



Spring 2012

FRASER VALLEY ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES SOCIETY

Xyolhemeylh

FVACFSS welcomes New Board

May 25, 2012

Dear Members of the FVACFSS,

The Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society (FVACFSS) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on March 28, 2012. Membership elected a new Board comprised of nine members at the AGM.

We are pleased to introduce to you the new Board of Directors, as follows:

Sheila Schmidt	Brenda Crabtree
Gerard Peters	Tammy Bartz
Teressa James	Gail Starr
June Quipp	Dianne Gardner
Brandon Gabriel	

This past couple of months has been a period of transition both at the Board level, as well as, operations. With that we are also very pleased to announce the appointment of Samantha Langton as the Acting Executive Director for an interim period while the Board works through the recruitment process for a permanent Executive Director. Samantha can be reached at our Chilliwack office (604) 858-0113 or samantha.langton@xyolhemeylh.bc.ca.

A couple of governance related initiatives we have put in place is the establishment of an independent Finance Committee as a result of the resolution put forward by the Membership at the AGM.

In addition, we are in the process of establishing a Governance Committee that will consist of four Board Members and four Members-at-Large. We will be sending out a call for an Expression of Interest from community members who would be interested in being considered for participation on this committee.

The Board of Director's goal is to establish good relationships amongst our Staff, Membership and Agency Stakeholders. Consequently, we feel the implementation of both the Finance and Governance Committees are a good starting point to help us improve overall relations and communications. In addition, the Board will be working on developing a comprehensive communications strategy. Please expect to receive more updates from the Board in the near future.

We thank our Staff, Membership, and Stakeholders for your continued support of the Agency as we move forward.

Respectfully,

Sheila Schmidt, President

On behalf of the FVACFSS Board of Directors

[Please see Board of Director Biographies featured as a newsletter insert]

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Finding Your Way in Your Healing Journey

Two-day Aboriginal Family Conference

By Elly Janik, Prevention Supervisor

This year, FVACFSS was honoured to host the Annual Aboriginal Family Conference – “Finding Your Way In Your Healing Journey”.

The theme acknowledges those who continue to walk their healing journey in a good way and provide support to those who still need a helping hand. “We, as human beings are good medicine for one another”, stated Elly Janik, Committee Chair. Key note speakers shared their stories of surviving the paths of addictions, residential schools, being a child-in-care and an adoptee and the courage to continue on with their journey.

We hold our hands up to: Elder Millie Silver from Sumas First Nation, who shared her residential school experience; Elder Gerald George from Skwah First Nation, who shared his addiction recovery journey, Dianne Garner, from Adams Lake Band [and Stó:lō] who shared her adoption experience and to Jennifer Roberts, from Ojibway/Tzeachten First Nation who shared her child-in-care experience with our participants. For many, the testimonials were the highlight of the Family Conference by empowering and encouraging others to continue their own personal healing journeys’.

Finding Your Way In Your Healing Journey workshops focus was on the common issues of healing. Topics include: Suicide Prevention [ASCERT Coordinator, J. Malloway], Games Families Play [CDW G. Robinson], What to do when your Medicine Wheel has a flat tire [A. Roberts], Arts & Crafts [D. Baker & J. McCaffrey], Cedar Tree Medicine [R. Greene & C. Silver], Residential Schools [G. George], Respectful Relationships [F. Charlie], Medicine Wheel [E. Gardner], Circle of Healing [D. Bain], Laughter Therapy [N. Commodore], and What I like about you [Aboriginal CYMH, S. Spence & K. Pflug].



Key note speakers share their strength and courage at the Family Conference

Special acknowledgement and thank you to Jennifer Malloway from Stó:lō Nation ASCERT Program for her partnership and financial support; Janit Doyle, Aboriginal Child and Youth Mental Health for their in-kind support; and to the Promontory Church for sharing their wonderful venue with us and good central location in the heart of Chilliwack.

Lastly, we enjoy hosting the Family Conference for anyone who is interested in experiencing, and participating, in the social, cultural aspects of the daily life experiences of our community and becoming aware of what our community members endure on a daily basis. We thank everyone for joining us this year and heartily extend an invitation to next year’s conference.



Kwas’hooy to our planning committee members, Norma Commodore, Melissa Celella, Natalie Brandon, Dave Rader, Julie O’Connor, and Michelle Fuller for their dedication and commitment to this project.

Did you know?



Family Conference Participation ratios:

Off-reserve Aboriginal (56.5%)

On-reserve Aboriginal (16 %)

Community Partners and Caregivers (27%)

**percentages are approximates*



Lets emót

One heart, One mind,
One family

KING IS MI:MEL SPATH (ROGER ANDREWS) from the Shxw'owhamel First Nation which means where the river widens.

QUEEN IS YA YUTS KII YA (AUDREY KELLY) from the Shxw'owhamel First Nation.



REGISTRATIONS CAN BE FAXED TO (604) 846-4889 C/O MELANIE WILLIAMS OR MAILED TO:

Tzeachten First Nation
Governance Office
Unit 29 □ 6014 Vedder Road
Chilliwack, BC V2R 5M4

36TH ANNUAL BC ELDERS GATHERING

JULY 10, 11 & 12, 2012

TRADEX ABBOTSFORD

**Trade & Exhibition Centre
1190 Cornell Street
Abbotsford, BC V2T 6H5**

**Hosts are the Stó:lō and
Tsawwassen First Nation**



The purpose of the Elders Gathering is so the Elders can come together and take their rightful place as advisors, teachers, and leaders. Many Elders are involved and work at the community level throughout the year. They participate at meetings, workshops and various events to support the youth, education committees,

Band Council and so on. The Gatherings are a time to socialize and celebrate their accomplishments as well as regenerate themselves for future work. It provides an opportunity for Elders to share traditional ways with visiting cultural and linguistic groups. This is done through songs, dances and ceremonies throughout the event

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

DIANE McELHINNEY, CO-CHAIR AT (253) 886-2675

RICK QUIPP, CO-CHAIR AT (604) 798-5574

RUTH ADAMS, ELDER SPOKESPERSON AT (604) 790-5414

MILLIE SILVER, ELDER CHAIR AT (604) 852-4159

WWW.36THELDERSGATHERING.COM



2012 SUMMER CAMPS

*Come join us for a
opportunity to experience
many of the healthy,
contemporary and
traditional lifestyles of
Aboriginal Peoples.*

Our summer camps empower participants to develop independence, self-esteem, and life-long friendships. Offering a variety of activities ranging from Canoeing, Traditional Teachings, Arts, Storytelling, Outdoor Adventures, Traditional Games, and more.

Natural Changes (ages 10-16) **July 17-20**

Warrior Camp (ages 12-19) **July 17-20**

Caregiver Camp **August 1-3***

Youth Day **July 27, July 31, August 10**

Family Spirit Camp **August 14-16**

There is no fee to participants.

Contacts for registration or information:

- Elly Janik, Prevention Supervisor at
1-800-663-9393 or e-mail
elly.janik@xyolhemeylh.bc.ca
- Natalie Brandon, Events Coordinator at
1-800-663-9393 or e-mail
natalie.brandon@xyolhemeylh.bc.ca (*caregiver camp)



Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society
#1-7201 Vedder Road, Chilliwack BC V2R 4G5

ABORIGINAL DAY CELEBRATION

Abbotsford City Hall - Thunderbird Square
32315 South Fraser Way
Abbotsford, BC
June 21, 2012

National Aboriginal Day will be celebrated throughout Canada on Thursday, June 21st. Aboriginal Day is a time to recognize the diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. Join in on one of the many activities celebrating culture, history and tradition. Check your local listings for activities in your community.

CHEAM ROOTS & TIES

Cheam Band Hall
52170 Old Yale Road
Rosedale, BC
Sunday (Monthly) at noon

This monthly event is set up to engage face to face communication, share a meal and develop relationships between foster children, families, social workers and community. It is hosted on the third Sunday of every month. For more information contact Joanne Hugh at 604-858-0113 or through e-mail at joanne.hugh@xyolhemeylh.bc.ca

FVACFSS SUMMER CULTURAL CAMPS

Natural Changes Camp (for young ladies ages 10-16)
July 17 – 20, 2012

Warrior Camp (for young men ages 12-19)
July 17 – 20, 2012

Caregiver Camp*
August 1-3, 2012

Youth Day (for youth ages 12-18)
July 27, July 31 and August 10

Family Spirit Camp
August 14-16, 2012

Our cultural camps offer the opportunity to experience many of the culture and traditions, including aspects of the medicine wheel (spiritual, mental, physical and emotional). For more information, please e-mail Elly Janik, Prevention Supervisor at elly.janik@xyolhemeylh.bc.ca or Natalie Brandon, Events Coordinator at natalie.brandon@xyolhemeylh.bc.ca or call 604-858-0113, toll free 1-800-663-9393 for caregiver camp only. See poster on page 4.

WOMEN'S CRAFT AND CULTURAL GROUP

FVACFSS Office
Suite 102, 20621 Logan Avenue
Langley, BC
Tuesday at 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

This is free gathering for women of all nations. For more information, contact Gary Robinson, Community Development Worker, at 604-532-3682.

LITTLE FEATHERS PLAYGROUND

Douglas Park Elementary School
Strong Start Room
5409—206 Street
Langley, BC
Wednesday's at 9:30AM to 11:15AM

Parents, Caregivers and children ages 0-6 can learn Aboriginal culture from our Kwantlen Elder through traditional teachings, drumming, songs, stories, circle time, snacks and more. For more information, contact Gary Robinson at 604-532-3684 or through e-mail at gary.robinson@xyolhemeylh.bc.ca

36TH ANNUAL BC ELDERS GATHERING

Tradex Trade & Exhibition Centre
1190 Cornell Street
Abbotsford, BC
July 10, 11, & 12, 2012

This year's hosts are Stó:lō and Tsawwassen First Nation. Participate in meetings, workshops and various events to support youth, education committees, Band Council, etc. To register, please fax to (604) 846-4889 c/o MELANIE WILLIAMS or mail to: Tzeachten First Nation Governance Office, Unit 29 – 6014 Vedder Road, Chilliwack, BC V2R 5M4. For more information, visit www.36theldersgathering.com. See poster on page 3.

The FVACFSS is a proud supporter of the 36th Elders Gathering. The 36th Elders Gathering organizing committee is seeking volunteers, please visit www.36theldersgathering.com for more information.

ABORIGINAL YOUTH MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

AUNTS AND UNCLES

Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society would like to **welcome** the newest Aunties and Uncles to the Aboriginal Youth Mentorship Program; Gayle Ramsden-Abbotsford, Simon Walker-Abbotsford, Andrea Vaags-Langley and Jackie Cerf-Langley. Thank-you so much for stepping forward to share your time and talents in volunteering with our young people.

If you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering with Aboriginal Youth Mentorship Program "Aunts and Uncles" please contact:

Gary Robinson, Community Development Worker (Langley Area) at Phone (604) 532-3684 or gary.robinson@xyolhemeylh.bc.ca

Annie Silver, Community Development Worker (Abbotsford / Chilliwack area) at Phone (604) 755-1200 or Toll Free 1-877-870-5894 or annie.silver@xyolhemeylh.bc.ca

Aboriginal Cultural Training

A learning experience

By Annie Silver, Community Development Worker

Sponsored by FVACFSS, Fraser Health- Aboriginal Health and Sumas First Nation

this one day Cultural Training Workshop provided 100 participants with a greater understanding of the history of the Stó:lō traditional territory, and First Nations and Métis culture within the Fraser Valley.

The March 8th training day was a great success but not without its bumps and curve balls! The day started with a keynote address from Cultural Advisor and Historian - Sonny McHalsie. Sonny provided participants with explanations of the Stó:lō Territory, origins of names, as well as historical issues. Key to the success of this event, is hearing participants feel they are better able to serve our Aboriginal population in the Fraser Valley from this learning experience. We also had rotating workshops on drum making, traditional medicines, the medicine wheel and Métis culture. And, a lovely lunch was served by the Stó:lō Elders.

A variety of stakeholders participated including School District Staff from four school districts, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Community Services from various regions, Spirit of the Children, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Abbotsford Police, private organizations such as Empowered by Horses, and foster parents.



*Aboriginal Cultural Training March 8, 2012
at Sumas First Nations*

It was very interesting to see what had resonated with participants through evaluation forms. One participant commented as days passed after the workshop and things came up in her daily duties, things that she learned helped her with how she was to handle her day. Another participant found it valuable to learn the true meaning of Indian time. It's not about being late, but more about things happen when they are supposed to happen and it's exactly at the right time.

Overall, the day was a very successful learning day and many would like to see this happen again, with more workshop options and more time.

FVACFSS Celebrates Third Annual Aging Out Ceremony

Aging Out Ceremony for Children Leaving Care

By Natalie Brandon, Events Coordinator

On Wednesday, March 7, 2012 FVACFSS celebrated its third annual Aging Out Ceremony for youth leaving care prior to December 31 of this year. The celebration, for the second consecutive year, was held at the Sumas First Nation Longhouse and began with a lunch feast catered by Big Al Jimmie.

Youth were honored in the Longhouse in traditional fashion, with affirming guidance from FVACFSS' Traditional Counsellors Herb Joe and Harley Chappell. Mike Dangeli and the Git Hayetsk Dancers were also a part of the honoring ceremony for the youth with a very moving performance designed especially for the youth.

We wish our youth well in their future, and safety as they spread their wings. Remember, glass ceilings can be broken!

BC Social Work Week March 5-11

Commemorated with this year's theme for Social Work Week in BC "Celebrating Strengths". Thank you to all our social workers for doing everything you do! FVACFSS offices all took time on Thursday, March 8 to celebrate with lunches in each region.

Christmas Party for Children in Care

Skating, crafting, and filling their bellies with pizza


By Natalie Brandon, Events Coordinator

The 2011 Christmas “Winter Party” had great surprises in store with a visit from Abbotsford Heat mascot Hawkey and “there goes a REAL fire truck”....

The West and North Regions were supported by the Abbotsford Home Depot who sent volunteers to build wooden boxes in a “Kids Workshop” where the children could take their finished product home. “Hawkeye”, the Abbotsford Heat mascot made an appearance and skated with the crowd, the Clearbrook Branch of the Fraser Valley Regional Library (FVRL) facilitated story time, and volunteers Angel and Elise painted the faces of eager children.

In our Central and East Regions party goers were treated to a visit from the Chilliwack Fire Department; children tried out the fire gear and got to explore the fire engine with lights flashing! The Chilliwack Branch of FVRL entertained with a magical puppet show and stories, Chiefs mascot “Wannawin” stopped by for a skate and high-fives, Gwen and Rochelle volunteered and painted many smiling faces, and cotton candy was had by nearly everyone!

Special thanks to everyone already mentioned who helped to make these parties a success, including Katrina Wall, South Fraser Way McDonald’s (Abbotsford), Sharon Bertoncini, Cheryl Ward, Wayne and Dotie Hawkins, Luckakuck Way McDonald’s (Chilliwack), Andy Brown (Chilliwack Fire Dept.), London Drugs (Chilliwack) and FVACFSS staff.



Respectful Relationships Program (RR)
COED
(Open to Men & Women)

Qwi:qwelstóm invites you to attend this 10 week First Nations Program that will provide an understanding of how our behavior affects relationships. It will give basic tools to make all relationships in your life more gratifying through:

- ✓ Values, beliefs and behaviors
- ✓ Feelings and emotions
- ✓ Dealing with anger
- ✓ Power and control in relationships
- ✓ The effects a relationship has on children
- ✓ Gender Roles, stereotypes and relationships
- ✓ Respectful communication

***A key message in this program is,
We all want to learn to have healthy respectful relationships***

WHEN: June 7, 2012
WHERE: Stó:lō Nation-Bldg. 5 – 7201 Vedder Rd. Chilliwack
TIME: 9am to approximately 12pm

No Transportation is provided

To sign up please contact Justin or Stacy at:
Stó:lō Nation
Qwi:qwelstóm Justice Department
Bldg. 5 – 7201 Vedder Rd.
Chilliwack, B.C. V2R 4G5
Phone: 1.877.847.3299 / Fax: 604.858.2671



If you think a child is being abused or neglected, you have the legal duty to report your concern. Call toll-free at **1-800-663-9393**.

If it is after hours or you are not sure who to call, phone the Helpline for Children at 310-1234. The Helpline call is free. You do not need an area code and you do not have to give your name.

If the child is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1 or your local police.

Welcome to New Employees



APRIL LEPRETTE

Finance Clerk
Finance Department



BRENDA GHAZVINI

Manager
Human Resources Department



REBECKAH GAUKEL

Receptionist/Clerk



CHARLES (CHUCK) LOUIE

Family Enhancement Worker
Prevention North Region



KAYLEE YOCHIM

Resource & Guardianship Account Technician
Finance Department



RAMONA VALENZUELA

Family Relations Worker
Prevention Central Region

CASSIE SILVA

Family Relations Worker
Prevention West Region

**HAPPY
ADMINISTRATIVE
PROFESSIONAL DAY -
APRIL 25TH**



**Thanks to all our administrative
professionals for the important work
they do on a daily basis to support
our staff!**

Xyolhemeylh is produced four times a year.

Editor Julie O'Connor, Communication Coordinator

Newsletter Contribution

Natalie Brandon

Norma Commodore

Brenda Ghazvini

Elly Janik

Julia McCaffrey

Gary Robinson

Annie Silver

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