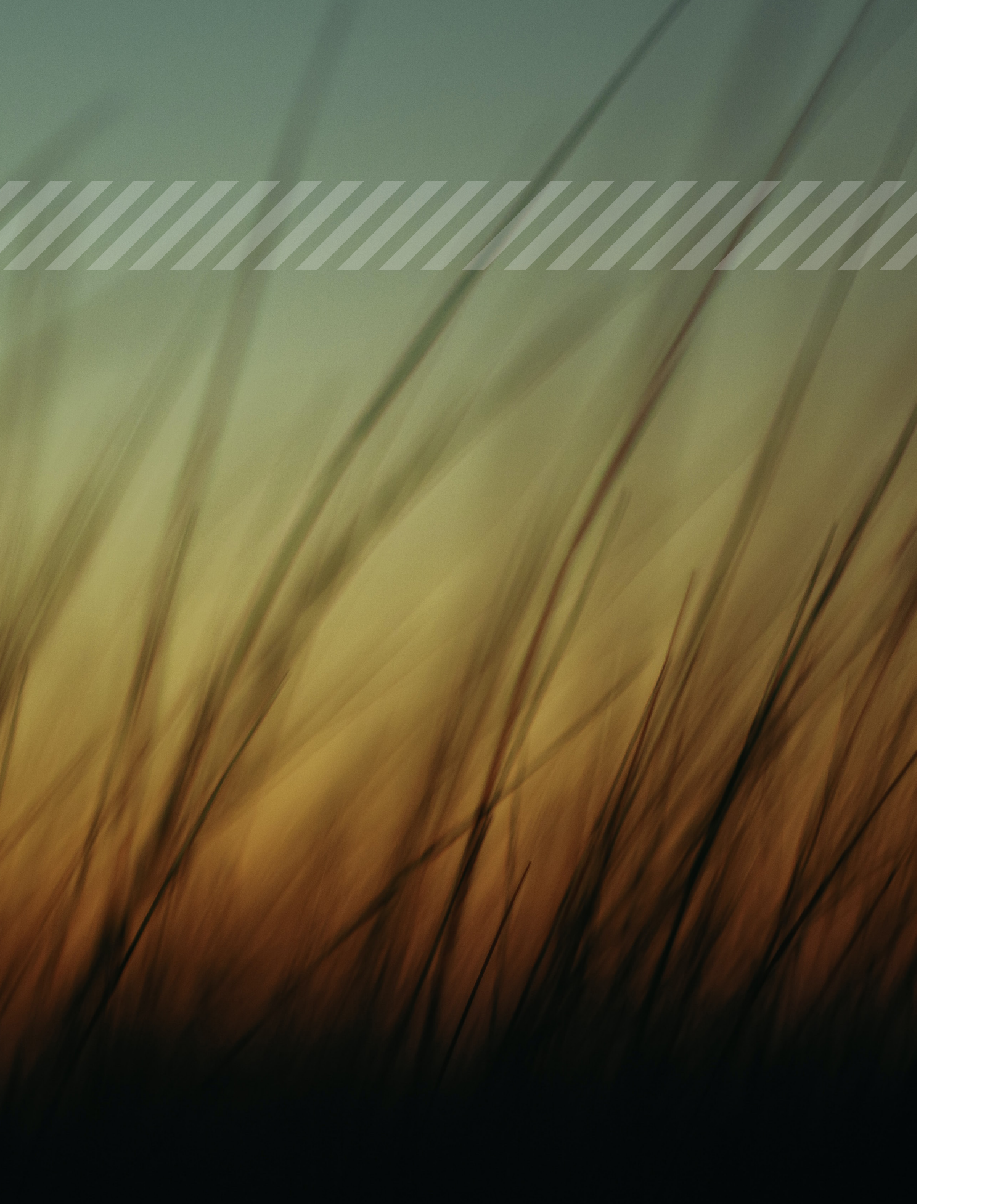
- Increased use of technology has helped keep connections with families, children and their communities.
- Opportunities to support families and communities during these unprecedented times ranged from SCFSA's "Facebook resources for children and their families" to a SCFSA staff convoy celebrating our 2020 high school graduates.
- Service programming modifications were made to continue supporting youth transitioning into adulthood during this time by extending residential support.
- Pandemic resource links were consistently shared with community and virtual town hall meetings were attended as SCFSA worked alongside community to support families.
- Caregivers were provided additional funds in June 2020 to assist in managing pandemic challenges.



Despite the challenges of this past year, SCFS continues to shift practice to collaboratively support and respond to the needs of the communities and families we serve.

In the months ahead, we will continue walking alongside families, children and youth on their healing journey with respect and acknowledgement of the inherent wisdom, knowledge and strength that they possess.

Despite the challenges of this past year, SCFS continues to shift practice to collaboratively support and respond to the needs of the communities and families we serve.



Dr. Cindy Blackstock Award

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 individuals they are meant to be."



Cultural Integration

Secwépemc Child and Family Services Agency collaborates and advocates for the well-being and cultural continuity and connection of children to their families and communities by honouring the legacy of our Secwépemc ancestors and our Secwépemc Nation. This commitment to culture includes community engagement and collaboration, workshops, events, including offering Secwépemc 101, an employee cultural training program (developed in partnership with Shuswap Nation Tribal Council), as well as opportunities to connect with and learn from our Elders. They support and guide practice and service delivery at all levels of our organization.

Team Leader: Lyle Thomas

Cultural Worker: Angela Peters

Elders Co-ordinator: Renee Narcisse

Cultural Program Co-ordinator: Larry Fenton]

Cultural Program Assistant: Squwey Gottfriedsen





This past year has the Cultural Integration Team has taken time to settle into their new space, envisioning being a place where staff, children/ youth, families, and community can gather and experience a sense of connection, belonging and safety. They have continued to explore ways to share their knowledge in different/creative ways as we move through this time. We look forward to offering in person workshops and events that will provide the opportunity to learn from one another, to laugh, to share, to celebrate.

Our Cultural Integration Team has taken care of/offered:

- Secwépemc 101
- Welcoming Baby Baskets
- Youth Christmas Hampers
- SCFSA Christmas Party
- Cultural care packages
- Online cultural workshops
- Created Coffee with an Elder sessions and offered language lessons in Secwépemctsin
- Elkstwécw-evening cultural nights offered in partnership/in community
- Welcoming new staff (part of orientation process)
- Provided Facebook content-stories, language, Elders profiles
- Created a pandemic Information and Activity Booklet (CYMH team also assisted with this) that was sent out to our 7 communities.
- Recording of the Honour Song sent by request to be included on a CD assembled by the Secwépemc Health Caucus.
- Drumming/singing

Spoken from the heart /
“Stek ten p’úsmen ren squqwlúlt”



Stet'ex7ém Advisory Council

Our SCFSA Stet'ex7ém (Elders) Group continue to keep us grounded and provide guidance and encourage all Agency staff towards a more meaningful and culturally knowledgeable approach to our work with the children, families, and communities we serve in the Secwépemc Territory.

Our Elders have adapted to connecting virtually and have embraced new ways of providing support and sharing their vast knowledge in a different way. These are the type of teachings we have learned from listening to our peers, our aunts, uncles, and elders, as well as life experiences. They are also the most important teachings to share because they are from the heart. These teachings have always been there but because people see culture as making a basket, drum or beading, they have been placed to the side. But due to the pandemic restrictions, we can speak and share more, allowing staff, families and communities a chance to remember their teachings they have learned from listening.

When the restrictions start to lift and we as people can start to gather this is going to be exciting times for the stories we have remembered, the respect and who we are as people will emerge.

This year the Elders Council welcomed **Colleen Seymour** from **T'kemlups te Secwepemc**.

Our Elders Council:

Ronnie Jules (Adams Lake/Cstálen)

Iris Jules (Nlaka'pamux & Adams Lake/Cstálen)

Louisa Celesta (Simpchw/North Thompson/Chu Chua)

Eddie Celesta (Simpchw/North Thompson/Chu Chua)

Joyce Manuel (Neskonlith/Sk'atsin)

Janet Deneault (Skeetchestn/Skitsesten)

Della Fellhauer (Whispering Pines/Clinton/Pelt'iq't)

Diane Sandy (Bonaparte/St'uxwtews)

Colleen Seymour (T'kemlups te Secwépemc)



Family Preservation



Kaylee Phillips, Program Manager: *"As the Family Preservation program manager, the areas that I support and oversee are our four Family Preservation Teams and Signs of Safety Integration. The four Family Preservation teams include Community Family Preservation Team, Intensive Youth Support Team, and our Two Urban Family Preservation Teams. We experienced tremendous growth, change, and development over the course of the last fiscal year. I continue to inform practice, process, and implement change in a way that I hope has and will lead to greater effectiveness and efficiency within our service delivery system. The following reflects the efforts, accomplishments, and functions of the teams that I have the privilege of working alongside of."*

Signs of Safety Integration

Signs of Safety Integration is the professional responsibility of all staff within our agency as it is our adopted approach to practice. However, we are fortunate to have the integration of the approach be largely supported by our Signs of Safety practice Lead, Shirley Selski. Shirley has been with the agency for over 15 years and has had a variety of roles within the organization. Shirley promotes, guides, mentors, and educates our staff in the ongoing integration of Signs of Safety, with a primary focus on family preservation functions.

This year our focus was to enhance opportunities for full integration of the approach within the agency by redirecting our attention to leadership. The objective was to build the capacity of our agency's leaders to promote that we move from implementation stages of the approach to ongoing integration of the approach. Our Team Leaders had the benefit of one-to-one mentorship with Shirley to enhance their skills in leading through Signs of Safety processes. This was in recognition that our Team Leaders are the most influential to the day-to-day practice of our staff. If they train, mentor, guide, and educate their staff through Signs of Safety then the parallel process is that their staff will do the same with their children, youth, and families.


Over the course of the year, Shirley worked diligently to pass the torch of guidance, mentorship, and support of Signs of Safety practice to the Family Preservation Leadership group. Shirley strived and continues to be a partner to our Team Leaders in evaluating, monitoring, mentoring, and celebrating Signs of Safety work that the family preservation workers are completing with our children, youth, and families. Over the course of this fiscal year some amazing child-centred safety plans, “Three Houses”, risk-assessment maps, and trajectories surfaced. We are seeing growth in consistency of Signs of Safety practice with our children, youth, and families. As a result, the practice is more child-centered, solution-focused, and strength-based.

Shirley continues to provide foundational Signs of Safety training to our front-line practitioners through training sessions, one-to-one support, and shadowing and mentorship opportunities in the field. Shirley is available to all staff to consult on complex cases, and on complex problems that could use an outside perspective on how to maintain solution-focused and strength-based lens. Shirley does and will continue to facilitate meetings when a third-party facilitator is needed to ensure success.

One important Signs of Safety accomplishment to be noted was the Care Plan Exception that we gained from the MCFD. Our agency was successful in the creation of a Care Plan tool that is rooted in Signs of Safety, reflects our mission, vision and values, and accounts for changes in child welfare service delivery that are inspired by new federal legislation. We are in the process of implementing this tool, that we hope will serve our children in care in ways that are more consistent with our approach to practice. We are thrilled to gain this level of autonomy in our ongoing work that will allow for our assessment and case management for children in care to be more purposeful, effective, organic, ongoing, and rooted in leading practice.

In addition to the above accomplishments, we were able to send 17 Family Preservation staff to Signs of Safety bootcamp. As a participant in the training, I was impressed by our agency’s representation and participation. Jamie Fowler, a Family Preservation Worker for the Community Family Preservation Team, volunteered to present a case for the larger groups to learn from. We had multiple staff take on roles to support the learning that occurred in the smaller breakout rooms. The commitment to growth and understanding in the approach was reflected by the incredible participation from our agency’s participants in this training.

Lastly, a Signs of Safety accomplishment that will lend to the integration of the approach along with benefiting the organization is the development of the new annual employee evaluation tool. While this was primarily a Human Resource endeavour, the tool that has been developed promotes the consistent use of Signs of Safety in leadership. I am very excited to see how this tool shapes how our professional relationships in a way that promotes Signs of Safety integration at all levels and within all program areas of the organization.



Our agency was successful in the creation of a **Care Plan tool** that is rooted in **Signs of Safety**, reflects our mission, vision and values, and accounts for changes in child welfare service delivery that are inspired by new federal legislation.

Urban Family Preservation Teams

There are two Urban Family Preservation teams, and they are led by Team Leaders Leanna MacKenzie and Nicole Hale. Nicole and Leanna’s teams oversee protection, support, and child services to our urban Indigenous population within the Kamloops service region. The primary objectives of these teams are to ensure child safety while promoting overall family wellness. They assess, case-manage, advocate, educate, provide support, and collaborate with children, families, and youth to achieve this objective.

The Family Preservation teams are comprised of an Intake Screener, 14 Family Preservation Workers, and two Transition Planning Coordinators. Our agency is grateful for the Family Preservation workers who we have been able to recruit and retain. They are all skilled, intelligent, committed, and passionate in their pursuit of supporting our service population in achieving their full potential. The Family Preservation teams use both Structured Decision-Making tools and the Signs of Safety Framework to inform their clinical judgement and optimize on the strengths of the children, youth, families, and communities that we serve.

These teams have undergone significant changes that they met with resilience over the course of the last fiscal

year. The first change was the two teams that were previously divided into Intake and Family Service Teams are now both considered Family Preservation Teams, and they have made the shift from specialized units to generalized casework. The purpose of this shift was to promote continuity in caseworker relationships to families and to promote the reduction of worker turnover for families.

These two units have had incredible accomplishments in partnership with the children, families, and youth that they serve and support.

Community Family Preservation Team

A significant part of our Family Preservation restructuring was the development of our new Community Family Preservation Team. This team provides child-safety and family enhancement services primarily to our seven communities — Simpcw First Nation, Bonaparte, Whispering Pines, T'kumlups, Skeetchestn, Adams Lake, and Neskonlith. The purpose of this team is to create service continuity within community. There is a Team Leader, Jen Kimble, and seven Family Preservation workers who make up this team and six have community assignment. There is a Family Preservation float who will support coverage and staff shortages to prevent multiple workers within communities providing differing practice to children, families, and communities.

Despite a pandemic, and all the challenges that our communities encountered over the course of the year, the relationships and service-delivery model that was built through the development of this team has created strength in how we partner with our communities to build capacity and enhance strengths of the families within community. There is a heavy focus on prevention and how we can partner to ensure that children, families, and youth do not require protective services to meet the safety needs of their children.

This team strives to provide service that is consistent with each community's individual values for children,

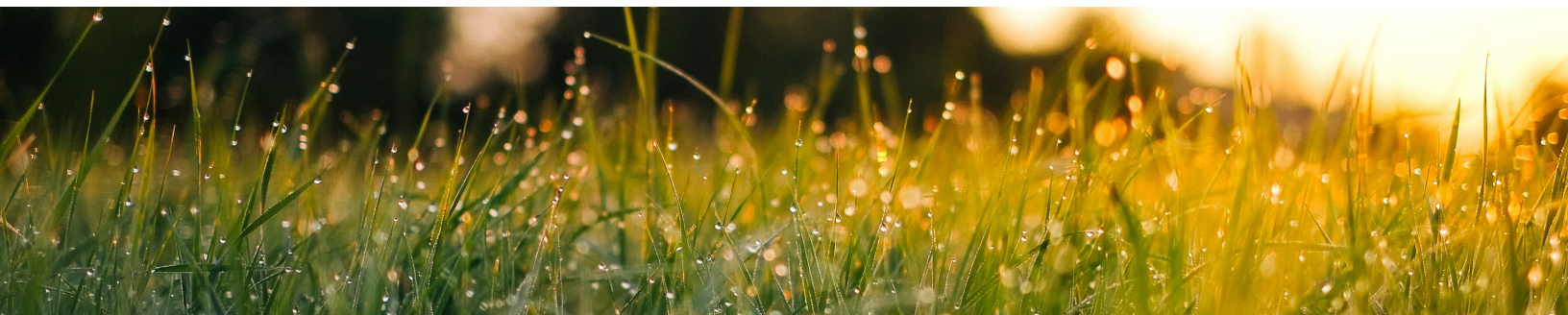
families, and youth. They work in collaboration with band representatives to ensure that they are upholding our agency's mission, vision, and values while adhering to the community's expectations for how child-welfare services should look to be successful in the lives of their community members. This team is committed to ongoing learning as it relates to community standards, values, beliefs, and expectations. We look forward to a future where our processes are rooted entirely in the values of our communities and our partnership can flourish further in indigenizing child welfare practice.

Intensive Youth Support Team

Another new team that was developed during the restructuring of Family Preservation was the Intensive Youth Support Team. This team was the vision of Team Leader Jesse Adamson. Through her role as a Team Leader for the Guardianship team she developed a passion for youth who were engaged in high-risk behaviors and had a goal to provide services that resulted in better outcomes for these youth. As these youth are the most disenfranchised and vulnerable people that we have the privilege of supporting, this vision was supported.

The team is comprised of five Intensive Youth Support Workers, a Team Leader, and two Youth Support Workers. They support approximately 10 youth each, which allows them to be responsive, creative, engaged, and to shift the service delivery to be what the young person requires instead of what the minimum practice standards suggest is offered.

This team is situated in a newly secured building on the North Shore of Kamloops. This creates a presence in the area that our youth frequent and allows the youth to have quick access to support as they require it. This new building holds the promise of comprehensive youth-based programming and hopefully engagement with this population that will promote that they meet their full potential through our service delivery.



Mental Health Team

The Mental Health Team believes in the intergenerational strength and resilience of Indigenous people and their communities, which is why we approach our practice in a way that is sensitive to the unique needs of families, children, and youth. In our practice, we acknowledge and honor the community, cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and traditions of the people we work with.

Our program primarily offers individual counselling, group counselling, specialized groups (boys' groups, girls' groups), and family counselling for a wide range of mental health and wellness concerns/challenges. For example, people have benefited from counselling services here that address mental health challenges, addictions, trauma, crisis-intervention, behavioral challenges, and a wide range of other concerns that impact the lives of families.

Nicole Tourangeau: Mental Health and Wellness Team Lead/Clinician

Laura Lee Taylor: Wellness Coordinator

Maureen Rothman: Mental Health Clinician

Caitlyn Bickerton: Mental Health Clinician (currently on leave but outside of reporting period)

Kiya Giesbrecht: Mental Health Clinician (hired outside of reporting period)

Alexa Tyler: Mental Health Clinician

Isabella Kreis: Mental Health Clinician

Kayla Coutlee: Cultural Key Worker

Michelle Ikwunomu: Intensive mental health clinician (hired outside of reporting period)

Jennifer Needlay: Administrative Assistant

This year we are fortunate to have had two practicum students:

Nicholas VanSabben: Yorkville University, Counselling Psychology

Dayna Manuel: Native Education College, Family and Community Counselling Program

This year has been challenging for us in managing the impacts of COVID-19, which put increased pressure on our families and communities. However, as a team, we have come together to support our families in various creative ways and have learned a lot along the way. One major advantage is that we have incorporated virtual programming and sessions into our regular work, which has allowed us to creatively meet the needs of families and youth who may not otherwise have been able to access our services.



Our team has participated in various trainings that have helped develop clinical skills, such as:

- Responding to Suicide Risk Assessment Training and ASSIST Training, Dialectical Behavioral Training
- Teen Mind Medicine Facilitator Training through the YMCA
- Understanding the Purpose of Life, 12 Teachings for Native Youth, and the Biology of Trauma/Wisdom of Trauma Trainings.

Maureen and Alexa have recently completed training and are now certified Play Therapists.

Kayla and Isabella have recently started their third offering of Teen Mind Medicine, which is a mindfulness-based program for youth who have mild to moderate anxiety. This has been very successful for our communities, and we look forward to continued offerings. Elder Iris Jules has co-facilitated the group with Kayla and Isabella and her presence is much appreciated by the youth.

Key Goals for next year:

- Completing the Indigenous Focused Orientating Therapy and the Intensive Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
- Running a DBT skills group for youth
- Continuing to partner with the YMCA to offer Teen Mind Medicine
- Offering drop-in groups for youth at the new Tranquille Office
- Partnering with local artists to offer mural making workshops with youth
- Increasing connection with teams at our agency and professionals in community
- Incorporating Signs of Safety into our counselling practice and intake procedures
- Working with the Elders to understand how we can improve our practice

- Reaching out to community to understand the mental health needs that various communities face in light of recent issues/concerns
- Introducing an online system for note taking and record keeping

However, we also strive to work collaboratively with other people and agencies which is why we have a wide variety of additional services that we provide. For instance, we also provide support to families by attending intensive case management meetings, psychiatrist meetings, and other community meetings. By attending these meetings, we are hoping to work collaboratively with all professionals involved in the care of the child such as doctors, teachers, social workers, hospitals, etc. to ensure that children and families are supported. Furthermore, we can help assist in completing mental health assessments, obtaining assessments, referrals to other agencies, and specialized services, such as suicide risk assessments and crisis intervention.

Our approach is to combine Western therapeutic modalities with traditional healing practices. The Western therapeutic models we use respect the unique lives of our clients and may include trauma-informed/trauma-specific counselling, narrative therapy, EMDR, CBT, solution focused therapy, alongside art and play therapy approaches—all of which are dependent upon the individual we are working with. Traditional healing practices include smudging, drumming, prayer, language circles, healing circles, and cultural crafts. We include elders and Secwépemc cultural workers in our practice to ensure it is well grounded in tradition. Additionally, we facilitate the process of family finding and identify exploration and we feel it is important to build strong connections to community and culture.

Early Years Team

Our Early Years Services are specialized intervention and prevention services for Aboriginal children 0-6 years of age and their families. We work directly with parents and caregivers to offer infant massage, parent coaching, "Circle of Security", "Strengthening Families" and cultural parent groups. Participation is voluntary and programs are family-centred and parent-driven.

Our Early Years Intervention Specialist (EYIS) provides mental-health and complex developmental prevention and intervention services, as well as transition planning for infants, children, and their families or caregivers. Our Early Years Family Enrichment Worker (EYFEW) works alongside our team to provide culturally sensitive family-centred support services to enrich parent and family development, as well as holistic well-being with infants and children 0-6 years of age. Our Early Years Key Worker (EYKW) provides direct support work in child-care settings, some school settings, and other recreational settings for children 3- 6 years of age with complex developmental delays or disorders. We directly assist with school readiness while working collaboratively with the family and the family's team.

Aboriginal Infant Development (AIDP) provides expert support to Aboriginal children with early identification and support of developmental delays or at risk for developing special needs.

Aboriginal Infant Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development dual consultants (AIDP/ASCD) provide expert support to Aboriginal children with identification and support of developmental delays or at risk for developing special needs.

Nicole Williams: Team Leader & AIDP Consultant (on mat leave from April 2020 to May 2021)

Barb Fedora: Team Leader & AIDP/ASCD Dual Consultant (covered as TL for Nicole W.'s mat leave)

The Early Years team was divided into two teams with Barb being TL for Wellness-Family Support and Nicole W. Wellness-Early Years. This did not happen in the reporting period for this report though. Will be in next years.



Emily Edmundson: AIDP/ ASCD Dual Consultant

Tanya Garfield: AIDP/ ASCD Dual Consultant

Willow George: AIDP/ ASCD Dual Consultant

Ashley Rankin: Early Years Intervention Specialist

Ambre Conklin: Early Years Family Enrichment Worker

Shayleen Jacob: Early Years Family Enrichment Worker

Megan Rolin: Direct Support Worker moved to AIDP/ASCD Dual Consultant role during reporting period.

Lisa Petel: Hired into the Direct Support Worker role at the end of reporting period.

Kyla Guido: Direct Support Worker

Mary Godin: Occupational Therapist

Jennifer Needlay: Wellness Admin

Crystal Camille reports: *"I'm happy to report that A.R's behaviour has improved immensely over the course of these past 2.5 months. We are seeing a completely different child than a few months back. A.R appears happy, is listening and not biting when he requires more attention, transitioning well from one task to the next with gentle reminders from staff and gaining more success with potty training. Working collaboratively with Mary, Lisa and Shayleen this child gained access to different tools to better serve him, his family and child-care provider. By demonstrating proper transitions, a schedule and how to use different play equipment, A.R's behavior improved by leaps and bounds. I'm always so happy to learn when healthy parents get back together. When this happens the behavioral issues we see sometimes dissipate. That's what I believe added to A.R's success."*

Completed training

Community of Practice: Sharing Cultural Curriculum Ideas
DayC2 Training

In progress

Indigenous Canada via Courser and the University of Alberta
Addiction Care and Treatment via UBC

Groups

Weekly play group every Wednesday
Kindergarten BBQ, held at Moccasin Square Garden — children received a new backpack, water bottle, pizza lunch and cake

Megan Rolin reports: *"This young caregiver took on the responsibility of raising three of her family members. With a quick transition, she encountered many road bumps as one would expect expanding your family from one to four. I have supported her through parent coaching, emotional support, advocacy, referrals to community supports and ASQ assessments. I am very proud of the courage and perseverance that this young mom has demonstrated to ensure that her children are safe, secure and loved."*

Completed

"Bringing Tradition Home", BC Aboriginal Childcare Society

"Supporting Early Social & Communication Development through Parent Coaching", Autism Community Training

"Toilet Training for Everyone Revised and Expanded", Autism Community Training

"Circle of Security", Emily and Willow

In progress

"The Ripple Effect of Resilience", Monique Gray-Smith

Groups

Play Group

Kindergarten BBQ

Strengthening Families





Emily Edmunson reports about her main

success story, DB: "D came to us a number of years ago through our play group. We supported D's family in recognizing red flags for autism and we supported them through the diagnosis process. Upon receiving his autism diagnosis, D and his family received wrap-around services from our team -- ASCD, Direct Support, Occupational Therapy and Family Enrichment. We helped D get into the Kamloops Autism Program and are now supporting the family with the transition to Kindergarten. D's mom has expressed how thrilled she is with how far D has come. She no longer worries about him bolting into the street, having major meltdowns, and she has also expressed pride in his new verbal language skills. D has now transitioned to Kindergarten at Beattie Elementary and is in a regular classroom with the support of a CEA (exactly what Mom had hoped for upon receiving an autism diagnosis, however, at the time she didn't think it would be possible)."

- Willow and I ran 3 Circle of Security
- 4 Kindergarten transition planning – 6 kids transitioned to Kindergarten this September
- Kindergarten transition BBQ
- 3 kids received private assessments from OAC (funded by our agency)
- Put together our puppet program for all day-care children (almost ready to distribute)
- Jordan's Principle applications – 2 kids received a significant amount of funding from Jordan's Principle for behaviour intervention/therapy tools

Nicole Williams reports: "An accomplishment for the families I'm screening and providing pre-services is I was able to identify for a family that there are no concerns about the child's developments and no indicators of autism as they were worried about previously. I had the ability to eliminate those factors for the family and reassure them that the child is meeting and exceeding all milestones."

Training

Cannabis in Prenatal, 2 parts

"Talk to me, play with me, carry me" webinar

Started the R.E.S.T. program, which deals with sensory of emotions and sensory output for children

FAMILY SUPPORT

Kyla Guido reports: "This summer I had the privilege to take approximately 30 children around the community on different occasions as part of a summer program that I designed. The program was held on four separate weeks and it featured activities like trips to water parks, pools and parks; ice cream outings; pizza parties; and adventures to the local science centre. This opportunity gave kids more social outings, more social interactions, and more physical activities, which tend to be hard for our families to plan for during the summer months. I hope that I can run more summer programs for our children and youth in the future, possibly providing transportation so that we can explore other communities."

"I also highly enjoyed organizing and putting together 30 activity bags for the children who were evacuated from their communities during the horrific fire season we had this year. I was grateful to be asked to assemble these bags as the summer was an extremely difficult time for the families and communities we serve."

Ambre Conklin reports: "It has been difficult this past year to provide regular service to our clients. Training opportunities have also been slim and were only offered online, which made them difficult to attend. Despite these challenges, I have had the privilege to assist co-workers with running a summer camp, assemble goodie bags for children evacuated from the fires, attend SPARKS training and help get play group up and running. A personal highlight from this year has been assisting my new client who had ADHD, ADD and social anxiety. It has been a learning process for me and I have been learning how to be more assertive through this process. He has been stepping up and taking initiative, and I am very proud of him. We have managed to work together to get him signed up for social assistance, put on a list for housing and successfully get him a disability package. He has wanted me to assist him not do the work for him, which is nice to see. I hope soon he will have a place to live and have a secure income."

Ashley Rankin reports: "A recent accomplishment that stands out was my work with a single father who self-referred to my services. He was living in a hotel and had an open child-protection file. He was also facing challenges with potty-training his young daughter and transitioning her to their new home away from family supports. I helped connect him with resources to get housing, counselling,

and assistance to furnish a new apartment. We worked together intensively over the next month and he was able to close the child protection file, potty-train his daughter almost completely, and work on building a sustainable lifestyle for himself and his daughter. This father went from having anxiety around parenting and needing intensive support to being confident and competent as a parent. I continue to work with this family to support them regarding family legal issues and transition work with his young daughter while she rebuilds a relationship with her mother who has recently re-established connection."

Training

"Fatherhood is Sacred, Motherhood is Sacred"

Supporting Healthy Transitions in School Aged

Children and Teens in Foster Care

Supporting Healthy Transitions in Babies and Toddlers

Programs

Indigenous parenting

"Fatherhood is Sacred, Motherhood is Sacred"

Strengthening Families Together (coming soon)

Lisa Petel reports: "AR has come along way from when I first started support. When I first met him, he was very physical, and he was biting, kicking, scratching, and hitting staff and his friends near him. After working with AR for a couple of weeks, the physical outbursts slowly happened less and less. I had helped staff to understand what AR's needs were, giving a heads-up for transitions, as AR needs time to process what they are wanting to happen not just a sudden, 'OK, this is what we are doing.' I was able to take the time to show AR that being physical to others does hurt. It was amazing to make such a good connection with AR and see the growth. AR now transitions well not only when I am there but with other staff when I am not there. Staff and the parents have been happy with this little person's growth!"

"Another success story was with O. I was able to see this little person when he first started and he has come a long way. He had little to no verbal communication, refused to be with the group or participate in calendar and circle time, and refused to have his pull-up changed. Now O can sit and play with his peers (he loves Playdough, is amazing at puzzles and loves dinosaurs). O can use lots of words and can communicate his needs with his peers and staff. He can now let staff change his pull-up when needed."

"I am truly honoured to be involved with all these children and love to see their own little transformations!"

Shayleen Jacob reports: "One of my accomplishments this year would be with a client dealing with the stresses of being a mom for the first time. After finding out that she was pregnant only a few months before the baby was born, a breech during labour meant they had to perform an emergency C-section. She was not able to see her baby right away because she had pieces of tube in her throat from the C-section, but she overcame the anxiety of holding her baby and eventually became comfortable holding him. She also dealt with post-partum depression while learning how to be a single mom. We supported her efforts in securing the baby's birth certificate, status and how to apply for CCB. Thanks to our support this mom is

now less reliant on our services and is often just checking in for someone to talk to or checking in because it makes her feel comfortable. She also had the opportunity to participate in the Circle of Security (CoS) program, which she really enjoyed. She spoke about how much it helped her understand some of the parenting that she is doing and why. She said she always looked forward to CoS because it gave her the opportunity to connect with other moms, making her feel less alone."

Programs

Playgroup

Summer camp (when it was being offered)



Resource



The Resource Team is responsible for two important and distinct functions of the Agency's day-to-day operations. The first is associated with the recruitment, development, and support of our Agency's caregivers. The second area is Kinship and Family Finding, which strive to reduce the number of children that may otherwise languish in Agency care.

Team Leader: Gail Peterson

Resource workers: Sharon Edwards, Monica Sivertson, Tammy Newton, Nola Campbell, Cinamon Holland

Kinship workers: Magalie Knopf, Rachel Liddy

Family Finder: Crystal Camille (she has left Agency, but this happened after reporting period) Caseworker

Assistant: Miranda Payne

"Resource offered an online Ribbon Skirt workshop for our caregivers. Caregivers were able to learn the significance of the ribbon skirt and were able to complete their own skirt during the workshop"

Here are some highlights for April 2020 – March 2021

- Streamlining of procurement process with contract Resource agencies, the referrals now reflect the child's needs, and the CRA develops a more child-centred proposal.
- Resource team has maintained a strong working relationship with foster parents and contracted resource agencies, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Each home has developed a COVID-19 emergency plan, and resources have documented them on Integrated Case Management (ICM).
- Resource workers have supported homes to develop a fire evacuation emergency safety plan during fire season, then documented the plans in ICM.
- All levelled caregivers have provided 100 per cent compliance with submitting monthly reports.
- Resource helped support youth transition out of care during the pandemic to extend their housing/ placement under a THA (Temporary Housing Agreement) with their caregivers.
- During Foster Parent Appreciation Month in October, we held an online event through our agency Facebook page, which included a message from our executive director, program manager and an honour song sung by staff and elders. Caregivers were gifted with an Indigenous-designed fleece blanket, certificate, gift card and years of service pins.
- Since the pandemic staff has had to learn to work differently, including moving case-planning and team meetings online. The Resource staff has been able to meet with the caregivers in their homes for their 90-day and annual reviews with protocols in place.
- Our case assistant has updated all forms and contracts to be more user-friendly with online submissions and approvals.
- We have five Resource workers and one contract Resource worker who works specifically on Safe Home studies. We had one Resource worker transfer to a new position in November as the Community Engagement team leader, and we welcomed a new Resource worker to the team in December, who transferred in from the Family Preservation team.
- Currently we have 68 Resource caregiver homes and six contracted Resource agencies. The agency also supports interprovincial placements in Resource homes, as well as provides support for reciprocal requests for children moving into our jurisdiction.
- Caregivers have been offered many opportunities to attend different online training, as well as "Core Pride" training.
- Resource has had the opportunity to attend several online development trainings as well as Resource network of practice meetings, where the teams are informed of updated COVID-19 practice guidelines and policy updates.
- Resource team leader attended several network meetings, which included partnership meetings with ICS, MCFD, LMO, BCFFPA, and foster parents. Attended local networking meetings with other Resource team leaders in Kamloops. Meet with CLBC to streamline a process for shared Resource homes.
- Developed and updated the Resource brochure to support recruitment of new Resource homes.
- Resource has developed a small lending library for caregivers.
- Resource offered an online Ribbon Skirt workshop for our caregivers. Caregivers were able to learn the significance of the ribbon skirt and were able to complete their own skirt during the workshop. The session was recorded, so other caregivers could learn at their own pace.

KINSHIP AND FAMILY FINDING

Kinship and Family Finding aims to reduce the number of children who may languish in Agency care by establishing meaningful permanency for children and youth, allowing them to grow up within their families of origin.

Family finding scans the child's family, loved ones, and significant supports to find unconditionally committed individual(s) to the child and youth who remains in care in hopes to achieve a plan with family that results in their eventual exit from care. This program offers a variety of out of care options that have prevented children from entering the foster care system.

Here are some highlights from April 2020 – March 2021:

- Team has worked on the development of permanency plans for children and youth.
 - Kinship has studied many Kinship homes so that children could be placed and find permanency with family.
 - Team has supported communities in the development of their own cultural safety agreements.
 - Kinship team has supported out-of-care caregivers with additional support for food security and additional funds for caregivers during Christmas.
 - Out-of-care caregivers were recognized along with foster parents during Foster Parent Appreciation Month and received gift cards.
 - The team holds ongoing permanency meeting with social workers to help support permanency plans.
 - The team has provided support to many reciprocal requests for out-of-care placements in our jurisdiction.
- This includes home studies and safety assessments for the child to be placed with their kin.
- We currently have two Kinship workers and one Family Finder worker. One Kinship worker moved into a Wellness position, and a new Kinship worker joined the team from the Guardianship team.
 - One worker has completed permanency training and the other is on a waitlist.
 - Kinship has helped honour children returning home by providing them with special blankets.
 - We currently have 54 out-of-care caregivers, who have one or more family placements.
 - Out-of-care caregivers are included in many online training opportunities that foster parents take for ongoing development. A few out-of-care caregivers participated in an online ribbon skirt making workshop, which was well received, and if given the opportunity they would like participate in more cultural activities such as this.



Human Resources

Chylane Diablo – Human Resources Manager

Domina Francois – Human Resources Assistant

The human resource department (HRD) is responsible for:

- Recruitment and retention
- Orientation, training, and development
- Occupational health and safety, wellness
- Employee communication and employee relations
- Performance management, succession planning, and compensation
- Records and information management
- HR policies and procedures





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