

**DZE L K'ANT FRIENDSHIP CENTRE**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2018 / 2019**



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# DZE L K'ANT FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

# ABOUT US

The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre is a community-based organization founded in 1974 by a devoted group of Aboriginal people in Smithers, British Columbia. We are one of twenty-five Friendship Centres located across the province committed to building a stronger Aboriginal community. We were initially founded as the "Smithers Indian Friendship Centre". As we began to grow into our role of providing programs and services to the community, our name was changed to reflect the local Wet'suwet'en culture. The name "Dze L K'ant" was chosen. It means "Foot of the Mountain" and represents where the Centre is now located, at the base of Hudson Bay Mountain.

The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society is an organization guided by Aboriginal values that provides activities, services and information. It focuses on developing skills and strengths while incorporating spiritual, emotional, mental and physical well-being to help people become self-sufficient and self-reliant. The Friendship Centre is dedicated to promoting awareness among all people.



# WHAT WE DO

The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society currently hosts the following programs between our three locations in Smithers, Houston and Dease Lake:

## SMITHERS

- Community Action Plan for Children
- Missing & Murdered Women & Girls Support Worker
- Legal Advocacy
- HIV/AIDS Awareness worker
- Alcohol & Drug Counsellor
- Aboriginal Patient Liaison Worker
- 5 X 5 Employment Program
- Mental Health Outreach Worker
- Youth Worker
- Housing Advisor & Economic Development

## HOUSTON

- Pregnancy Outreach Worker
- Early Childhood Educator
- Family Support Worker
- After School Support Worker
- Connections Family Support
- Youth Connections
- Early Resource Worker Years
- AECD, Coordinator

## DEASE LAKE

- Pregnancy Outreach Program



# OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre is proud of its organizational structure, and that for over 40 years, this governance model has made our Centre accountable and transparent to its membership and provincial and federal partners.

## Andrew Tom President

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With over 15 years of frontline, relevant experience in the social sector, and as a member of the Wet'suwet'en Nation, inspirational First Nations leader Andrew Tom became a member of the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre's Executive Board in 2002 and is presently serving his first term as President.

Through many years of ongoing education, Andrew's incredible competency and sound knowledge of Indigenous culture and traditions are equivalent to his sincere passion and drive. Andrew is known for his contributions to the social sector: developing and growing new programs, social and economic developments, and bringing resources to both Indigenous people and the wider community he serves.

Andrew is actively involved with and has a strong understanding of the following: Housing Issues & Homelessness; Aboriginal Justice; Poverty & Poverty Reduction; Referral Processes; Family Violence and High/ Low-Risk Youth Issues; HIV/A.I.D.S. Awareness & Prevention; Addictions, Crime Prevention & Support; Government Resources & Structure; Community Wellness, and Child Welfare.

Andrew sits on the following non-profit agency boards: Wilp Si'satxw House of Purification Society; Native Court worker & Counselling Association; Office of the Wet'suwet'en Society.

## Susie Hooper Secretary/Treasurer

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Since 2013, Susan (Susie) Hooper has acted as Secretary/Treasurer of the Board for the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre, bringing an extensive history as a Committee and Board member within the non-profit sector, with expertise in Indigenous healthcare and education.

As a member of the Métis Nation, Susie has advocated for, and worked with, the Métis Nation of British Columbia since 2008, presently serving her second terms as its Northwest Regional Director and Minister of Health (since 2016) and MNBC's Executive Secretary (since 2012); Minister of Employment & Training (since 2017). In years prior: Minister of Education (2012-16), Minister of Children & Families (2016-17), and Vice-Chair of Métis Women of BC (2008-12). Susie has developed a wide range of health initiatives and programs for the Métis community.

Presently employed as a Human Service and Aboriginal Support Worker for School District 54 (Bulkley Valley), Susie works in an alternative education setting with high-risk adolescents. In this role, she supports students in their development; and helps build a sense of belonging & safety, success and positive self-esteem while recognizing and honouring the cultural and linguistic heritage of Indigenous students. She has received five awards within Education and was awarded as Volunteer of the Year, 2016 by the Town of Smithers.

## **Guy Brown**

### **Director**

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As a volunteer Board Member for the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre and member of the Gitxsan nation, Guy Brown works collaboratively with fellow board members to ensure proper strategic planning and stewardship of the Society.

With 10+ years of activity within the non-profit sector, as well as the ability to clearly articulate ideas, options, and rationales, Guy advocates for improving the lives of Indigenous people and community members and proactively contributes to making the best, long-term decisions which will positively grow and develop a healthy, sustainable community.

Combined with his contributions and insight given to the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre, Guy also dedicates his time as a volunteer with DUDES Club through Positive Living North. The objective of DUDES Clubs is building solidarity and brotherhood among vulnerable Indigenous men; to promote health through education, dialogue, and health screening clinics; to help men regain a sense of pride and fulfilment in their lives.

## **Kendall Strong**

### **Director**

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Since 2016, Ken Strong has served the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre as a volunteer Board Member. A member of the Métis Nation, Ken's enthusiasm, dedicated advocacy, critical thinking, understanding of Indigenous issues, and decision making have contributed to the Board's collaborative, insightful strategic planning as well as stewardship of the Society.

Ken is sincerely passionate about developing culturally relevant social and economic programs and services for Indigenous people. Ken has brought volunteer experience to the Board through his previous efforts as a Youth Council member of Mile Zero. There, he and others contributed to developing a self-governing, sustainable Nation in recognition of inherent rights of Métis citizens; also, developing opportunities for the local Métis community by providing culturally relevant social and economic programs and services.

## Stanley Namox

### Vice President

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Stanley Namox joined the Board of Directors in November 2018 and brings with him a valuable perspective and a wealth of experience. Stanley has over 30 years of public service experience, 20 years of which was spent as a Health Care worker in the Bulkley Valley. His considerate and respectful approach to care for the vulnerable, and his passion for working toward solutions to social challenges, has made him an extremely valuable asset to the many organizations he has been involved with; including the Brain Injury Society, Smithers Community Services, Northern Health and The Salvation Army.

Raised to always respect human dignity and choose sensitivity and kindness, for as long as he can remember, Stanley has been helping others. Stanley's community service roles include providing training for young healthcare workers in the importance of culturally sensitive approaches to caring for indigenous elders. As a fluent speaker of the Carrier language, Stanley has much experience as a translator for elders within the medical system as well as providing culturally safe supports and encouragement for people with disabilities to become self-sufficient despite their daily challenges.

Stanley is passionate about holistic community health and for ensuring those who are most vulnerable in the community; the elderly, homeless, and those with disabilities, are respected and nurtured. Stanley currently sits on the Board of Directors of the Office of the Wet'suwet'en and Positive Living North and is known in the community as an active advocate for Indigenous culture and language, always open to teaching and sharing his cultural wisdom and language.

## Jillian Dennis

### Youth Director

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Jillian has been enthusiastically welcomed by the board of directors at the Friendship Centre as our newest Youth Director. She brings with her a valuable and unique perspective as a young Indigenous woman who was born and raised in Smithers, BC. Jillian recently graduated from Smithers Secondary School and is passionate about programs for youth. She is particularly excited by the opportunity to gain mentorship from experienced board members and learn more about how the Friendship Centre is run.

Jillian is continually seeking opportunities to be involved in activities and initiatives which are focussed on improving the lives of youth in our community. Interested in art, writing and sports, and always keen to get involved in helping and caring for others, Jillian brings her quiet confidence and genuine desire to make a difference to the Friendship Centre's Board

# ABOUT OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ANNETTE MORGAN



A proud member of the Gitxsan Nation, Annette has dedicated her career of 25+ years to First Nations people and communities—in northern BC as well as provincially and nationally. She has served as elected President of the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, 2011 thru 2018. Annette works with various levels of government, First Nations, and community stakeholders, garnering new opportunities, ongoing partnerships, negotiating and collaborating for economic development, as well as financial and budgetary feasibility.

Through her expert analysis, strategic organizational direction, mediating and negotiating skills, Annette is at the forefront of financial growth and program implementation; fundraising for support and expansion of existing and future programs. With extensive knowledge of the community, region, government, and people she serves, Annette is well-informed on social issues facing First Nations people and communities—influencing and affecting homelessness, poverty, affordable housing. She provides the housing team with essential leadership required to deliver tangible results to ongoing housing problems, working together with the team towards attaining funding for, and providing affordable, safe affordable housing and related services.

Outside of the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre, but always at the heart of service to others, Annette presently sits on the Independent Aboriginal Housing Management Board of Directors, and was recently re-elected as a Municipal Councillor for the Village of Telkwa, where she's served since 2014.



# A MESSAGE FROM ANNETTE:



It is a pleasure to present the 2019 Annual Report of the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society to our members and community volunteers.

Our Annual Report demonstrates the fulfillment of the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre's mandate as contract manager for the many local, provincial regional, federal governments as well as the many foundations and community donors.

Some of the achievements highlighted in this report include:

- Success in various funding applications
- advocacy on behalf of families in regard to Safety of Children and Families
- Creation of a Housing Department

As you will see by reviewing the full report, The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre is a strong, fun and caring organization and committed to providing long term services to our communities.

We look forward to another year of hard work and dedication to serve you with opportunities of growth, development and more partnerships.

Our priorities for this year are housing, supporting reduce of waste, the cultural centre here and employment services.

Thank you for supporting our organization, by being here and being a part of a dynamic cultural support.

Nox Stakine  
(Mother of the Stakine)

Annette Morgan  
Executive Director, Gitxsan Nation  
Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society





# SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE DZE L K'ANT FRIENDSHIP CENTRE IN SMITHERS HOUSTON + DEASE LAKE



## POSITIONS AT THE DZE L K'ANT FRIENDSHIP CENTRE IN SMITHERS

At our Smithers office, located at 1188 Main St, Smithers BC we offer a range of high quality, culturally safe programs with a focus on family health and wellness for Indigenous community members.

### Administrative staff:

Annette Morgan: Executive Director,  
Accounts Supervisor: Michelle Asato  
Accounts Payable: Renee Barnard

### Smithers Program staff:

Program Director: Genevieve Poirier  
Community Action Plan for Children: Deb Lear  
Missing & Murdered Women & Girls Support Worker: Roxanne Quock  
Legal Advocacy: Angela Sketchley  
HIV/AIDS: Patricia Kolida  
Alcohol & Drug Counsellor: Mel Bazil  
Aboriginal Patient Liaison Worker: Ally Dick  
Northern Corridor Program 5 X 5 Job Placement: Luba Kasum  
Mental Health Outreach Worker: Sonia Palmer  
Youth Worker: Nika Palmer  
Housing Advisor and Economic Development: Lydia Howard



## POSITIONS AT THE DZE L K' ANT FRIENDSHIP CENTRE IN HOUSTON

At our Houston office, located at 3383 11<sup>th</sup> St, Houston, BC we offer a range of high quality, culturally safe programs with a focus on family health and wellness for Indigenous community members.

The Houston Friendship Centre operates as a satellite hub with administration located at the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre in Smithers.

### **Houston Program staff:**

Pregnancy Outreach Worker: Cheryl Gatzke  
Early Childhood Educator: Leslie Heppner  
Family Support Worker: Cheylene Jubb  
After School Support Worker: Emma Bowen  
Connections Family Support: Carrie Wiebe  
Youth Connections: Daniel Klein  
Early Resource Worker Years: Jackie Maurer  
AECD, Coordinator: Position Currently Vacant



## POSITIONS AT THE DZE L K' ANT FRIENDSHIP CENTRE IN DEASE LAKE

The Dease lake program is currently a program designed specifically for supporting families in the rural and remote community. Dease Lake is a satellite hub and is managed by administrative staff in Smithers.

### **Dease Lake Pregnancy Outreach Program staff:**

Amanda Lefort

**DEDICATED TO  
CULTURALLY  
SAFE SUPPORT**



# SMITHERS PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

**Community Action Program for Children (CAPC)** The Community Action Program for Children is a federal initiative that provides a supportive environment for moms, dads, grandparents and other caregivers and their children aged to 0 to 6.

- Pregnancy Outreach Program
- Quality Early Childhood Programs
- Family Support, Education & Resources
- Support for pregnant women
- Formal and informal system improvement
- Opportunities to build community capacity

**Legal Advocacy:** The program is a Poverty Law program. Poverty Law is the body of laws that concerns the rights of low-income individuals and families to access government benefits. The intake criteria is very specific. A Legal Support Worker can help with applications, reconsiderations and appeals for:

- Tenancy- Issues with landlords such as unfair evictions, repairs, quiet enjoyment, guests, etc. support with Residential Tenancy Branch processes and hearings
- Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction Benefits - Welfare, hardship, persons with Persistent and Multiple Barriers benefits, Persons with Disabilities benefits, crisis supplements, general supplements, investigations and reviews
- Federal Benefits - Canada Pension Plan - Disability, Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, Child Tax benefits, Eligibility Reviews
- Work Related Issues - Employment Standards, Employment Insurance, WorkSafe BC benefits
- Debt & Consumer Issues - BC Hydro crisis customer fund, debt counselling referrals, stopping creditors from calling, information and responding to creditors
- Human Rights - BC Human rights complaints process and submissions

## **Missing & Murdered Women & Girls Support Program (MMIWG):**

The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Program offers trauma-informed counselling and emotional, cultural and practical support to family members of missing and murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in their own Community.



The program recognizes and offers a whole family centered approach to families with complex needs and keeps focus on safety, self-care, mental health and physical well-being.

This program is designed to support the families of women and girls who have gone missing or have been murdered in our community in the following ways:

- Provide information and support to families going through the justice process
- Provide trauma informed counselling to victims of MMIWG and their families
- Facilitate workshops that focus on topics identified by participants as useful in their healing journeys (Grief and loss; safety; self-care; communication; storytelling; addictions and loss; grief and the workplace; children and loss)
- Raise awareness by hosting events and activities such as group sessions and MMIWG walks along "Highway of Tears."

**HIV/AIDS Awareness Program:** The HIV/AIDS Awareness program provides education and awareness on HIV/AIDS, STBBI's, Hepatitis C, activities include:

- Wellness Days -Wellness Days are provided to increase awareness and knowledge in preventing HIV/AIDS infection in the Northwest. Snacks and refreshments are always provided
- Community Education - Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre's HIV/AIDS Awareness Program & positive Living office are always invited to do presentations on HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis. This is provided to the High School and also Indigenous communities
- Condom Distribution - The HIV/AIDS Awareness Program provides condoms for distribution to the public. Condoms are continually provided to Mountain Eagle Books upon request
- World AIDS Day - World AIDS Day is held on Dec. 1 each year and is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight

**Alcohol & Drug Program:** The Alcohol & Drug program helps improve the quality of life for clients and their families who are working towards holistic health. The program improves clinical outcomes by enabling clients to meet their treatment objective and maintain positive change. The services available are:

- One-to-one counselling
- Treatment planning
- Harm Reduction Plans
- National Addictions Awareness Week activities



**Aboriginal Patient Liaison Worker (APL):** APL's are an important part of the health care team. They work to ensure First Nations and Aboriginal patients, clients, residents and their families have access to high quality, culturally appropriate care. They help to bridge the gaps between western and traditional medicine ensuring a holistic health approach. Services provided include:

- Arranging for translate service
- Helping patients understand health care processes, procedures and terminology
- Helping to ensure admission and discharge planning goes according to patient needs
- Assisting with Advanced Health Care Planning
- Facilitating communication and cultural understanding between patient and care providers
- Connecting patient to end of life support services
- Coordinating spiritual/cultural advisors
- Supporting and comforting family and friends
- Assisting with referrals within Northern Health and to other community agencies
- Helping link patients to the non-insured health benefits and the FNHA Benefits program
- Assisting with transition to and with long-term care

**5X5 Employment: Northern Corridor Program:** The Northern Corridor program prepares and supports aboriginal clients for employment in a culturally safe holistic way that reduce barriers to employment. The Employment coordinator work in partnership with community services and industries to develop and promote new workforce initiatives.

**Mental Health Outreach Worker:** The purpose of this program is to help Indigenous people living in a remote, rural and or isolated villages and urban communities to strengthen their ability to understand and cope with mental health concerns.

**Youth Worker – Culture is Alive Program:** The goal of the **Culture is Alive Program** is to connect local Indigenous youth with each other, social supports, positive experiences and learning and employment opportunities in our community.

The program is designed specifically to support our local youth during a vulnerable stage of their lives to become self-reliant and self-sufficient as they transition to cities from remote northern communities and reserves. The program will provide a point of connection for youth to take their first positive first steps towards meaningful training and employment opportunities in the community.

There are two key components of the program:

1. Drop-in projects and activities (creative, cultural, land-based, foods, workshops)
2. Point of Connection: Job shadowing/mentorship program (workshops, training and mentorship/work experience)

**Housing Advisor and Economic Development:** The Housing Advisor works collaboratively with local stakeholders, First Nations partners and government, at the municipal and provincial level, to further the Friendship Centre's strategic goals for increasing access to safe, secure and affordable housing in our community. The Housing Advisor identifies and explores funding opportunities, engages with stakeholders and develops internal organizational capacity and policy relating to affordable housing development projects and management. The role also involves coordinating education and outreach activities relating to affordable housing need in the community.

The Economic Development aspect of the role provides grant writing and capacity building services to increase further the Friendship Centre's mandate and program delivery capacity. The Economic Development Advisor works collaboratively with the Executive Director, Accounts Supervisor and members of the Friendship Centre's Wellness Team, as well as local stakeholders, First Nations partners and government, at the municipal and provincial level.



# HOUSTON PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

## Early Years Program

- Pregnancy Outreach Program
- Family Support/parenting support programs
- Tadpoles (kindergarten readiness pre-school program)
- Parent legal family legal advocacy

**Connections program:** Targeted toward Indigenous youth and families with MCDF files, and children in care/aging out of care.

## After school program

The after school program is a year-round daily drop in program for aboriginal school aged children. This program provides a much needed safe and supportive place for young people to access services without barriers. The After School Program provides fun, educational, and culturally relevant programming to community youth, giving them a safe place to participate and belong in the community.

## Schedule of services at Houston Friendship Centre

Monday - Friday programming is as follows:

Connections program - Monday - Friday 8:30-4:30 aboriginal family development - work with families with ministry files, and children in care.

Youth Connections program Monday to Friday 12pm-8pm - Teens ages 13-18

After School Program Monday to Wednesday, Friday 3pm-5pm Thursday 2pm-5pm

Lawyer - family advocacy Tuesday - 3rd Tuesday of the month

Lawyer Parent Legal Centre 1st & 3rd Monday of every month



A person wearing a large moose head costume is the central focus of the image. They are standing in a grassy area with a wooden structure in the background. Other people are visible in the background, some sitting on the grass. The image has a blue tint.

# PROGRAM DIRECTORS ANNUAL REPORT 2018–2019

## REPORT PROVIDED BY GENEVIEVE POIRIER, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

The Program Director provides overall coordination of key events and activities undertaken by the Organization. As the first point of contact for people entering the Friendship Centre, the Program Coordinator is also an important face of the organization. Along with coordinating the various activities and administrative tasks, the role is about welcoming people and meeting them where they are at when they enter our centre.

CAMUS  
PHOTOGRAPHY

## NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

### **JUNE 21, 2018**

National Indigenous Peoples Day is a day of celebration of Aboriginal culture. It represents the importance of being actively connected to the land, community and the spirit through the elders prayers and welcoming, traditional dances, games, foods, crafts, and storytelling. It is a day of sharing, respecting, honouring and learning about Aboriginal Culture. Special events include face painting and children's activities, war canoe on display, soap berry contest and moose calling competition. The event continues to grown and in 2018 was attended by over 500 community members.





Funding for Indigenous Peoples Day is not guaranteed and each year our centre works hard to investigate and apply for various funding opportunities which are often limited. In 2018 funders included: Canada Heritage, First Nations Health Authority, BV Community Foundation. The event is also supported through sponsorships and in-kind donations from a wide range of local community businesses. The budget for this event in 2018, including all grant funding, in-kind donations and volunteered in-kind hours is estimated at \$25,000.

National Indigenous Peoples Day planning began November (2017) with a committee made up from organizations such as the Town of Smithers, Smithers Public Library, BV Child Development Centre, BV Museum, The Prestige Hudson Bay Lodge, The Interior News, Bachrach Communications, BV Arts Council and our beloved Bill Goodacre who passed away in early 2019, was passionate about National Indigenous Peoples Day and very instrumental in its success over the years.

The success and organization of the event has increased over the last three years as a result of increased organizational capacity. Activities involved in the success of this event include:

- Seeking and applying for funding
- Booking entertainment
- Booking services e.g. portable toilet, road closures and permits
- Coordinating and event organizing, volunteer recruitment
- Budgeting and reporting/accountability

As a result of running this event for many years, evaluation and increased organizational capacity, we now have a clear planning process, plans and procedures which allow this large event to run extremely smoothly and improved each year.





The header features a light beige background decorated with black line drawings of pine branches and various Christmas ornaments. The ornaments include a large one with a diamond pattern, a smaller one with a face, a star-patterned one, a bell, a snowflake, and a pinecone. A solid red horizontal band is positioned across the middle of this decorative area.

## ANNUAL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER

The Annual Community Christmas Dinner is provided by the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre with support from donations from businesses of Smithers. In the month of November the Staff of the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre canvas the community for in-kind donations, monetary, volunteers. The staff prepares a Christmas dinner of turkey and ham with mashed potatoes, gravy, cranberries, salads, hand-made dinner rolls, and beverages. There are door prizes given out to attendees. The Annual Community Christmas Dinner serves approximately 500 people who may not have a chance to sit down and share a Christmas dinner with friends, family and community. Businesses and volunteers are acknowledged by announcement, recognition is provided through our Wall of Thanks to our sponsors and a thank you advertisement is submitted to the Interior News acknowledging our sponsors.



## FAREWELL BILL GOODACRE



**"WE ARE ALL CONNECTED"**

In January 2019 we bid farewell to Bill Goodacre, our former President, who dedicated over 20 years of service to the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre, working tirelessly as our President to enhance the lives of urban Indigenous people.

Bill Goodacre was a former Canadian politician who represented the electoral district of the Bulkley Valley Stikine in the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia from 1996-2001.

Bill received a degree in Economics from the University of British Columbia and worked as a grocer for Goodacres Store Ltd. Since 1990, Bill has served five 3-year terms as town council for the Town of Smithers. During this time, Bill has also served as a board of director of the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society. In 2013, the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society was honoured to nominate Bill to the Queen's Jubilee medal in which he received.

As a politician and a dedicated community member, Bill showed us how to live a meaningful life: Work with determination and integrity on what matters most to you. What mattered most to Bill was people, and he spent his life striving to make the lives of people in his community better.

Bill has led the Society with some very key initiatives including the purchase of the Main Street building. He played a lead role in governance, organizational capacity as well as history of the community, supporting the society to grow and enhance throughout the years. Bill was a true champion and advocate for human rights, social equality, justice and a powerful voice for reconciliation in our community. Bill sat on the National Indigenous Peoples Day Committee and was instrumental in ensuring the ongoing success of this event.

Bill has always played a key role and recognized as a kind and gentle man that is dedicated to enhancing the lives of others. He was passionate about the Indigenous communities and rights, so his voice was always heard when there was a concern to deal with. Bill will be forever remembered, by all of those he came in contact with at the Friendship Centre, for his ability to be both our esteemed leader and our dear friend. Bill is greatly missed by our organization and the community members we serve.

## 5x5 Employment Program

The 5x5 Employment program is funded in part by BCAAFCs 5x5 Indigenous Job Plan. The program provides a wide range of social and employment and training related programming. The program is designed to meet people where they are at and provide referrals to services both in-house and within the broader community

### 2018-2019 Program Highlights

The Employment coordinator assists clients with:

- Resume writing
- Cover letter writing
- Job searchers
- Job interview preparation
- Career counselling
- Funding opportunities

The employment program provides opportunities to obtain job-related certificates in the following:

- WHMIS
- Occupational First Aid
- Food Safe Level 1
- Cashier Training
- Serving It Right
- Traffic Control
- Forklift operation
- Drivers study group

## The Enhanced Health Care Assistant Program (EHCA)

Aboriginal Community-Based Training Partnership Program is a Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre and Coast Mountain College Partnership.

## Objectives for the EHCA Program:


- To provide aboriginal community members with post-secondary education and skill straining in the community of Smithers that will lead to sustainable employment;
- To support aboriginal community needs and priorities, including responding to new economic opportunities and industry needs for a local skilled labour force;
- To provide recognized public post-secondary credentials and/or course credits that are portable and transferable to other post-secondary institutions and program

## Impact of the Program:

All eight students progressed immensely in their knowledge and education as well as in their social, emotional skills and self-confidence. This program gave them a boost not only in self-confidence and self-respect but also in successful acquisition of a job with higher pay which will in turn bring stability to their lives. Local communities of Smithers, Houston and Hazelton benefited from this project as all of the participants stayed in the communities, were able to find jobs and are now contributing to the well-being of our residents. The students were able to fill in the high demand positions in local institution.

# TESTIMONIALS


## THE STUDENTS:



"I love the program and the "wrap around" support for every student! Every obstacle was addressed. Thank you!"



"I am very happy with the experience and would recommend it to anyone! Great Program!"



"It was an amazing experience and helped achieve my dream of helping others who can't help themselves, and also achieve my career goals."

# HIV/AIDS AWARENESS WORKER

## 2018-2019 REPORT PROVIDED BY PATRICIA KOLIDA

### Program Description:

- To increase awareness and knowledge of preventing HIV/HCV infection in the Northwest by providing services, activities and information for all people through workshops, social media and outreach projects.
- Host Bi-weekly HIV/AIDS and other STBBI's awareness workshops and Cultural appropriate wellness days within our community and surrounding areas. As well as keeping people informed with the latest HEPC and HIV drug developments and prevalent information.
- To build a great network with Red Roads HIV/AIDS Network, Pacific AIDS Network, Healing Our Spirit Positive Living North.
- To use the Medicine Wheel approach in addressing issues concerning HIV/AIDS, Hep.C STBBI's and other chronic diseases.

## HIV/AIDS Awareness & Culturally Appropriate Wellness Day Workshops:

- HIV/AIDS Awareness: The Basics
- Hepatitis A, B, C, D
- Heart & Stroke & HIV AIDS
- Point of Care (Early HIV Testing)
- Harm Reduction
- Cancer & HIV/AIDS
- Traditional salve making/medicine teas
- Traditional Crafts/ Dream Catchers/beading
- Special Occasion Crafts: Mothers Day/ Christmas/ No sew pillows
- SelfCare/ Stress Release Crafts/ Wind Chimes, stress jars etc.
- Adult colouring• Healthy Eating/Suggestions in how to make healthy snacks, lunches and dinners on a budget
- 6 Week program Food Skills for Families/ Learning how to prepare foods/and cook on a budget
- Preserve Safe/ Canning and dehydrating foods
- Container Gardening/ Community Gardening and Gathering
- No Bake Goods

HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STBBI's information material was made available at each workshop.



## ISPARC Fitness Program Objective:

To increase physical movement from a beginner level to more advanced levels.

I was very fortunate to have worked with 3 groups of participants. Elders Group, Community Participants and Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Staff. When at first I mentioned to participants we would start an exercise program with 10 minute sessions they would either look away, leave the room or have a blanket on their faces. I then asked participants to pick three of their favourite songs. Each week I would pick one participants selection and set the exercises to the music. Participants enjoyed the sessions not realizing that the three songs they chose averaged 10 minutes in length.

**Elders Group:** We started with beginner chair exercises as according to ISPARC FitNation Manuel and gradually increased the level and length over 8 weeks. By the end of the 3 weeks, elders were exercising out of the chairs and moving around more. They saw improvement in flexibility in their hands, fingers, less pain in their hip area, more endurance and they had a lot of fun.

**Community Group:** We alternated from having a morning and afternoon session. Morning sessions consisted of progressive chair exercises, a light breakfast and HIV/AIDS/ HepC, STBBI's awareness videos followed by questions. Afternoon sessions consisted of progressive chair exercises, a light lunch and craft making or a non-bake recipe tryout. Healthy eating was discussed and recipes given out. Physical improvements were expressed, participants were feeling less stressed and an over all well being within the group was felt.

**Staff:** Sessions progressed from beginner level to advanced. We used the old craft room, hallways and stairs. Group sessions as well as one on one sessions were given. Staff expressed they needed the break, felt refreshed, energized and more productive.

## Harm Reduction

As part of the HIV/Aids Awareness program, we do weekly and monthly condom distribution to Mountain Eagle Books, NWCC, Witset Gas Bar, and Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre. We ensure that all services are flexible including support from Administration when office hours are closed.



# HOUSING ADVISOR & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**2018-2019 Report provided by Lydia Howard, Housing Advisor and Economic Development**

## **Developing an Indigenous Housing project in Smithers:**

### ***Summary of progress to date: September 2018-March 2019***

In **September 2018** the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre hired a Housing Advisor to pursue opportunities for affordable housing developments for Indigenous people in our community. From September to October, the Housing Advisor focussed her attention on working with the Town of Smithers and Lu'ma Development Management to prepare a proposal for a housing development for Indigenous people in Smithers.

In **October 2018** the Friendship Centre, in collaboration with development consultants Lu'ma Development Management and Terra Housing, submitted proposal, under BC Housing's Indigenous Housing Fund RFP.

In **December 2018** the Friendship Centre learned that we were successful recipients of a Health and Wellness Grant for Indigenous Communities to begin a year-long community engagement project: "Affordable Housing in Smithers for Indigenous Peoples: Community Education and Engagement." it is focused on increasing community awareness and dialogue around the need for affordable housing in Smithers for Indigenous families. This grant will provide funding to support our organization to take a proactive approach to community engagement and consultation regarding housing.





**Community education and awareness activities associated with this grant include:**



- High-quality affordable housing communications package (print and digital)
- Stakeholder engagement meetings
- Housing Connections meetings where people with lived experience can share their insights and gain resources
- Open house Expert Q&A panel on Indigenous Housing
- Housing information booths at popular community events: Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21) and BV Exhibition (Fall fair) planned for August 22-25th, 2019

since January 2019 the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre has been working actively with our development consultants, the Town of Smithers and BC Housing toward our goal of developing a housing project for Indigenous families and elders in Smithers.

**This work has involved:**

- Ongoing discussions and relationship building with the Town of Smithers (staff and elected officials) specifically regarding a location for the project and the rezoning of the potential property.
- Discussions with BC Housing to progress our funding applications forward,
- Work with our Lawyer and BC Housing's legal team to incorporate a new housing society to manage future projects.
- Work with our development consultants, architects and building designer regarding conceptual design of proposed housing development.

## Economic Development

In September 2018, the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre hired a Housing and Economic development Advisor.

The Economic Development Advisor works collaboratively with the Executive Director, Accounts Supervisor and members of the Friendship Centre's Wellness Team, as well as local stakeholders, First Nations partners and government, at the municipal and provincial level, to further the Friendship Centre's mandate and program delivery capacity.

### Highlights from September 2018-April 2019

The Economic Development advisor submitted nine funding applications between September and March 2019 and of the nine applications submitted, five have been approved and two are pending approval. Below are approved grants applied for between September 2018-April 2019:

***Health and Wellness Grant for Indigenous Communities: Affordable Housing in Smithers for Indigenous Peoples: Community Education and Engagement***

**Submitted:** November, 2018

**Status:** Approved

***Civil Forfeiture Grant: Holistic Health Pilot Project Grant***

**Submitted:** December 2018

**Status:** Approved

***Urban Program for Indigenous Peoples Proposal: Program and Services***

***Project Stream: Youth Program***

**Submitted:** February 2018

**Status:** Approved

***NRT Youth Initiative: Blankets for Elders Project***

**Submitted:** February 2019

**Status:** Approved

***Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Commemorative Grant: Mural project***

**Submitted:** March 2019

**Status:** Approved

# LEGAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM

## **2018-2019 Report provided by Angela Sketchley, Legal Advocacy worker**

### **Program Description:**

The Legal Advocacy Program is committed to the advocacy, promotion and education of poverty law rights and benefits. Poverty Law is the body of laws that concerns the rights of low-income individuals and families to access government benefits. The intake criteria is very specific. A Legal Support Worker can help with applications, reconsiderations and appeals for:

- Tenancy
- Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction Benefits
- Federal Benefits
- Work Related Issues
- Debt and Consumer Issues
- Human Rights

### **Program Summary**

The program is achieving all outcomes in regards to providing advocacy, outreach, referrals, information and systemic advocacy for poverty law matters.

- Direct client advocacy was addressed by serving the maximum number of clients possible. Clients and their supports are able to gain a clear understanding of their legal matter, and were more likely to have their legal matter resolved. 649 legal matters were completed, including full file representation, summary service and legal referral service.
- Public legal education (PLE) was addressed by materials being available at the Friendship Centre's reception area and in the program office. Throughout the year, public legal education materials were distributed to groups and organizations depending on specific needs, such as tenancy or benefits for elders.



- Systemic advocacy in regards to housing was addressed by providing a letter of support to an affordable housing project and speaking at the Town of Smithers in regards to the lack of affordable housing in the community. Additional outreach and submission work was done to increase awareness of tenancy needs in Houston and advocate systemically for improved opportunities for advocacy/service.
- Workshops: The program facilitated a tenancy workshop in Smithers, a tenancy workshop in Houston and held several interactive draws to increase awareness of tenant rights and responsibilities. Resources were distributed to clients and groups throughout the year and online resources were shared on social media.
- Outreach to isolated areas was addressed by: phone, faxing and email support provided to clients from Burns Lake, Telkwa, Houston, Witset (Morice town), Hazelton, Kispiox and Fort Babine. Having bus tickets available to Legal Support clients has assisted with having outreach clients attend the office.
- Outreach was also addressed by offering 25 drop in days in total on top of appointment days, where clients who had barriers to appointments could drop in, learn about the program, identify issues early and meet the advocate. This "out from behind the desk" format supported early intervention, low-barrier service and improved engagement.

**Conclusion:** The work the program has addressed this year is very reflective of the barriers people are facing out there: under housing, marginalization, the opioid crisis, mental health, intergenerational effects of residential school/60's scoop, violence against indigenous women and girls etc. With lack of stable housing and crisis, people are less likely to retain paperwork, phone numbers, I.D, passwords etc which are the pre-requisites necessary to navigate the systems for basic needs. The increase in people in crisis and this program being in a place they trust is vital to them reaching out to have those needs met in a respectful, kind and effective manner.

# COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN FOR CHILDREN

## 2018-2019 Report provided by Deb Lear, CAPC Coordinator

### Program Description:

The CAP-C Coalition is a federally administered program which is funded through the Public Health Agency of Canada. This initiative came about as a result of the 1990 United Nations World Summit for Children, where the commitment was made to invest in the well-being of vulnerable children. This funding came from the Federal Government via the Public Health Agency of Canada in 1993.

The vision was to plan and implement programs for children and their families in order to enhance the health and well-being of vulnerable children. The program is delivered via a "coalition" model providing the funding for perinatal and Early Childhood Education (ECE) partners in Smithers, Houston, Terrace, Kitimat, Dease Lake, and Prince Rupert. CAP-C manages \$269,461 of the annual funding provided to these centres, administered through Coalition members contracts.

Through the successful partnerships with government and community organizations, (some of which include Northern Health, Public Health Unit, MCFD, SCSA, CCRR, Building Blocks, Strong Start, PLN, Child Development Centre, School Districts, BCAA/United Way) CAP-C Programs are able to offer services for families and caregivers to connect, obtain resources and referrals, receive one on one support, food vouchers, lending materials, recycled clothing, access to health professionals, assistance with social services, and educational and peer support.

Realizing that individual communities were suited best to identify their own needs, CAP-C contracts with 6 individual centres that provide these services in their local communities.

The six Northwest Coalition Members are:

- Smithers POP (through the Northern Society of Domestic Peace)
- Houston POP (through Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre)
- Terrace Parenting (through Kermode Friendship Centre Society)
- Healthy Babies (through Kitimat Community Development Centre)
- PACES Hub (through Westview Childcare Centre Society)
- Dease Lake POP (through Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre)

The Coalition meets twice a year for training; at least once a year via conference call and as often as necessary via e mail, Facebook and telephone.

The Coalition submits monthly statistical and program update reports to the Coordinator in addition to financial reports that are required by and submitted to Public Health Agency of Canada three times per year.

The coordinator makes annual site visits including a mini audit of the financial records.

The guiding principles of the Coalition are:

- Children First
- Strengthening and Supporting Families
- Equity & Accessibility
- Partnerships
- Community Based
- Flexible

The mandate of CAP-C is to strengthen the parents, grandparents and care-givers capacity to support their children's healthy development.

## 2018-2019 CAP-C Highlights

Due to the horrendous fires of last summer, the Dease Lake Pregnancy Outreach office was on constant high alert, ready and prepared to evacuate at any moment. The office stayed open at that time to help anyone in any way possible. It was extremely stressful time and our Outreach Workers contribution to the community was commendable. The community is recovering, regrowth is everywhere.

A collaboration between our Dease Lake Pregnancy Outreach Worker and a Northern Health Nurse put them on the front page of the February 11/19 issue of Healthy Living in the North. "Thermometers help keep kids out of Dease Lake emergency room". The Dease Lake Northern Health Nurse, while at the local Health Fair, was able to distribute thermometers and educational information to the community. The end result was a huge success!

Dease Lake secured a grant from Success by Six, making it possible to offer the "Bringing Traditions Home" program to the community. This was deeply enjoyed by everyone.

Smithers POP and Hazelton Smart Start workers received training regarding the proper installation of infant/child car seats. This was followed by a Car Seat Clinic where we provided the community an opportunity to have their car seats checked and provided the information needed to reinstall properly.

Child and infant car seats were provided to families in need in Houston with thanks to our partnership with Northern Health and BCAA/ United Way Car Seat Grant Program.

The Houston Pregnancy Outreach Worker successfully arranged for local "Farmer's Market" weekly vouchers for clients.

## ABORIGINAL PATIENT LIAISON WORKER

**2018-2019 Report provided by Alexanne Dick, Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Worker**

### **Description of the APL Role:**



- Facilitates connection between Indigenous clients, families, and professional health care providers
- Assists in navigating patients through the health care system
- Addresses barriers and topics of cultural safety and sensitivity
- Makes medical arrangements for clients
- Assists with understanding health care systems, follow-up care, and medical language
- Ensures appropriate care is provided with respect for traditions, cultural values, and Indigenous beliefs

## Services Provided

- Arrange for translation services
- Help patients understand health care processes, procedures and terminology
- Help to ensure admission and discharge planning goes according to patient needs
- Assist with Advanced Health Care Planning
- Facilitate communication and cultural understanding between patient and care providers
- Connect patient to end of life support
- Coordinate spiritual/cultural advisors
- Support and comfort family and friends
- Assist with referrals within Northern Health and to community agencies
- Help link patients to non-insured health benefits
- Assist with transition to and within long-term care

## Weekly Services to Reach Goals and Objectives

- Participating in Bulkley Valley District Hospital (BVDH) hospital rounds
- Visiting with Indigenous patients in Acute Care and in the Maternity ward at BVDH
- On call and spontaneous visits with Indigenous patients in the Emergency unit at BVDH
- Participating in family meetings for patients at BVDH
- Participating in discharge meetings for patients at BVDH
- Coordinating patient travel for clients to access medical services as required
- Assist with scheduling medical appointments locally as well as provincially
- Accompanying clients to their medical appointments in the community upon request
- Being present with patients during morning visits with their physicians while at BVDH, upon request
- Home visit with elders in the community
- Daily statistics and reporting for Northern Health Authorities





## OUTREACH

- Working in conjunction with the Witset Health Centre, meeting with the staff as well as with clients in the community to be a liaison with medical services in Smithers and elsewhere
- Participating in elders lunches in Smithers and Witset
- Working in conjunction with the Bulkley Lodge, meeting with the staff as well as with clients to be a liaison with medical services in Smithers and elsewhere
- Distributing updated APL pamphlets and posters in the community health services facilities
- Working in conjunction with Positive Living North, Smithers, Pregnancy Outreach Program, Passage House, Broadway, Shelter, High Roads Services, and other social organizations to work with the staff as well as with clients to be a liaison with medical services in Smithers and elsewhere
- Organizing monthly Brown Bag Cultural Learning Sessions to inform physicians, health care providers and clinicians on topics of cultural safety, cultural knowledge holders and Indigenous history and belief systems

## SPECIFIC OUTREACH ACHIEVEMENTS

- Presenting information on the APL position to the Committee Coordination for Women's Safety (April 19, 2018)
- Attended annual Interagency Collaboration Fair (June 7, 2018)
- Presenting information on the APL position to the Advanced Health Care Aid program through Coast Mountain College (June 8, 2018)
- Attended Youth and Elders Health Career Fair and hosted an information table to share my services (July 26, 2018)
- Facilitator with What Matters to Me table at the BVDH (May 8, 2018)
- Attended Pregnancy Outreach Program in Houston (October 30, 2018)
- Attended Northwest Sub-Regional Caucus with presentations by First Nations Health Authority, Northern Health and representatives from Health Centres in the Northwest (November 7, 2018)
- Organized Medication Return Event, Community Lunch and Mini Health Fair in the Witset Community (November 21, 2018)

## SUCCESSES IN PROGRAM

- Received 8 child car seats through a successful grant application through BCAA (April 2018)
- Hosted Medical Student for practicum placement from the University of Northern British Columbia (May 2018)
- Received \$750 for a Youth Engagement Salmon Canning Workshop through TakingITGlobal (TIG) Youth-led Service Grants (October 2018)
- Received \$500 for a Med Return-It event through First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) (November 2018)

## MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER

**2018-2019 Report provided by Roxanne Quock, MMIWG Family Support Worker**

### ***MMIWG Support Program Description***

The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Program offers trauma-informed counselling and emotional, cultural and practical support to family members of missing and murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in their own Community.

The program recognizes and offers a whole family centred approach to families with complex needs and keeps focus on safety, self-care, mental health and physical well-being.



## **Services Provided**

### **Aug – Sept 2018**

Message in a bottle Workshops provided to Smithers, Houston, Witset. Painted bottles and wrote messages to loved ones. One message was burnt in fire to symbolize sending message to loved ones, the other was put into to bottle to keep.

One young Woman from the community went missing. Her body was found a few weeks later by family organized search parties. Supported family by introducing family to Mel Basil who gave them workshops in communications and training for dealing with media, security culture, and support. Sat with family as they had meetings with the Major Crime Unit Liaison.

Made connection with three community groups: Community Coordination for Women's Safety Committee, Smithers Wellness Committee, and the Bridging Committee will be attending future meetings

### **October 2018**

Created a Media Package for future missing persons cases.

Created Information Package for future missing persons families.

Created a missing persons Kit.

Held a solidarity paddle for Jessica Patrick Balczer Family.

Attended a 5-day Indigenous Tools for Living Training where I learned skills for supporting and counselling clients

### **December 2018**

Created Capacity report for MMIWG Support Program. Prepared medicine gathering for upcoming Medicine making workshops. Applied for funding and received approval for Wellness Grant from Northern Health to deliver women's self-defence workshop. Attended Community Coordination for Women's Safety Committee meeting.

## **Activities to Ensure Program Completion**

- Build Partnership with Local Community Services and Organizations
- Create a Work plan with Families
- Promote Program
- Provide Information and Support to Families Going through Criminal Justice Process
- Undertake Trauma Informed Counselling to MMIWG Victims and families
- Workshops
- Develop Calendar and Events Newsletter

### **January 2019**

Planned and organized a Women's Empowerment Self-Defence Retreat.  
Planned Stolen Sisters March.

Co-Facilitated Situational Awareness workshop with Mel Basil.

Attended Community Coordination for Women's Safety Committee.

### **February 2019**

Coordinated Women's Self-Defence Retreat

During retreat I delivered Devil's Club Salve Making Workshop and  
Therapeutic Card Making Workshop.

Delivered the Stolen Sisters March.

Attended Community Coordination for Women's Safety Committee.

### **March 2019**

Attended MMIWG Dinner in Witset, promoted MMIWG program as well as  
our MMIWG mural project.

Talked with families about what the MMIWG program offers and about our  
commemoration mural project to gain feedback.

Ran an info table at the Witset band office during the OW feast to  
promote program as well as the mural project.

Held a luncheon for MMIWG families to provide info about the mural  
project and see if they would like to support it.

Co-facilitated with Jackie a women's self-defence workshop in Houston.

Also provided counselling support one on one by appointment and walk-in.

Attended the Community Coordination for Women's Safety Committee  
meeting.

### **Success Story**

One of the events the MMIWG Program has hosted was a 2.5 day Women's Empowerment Retreat at Banner Mountain Lodge 18km outside of Smithers. An Indigenous husband and wife team were brought in to deliver their "Indigenous Female's Self-Defense Course." The course consisted of both mental and physical training. The instructors informed participants about how Indigenous youth and women are heavily targeted in Canadian society which puts them more at risk of physical and sexual violence. There are over 1200 missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada, which is evidence this country is not a safe place for Indigenous women and youth. These statistics are the reason this course was created.

Participants learned about:

- Situational awareness: Identify a potentially threatening person and understand the dynamics of a dangerous situation
- Anti-abduction skills and techniques
- Anti-rape skills

Daytime was filled with the self-defence training to sharpen participants mind and body and in the evenings, we worked on spiritual health using traditional medicines and therapy OH cards. The MMIWG Support Program also facilitated a Devil's Club Salve making workshop where the women and girls learned to work with local plants transforming it into traditional medicine. This workshop further empowered our women and girls to literally take their healing into their own hands.

## WHAT THE PARTICIPANTS HAD TO SAY:

"Having so much beautiful land around us, out of town, less distracting. Place was amazing! The instructor, techniques were awesome and all the laughing and canning together. Building stronger connections and the OH cards."

"Thank you for inviting me. I feel more courage, less paranoid, less fear with the tools I have endured."

"The only thing I wish to see is more people exposed to this. I feel every aboriginal woman aged 11-15 in Canada should have this opportunity."



# MENTAL HEALTH AND OUTREACH PROGRAM

## 2018-2019 Report provided by Sonja Palmer, Mental Health and Outreach Worker

**The program:** The purpose of the Mental Health and Outreach Program is to help Indigenous people living in a remote, rural and or isolated villages and urban communities to strengthen their ability to understand and cope with mental health concerns.

The program focusses on providing counselling, advocacy and awareness regarding mental health issues. This is delivered through a range of culturally relevant activities such as arts and crafts, traditional medicine workshops and food preparation and sharing programs.

The mental health Outreach worker plays an important role within the Friendship Centre in supporting many of the programs and program staff. This role provides traditional knowledge and experience sharing with younger staff, collaborating on various projects and activities to ensure their cultural safety and success. Examples include providing knowledge and experience in preparation of traditional foods for events and workshops.

### Key services to clients include:

**Counseling and referrals:** Provided as needed to people with mental health issues for youth, adults, and elders whenever requested and as needed. Often times these services provided as drop-in counselling services for clients who enter the Friendship Centre in crisis.

**Advocating:** A key role for the mental health outreach worker is advocating for clients who need this support. This includes discussing further care with other mental health professionals and supporting clients through challenging life transitions.

**Awareness raising/Education:** To increase understanding regarding mental health issues by providing activities, traditional and alternative therapies and culturally relevant activities i.e cultural art therapy, Smudging and or Pipe ceremonies, Healing Circles in collaboration with other programs such as the Alcohol and Drug Counselling program.

## 2018-2019 Highlights

Drop-in breakfast toast bar: We encourage people to stop by and enjoy socializing and participating in activities at the Drop-In. The drop in toast bar program serves toast, jam coffee and tea. Drop in is every Monday and allows for clients to interact with each other and the mental health and outreach worker, make appointments and receive referrals.

Bath Scrub Workshop: The Mental Health Program offers a free salt scrub workshop. The project was intended to bring several health-related benefits like treating muscle soreness, or treating itchiness and insomnia.

Medicine bag Workshop: The medicine bag workshops are intended to bring cultural awareness to the mental health program and be used at home to remind them of the cultural responsibilities for health and well-being.

Painting pots and beading with elders: Craft activities are regular part of the program, for example provided during the elders lunch as well as for events such as our Mothers Day gift making activities.

Kidney Screening: Partnership to support and provide referral for clients who are in need of kidney screening.

### Fit Nation:

In collaboration with the HIV/AIDs Awareness Program, the Mental Health and Outreach Worker offered the Fit Nation program. The program provided a relaxed and supportive environment for participants to engage in low impact exercises, connect with one another and learn about the benefit of active lifestyle for physical and mental health.

Attended "In her Shoes" Workshop in Smithers provided by Northern Society of Domestic Peace.

The workshop allowed the mental health and outreach worker the chance to learn more about violence against women in our community and supports available for referrals.

### Weekly elders lunches

The elders lunch is held every Thursday and provides a healthy meal to be shared and enjoyed together. The lunch is an opportunity for elders to come together in our community and share their stories, feel connected and talk about challenges and get supports.

### Annual Mental Health and Outreach Community Lunch:

Once a year the mental health program hosts a community lunch. The purpose of the lunch is to network, to market and to share ideas of wellness and mental health.

# YOUTH COORDINATOR

## 2018-2019 Report provided by Nika Palmer, Culture is Alive Program Coordinator

### Program description:

The goal of the **Culture is Alive Program** is to connect local Indigenous youth with each other, social supports, positive experiences and learning and employment opportunities in our community.

The program is designed specifically to support our local youth during a vulnerable stage of their lives to become self-reliant and self-sufficient as they transition to cities from remote northern communities and reserves. The program will provide a point of connection for youth to take their first positive first steps towards meaningful training and employment opportunities in the community. There are two key components of the program:

- Drop-in projects and activities (creative, cultural, land-based, foods, workshops)
- Point of Connection: Job shadowing/mentorship program (workshops, training and mentorship/work experience)



## 2018-2019 Highlights

### Drop in projects/activities:

The youth worker held the following activities to engage youth:

- Mini and large paddle painting and medicine bag making
- Drum making
- Mini bentwood box decorating
- Traditional cooking e.g. Bannock making workshop.

### Training and employment readiness:

The youth worker coordinated and supported youth to participate in the following training:

- Drivers test
- Boat license
- Driving lessons
- resume writing
- cover letter writing
- mock interviews

### Success stories:

#### The 3C challenge - Funded by the Government of Canada

The 3C Challenge allows Indigenous Youth the opportunity to tap into their entrepreneurial ideas and spirit. Each participant learns about the 3Cs: Culture, Community and Cash.

The Youth worker co-hosted the 3C challenge with the BCAAFC. This program included a three day entrepreneurship training and ongoing mentorship throughout the challenge. Youth participants were from Smithers, Witset and Houston. We had the most participants in the program in BC! Three of our groups of youth placed in the top 5 for their efforts in raising funds by selling their products.



### **Youth and Elder activities**

The Youth worker held a Youth and elder gathering where participants took part in the following:

- painting canvases,
- paddle painting
- mall and large, drum making,
- mini bentwood box decorating,
- The Youth and Elder gathering was a huge success! it was great to see youth and elders gather in one place to share a meal, share stories, share traditions and different languages. Seeing the youth and elder engage is needed in our communities.
- 4 youth got their drivers license after participating in driving lessons
- 2 youth got their boat licenses.

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL COUNSELLOR**

### **2018-2019 Report provided by Mel Bazil, Drug and Alcohol Counsellor**

#### **Services Provided:**

Direct Client Services, one to one counselling, group and family sessions, harm reduction planning, treatment planning, grief and loss presentations, trauma informed service, Indigenous Informed Practices, Cultural competency, and Cultural safety. Reporting activities.

Delivering projects with the War Canoe Nyībegh, Paddles up, connecting stories and history with community, serving the clients through partnerships, ranging from storytelling, drumming and singing, historical interpretations, land based initiatives. Solidarity Paddle, and forming a local Harm Reduction Patrol, supporting MMIWG Initiatives with the MMIWG Support Worker, promoting wellness through culture with drumming, singing, smudge bowl, National Indigenous Peoples Day, National Addictions Awareness Week, Community Christmas Dinner, and regular supportive presentations to the School District and Local Community College.

Writing Grants and reporting on completed projects. Keeping in touch with groups like the First Nations Health Authority for trainings and co-facilitations.

Teamed up with the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centres Executive Director, Annette Morgan and Culture Is Alive Coordinator Nika Palmer to deliver information sessions with the INAC presentations for Bill S3, changes for status.

Partnered with Houston Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society, Witsuwet'en Culture and Language Authority, Northern Health, Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Smithers Community Services, Smithers Public Library, Positive Living North, and School District #54 schools at Walnut Park, Smithers Secondary, Silverthorne Elementary, Telkwa Elementary, Count, Discovery Program, and Coast Mountain College.

### **Committee Meetings**

Smithers Harm Reduction Committee. Linked for partnerships in harm reduction for referrals, partnered activities, and for training knowledge.

Community Council for Women's Safety. Connect with larger community who are deeply concerned for all aspects of women being safe from violence, harm, stigma, poverty, addictions, and legal issues.

### **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS AND EXTENSION**

Completed two large grants, for a Solidarity Paddle, as well as forming an All Clans Patrol with some harm reduction and safety trainings, compilation of a headquarters for the All Clans Patrol, and completion of reporting for these two large grants.

The Solidarity Paddle saw more than 350 people in total over the three week period the land based initiative was active. There was a family of a missing and murdered girl in Smithers who all attended one exclusive afternoon with her family and they brought in some media coverage that day, it wound up being covered on the local television channel for their show Open Connections, With Robert Pictou. For the solidarity paddle, there was also some art pieces commissioned by a local West Coast Wet'suwet'en Artist, Smogelgem, with four high quality paddles, and two food grade bentwood boxes from another West Coast Artist, Cody Wedlidli Merriman. The final dinner for the Solidarity Paddle saw a local neighbouring War Canoe Family from the Gitksan Nation receive and reciprocate the gifting of these paddle, while seeing fresh coastal halibut steamed in a bentwood box for the elders and youth dinner.

For the All Clans Patrol trainings, more than 45 trainees have taken training in Situational Awareness, Self Defense, Radio Communications, Mental Health First Aid, Escalation/Deescalation, Warrior Presentation, all facilitated by Sakej Ward, Melody Andrews, and Mel Bazil. The trainings are not yet complete, and there are some more grants up coming to assist in the larger launch of the patrol.



# HOUSTON PROGRAM REPORTS

## CONNECTIONS PROGRAM

**2018-2019 Report provided by Carrie Wiebe, Connections Family Support Worker**

### **Narrative Report on Deliverables Year End**

Throughout the 2018/19 fiscal year, the ASI:CSP Connections Program, hosted by the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre - Houston Program Office, provided a direct-service, culturally-safe approach to reducing the number of Urban Aboriginal children and youth in-care; and to improving outcomes for those living at-risk, and/or receiving services under the CFCSA in Houston. The Connections Program works both individually and collaboratively with individuals and families to promote, support, and enhance child safety, family wellbeing, and permanency.

Our client group consists of at-risk Aboriginal families with school age children and youth; families of school-aged children receiving services under the CFCSA; children and youth ages 7-18 receiving services under the CFCSA; youth up to age 26 who have aged out of CFCSA care; and young families with a parent (up to age 26) who has aged out of CFCSA care.

### **Aboriginal school-age children/youth in-care will be identified & receive intake into ACY service stream**

This year, our ACY service stream effectively identified and received a number of children and youth in-care or at risk of coming into care. Referrals to this service stream were received from MCFD offices in Smithers and Hazelton, as well as from community partners in Houston, Smithers and Burns Lake.

Community partners include the Bulkley Valley Learning Center, Houston's Link to Learning Program and Community Services, Carrier Sekani Burns Lake, Northern Health, Northern Society for Domestic Peace and more. Additionally, children and youth were identified and referred by Aboriginal ASSET workers at our local elementary and high schools. We also had self-referrals from foster parents and youth in the community.

Finally, our After School Program, run by a separate MCFD contract and held in the same facility as ASI:CSP, was able to successfully identify and refer school-age children. As a result of these referrals, children and youth in-care and at risk were successfully identified, received and connected with our services.

**Aboriginal families with school-age children/youth in-care will be identified & receive intake into AFD service stream.**

Throughout the 2018/2019 fiscal year, our AFD service stream has constantly been receiving new Aboriginal families with school-age children and youth in care. These families were referred by combination of community partners and connections, MCFD offices in Prince George, Smithers, Burns Lake, Hazelton and Terrace, along with quite a few self-referrals.

The steady number of referrals, especially self-referrals, speaks to the importance and effectiveness of our programs, and the positivity with which they are regarded and recommended.

**Aboriginal families with a young parent who aged out of care and whose children are in care or at risk of removal, will be identified & receive intake into AFD service stream.**

This year we successfully identified and connected with four new young parents with children in care or at risk of removal. All four parents heard of our program by word of mouth from other clients and community partners and referred themselves, indicating our program is a trusted source of support. Our program staff are approachable and skilled in providing and maintaining that source of support, especially in the first stages of self-referral. The first stage in the self referral process is a visit to the Friendship Centre to meet the program staff and schedule an intake appointment and set up counselling and advocacy services.

The AFD worker maintains steady and solid relationships with MCFD child protection workers. The AFD is a necessary link for effective communication, bridging the gap and providing advocacy and additional support for parents while maintaining child protection and safety as the primary concern.



**Referring social workers & other referring community partners have been communicated with in a timely manner and invited to participate in a coordinated service planning meeting.**

Good communication is one of the core principles of the Connections Program. Within 48 hours of receiving a referral, we contact the person who provided the referral. We contact them again immediately after client contact is established. The program staff then coordinate with social workers to review and update service plans. Afterwards, relevant service providers, including those requested by the client, are invited to meet, review and plan with set goals for the future. Program staff continue to communicate on a daily basis with social workers and referring community partners. Thanks to our ongoing efforts to maintain open communication with our clients and partners, we are able to minimize gaps in services and plans of care.

**Clients will be connected to their extended families, and cultural communities**

During the intake process, staff and clients work together to explore and identify options to connect with cultural communities, including potentially supportive relatives and community members. Of course, connections are explored and assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure relationships are healthy, safe and generally positive.

Often, staff will organize family meetings and invite extended family members or community relations to check in on individual and collective thoughts, feelings, progress and aspirations. Through relationships with extended family members and community, clients have repeatedly reported an increased sense of belonging and permanence. Recently, a number of families were connected at a welcome home feast for foster children in their home community. These connections have continued to gain strength and are supported by AFD/ACY staff.

**Child/youth's family, close community members, and cultural community supports are identified and located, kinship connections, and EFP options are explored.**

Identifying and locating family, close community members and cultural community supports for each child and youth in the connections program occurred with the support of AFD/ACY staff. Throughout the 2018/2019 fiscal year, extensive work was done to support and encourage family members caring for children through current EFPs. Our team worked hard to implement and support plans of care, specifically with regards to emotional and behavioural needs, as well as funding. By ensuring ongoing one-on-one meetings with our clients alongside group meetings, we are able to assess, re-assess and navigate the safety and supportiveness of home environments, family dynamics and unique relationships with everyone involved.

**To provide culturally safe support and connections for referred Aboriginal youth, to improve and expedite case planning by establishing collaborative networks of support.**

This year has been full of good work around cultural connections, and cultural support for the aboriginal youth participants. Youth are engaged in cultural activities on a regular basis and are flourishing. Some of these activities include: beading, painting, medicine making, woodworking, canoeing and spending time on the land.

We provide services to people from many nations. We share a diversity of traditions, expressions and protocols with the youth. Culture is the heart of every clients plan of support. All clients receive individual support in identifying and strengthening supportive connections with their home nation, as well as with themselves and their unique relationships to their cultural roots.

Youth are encouraged to participate in cultural events, and supported through the process of learning more about where they come from, who they are, and who they can be. Individual teachings are then shared within groups as clients share what they have learned, and learn to further explore culture through community.



# AECD – EARLY YEARS PROGRAM

**The Early Years strategic plan has 5 key service Goals:**

## **1) Supporting Families**

We support families in three main ways: Parenting group drop-in, community outreach and one on one sessions at our centre or in people's homes.

a) We support families directly through our weekly drop-in Early Years Cultural Parenting Group. This happens every Thursday from 1:00-3:00 pm at our building. Parent's and family members are welcome to attend this comfortable, culturally safe environment. At each session, a healthy snack/meal is provided to address the food insecurity issue of many of our clients. We encourage and promote healthy eating according to the Canadian Food Guide.

b) We provide community outreach in a range of capacities. We host various events in collaboration with other Friendship Centre contracts in our building as well as community services and members. Events that we hosted and/or participated in the recent past included:

- a Family Literacy Brunch with Houston Link to Learning
- Community Christmas Lunch hosted at our centre
- an Ages and Stages screening done with Northern health and the child development centre hosted at our centre
- a MMIWG awareness march on February 14th
- weekly visits to the Bean Stalk Daycare to provide an interactive indigenous based story time for the children with language lesson

c) Staff engages with clients in one on one sessions. This can happen at our centre or at a client's home by their request. In these sessions, staff are able to provide a supportive, safe, non-judgemental atmosphere for clients to speak to some of their family and personal vulnerabilities. Staff spends on average twelve hours a week with various clients in this capacity. Staff also provides support around home visits with children and can be an encouraging voice on positive parenting.

## **2) Providing Family Navigation**

We provide appropriate, supportive referrals to vulnerable families in Houston. The majority of our clientele are indigenous peoples living off of their home reserves. Houston has a low cost of living compared to surrounding communities thus a large number of vulnerable families move to Houston. Staff is available to meet with clients and is able to help them navigate their specific needs and find the right service providers for them. Clients can drop in to our centre in Houston Monday-Friday 8:30-4:30. They can call us at 250-845-2131 and email us at [early.years@dzekant.com](mailto:early.years@dzekant.com).

We also post our events and community events on our Facebook page Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Houston Office.

Our main community partners that we refer clients to are:

- Northern Health Authority
- Child Development Centre of Smithers and Houston-come to Houston weekly and does home visits
- Interagency referrals to our drug and alcohol counsellor, our aboriginal Patient Liaison, our AECD Kitchen program, Pregnancy Outreach, Tadpoles Parent participation playgroup-at our friendship centre
- Family play gym-hosted by AECD Friendship Centre contract at Houston Community Hall
- Houston Link to Learning-free literacy programming
- Strong Start and Jump Start programs-hosted at elementary schools in Houston
- BC Aboriginal Health Authority
- Parent's Legal Centre
- Comes to our building twice a month-free service
- Family Law Advice Clinic-comes to our building once a month-free service
- Bean stalk daycare
- Ministry of Children and Family
- Thomas Robinson Consulting- Professional Support Services
- Salvation Army Food bank
- Northern Society for Domestic Peace-free counselling service for children, men and women
- Witset Band office-Indian Status assistance
- Jordan's Principle

### **3) Non-Child Care Early Learning**

We are able to host a variety of events such as our literacy brunch and our Ages and Stages screening which focuses on child development in regards to their physical, emotional, social capabilities as well as their communication and cognitive skills. Currently at our building we have two non-child care early learning programs funded by a separate contract. The contract is Aboriginal Early Child Development.

### **4) Promoting Community Belonging**

Throughout our programming and outreach clients are able to create peer to peer social networks where they can reduce feelings of isolation and increase their community connectedness. We welcome all people groups and strive to provide a place of growth and identity. Our goal is for our participants and their children to have a real sense of belonging when they access our services in a formal or informal manner.

### **5) Supporting Indigenous Culture, Language Revitalization, Cultural Competency**

We incorporate indigenous culture into our programming

- Using the medicine wheel for teaching
- Inviting elders to welcome participants to events and acknowledging the territory the event is taking place on
- Group drumming
- Indigenous style crafts and artwork
- Traditional medicinal workshops
- Inclusion of multiple generations into programming
- Traditional storytelling to clients
- Traditional storytelling and language lessons to outside partner agencies-daycare
- Provide cultural resources and support to other Friendship Centre contracts



**We strive to reduce barriers by:**

- Providing transportation to workshops at our centre (when able to, dependant on budget and staff availability)
- Provide snacks and meals to clients attending
- Providing childcare to clients attending (funded by different contract)
- Providing support staff when we have large groups (funded by different contract)
- Inclusion of extended family at events and workshops

All of our weekly Early Years workshops focus on cultural identity, protocol, education and activities. Pictured on the front page and below are a few of the many workshops that the Early years program has provided over the last year.

All of our weekly Early Years workshops focus on cultural identity, protocol, education and activities.



# AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

## **2018-2019 Report provided by Emma Bowen, After School Program Coordinator**

Throughout the 2018/2019 fiscal year, the After School program, facilitated by the Dze L k' ant Friendship centre provided a direct service to school age children, in an after school, and spring break/summer program capacity.

The after school program offers children ages 8-12 a safe, healthy, cultural sensitive environment. Staff strive to promote a holistic perspective to care, encouraging and supporting through programming, a safe and healthy atmosphere that supports Social emotional development, peer relationships, and a healthy lifestyle.

ASP offers a safe, relaxed environment where children can de stress after school and gives children an opportunity to interact with Children in a different setting, developing social skills and an enhanced sense of confidence. The ASP refers children with needs requiring additional supports to its network of community partners such as C.D.C, Thomas Robinson consulting, M.C.F.D and supporting families to access govt and provincial services such as Jordans Principle and child care funding.

Our client group consists of: at- risk Indigenous families of school- age children/Youth at risk; families of school-aged children receiving services under the CFCSA, and children in the demographic group.

- **Children develop and maintain positive peer relationships and support networks.**
- **Children increase knowledge on a variety of local cultures and traditions.**

The After School program participated and actively contributed to cultural events such as national Indigenous day where children along with their families, helped organize activities, and prepare traditional crafts and medicines for the celebration. The after school program also collaborated with the school district to participate in a drumming presentation for the community fostering belonging, empowerment and citizenship. The children also participate and encourage their families to join events such as marches for sisters in spirit, and M.M.I.W.G. The after school program set up a wonderful art visual for every child matters celebration (orange shirt day) in September. Children invited families to participate in a cultural outing to irrigation lake where children had the opportunity paddle the war canoe and enjoy some traditional story telling.

- **Children increase in physical activity level, and develop awareness of local facilities and the environment:**

Children are exposed to at least 30mins per day of physical activity or out door adventures. We access Silverthorne school fields for “big games” such as soccer, baseball and team building activities. We visit the Houston leisure facility once per week for public swimming, and the Pleasant Valley plaza for Mini golf and bowling. The after school program participated in a 10 week honour your health challenge and accessed the Morrice Mountain cross country ski trails once per week. The children had a chance to invite their families and cross country ski and snow shoe the trails. Throughout the summer we used the Friendship centre suburban to visit lakes and hiking trails in the area where we had the opportunity to hike, fish, berry pick and explore our surroundings.

- **Children increase knowledge regarding healthy eating:**

Programming includes a healthy meal or snack everyday, which the children help prepare, and added a kids in the kitchen day twice per month where children prepare a healthy meal and bring it home for their family. The after school program also partnered with Houston Link to Learning and participated in the community garden project where children grew, maintained and harvest their produce, and had the opportunity to share and prepare a number of meals and snacks from the food they grew.





# CONTACT US

If you have questions, ideas, feedback or media enquiries, relating to our organization please contact the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre at:

Phone: (250) 847-5211 - Reception ext. 200

Fax: (250) 847-5144

[info@dzekant.com](mailto:info@dzekant.com)

1188 Main Street

P.O. Box 2920

Smithers, BC

V0J 2N0

