



January 2025 NEWSLETTER



IN THIS ISSUE

Discover exciting updates on our youth cooking initiatives, relationship program hide and moccasin making, the Feel the Beat Christmas dinner, funding opportunities, local training options, a story in the language, the various ways we supported our relations over the holidays, and more!



Mission

We are all somebody's seventh generation. We are committed to work with our communities to create the necessary change to ensure children currently in care have the advocates they deserve and seven generations from now, the need for a child welfare system will no longer exist as our families will be whole and healthy.



Vision

Work collectively to exercise nte?kəpmx and syilx inherent rights as we empower children, young people and families.

tekm míns | tá k'wúl'əm - Our Call to Action

We are at a critical moment in time. A great deal of change is taking place within the current political climate in which we exist. Bold steps are required to actualize the changes necessary for the communities we represent. For the first time since colonization, our action will fundamentally alter the foundation upon which outside governments have imposed political interests of assimilation through the systemic removal of our children.

For generations, our children have been the ones on the front line of federally and provincially legislated cultural genocidal regimes. Our families and communities were fractured but never broken. To achieve healing, justice and hope for each child ever removed from their parents, families and communities, it is up to us to provide a new reality for generations to come.

Through the wisdom of our ancestors, we have been taught the ways to care for one another. We must work toward a future markedly different from the current state wherein there are more Indigenous children in care now than at the height of the residential school era. While the current system is derived of legislation and policy, not of the Indigenous origin at a community level or otherwise, we undertake the process of decolonization to bring traditional knowledge, guidance and practices of the nte?kəpmx and syilx people forward in collaboration and guidance of our communities.

It is our responsibility to create the necessary change to ensure children currently in care have the advocates they deserve; and seven generations from now, the need for a child welfare system will no longer exist as our families will be whole and healthy. nte?kəpmx and syilx ancestors have anticipated this change and passed on their wisdom as we respond to this call to action. This very legacy is now ours to nurture and protect as we build a new platform where today's children, young people, families and communities will remain together and rekindle their cultural ways of being.

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SCFSS STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

CULTURE OF CARING

- Communicate with one voice
- Integrate language and traditional teachings into programs and services
- Grow caregiver networks in alignment with traditional and community values
- Incorporate learning from Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- Return rights and responsibilities to our people through the development and implementation of Governance and Laws



PROTECTION TO PREVENTION

- Bring and keep our children home
- Align programs and services with our vision
- Shift our focus from fear to love
- Build community engagement and capacity
- Build trusting relationships

GROWING OUR PEOPLE

- Engage community expertise to support our vision
- Retain those committed to our vision
- Adopt, embrace, and implement cultural practice frameworks
- Acknowledge Post-traumatic Growth (PTG)
- Build professional capacity

INFRASTRUCTURE ALIGNMENT

- Realign budgets to shift from protection to prevention
- Improve Information Technology support in current and post COVID-19 environment
- Structure change management to achieve our collaborative vision
- Improve prompt management reporting
- Integrate programs and services to build community capacity





FEEL THE BEAT - CHRISTMAS DINNER

"Barb was an amazing host, and all the teams coordinated smoothly with good timing and communication. The event was beautiful, and the entertainment was fantastic. Having the youth and families join and perform was special, and seeing the elders and families together, honoring and celebrating, was amazing. The presence of a professional photographer to capture families together over the holidays was incredible. The event was well-run, thoughtfully organized, professional, heartfelt, inclusive, joyous, and special. I am grateful to have witnessed it and in awe of the strengths and gifts each team member brought. It was a special night to be a part of."

- Paula Moyes

"We recently hosted our Feel the Beat Year-End Celebration Dinner, and it was a fantastic event with a great turnout from our community members and many of our Feel the Beat attendees. This event celebrated our regalia-making efforts and marked the end of a wonderful year. We created a festive environment with door prizes for all ages. All female staff wore ribbon skirts, and some brought extra skirts so every female staff member could participate.

Many of our Feel the Beat regalia members joined the drum group, and we had an impromptu sing-along to Christmas songs, which encouraged great group participation. Carol Holmes led the kids in singing a Christmas song in nsyilxcən, which was a special moment. The kids also enjoyed announcing the table numbers for dinner, patiently lining up and helping with the draws.

Though there were some small hiccups, our team pulled together to keep everyone entertained with snacks, drinks, and music, thanks to Emily T.'s extensive knowledge of the building's inner workings. Participants shared their positive experiences, with many looking forward to the dinner after having such a great time the previous year.

People especially enjoyed watching the kids perform in their regalia and sing in the language. Overall, the event was well-organized, inclusive, and joyous. It was heartwarming to see the strengths and gifts each team member brought, making it a truly special night." - Barbara Huston

"It was a Christmas dinner held at the civic center, open to community members who signed up for the event. There were door prizes for all ages and a performance by a powwow drum group called Bad Eagle, along with powwow dancers from around the community.

I would personally like to see traditional hand drummers from our communities be part of the event. While we had traditional music with the powwow drum group, I believe it would be nice to have our community drummers come out and sing some of our traditional songs from around Merritt." - Ethan Sheena-Patrick



Corrina Manuel, Acting Culture & Language Manager/Elder's Coordinator



Barbara Huston, Culture Coordinator



Ethan Sheena-Patrick, Culture Coordinator



Shannon Boyce, Culture Coordinator

FEEL THE BEAT - CHRISTMAS DINNER



FEEL THE BEAT - CHRISTMAS DINNER



CULTURE & LANGUAGE TEAM UPDATES - DECEMBER 2024



Collaborating in this way opens up more opportunities for discovery, growth, spirituality, and exploring identity through therapeutic creation, art, culture, and collective healing. It elevates participants to higher frequencies of energy, self-actualization, reflection, and a deeper sense of self. This collective healing and growth strengthen our connections to community, family, and the world.

Youth are the portal to the future and an essential part of our community. Evening events like this are impactful and important, aiding in prevention and fostering a sense of togetherness.

Nov 7th Feel the Beat Youth Night

The Culture and Language team hosted an incredible Feel the Beat event at the KLC gymnasium, where youth and families came together to make medicine pouches with sage and beading. It was amazing to see the creativity and craftsmanship on display. Youth workers were present, working alongside the participants, building relationships and community connections. The collaborative atmosphere was impactful, and it was heartwarming to see the youth sharing their creations with their parents, and in some cases, gifting them. This experience was empowering, inspiring many youth to continue creating beaded art long after the event.

The evening was not just about creating art; it was about learning together, building skills, and understanding knowledge collectively. This process solidified trust and reciprocity, decolonizing the practice of therapeutic intervention.

Unlike traditional Western ideologies that position practitioners as the sole teachers, this event demonstrated vulnerability and mutual learning. Trying something new together and offering helping hands fostered trust and respect, enhancing the healing journey.



Nov 26 Staff Orientation

During our staff orientation on November 26th, we made commitment sticks as part of the cultural component for the week. The event was filled with incredible art, sharing, and witnessing. Paula Collet, Ethan Sheena-Patrick, Shannon Boyce, Vicki Geier, and Larissa Law created beautiful art and commitment sticks. It was an amazing day of learning and sharing with the Elders, and it was a beautiful experience to witness what was created.



Paula Moyes, Traditional Counsellor



CULTURE & LANGUAGE TEAM UPDATES - DECEMBER 2024

Nov 6th: Making Holistic Medicine Tea, Salves, and Throat Spray with Barb Huston

On November 6th, we hosted a workshop with Barb Huston, where participants learned to make holistic medicine tea, salves, and throat spray using locally harvested plants. The medicine tea was crafted for the cold and flu season, while the Cotton Bud and Devils Club Salves were made for cuts, burns, and pain. We also created a sore throat spray with Devils Club and Ribena, and a hand cream with Horse Tail, Arnica, Stinging Nettle, and Shea Butter, which is excellent for arthritis pain and inflammation.

Barb shared incredible knowledge about when and where to harvest local plants, how to prepare and store them, and the benefits of each plant used. Participants learned how to utilize the medicinal properties and nutrients of these plants, as well as how to extract and strain the medicine for use. This knowledge will be invaluable for sharing with family and friends, harvesting together next season, and making medicine and salves as a community. It connects youth and families to culture, the land, and each other through holistic healing.



The key benefits of attending our program include fostering connections and relationships within the community, gaining sacred wisdom and traditions from elders, and healing through culture and family. Participants celebrate identity, collective consciousness, and spirit through creation, expansion, joy, learning, and uplifting experiences.

Attending Feel the Beat and learning about sacred plant medicine, including how to harvest and create it for personal healing journeys and identity, is both empowering and impactful. Being part of a community where everyone can learn, grow, and create together opens new pathways for healing, unity, and strengthening bonds through culture. This process benefits both individual identity and collective healing, helping to solidify the wisdom passed down to future generations and preserve culture. Passing on sacred traditions, oral teachings, stories, ceremonies, and inherent wisdom is a strong measure of success for community and family healing. It creates opportunities for individuals to embody their highest and fullest potential, connecting deeply with Mother Earth, spirit, and each other.



Paula Moyes, Traditional Counsellor

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ᐃᑦᓂᓂᓂᓂ & Grizzly Bear Story

by tułmatétk^{wu} (Ethel Isaac)



qalmin te?e sqayx^w he sk^wests ek^{wu} ᐃᑦᓂᓂᓂᓂ. cut ek^{wu} te?e he ᐃᑦᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂ, x^{wuy} ek^{wu} nes čex^{wuy}mx^w wətu?e we muymuyx, x^{wuy} ws cewm te tmíx^w eł e sulus, sulus ek^{wu} xe?e. x^{wit}?it ek^{wu} x?e ne?e he syep te?e he muymuyx ek^{wu} meł xe?e ne?e ks pepyesuts he qalmin. ?aks cutes x^{wuy} he tmíx^ws ek^{wu}, ?es cuk^ws cutes he tmíx^ws, łiy^wmkes, weytes, pepyesut xe?e cíy^e.

There was an old man named ᐃᑦᓂᓂᓂᓂ. He was clearing land what is now Shulus. There used to be a lot of trees where it is now cleared. He was there by himself clearing the land at Shulus. He cut down the trees and burned it. He did this all by himself.

Ohhh!cuns ek^w he sm?ems, "x^{wuy} kn nex łiy^wmxn, x^{wuy} kn nex cewm ?uyrnx^w, te?ə x^{wuy} knx x^{wist} te nuypikn. x^{wuy} cewxicmx^w tk nsłeqye." ?es cuts ek^{wu} ł sm?ems, "Ohh! humeł" cuxic ek^{wu} te słiqy^es. kemeł q^wnox^w ek^{wu} ek^{wu} xe?e he smułec te mařxetn. Tete?e ks cuns ł snuké?s, s^wnox^w te mařxetn, tete?e s^{wuy} ks cuxicn tk słeqye. e ek^w xe?e he smułec kəkze?stes ek^{wu} xe?e he sux^wsux^w ek^{wu} he ek^{wu} meł ne?e es cuxic ?ex cuxitm k słeqy^es ek^{wu} ks k^wuk^wx^wtiyxs ?es nes čax?uým^w ...

Ohhh! before he went, he told his wife that he was going to cut down some trees where he was clearing land. He as not going to leave until past lunch and that she should fix him something to eat. His wife said "Okay!". She fixed his lunch and in the meantime, she was menstruating. She never told her husband this and continued fixing her husbands lunch. The woman did not believe that the Grizzly Bear would know this and continued making lunch and he left to clear land ...

?es ek^{wu} ne?e cewmmm, ?es kicnəpetem te swx^wsux^w. telix ek^{wu} ne sč^wuts, ?es cuns ł swx^wsux^w, " ?ex k^w te?e knem, łu? ?ex k^w ne?e ?es telix. čiy kn te u?i, łu?sqeyx^w k^w, ?eł łu?sqeyx^w kn ncewe?. ?ex kn ne?e čeq^wusm k cewm. kemeł tete?e x^{wuy} ks kescmx^w!, knem k^w łu? ?ex ne?e ?es telix, knem łu?." ?ex k^w ne?e yełlime ek^{wu} he sux^wsux^w, qalim ek^{wu}, k^wens ek^{wu} xa?tes ek^{wu} he keykiyxs. x^{wuy} ek^{wu} k^wens he qelmin, qalepqs ek^{wu}, x^{wuy} he he qelmin, ?es cuk^w k^wixs ek^{wu}! Ohhh! tete?e ...

He was working away and all of a sudden Grizzly Bear was standing right beside him. The Old Man asked him, "Why are you standing there? I am just like you! we are both the same. I am busy fixing my land, leave me alone! Why are you standing there?" Grizzly Bear was growling at the Old Man, biting, making a grab for his hand, made a grab for his head and the Old Man pulled away ... Ohh! No!

he ek^{wu} xwuy k^wens he swelminks eł k^wens ł swelminks hes łuq^wepkes te swelminks, ?es te?ekeks ek^{wu} ne syep. he ek^{wu} x^{wuy}ce? ks pentc ?es k^wens ł k^wuk^w se?his łu? xeyłxtem te?e ł se?hise, le?ekeks ek^{wu} ne muymuyx, sč^wuts łu? ne?e te swelminks. he ek^{wu}s ks telixs ł qelmin ?es cuns ł səx^wxúx^w, "knem łu? te?e xeylcemx^w we?tex^w ne?e x^{wuy} he? swehem, we?stex^w ne?e x^{wuy} he? sk^wənam?ite, kemeł k^wexcemx^w ns sk^wenami?t, ?es kewxxcmx^w wułu?e! x^{wuy} puyscemx^w!, te? x^{wuy} ks kescemx^w! čiy kn te u?lí, ?ex kn te?e cewm!"

He went to get his gun and it got tangled in the tree! Then he went for his knife and the same thing happened and it got tangled in the bush that was right beside his gun! The Old Man stood up and talked to the sux^wsux^w, "Why are you doing this to me? You have all your belongings with you! You take my belongings and you put it way over there! You are going to beat me up! Leave me alone! I am just like you! I am working!"





he ekwu mef ne?e ?es kitixs he suxwsuxw hes kwens he qelmín, ?es λuqes ?es cukwiyxw ekwu, es knwextem he qwomqns, ?es teleps ekwu he qwomqins, kmime? ekwu nā?e ne sqwamustns, es texwoxwus ekwu k sqaqqins ekwu ks kwupes xe?e tes t skapqns he ekwu ?ye? es danć ekwu. ?es ne?e ?u? knweñs t swełminks es qeyes t suxwsuxw ne qwomqins, es qamts. mus nks ?es qiyēs ?if cutut ws t suxwsuxw...

Grizzly came near the Old Man and got him in a headlock. The Old Man pulled away and Grizzly ripped his scalp until it was just hanging. Grizzly started to dance! Somehow the Old Man got his gun and shot toward Grizzly's head and nicked him [Grizzly let the Old Man go]. The Old Man shot at Grizzly four times before he fell down.

ekw mef ne?e cuns ekwu t suxwsuxw, "humef, kném λu? ?ex kw ne?e ?es λiy?ix, es cutiyxkw, telixe, mice?qe ?ek ke?s telex xwuý kt seysi?!" ekwu te?e ks qwætciqs he suxwsuxw. nweñ nke zoq, mus es qamć ekwu. ?ex ekwu ne?e es qalixeñ ekwu qalixeñs ekwu xe?e ekwu xe?e. tete?e qwætciqs ekwu suxwsuxw, nweñ nem xe?e ne? zoq λeñ. ekwu es qatciqs ekwu, es cuts " ?exwe mef ne? ?es cutxe! ?ex kw nke te?e zoqweće?me!"

The Old Man told səxwsuxw, "Okay! how come you are laying there? Stand up! Sit up! Stand up and we will play together!" səxwsuxw never moved, he was already dead as he got shot four times. The Old Man jumped around him, səxwsuxw never moved, he was dead. The Old Man got ready to leave and told səxwsuxw "Lay there then! you are just paying dead!"

Té te?e kwens λu? nweñ ekwu te?e zoqw he səxwsuxw e ekwu es qwetcix t qelmín, ce?ew ekwu he skλusc, tek m he xwe?pits! kices he sm?ems, ekwu kwukw ks syip he sm?ems ..

The Old Man kept looking at səxwsuxw to make sure he was dead. The Old Man left. He had blood all over his face and all over his clothes. He got home to his wife and startled her.

?es syip he sm?ems cuts "Ohhh! tiwi?! xeñi kw nukw!" he ekwu kuk ks cuns he sm?ems, "cus ks kitiximcmxw u?eye! ?es yo?texw nke le? sqwnox! kwen te mef he xeym ?eycu! λu? ?ex kn zoqwwi?x!" wewix ekwu ?ey? ne?e he smulex ekwu. cuntem ekwu te sm?ems, "qweqent, qwenekstemcín, ?ex we? xe?e kekze?stene xe?e tk ?eszéytn!: knemus nke t qelmín ?ex nke ne?e λu? e laxt he qwomqns. cukw xe?e ns qwiyncut. cukw.

His startled wife said "Ohhh my! You are hurt!" He told his wife "Don't you come near me! You tried to hide that you were menstruating this is what happens! I am just about dead!" The woman cried and his wife told him, "Poor you! I feel so sorry for you! I did not believe that this would happen to you." Whatever happened to the Old Man, his head must of healed. I have finished my talk. End



This story and artwork is borrowed from the First Voices website. View & listen by clicking the following link or scanning the QR code:
<https://www.firstvoices.com/nlekepmxcin/stories/fd53a35a-dbe5-4437-a8b6-4dd79a563974>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Tracey Aljam
- Laura Suchell

NOTES

- The Elders' teachings conclude that young girls and women should not go to the mountains when they are on their time. Also
- that they should not prepare meals for their men folk as Bears can smell the blood and be bothered if the men are out hunting or doing other activities.





COMMUNITY TEAM UPDATES - DECEMBER 2024

The Upper Nicola Christmas party took place on December 8, 2024. Willa contributed by providing snack trays and gingerbread house supplies, as well as managing a station at the event. Aly and Natasha from the Family Wellness & Prevention team also attended to assist at the gingerbread station. A few surprise guests showed up to hand out gifts to all of the families.



Willa Ermineskin, Community Prevention Worker

The Winter Solstice Powwow held at Merritt Civic Centre was a remarkable cultural event bringing together approximately 80-100 participants throughout the weekend of December 20-22, 2024, to celebrate the Winter Solstice. Marking a time of renewal, reflection and celebration of the return of the light. Highlighting the traditions within the Nicola Valley and surrounding communities through vibrant dancers, powerful hand drumming, vendors and community members. The event provided an essential space for celebrating community ties, educating the wider public, and the celebration of the season.

SCFSS was able to support the event by contributing in-kind support for use of the Civic Centre Kitchen and ensuring hotel accommodation was booked to host the powwow committee including drummers and MC's for the two nights of the event.



Stephanie Tourand, Community Planner

In December, the Community Team, Family Team and Child Wellness Team came together to support LNIB's Christmas Hampers. They worked collaboratively to brainstorm personalized gifts for each child and youth. Additionally, they assisted with the delivery of hampers, ensuring that each family received multiple gift cards and that every member was given a special, individualized gift.



Jalissa Weymouth, Community Prevention Worker





COMMUNITY TEAM UPDATES - DECEMBER 2024



The intention of the team was to support the grieving families in our communities. The medicine will aid them in their healing journey. Elder Amelia shared the protocols for harvesting juniper and its uses. We aimed to collect enough medicine for two grieving families to bathe in, helping them through their grieving process and healing journey.

We were also taught the protocols of a talking stick, and a couple of us made sticks to be used in different group settings. Additionally, we brought back used medicine to the land and learned how to follow the protocols. We placed tobacco down, surrounded the trees with the medicine, and covered it. Elders Amelia and Cathy led an opening and closing prayer while we were on the land.

On Tuesday, December 11, 2024, the culture team and community team went out on the land to harvest juniper. Elders Amelia and Cathy taught us the teachings behind the medicine and its many beneficial uses. Afterwards, we processed the juniper, and the entire office was filled with its healing scent.

The goal was to gather enough juniper to share with grieving families in the Valley. Amelia and Cathy explained that juniper is good medicine for those grieving the loss of a loved one. It can be boiled on a stovetop in a pot of water and used for bathing.

"It was a beautiful morning to be out on the land. Being out in nature is so healing," said Paula Moyes, SCFSS traditional counsellor.

Please practice safe and sustainable harvesting techniques. Avoid over-harvesting and always give an offering. Ensure you are in a good mental and emotional state when harvesting. Connect with an elder or knowledge keeper to learn more about safe harvesting methods, preparation, and use of these medicines. Always consult with your medical provider to confirm that any regular medications you take will not negatively interact with natural medicines.



Satara Twan, Community Prevention Worker



COMMUNITY PLANNING UPDATES

As the winter season begins, there is an increased focus on planning as we slow down and prepare for the new fiscal year. During the fall season, the planning work was greatly focused on education. During late summer/early fall we were able to facilitate 8 information sessions on the Agreement in Principle on FNCFS Long Term Reform's Post-Majority Support Services to both our internal teams and to community staff to ensure awareness of funding coming from legislative changes, and the programs SCFSS are planning for and developing as a result. The fall also included follow-up work planning with most of our teams to expand on the work done earlier in the fiscal year.

We have also been able to continue the planning work within our communities. In December, SCFSS was able to support Shackan with developing budgets for the current and upcoming fiscal years. This budget work also provides a framework for the work planning being done, and guides the support of our Community Prevention Workers in helping Shackan with implementing programs. We are beginning to schedule in budgeting, planning, and reporting meetings with our other community contacts to continue to support our communities in developing programming that meet community needs, and ensure healthy families throughout the valley.



Stephanie Tourand, Community Planner





FEBRUARY 2025



- Community Calendar -

CULTURE OF CARING



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26	27	28	29	30	31	1 NLX H - CULTRAL WELLNESS DAY @ASHCROFT HUB UNB - CAPTIXWL STORYTELLING 9 AM - 8 PM @NVIT
2	3 NIB - SOUND BATH 6PM NOOAITCH BAND HALL	4	5	6 SIB - RATTLE MAKING 10 AM-3 PM SHACKAN BAND HALL NIB - GIRLS GROUP MEET & GREET NOOAITCH BAND HALL	7 SIB - TROUT SPEAR 10 AM-3 PM SHACKAN BAND HALL	8 LNIB - YOUTH SOAPSTONE CARVING 9 AM - 5 PM @LNIB CULTURE CENTRE
9 LNIB - YOUTH SOAPSTONE CARVING 9 AM - 5 PM @LNIB CULTURE CENTRE	10 SCF - WOMEN'S GROUP 5-8PM @CIVIC CENTRE	11 SCF - FTB @SIB HALL 4-8 PM UNB - 12 SCREAMING BABIES 10 AM - 12 PM ON ZOOM	12	13	14 SCHSS - HARM REDUCTION EVENT 1-8:30 PM @CIVIC CENTRE	15 SCF - MEN'S GROUP CONFERENCE - 8AM - 6 PM @ CIVIC CENTRE
16 SCF - MEN'S GROUP CONFERENCE - 8AM - 6 PM @ CIVIC CENTRE SIB - FAMILY DAY TRIP TO KELOWNA (FAMILY TRIPS COVERED)	17 FAMILY DAY SCF OFFICES CLOSED SIB - FAMILY DAY TRIP TO KELOWNA (FAMILY TRIPS COVERED)	18 SCF - WOMEN'S GROUP 5-8PM @CIVIC CENTRE	19	20 SCF - FTB @NIB HALL 4-8 PM	21	22 SCF - RELATIONSHIP PROGRAM SENSE OF FAMILY - 9 AM - 9 PM @LNIB BAND SCHOOL
23 SCF - RELATIONSHIP PROGRAM SENSE OF FAMILY - 9 AM - 9 PM @LNIB BAND SCHOOL	24	25	26	27	28	1



Coldwater:

- Girls Group (9+) | Health Building | Monday | 3:30-4:45 PM
- Youth Gym Nights | Coldwater School | Tuesday | 6-7:30 PM
- Youth Drop-in | Coldwater Health Building | Thursday | Afterschool
- Men's Group | Coldwater Health Building | Bi-Weekly Wednesday | 6-8 PM
- Women's Group | Coldwater Health Building | Tuesday | 5:30-8 PM

LNIB:

- Soup Kitchen - Every Wednesday
- After School Recreation | Varies | Monday-Thursday *May change for Weekend Snowboarding | 2:30-4:45pm

Nooaitch:

- After School Drop In (ages 6+) | SCHSS Satellite Office (Across from Band Hall) | Varies | 3:45 - 5:30 PM | Parents please pick up from the SCHSS Satellite Office!
- Gym Night (ages 6+) | Nicola Canford School (pick up in Nooaitch from each child's home) | Every Wednesday | 6 - 7:30 PM
- Drum Nights | Nooaitch Band Hall | Tuesday | 5-7pm
- Girls Group | Nooaitch Band Hall | Thursday | 4-6 PM

*Check Sha-Noo Facebook group for December changes and Friday Skating times

Shackan:

- After School Drop In (ages 6+) | SCHSS Satellite Office (Across from Nooaitch Band Hall) | Varies | 3:45 - 5:30 PM (Parents please pick up from the SCHSS Satellite Office!)
- Gym Night (ages 6+) | Nicola Canford School | Every Wednesday! | 6 - 7:30 PM

UNB:

- Archery Night | Spahomin Hall | Tuesday | 6-8 PM
- Buzz's Bootcamp | Spahomin Hall | Thursday | 12-12:45 PM & 6-7 PM
- Girls Group (ages 11-16) | Kwu Stemtima Office | Monday | 4:30-6:30PM
- nsyilxcən skix'w's (songs) | Zoom | Monday | 12 & 6 PM

Legend:

- Event Name | Location | Day | Time



Building a Strong Sense of Self: A Journey of Tradition and Teamwork

Eleven couples recently gathered for a unique and enriching experience aimed at building a strong sense of self-identity through cultural Teachings. The event, which focused on the traditional skills of hide-making and moccasin crafting, provided participants with an opportunity to learn and grow both individually and collectively.

Learning and Collaboration: Throughout the event, couples were guided through the intricate steps of creating their own hides and crafting moccasins. This hands-on process emphasized the importance of working as individuals, as couples, and as a cohesive team. One of the key lessons was learning to ask for help when needed, fostering a supportive and collaborative environment.

The facilitators, who taught in their traditional way, incorporated their cultural teachings and guided the couples through each step. Witnessing the team step up to work together and be mentored by these knowledge keepers/facilitators was truly inspiring.

Ongoing Initiative: This event is part of an ongoing initiative aimed at building a strong sense of self-identity. The goal is to help participants connect with their cultural roots and develop a deeper understanding of themselves and their heritage.

Shared Wisdom: One of the valuable lessons learned during the event was that everyone starts at the same point, regardless of their previous experience. This inclusive approach allowed all participants to begin their journey together and progress at their own pace.

Participant Reflections: Participants shared their thoughts on the experience, with one noting, "It's not as hard as I thought it was going to be." Another participant expressed pride in their accomplishments, saying, "I'm proud of myself and I look forward to sharing this with my kids."

Program Benefits: The benefits of this program extend far beyond the event itself. The teachings can be shared widely, as demonstrated by one participant who supported their own community's hide sessions. This individual was proud of their ability to mentor others through the process, having developed new skills in observing and listening during the work.

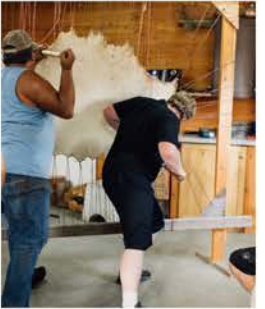
Elder Involvement: Elders played a significant role in the event, honoring the couples and bearing witness to their efforts. They recognized the importance of practicing medicine wheel teachings and working to overcome generational traumas.

Cultural Continuity: One couple, in particular, had been saving hides to start their home tanning practices after learning the teachings. This dedication to preserving and continuing traditional practices highlights the cultural significance of the event.

Overall, this initiative not only strengthened the participants' sense of self but also fostered a deeper connection to their cultural heritage, creating a ripple effect of knowledge and skills that can be passed down through generations.



*Allyson Sterling,
Relationship Navigator*







CAREGIVER TEAM UPDATES

Christmas gifts for our young relations

During the holiday season, our caregiver team coordinated gift bags for approximately 70 of our young relations. These bags included a variety of items such as hoodies/sweaters, pajamas, and stocking stuffers. It was heartwarming to see many staff members come together to contribute to this effort. Some baked cookies, while others helped pack the gift bags with various goodies. The collaboration and support from all teams were truly amazing, bringing many smiles to our young people and families.

In an effort to support local businesses, the caregiver team sourced local gifts. 378 Boardshop in Merritt, BC, designed the red sweaters, adding a special touch to the gift bags.

Additionally, cultural items handmade by our culture team and elders were included, enriching the gifts with meaningful connections to our heritage. Gifts were also distributed to our caregivers, ensuring they felt appreciated and supported.

This collective effort over the holiday season showcased the incredible spirit of our community, with everyone coming together to spread joy and support to our young relations and their families.



Gail Peterson, Acting Protection Social Worker





YOUTH TEAM UPDATES

Youth Prevention Christmas Food Boxes

The recent Youth Prevention Christmas Food Box Initiative, spearheaded by the Youth Transition Program Coordinator with the support of the Youth Team, successfully provided holiday meals to 30 families, benefiting a total of 38 prevention youth. The team diligently shopped, organized, and delivered these boxes, which included festive staples such as ham, potatoes, stuffing, gravy, pie, and vegetables, ensuring that each family could enjoy a

complete holiday dinner. In addition to the food, the boxes contained hygiene bags filled with essential items, mental health resources, and a thoughtful craft created by a local elder, emphasizing a holistic approach to support and care for the families during the holiday season. This is our second year making food boxes for our prevention youth, making it an ongoing initiative.



Shay Lee Jack, Youth Transition Program Coordinator





YOUTH TEAM UPDATES

Youth CLC Lunch & Learns

Scw'exmx Child and Family Services has implemented an engaging Lunch & Learn life skills program, which commenced on October 31, 2023. This ongoing initiative is designed to equip students with essential life skills and resources, fostering their personal growth and well-being.

To ensure participants received support and incentives during the holiday period, the Youth Transition Worker organized a pre-holiday event. Each participant benefited from the following:

- An incentive based on the students' weekly participation, calculated at \$20 per week, to support them through the holidays. Some students expressed how helpful this was, as it supplied their Christmas shopping and groceries for the two-week closure.
- 3-4 thoughtful gifts during a game of Indian Bingo.
- Essential wellness supplies.
- Hygiene products.
- Access to mental health handouts and crisis lines as valuable resources.

Throughout the program, participants enjoy a provided lunch while engaging in various life skills topics, hands-on experiences, and expert facilitation. This comprehensive approach aims to empower students with the tools and confidence they need to succeed.

If any local agencies or resources are interested in participating in the program by introducing themselves or hosting a life-skills topic, please do not hesitate to contact the Youth Transition Worker at Scw'exmx Child and Family Services. This collaborative effort will further enhance the program and provide students with a supportive network of local resources.

When the program first developed, there were 6-10 regular participants. We are now celebrating a total of 34 participants! What a huge milestone!



Shay Lee Jack, Youth Transition Program Coordinator





YOUTH TEAM UPDATES

New Youth Culinary Program in Partnership with NVIT

In December, the youth team launched an exciting new program for youth in partnership with NVIT. This course is led by Chef Kim, NVIT's Red Seal Culinary Instructor, who has graciously agreed to host a specialized meal prepping program for our youth. Chef Kim has a passion for working with young people and brings a unique perspective, having experienced firsthand what it's like to be an at-risk youth.

During our December sessions, eight youth participated and learned essential culinary skills, including knife safety, cutting techniques, food safety, and how to use professional kitchen equipment. The program covered a variety of recipes and meal preparations, such as bone broth, chili, banana bread, fresh biscuits, turkey

soup, and even a complete Christmas turkey dinner.

A major highlight of the program was prepping 150 Christmas meals for families and relations in need. This hands-on experience gave the youth a meaningful way to give back to the community while building valuable life skills.

The feedback from participants has been positive. Each week, the youth have been eager to return to the NVIT kitchen, excited to learn more. Not only are they gaining important culinary skills, but they're also getting a glimpse into what a university-level course can offer.

We're thrilled to see the impact this program is having and look forward to continuing to support our youth on their learning journeys!



Emilie Thurber, Youth Wellness Coordinator



NICOLA VALLEY

YOUTH

GATHERING



FOR YOUTH AGED 13-18



We warmly invite the youth of the Nicola Valley to our annual Youth Gathering, featuring on-the-land teachings from local elders and teams. The event will focus on building connections, celebrating culture, and sharing valuable lessons from the land.

Open to all of our 5 surrounding bands, 50 participant capacity so register soon!

**MEALS PROVIDED
DOOR PRIZES &
ENTERTAINMENT**



Scw'exmx
Child & Family

Questions email:
ShayLee.Jack@scwexmx.com
or call (250) 378-2771

MEN'S GROUP

WELLNESS CONFERENCE

February 15-16, 2025

 Civic Center (1950 Mamette Ave., Merritt, BC)



REGISTER FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A
COYOTE BROTHERHOOD SWEATER.



Click the link in the original post or scan the QR Code to register!

Saturday
Feb-15-2025

Sunday
Feb-16-2025

	Saturday Feb-15-2025	Sunday Feb-16-2025
8:00 AM	Doors Open	Doors Open
8:30 AM	Buffet Breakfast	Buffet Breakfast
9-11:30 AM	Wellness Workshops	Wellness Workshops
12-12:30 PM	Lunch, Dudes Club Presentation	Lunch
1-4 PM	Wellness Workshops	Wellness Workshops
4-4:30	Wellness Workshops	Closing Remarks
5-5:30 PM	Dinner	Doors Close
6:00 PM	Doors Close	

Workshops include:

- Talking Circle
- Soapstone Carving
- Copper Etching
- Flint Knapping
- Leather Crafting
- Drum making
- Ribbon shirt making
- Poetry
- Story Telling
- Massages
- Readings
- Games
- Brushing Off
- Haircuts

We have room for 100 participants so register early to secure your spot! Workshop sign ups will be at the door when you sign in. Wellness bags provided at the door, amazing door prizes to be won, good food and opportunities to build personal and professional growth.



INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SURVIVORS SOCIETY



DUDES Club



Upper Nicola

LOWER NICOLA INDIAN BAND



Keeping Your Child Safe Online

Overview

The internet can be a source of fun, learning, and friendship for children and teens. Many kids take classes or music lessons, play games, or connect with their friends online. But the digital world can also expose them to problems, such as cyberbullying and internet porn. It's important to know what your child is doing online. Here are some ideas for how to stay aware of your child's online activity.

- Monitor your child's use of the internet. This may mean checking multiple devices, including their computer, tablet, phone, or smart TV—any device that has an internet connection.
 - Look at the history to see what sites they've visited, and check the games and apps they're using.
 - Watch for content that may be violent, sexual, or not age-appropriate for your child. Talk to your child if you find any disturbing content on their device.
 - Be sure you are notified about any in-app purchases your child makes. If your child has a phone, register it and other devices on your own plan so you can see their purchases.
- Follow your child on social media.
- Some experts say that preteens should not be on social media. But for most teens, social media is how they interact with their friends. If your child is on social media:
 - Find out what sites your child uses, and "friend" or follow them. This helps you know what they're doing and seeing.
 - Check who else is following them. Explain to your child that you're not doing this to spy on them but to help them stay safe.

- Be alert for sites and apps with direct messaging and video chat.
- This is often how adults who prey on children engage with them. Discuss this risk with your child. Help your child understand the difference between real-life friends and people they know only online. Talk to your child if you see they've been chatting with anyone they don't know in real life.
- Don't simply rely on parental controls.
- Parental control apps can help you know what your child is doing on their devices. But kids can often figure out ways to get around these controls.
- Get your child to agree to a plan for their media use.
- Include what kinds of sites and apps they can use and when they can be on them. Also decide what will happen if your child doesn't follow the rules. Review and update your plan as your child matures. Teens will want and expect more privacy.
- Watch for signs of problems.
- Talk to your child if you notice changes in behaviour, such as being more secretive, withdrawn, angry, or anxious. These could be signs of online bullying or other problems your child needs help with. If you have concerns, talk to your child's doctor.



Resource shared from the healthlinkbc.ca website. Scan the QR code to check out other helpful info.





JANUARY IS ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS MONTH IN CANADA.

Brain-healthy tips to reduce your risk of dementia

This page lists evidence-based tips and strategies to help you lead a healthy, balanced lifestyle that reduces your risk of dementia.

Your abilities, health and interests should be taken into consideration when making brain-healthy choices. If you have questions, [speak to your doctor or healthcare provider](#), or [get in touch with your local Society](#) for some recommendations.

Why brain health is so important While there are some risk factors you cannot control for dementia, such as age and genetics, reducing the effects of risk factors that can be controlled is possible.

By following these tips and strategies, you're not only reducing your risk of dementia, you're also:

- Looking after your long-term brain health,
- Reducing your risk of other cognitive and chronic diseases, and
- Protecting your overall health

BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

People who exercise regularly are less likely to develop heart disease, stroke and diabetes – all risks associated with dementia.

Physical activity also pumps blood to the brain, which nourishes the cells with nutrients and oxygen. As well, regular exercise helps to reduce stress and improve your mood.

Being physically active can reduce these risk factors for dementia:

- Depression
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Lack of physical activity

Five tips for being physically active

1. Start where you can and set reasonable goals. If you feel you have little opportunity to exercise, start by adding a bit of physical activity into your daily routine. Choose a brisk walk or roll to the store rather than driving the car, or take the stairs instead of the escalator or elevator for one or two floors.

2. Think of it as "activity", not "exercise." Choose activities and sports that you enjoy, and physical activity won't seem like a chore or task to tick off.

3. Once you get going, aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity per week. Moderate activities could be walking a dog or going for a bicycle ride, while vigorous activities include swimming or going for a run. If you have reduced mobility, try activities that can help you maintain your balance and prevent falls, such as gentle yoga or tai chi.



Resource shared from the alzheimer.ca's website. Scan the QR code to read the full article!



4. Consider aerobic activities.

Aerobic activities, such as walking, swimming, hiking and dancing, can help maintain general fitness. Many experts recommend walking as one of the safest and most effective forms of aerobic exercise.

5. Plan out your physical activity with someone you know. That way, you are more likely to keep active while you also gain the brain-healthy benefits of social interaction.

BE SOCIALLY ACTIVE

Staying connected socially helps you stay connected mentally. Research shows that regularly interacting with others may help reduce your risk of developing dementia.

Having an active social life also can reduce your stress, brighten your mood and keep your relationships strong.

Being socially active can reduce these risk factors for dementia

- Depression
- Social isolation

Five tips for being socially active

1. Make the most of your daily opportunities to socialize. Chat with your taxi driver or store clerk; make conversation in the elevator.

2. Practice a random act of kindness. It could be as small as smiling at someone else passing by – paying your happiness forward will not only brighten someone else's day, but yours as well!

3. Find time to volunteer.

Whether it's participating in service clubs or joining a hobby group, you'll find that there are many healthy benefits to volunteering. It can build self-esteem and confidence, and it can expand your network of social support.

4. Combine social interaction with an activity.

It could be a physical activity like walking together or a fitness class, or it could be something like a book club or a play. Ask someone to try a brain-challenging game together. Enjoy yourself while you positively impact your brain health.

5. Maintain old friendships and make new ones.

Stay social through work, volunteer activities, travel, hobbies, family and friends. Be open to new experiences – accept invitations and extend a few of your own. Keep up your old and new friendships through talking on the phone, chatting online via email or social media, or even writing a letter.



Resource shared from the alzheimer.ca's website. Scan the QR code to read the full article!

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Scw'exmx Child and Family Services Society (SCFSS) is family-centered and guided by nte?képmx and syilx traditional knowledge and principles. SCFSS utilizes prevention and protection strategies with the collective goal to keep children with their families and communities. SCFSS recognizes historical challenges and is guided by traditional strength and wisdom to build family and community capacity in a monumental shift from protection to prevention.

As an Indigenous organization serving the nte?képmx and syilx communities, SCFSS prioritizes the hiring of nte?képmx and syilx community members. Following community member priority and pursuant to Section 41 of the BC Human Rights Code, preference may be given to qualified applicants of Indigenous ancestry.



Current Postings

- Check out our website for current opportunities.
- Elder recruitment dinners coming soon!

APPLY NOW

See our full postings and apply on our website at www.scwexmx.com
Submit your cover letter and resume on our website, you can also send inquiries to: jobs@scwexmx.com



LOCAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



EXPLORE YOUR FUTURE WITH CONTINUING STUDIES PROGRAMS

VIEW OUR LIST OF PROGRAMS




REGISTER NOW
for our ongoing programs.

Connect with an Academic Planner today!

bit.ly/NVIT-AFP

nvit.ca | info@nvit.ca | 1.877.682.3300



- Basic First Aid
- Intermediate First Aid
- Advance First Aid
- Emergency First Aid
- Standard First Aid
- Transportation Endorsement
- Emergency Medical Responder
- Mental Health First Aid
- FOODSAFE Level 1
- WHMIS 2015
- CSTS-09
- Traffic Control
- OSHA Fall Protection
- OSHA Elevated Work Platform
- Confined Space Entry & Monitor
- Confined Space Rescue
- H2S Alive
- Transportation of Dangerous Goods
- Global Ground Disturbance
- Pipeline Construction Safety Training
- Forklift Training
- Intro to Grid Powered Solar PV
- Workforce Skills Training
- Cooking Class
- Gladue Writing Training
- Forestry Worker Essentials

NEW COURSE DATES RELEASED!




Basic First Aid
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM | Merritt Campus
Wednesday, December 11, 2024
Wednesday, January 22, 2025
Friday, February 21, 2025
Wednesday, March 19, 2025
Friday, April 25, 2025

Advanced First Aid
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM | Merritt Campus
March 3 - 14, 2025
(2 weeks, Monday - Friday)
Registration Deadline:
February 17th, 2025

REGISTER TODAY!
FOR MORE INFORMATION,
VISIT OUR WEBSITE
nvit.ca/continuingstudies.htm



New dates for Basic First Aid and Advanced First Aid Courses are here! Equip yourself with life-saving skills and be ready to respond confidently. Register today and make a difference!

Learn more about our First Aid courses:
nvit.ca/continuingstudies.htm

Download the registration form:
https://www.nvit.ca/.../cost_registration_form_fillable...



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

FIRST CITIZENS FUND

The First Citizens Fund is a perpetual fund created in 1969. It supports cultural, educational and economic development programs for Indigenous people, communities and businesses in B.C., and it helps fund Indigenous organizations offering services in these areas.

Supported Initiatives

The First Citizens Fund is part of the Province's commitment to improve the quality of life for Indigenous people. It supports

- Indigenous small business development
- First Nations language preservation
- Friendship Centres
- Elders and students
-

Programs & Services

All programs, services and initiatives are managed and delivered in partnership with British Columbian Indigenous organizations.

- Business Loan Program - All Nations Trust Company
- Business Advisory Centres - Kootenay Aboriginal Business Advocates Society, and Prince George Aboriginal Business Development Centre
- Friendship Centres Program - BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres
- Student Bursary Program - BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres
- Elders Transportation Program - BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres
- First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Program - First Peoples' Culture Council

Governance

The First Citizens Fund is administered by the Province.

Financing

The First Citizens Fund began as a perpetual fund, created in 1969.

There are two components to the fund:

- Principal - held as capital interest earning
- Surplus - providing funding to support programs through interest earned on the principal established through Section 4 of the Special Accounts Appropriation and Control Act. Interest earned from fund investments supports programs and services for Indigenous people.

CONTACT INFORMATION

CALL OR EMAIL IF YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS.

Office

1-800-880-1022

Email

IRRInfo@gov.bc.ca



LEARN MORE



SCW'EXMX CHILD & FAMILY NEWSLETTER SIGN UP!



Would you like to receive newsletters and updates from Scw'exmx Child & Family? Scan or click the QR code below to sign up for our newsletter today!



www.scwexmx.com / facebook.com/scwexmxchildandfamily / Instagram.com/scwexmxchildandfamily

Scw'exmx Child & Family

Child Wellness Concern After Hours? Please Call:

1-800-663-9122

Children's Help Line for Children and Youth

Do you need help?

If you don't feel safe or you have a concern, you can call this number 24-hours a day for free from any phone.

310-1234

Scw'exmx Child & Family Services Society

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Downtown Address: 1988 Quilchena Ave., Merritt, BC V1K 1B8

Mailing Address: 1750 Lindley Creek Rd, Merritt, BC V1K 0A3

Prevention Hub Address: 2475 Merritt Ave, Merritt, BC V1K 1B8

Quilchena Address: Unit #2 - 3512 Highway 5A, Quilchena, BC V0E 2R0

Telephone: 250-378-2771

www.scwexmx.com

Facebook Page: facebook.com/scwexmxchildandfamily



Healthy Children



Healthy Communities



Healthy Families