DZE L K'ANT FRIENDSHIP CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT

2019/2020



DZE L K'ANT FRIENSHIP 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 to all people. 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.



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 transparen to its membership and provincial and federal partners.

Andrew Tom, President

Stanley Namox, Vice President

Susie Hooper, Secretary/Treasurer

Guy Brown, Director

Kristal Grenkie, Director

Jillian Dennis, Youth Director



A message from our Executive Director: Annette Morgan

First I would like to acknowledge our team and volunteer board of directors for their dedication and commitment through some of the toughest times we have seen as an Indigenous organization.

What we witnessed is dedication, commitment, long hours, uncertainty and overall increased love for our community members and clients.

We have made large strides prior to COVID-19 in Indigenous Housing, Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, and emergency services and readiness.

Our commitment to enhancing the lives of others maintains our number one priority, while we work to keep our local governments apprised of opportunities that will help us grow through the next generation. This is certainly not easy, but the foundation of our ancestors in terms of reconciliation has allowed us to keep moving forward and speak the truths that need to be spoken.

Our team of front line workers, our administration team and our board allow us to host one of the strongest accountable and transparent community services. We ensure our partners are acknowledged for their work, our team leaders are recognized for their contributions and board for the daily commitments made to keep pushing us forward.

We have made many new friends and allies over the past year who witness our dedicated work and continually offer their support. As we move into the next fiscal year we move with confidence that we are able to meet the needs of our urban-Indigenous people and we continue to support where we can while following the many protocols from our health organizations.

We look forward to the challenges that will come, and we want you to know that we are here for you every step of the way.

We are not alone and we will work together to do what it takes to get things done. It is truly and honour and a privilege to serve as your Executive Director and we look forward to another year.

Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society Program Director Annual Report

2019 - 2020 Fiscal Year

April 1/19 – March 31/20

National Indigenous Peoples Day 2019

The National Indigenous Peoples Day planning begins in December (2019) 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, BV Arts Council.

The Committee had its first meeting on January 22, 2020. This year the committee is planning to have comedian Howie Miller to perform at our National Indigenous Peoples Day. We will apply National Day of Wellness through First Nations Health Authority and the BV Arts Council to secure funds.

National Indigenous Peoples Day 2019 was very successful. The event was hosted at the Cultural Centre Utilizing the lawn with big event tents. There was approximately 650 people in attendance.

The celebration started at 11 am this year with Chief Timberwolf Mable Forsythe doing the opening prayer and welcoming to the territory. Many activities took place on stage with performances from Muheim All Clan Drummers and singers. We had Kelsey Abraham (Pow Wow dancer) with his daughter Bella Rain perform this year. The Ewk Hihah Hozdli Drum and Dance group also performed.

Special guests appearances were made from Mayor Taylor Bachrach as he participated in a soapberry whipping demonstration with facilitator Sharon Patrick. They both gave out delicious samples of the whipped soapberries to the crowd. Lynn Mackenzie and Shane Loughram from Moose FM participated in the Moose Calling Contest. There was a BBQ with hamburgers, hotdogs, salads, bannock and cake.

New additions this year included: water bowls for dogs, vegen burgers, gluten free buns, the seating area set closer to the stage, large tents for shelter against sun or rain, "Where Are You From?" signing board and a skirt made & put around the stage. A Passport to wellness and a "have your map stamped" encouraged many participants to visit the activities inside the hall. A memorial signing table was set for our beloved Bill Goodacre.

Some of the indoor activities included: Coast Mountain College; Select Spa Services, Traditional Storytelling Workshop, cedar demonstrations, Bear Nose Sensory Game, BV Museum Indigenous Artifacts and information, and the Smithers Public Library Book Display.

Community Ambulance Services, Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre, Positive Living North and Smithers Bridging Committee as well with Indigenous craft vendors. Children from St. Joseph, Muheim and other centers attended and participated in the celebration.



Kelsey Abraham



Brenda Schaffer & JT Thomas



Muheim All Clans Drummers & Dancers



Mayor Taylor Bachrach – Soapberry Demo



National Indigenous Peoples Day Cake



Doing the Round Dance



Keira Westby – BV Museum



Coast Mountain College Spa Program





Moose Calling Contest

Ewk Hihah Hozdli Drum Group



Annual Ramona Wilson Walk 2019

The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre staff members participated in the Annual Ramona Wilson Walk 2019. The Walk this year was on June 15, 2019



Six staff members from the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre and the Houston Friendship Centre took part in the 25 Annual Memorial Walk to continue to raise awareness about the Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

For 25 years, the walk has begun at Lake Kathlyn Elementary School and continued just over two kilometres to Yelich Road, near where Ramona's body was found.

Ramona Wilson disappeared June 11, 1994. Her body was found April 9, 1995 near the airport in the woods.



Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre's – Mel Bazil, Nika Palmer, Sonia Palmer, Genevieve Poirier, Lydia Howard

FOODSAFE

Food Safe is about preventing the transmission illness and also about worker safety on the job. People who prepare, serve and clean up food should take the course for the safe of the customers and also for their own safety. The course was held at the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre on June 18, 2020. There was 12 people that participated and 4 staff members took the Food Safe Course.



GENEVIEVE POIRIER

has successfully completed
FOODSAFE Level 1

of the FOODSAFE Training Program

Valid until: June 18, 2024

Issued by:





Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre

Annual Community Christmas Dinner 2019

This year the Annual Community Christmas Dinner was held on December 12, 2019 at the Friendship Centre Cultural Centre. We served 250 + at the Annual Community Christmas Dinner.

Why Have An Annual Community Christmas Dinner?

However, not everyone has a family dinner to go to but the Annual Community Christmas Dinner exists to change that. The dinner is to welcome anyone who can't attend a Christmas dinner of their own or is going to be alone through Christmas. We host the dinner every year to give somebody a chance to have a Christmas meal. The dinner gives people the opportunity to socialize with other people that they haven't seen for a while.



Christmas Dinner, Dec 12, 2019 (Pictures by Elmira Sanati Nia)

Culture is Alive Annual Report

April 1st 2019- March 31st 2020 By Luke Guilbault Youth Employment Coordinator

Program Objective:

The goal of the **CIA- Culture is Alive Program** is to connect local Indigenous youth with each other, social supports, positive experiences as well as 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 steps towards meaningful training and employment opportunities in the community



Program Highlights

This year we worked hard to offer as many opportunities as we could to our youth. We engaged them by hosting meet & Greets at the schools, and learning centres. We hosted free training at the Hall for Driving, First Aid, Transportation Endorsement, and Food Safe.

We offered Cultural Workshops such as Drum Making, Feast soups with Elders, Cedar Bracelet making, and Bentwood Box crafting & painting. Additionally, we ran Employment workshops for Resume, and cover letter assistance, 1 on 1 mock interviews to prepare clients for an interview in the field their interested in. As well as workshops on Facebook etiquette, Hygiene, and how to make the most out of job search websites such as Linked in or Indeed.

As the new year began, and the Covid-19 Pandemic spread. We shifted our Programs online, creating Zoom workshops, Informational Videos, and Applying for Grants and Client supports. One Such Support was the Kids Breakfast Program in partnership with Breakfast Club of Canada it allowed us to provide youth with Healthy Pre-made Frozen Breakfast Meals so that they could focus on their studies with a full stomach.

Success Stories:

This year the Culture is Alive Program, partnered with All Nations Driving Academy to support a number of youth to undertake training and gain their driver's license. This was a hugely successful program with so many youth succeeding in their goals and finding confidence in their new skills. We believe that this partnership is a success story in that we were able to reduce barriers and ensure wrap around support was provided to ensure the young participants were successful. We received this message from a parent of one of the youth who participated in driving lessons program which was a collaboration with All Nations Driving Academy. "Robert our driving instructor has been great, and supportive. He has not only given Koby Lessons, but boosts Koby's Self Esteem. Koby has been feeling nervous, and anxious with his test coming up. Robert reassures him that he is more than ready. I'm so thankful to your program, and Robert for giving him these lessons. I have taken him numerous times, but feel I may have forgotten certain things that maybe important and Robert and your Program have given that missing piece to prepare my son to feel confident for his big day!"



We have felt especially fortunate to be able to run cultural workshops with local indigenous youth. The positive reactions youth have as they complete their drums are a success of their own. These workshops made possible by the BCAAFC funding help to build confidence, and pride in their culture. This success directly translates to improved self-confidence, and has contributed to youth coming back to the program for additional services such as resume writing and job search aid on their journey to become self-reliant, and self-sufficient young adults.



Working as a non-profit we always want to give all we can to support our clients. So when we can get more support for the same or lower cost that's a triumph for us! During the 2019-2020 fiscal year the Culture is Alive program had budgeted to be able to provide roughly 12 indigenous youth training in first aid (OFA level 1). However after some inquiry we found that by reserving 18 spots in Occupational First aid Level 1 (OFA Level 1) the price per head went from \$115.00 to \$75.00 which allowed us to train 6 additional youth well saving \$30.00 which we invested into Food and Nutrition for the course so that students could focus exclusively on the course, and not have to worry about where to eat lunch.



APRYL 1,2019-MARCH 31ST, 2020

PROGRAM TIILE: HIV/AIDS AWARENESS

TITLE OF THE STAFF MEMBER: HIV/AIDS AWARENESS WORKER

SUMMERY OF THE PROGRAM'S OBJECTIVE:

- . Increase awareness of preventing HIV using culturally relevant resources
- . provide workshops on different topics relating to HIV infection
- . Distribute resources for awareness campaigns.
- . provide non-judgmental services, activities and information to encourage testing
- . Promote healthier choices, partner with Positive Living and other local organizations
- . Reduce stigma and discrimination for those infected, affected and at risk of HIV infection
- . Improve wellbeing of communities through outreach, network and awareness at community events



A. Preparation for AIDS Awareness Day. Day on NOVEMBER 4th 2019. World Aids Awareness Day.



B. People stopping by for inquiries. About 30 people stopped by and this was a great achievement.



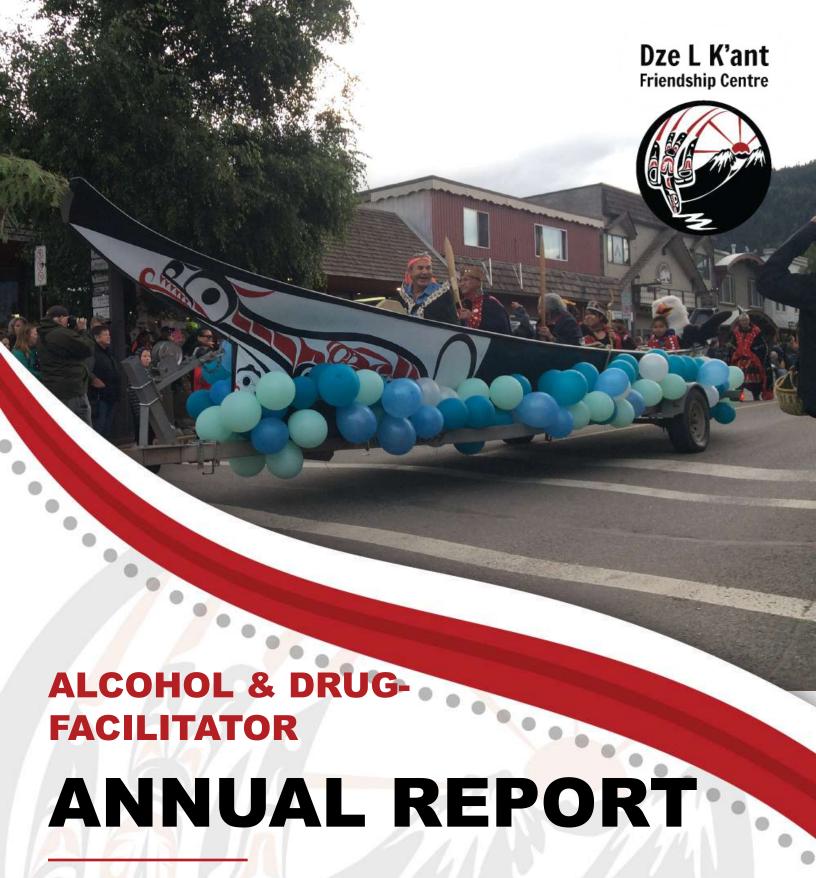
December 2, 2019 | Coast Mountain College

C- Presenting 2019 WORLD AIDS DAY WEEK, co-hosting it with Positive Living.



Discussion in progress during a workshop.

This was one of the most wonderful times that we had together. Just both the young and the elderly people coming together to talk about HIV/AIDS was great. What made this workshop so unique was that, all the elderly people here had no or very little knowledge about HIV. This day they all learnt about Facts, Myths and Misconceptions about the virus. All of them were happy and appreciated the information they obtained. This was a milestone for this program-passing information to people who had no or very little knowledge about HIV was a step ahead. It conquered well with this program's motto which goes by, "Tell someone to tell someone". The information they got, they will in turn pass it over to others.



2019 - 2020

Dze L K'ant Friendship Society 1188 Main Street Smithers BC, V0J 2N0

Mel Neil Bazil 250 847 5211 extension 207 alcohol.drug@dzelkant.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre and Board of Directors supports the partnership with the Ministry of Children and Families to develop and host the Life Skills and Youth Transition program. We propose this strategy includes developing a program to assist youth in transition to adulthood.

These services will allow youth to achieve independence with confidence and success through interventions and support aimed at promoting the development of adult competencies. Services will provide youth with the necessary skills and supports to live in their community, with a plan for assisted transition to independence and/or have necessary skills for independence.

The program will be individualized based on the youth's strengths and needs, focusing on developing resiliency by ensuring informal and formal networks of support are in place within their community and families.

Introduction

Mission

The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society is an organization guided by Aboriginal values that provides activities, services and information to all people. 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.

Alcohol & Drug Facilitator Program

The Alcohol and Drug Facilitator provides one-on-one, group, and family counselling to individuals and members who are or have been involved with substance abuse, including educational, activity-based, and counseling services. Other services offered are Grief and Loss, FASD, Family Support.

Where necessary, the Alcohol and Drug Facilitator also develops treatment plans and undertakes referrals. The Alcohol & Drug Facilitator can help to understand Harm Reduction, train in Naloxone Kits, and can also help to create a Harm Reduction Plan.

The services do not require a person to be struggling with addictions, but can also be provided to family and friends of individuals and members who are involved with addictions, heavy use, recreational use and beneficial use of substances.

Annual Highlights

- Trained as a trainer in Naloxone Kits and SAVE ME steps with the First Nations Health Authority in 2018, however formalized with FNHA for forming a community of trainers in BC for an Indigenous Harm Reduction Community Council.

Annual Highlights continued:

- The facilitator's skills include ASIST 11 Suicide Intervention,
 Decolonizing Addictions, Roots of Trauma, Indigenizing Harm Reduction,
 Naloxone Kit and SAVE ME steps Train the Trainer, Emergency Operations
 Command training, First Aid for Children and Elders with Defibrillator. Not Just
 Naloxone Harm Reduction Training, Food Safe, Wilderness Skills Training,
 Critical Incident Stress Management.
- The Facilitators Cultural Competency includes, Wet'suwet'en History, Drumming Singing, Storytelling, Spirituality, Wellness Through Culture, War Canoe Skipper, Traditional Healing Practice and Community.
- Mel is a member of the Smithers Community Council on Women's Safety, and Smithers Harm Reduction Committee.
- Forming an Indigenous Lead Volunteer Street Patrol involving Harm Reduction, called the All Clans Patrol. It involves training in Harm Reduction, Naloxone Kit Training, Situational Awareness, Radio Communications, Decolonization, Escalation/DeEscalation, Self Defence and Reporting. It will focus attention on volunteerism from peers, or network of folks who have lived or living experiences with substances, and their friends and family.
- Presentations for schools like iCount, Matriarchs on the Rise, Brown Bag Lunches at Bulkley Valley District Hospital, Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs, Dze L K'ant Staff, and Positive Living Northwest Smithers, as well as individual clients with a range of presentations: Decolonizing Addictions, Reducing Stigma, Indigenizing Harm Reduction, Cultural Competency.
- Cultural and Work Related Presentations with School District #54 in Smithers and Houston, as well as with Coast Mountain College. Especially a full day of delivering cultural presentations at the annual Indigenous Peoples' Day on June 21, 2019.

CONCLUSION

The Alcohol & Drug Facilitator Program now has plenty of work to continue with not only direct client services for the next year, but also with the projects that the facilitator has created that spurns more partnerships with agencies and schools to reach populations and increase safety for folks who chose to use substances and refine pathways that assist folks who wish to obtain sobriety.

The next steps will see the wave of trainings needed to create the All Clan Patrol. Connection via new partnerships and the growing Dze L K'ant Society is exciting and the local healthy community is growing. The new patrol will make that healthy community much more visible and active.

Mel Provides his services and skills with pride and accomplishments from the last 20 years of providing services in Smithers and Area. His range includes Residential School Survivor counselling, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder knowledge and supports to families, MMIWG herstory and supports, Cultural Competency, Suicide Intervention. His practices are Trauma Informed, Indigenous informed, and Social Justice Driven. He plans to continue to last in this field with self care, community of care and always creating and building on his skills and practices.

Sne Kal Yegh

Mel Bazil Alcohol & Drug Facilitator

Annual Report: Housing and Economic Development



Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society

Report provided by Lydia Howard Housing and Economic Development Officer

Housing Advisor Report : April 2019-March 2020



The Housing Advisor is responsible for exploring opportunities to increase affordable housing and social support services to meet the needs of Indigenous community members. In this role the Housing Advisor engages with key stakeholders (local and provincial governments, first nations and community organizations) and develops internal organizational capacity and policy relating to housing services and development projects.

In 2019 the housing advisor has been working actively with development consultants, building designers, engineers, municipalities, the provincial funders, and key community stakeholders toward the goal of affordable housing developments of in both Smithers and Houston which would increase the opportunity for safe, secure housing for Indigenous families and elders.

Key activities of the Housing Advisor April 2019-March 2020 include:

- Providing advice relating to housing development to the Board of Directors to achieve the Friendship Centre's strategic housing goals.
- Identifying and pursuing housing development funding opportunities through proposal/grant writing (BC Housing's Indigenous Housing Fund, Reaching Home, CMHC Seed Funding).
- Building and facilitating strong collaborative relationships with key community stakeholders including first nations, provincial and municipal government levels.
- Advocating for more affordable housing to meet community need in collaboration with other community partners, particularly at the municipal government level.
- Working with development consultants (Terra Housing/Lu'ma Development Management), building designers to ensure our centre submits strong funding proposals.
- Working with the municipality regarding development requirements: land, use decisions, required bylaws and permits.
- Working to build wider community support for the project through a year-long community engagement project: "Affordable Housing in Smithers for Indigenous Peoples: Community Education and Engagement."
- Working to ensure our housing is developed in consultation via community engagement activities.
- Working to develop our community's first Indigenous Housing support program to ensure culturally appropriate wrap around services to clients at risk of homelessness.

Indigenous Housing Project: Smithers

The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre has been working actively with our development consultants (Terra Housing/Lu'ma Development Management), 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 communication 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 and development consultants to progress our funding applications,
- In 2019 we worked with our Lawyer and BC Housing's legal team to incorporate a new housing society:

Dze L K'ant Housing Society.

Homelessness and housing challenges facing Indigenous people in communities right across Canada can be directly traced to historical trauma as a result of Canada's history of colonization and in particular the impacts of the residential school system on Indigenous families. The Bulkley Valley has a long history of housing challenges for Indigenous people, stretching back to its very settlement. In the recently published book: Shared Histories: Witsuwit'en-Settler Relations in Smithers, British Columbia 1913-1973. author and Florida State University researcher, Tyler McCreary illustrates the many ways in which colonization. community planning, legislation, local politics, systemic racism and economic growth marginalized the local Witsuwit'en people, forcing families to leave Smithers, find shelter in substandard housing or face homelessness while around them, the community continued to grow and thrive Today's statistics show that there is still much work to be done in our community in regards to affordable housing for Indigenous families. Photo Camus Photo Source Homelessness Hub https://www.homelesshubb.ca/ebo homelessness/population-specific/indigenous-peoples

Affordable Indigenous Housing Education and Awareness Project Dec 2018-March 2019

This project aimed to increase community awareness and dialogue around the need for affordable housing in Smithers for Indigenous families.

This project was made possible via a grant from BC Healthy Communities.

Community education and awareness activities associated with this grant included a wide range of inclusive community activities:

- Stakeholder engagement meetings with key frontline workers from a wide range of social support services/organizations. Included 2 tenancy rights workshops aimed at providing knowledge to frontline workers who engage with people facing tenancy challenges.
- Housing Connections gatherings
 - Created a space for people with lived experience of housing challenges to share their insights and gain resources. Including public 2 tenancy rights workshops designed to provide relevant tenancy rights education to community members.
- Affordable Housing Survey: Developed and carried out a in person housing survey for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in our community.
- October 2019 All Indigenous Expert Q&A panel on Indigenous Housing with experts including: Annette Morgan (Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre) Lucy Gagnon (Witset First Nation), Rod Hill (BC Housing, and Cliff Grant (Aboriginal Housing Management Association). This event was attended by approx. 50 community members including Indigenous community leaders and elders including Wetuswet'en first nation, Smithers Mayor and Town Councillors, Town planning staff (Smithers, Telkwa, Houston and Hazelton BC). Various local service providers including: SCSA, NSDP, Positive Living North, Parent Legal Centre, Houston Community Services, Dik Tiy Housing Society. Northern Health management and support staff, Ministry of Social Development and Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre frontline staff
- Members of the broader community interested/concerned about housing challenges.
- **Community Housing information booths** at Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21, 2019) and BV Exhibition (Fall fair) August 22-25th, 2019.
- Affordable housing guide designed to help Friendship Centre clients navigate the system to find suitable and affordable housing (available in print and digital copies).

A total of **572 community members** participated directly in this housing engagement project.





Community
Housing Booths.

Indigenous Housing Panel.

Affordable Housing Survey.

Housing Connections Gatherings.

Stakeholder Engagement Workshops.

Community feedback

"It's great to see initiatives are taken to solve the lack of housing."

"Valuable for the community as a whole."

"I'm a Councillor with the Town of Smithers. I am trying to be well informed as to the challenges facing Smithers.

This event definitely helped me to be more aware of today's housing challenges!"

"It was great to hear examples of culturally appropriate housing and the elements that make them effective. It would be great to build on that component in future workshops/presentations."

"Really appreciated the cultural perspective on housing. Especially cultural practice accommodations, selfdetermination and economic development opportunities within funding. Important of attractive, beautiful and long term, well-built housing. Building above the basic health and safety standard."



Affordable Housing Survey:

As part of the education and outreach project, the Housing Advisor created a survey to gain information from Indigenous community members in need of housing and to help inform out housing projects.

The survey is designed to be easy to complete and reduce barriers associated with low literacy. The survey was provided at Indigenous Peoples day and over 60 surveys were completed on the day. Another 30 surveys were completed at our housing booth at the BV Fall fair.

Staff at the Smithers and Houston Friendship Centres have been administering the Survey throughout 2019.

Since June 2019 we have received 98 completed surveys and the Housing Advisor is currently analyzing the data.

Economic Development Report:April 2019-March 2020

The Economic Development Officer works collaboratively with the Executive Director, Board of Directors, Accounts Supervisor and Friendship Centre staff, 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.

In 2019 the Economic Development Officer was responsible for:

- Engaging regularly with frontline support staff to identify needs, gaps in community services in the Bulkley Valley and opportunities for expansion of programs to meet these needs.
- Working with the ED and Board of Directors to develop and implement strategic priorities to ensure high quality, viable and sustainable programming to meet community needs.
- Working with senior staff to update capital asset management plan and documentation
- Ensuring website is up to date
- Working with ED to move toward accreditation (CARF) for MCFD programs (Houston)
- Exploring funding opportunities that meet the strategic priorities and align with community need.
- Developing and submitting proposals in collaboration with ED and appropriate staff to
 - o Diversify and expand program delivery to meet needs and
 - Ensure the Friendship Centre can continue to make necessary capital improvements.

In 2019 the EDO worked on a number of funding opportunities and was able to leveragee a wide range of funding sources for additional programming as well as capital improvements. The Economic Development Officer submitted 10 funding applications between April 2019-March 2020 and of these 6 proposals have been approved and 4 are pending approval in early 2020.

Funding applications approved April 2019-March 2020

- Community Action Initiative Grant: New mental health counselling program for Houston Centre
- UBCM Partnering for Reconciliation: Reconciliation Circles Project
- BVCU Community Initiative Grant: Essential Healthcare/Hygiene Kits Program
- Wetzinkwa Community Forest Community Grant Program: Exterior revitalization project (siding removal)
- Community Gaming Grant, Capital Projects Fund: Exterior revitalization project (siding removal and new stucco siding).
- Regional District Bulkley Nechako Federal Gas Tax Grant: Exterior revitalization project.

Funding applications submitted April 2019-March 2020 (pending approval)

- Civil Forfeiture Grant: MMIWG Support Worker Program
- Giving Voice Fund: Strong Indigenous Women and Girls Project (MMIWG activities)
- Reaching Home Program: Indigenous Housing Support Program (frontline support worker for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness).
- BV Arts Council: Indigenous Peoples Day Grant for Indigenous performer.

Key projects: 2019/2020

Exterior Revitalization project (1188 Main Street building)

A key project for the Economic Development Officer for 2019-2020 has been securing funding for a revitalization of the siding of the Friendship Centre's building at 1188 Main Street. The siding project was identified by senior staff and board of directors as a priority for 2019.

The Economic Development officer submitted funding applications in 2019 and funding has been received from the Wetzinkwa Community Forest, BC Capital Gaming Grants and the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) toward this project. The cost of this project is high, largely due to the removal of asbestos present in the building. Therefore, this funding removes the financial strain of the Friendship Centre taking on the full cost of this extensive project. As a result, only a small portion of this project will be required to be funded by the Friendship Centre as approved by the Board of Directors in 2019.

This renovation project will not only protect our building and our key capital asset, but will assist the Friendship Centre in increasing the vibrancy and cultural diversity of downtown Smithers.

Timeline: The Exterior Revitalization Project involves removal of the aged vinyl siding, application of plywood and the final application of stucco. This will involve working with three contractors. The work will be completed by the end of spring 2020 in preparation for the MMIWG Commemoration mural to be painted on the side of the building.

In 2020 the Economic Development Officer will continue to work with the contractors and the Town of Smithers to ensure this project is successfully completed in a timely manner and that all required permits are undertaken.

MMIWG Commemoration Mural Project

In collaboration with the Executive Director and the MMIWG Support worker, the Economic Development Officer submitted an application to the MMIWG Commemoration Fund for a mural project to commemorate the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in our community.

In 2019 the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre MMIWG Commemoration mural project was approved for \$99,945.00 from the Department of Women and Gender Equity for our project: At the Heart: Mural commemorating the live and legacies of Indigenous Women and Girls from our communities

Objective of project: The objective of the project is to produce a mural to honour the lives and legacies of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls from the communities of Smithers and Witset, both of which are situated along Highway 16 (The Highway of Tears).

Project Summary: Professional local Indigenous artists, in close collaboration with the local families of the missing and murdered, will work through a trauma informed creative process with

high quality facilitators and counsellors to create a large-scale mural on the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre building (situated in downtown Smithers).

The shared goal of Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre and families is to use community public art to raise awareness and bring families together who are directly impacted to heal.

Duration of project: April 2020-September 2020.

Key project activities include:

- 1. Trauma informed design process workshops (April/May 2020)
- 2. Mural painting (June/July 2020)
- 3. Commemorative sign and information station (Developed in July/August 2020)
- 4. Commemoration community event and ceremony unveiling of mural (September 2020).

In 2020 the Economic Development Officer will work in collaboration with frontline staff and our Trauma Informed facilitator Sandra Martin Harris to ensure that clients involved are supported during the process. The role of the Economic Development Officer will be coordinating events and activities for the families and the artists as well as developing the wording, in collaboration with the families, for the signage.

5x5 Employment

Report by: Nika Palmer



The 5x5 Employment program is funded in part by BCAAFCs 5x5 Indigenous Job Plan. The program provides a wide range of social, 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.

The Employment coordinator assists with a variety of supports, including but not limited to:

- Resume and Cover letter writing
- Job searches
- Mock interviews
- Applying online for employment
- Funding opportunities
- Work gear start up
- Certification

The employment program also provides opportunities to obtain training certificates so that one can be eligible for the employment they are seeking and reduce barriers. Some courses include:

- Drivers Licence
- Traffic Control
- Food safe
- First aid
- WHIMIS

- Serving it right
- Security training
- Transportation endorsement

The success stories of my program are the clients themselves. As the employment coordinator, I am fortunate to watch my clients thrive.

This is possible with the program opportunities to educate themselves and have the proper training to feel confident in applying for the career they desire. Being able to supply the necessary safety gear for their new position is also satisfying to know they are prepared and self-assured to do the task without barriers.



INTRODUCTION

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

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 benefit, eligibility reviews.

WORK RELATED ISSUES

Employment Standards, Employment Insurance, Worksafe BC benefits.

DEBT AND 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.

Program Summary

The program is achieving all outcomes in regards to providing advocacy, outreach, referrals, information and systemic advocacy for poverty law matters. This year there was a transfer of advocates and the report has been adapted to reflect this change.

- 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. Between March 31, 2019 and February 19, 2020 there were 411 files were completed. The new advocate has so far taken on a number of full representation Residential Tenancy files. He has also been involved with helping clients apply for income assistance, answered questions about CPP, and made appropriate referral when warranted to outside agencies.
- 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 included identifying trends with access to welfare, the previous advocate Angela Sketchley completed two complaints to the Ombudsperson, meeting with the Ombudsperson during their northern outreach tour, respectfully addressing the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR) panel at the Provincial Training Conference for Advocates in regards to clients' real lived experiences with barriers to welfare and attending an information session with the MSDPR and Service BC staff. She also obtained an outreach worker for her work with clients who were having difficulty with what can be a very challenging system to navigate. The clients outcomes were greatly improved with the early intervention that resulted from this work. In regards to housing this 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. The new advocate anticipates continuing this worthwhile work.

- Workshops This year, 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. The new advocate has so far hosted an Elder Issue workshop and has coordinated with Service Canada so that they and the CRA will host a workshop at the Friendship Center.
- Outreach to isolated areas was addressed by: phone, faxing and email support provided to clients form Burns Lake, Telkwa, Houston, Witset (Moricetown), Hazelton, Kispiox and Fort Babine. Having bus tickets available to Legal Support clients has assisted with having outreach clients attend the office.
- Outreach was previously 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. The new advocate has been allowing drop-ins every
 day of the week and anticipates continuing this practice.

Success Stories

As part of the Legal Advocacy program's systemic advocacy obligations, the previous advocate successfully addressed systemic issues with moving supplements issued under the Employee and Assistance Act. Moving supplements are issued by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR) for moves within a community or an adjacent community. This policy is a barrier for people who have to move to another community to secure housing or who are marginalized from their communities due to unaffordable or unavailable housing. This program was able to successfully appeal two denials.

- a family who lost their housing security of no fault of their own secured housing and services in another community. The family was denied a moving supplement because they didn't meet the requirement/policy that a moving supplement only be issued for a move "within a community or an adjacent community". I argued that statutory interpretation of "adjacent community" cannot be applied the same in the north as it is in the lower mainland and our "adjacent communities" are often 60+ km apart. The "adjacent community" in the north may also be lacking essential services such as grocery stores or available housing whereas the Lower Mainland 's adjacent communities do have essential services. The Reconsideration Branch agreed and the request for reconsideration was approved. This case brings up an important point about particular policy not being realistic or inclusive of the north.
- A second client was denied a moving supplement from MSDPR to move from Houston, BC to Witset, BC because they also didn't to meet the requirement that the move happen within a community or to an "adjacent" community. We successfully appealed based on the term adjacent not being inclusive of the north, as I have done in the previous file. I also argued that the client was, as an indigenous woman, at risk of increased health and safety issues due to relying on hitchhiking as they couldn't afford the bus ride to/from Houston to access family, medical care and other services. This is an example of the systemic discrimination we see and is now part of a bigger systemic advocacy effort to have the term "adjacent" removed from the Employee and Assistance Act to 1. be inclusive of people living outside the greater Vancouver region and 2.to ensure Indigenous women do not have to face further vulnerability as a result of being displaced due to under housing.
- * update: as of July 1, 2019, moves anywhere in BC are now eligible for MSDPR moving supplements.

- * The program has had success with several hydro customer crisis customer fund applications and referrals. With increased heating costs due to living in the north, a large number of people face disconnection in the winter months. We were able to prevent disconnection and subsequent reconnection and security charges. Clients have reported they would not have been aware or able to benefit from the fund on their own or understand the additional documentation without the assistance of this program.
- * The new advocate has so far had success defending two evictions. He also managed to have the RTA require a landlord to have a licensed remediation specialist evaluate and repair a premises.
- * Additionally, the new advocate has been coordinating for survivors of St. Josephs school to liaison with the Unvalidated School Society and a possible lawyer who is considering making a claim on their behalf.

Training

- The previous advocate attended the Provincial Training Conference for Legal Advocates Oct 16-18 provided by the Law Foundation of BC.
- The previous advocate completed a human rights webinar, hydro crisis customer fund webinar and a workshop on status registration changes.
- The new advocate is attending a Provincial Training Conference from February 23- 28th, 2020.

CONCLUSION

The work the program has addressed this year is very reflective of the barriers people are facing out there: under housing, marginalization, the opiod crisis, mental health, intergenerational effects of residential school/ 60's scoop, violence against indigenous women and girls etc. With moving around 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.

Mental Health

Annual Report 2019-2020



Mental Health Outreach

Annual Report

Out objectives to the Mental Health program are to provide counselling and referrals as needed to people with mental health issues for youth, adults, and elders whenever possible. We offer assistance to clients to access hospital and community mental health services as well as advocacy and to partner with other mental health and wellness providers in the area. We want to increase the understating regrading mental health issues by providing activities, traditional and alternative therapies and culturally relevant activities including art therapy, smudging and healing circles.



Many factors have influenced mental health and include, education, financial finances relationships, residential school legacy survivors and post traumatic stress.

As your mental health outreach worker I am trained in Indigenous focus-oriented therapy sessions. These sessions are open to anyone. Focus-Oriented Therapy (FOT) is a body centred and person

centred approach to healing, developed three decades ago at the University of Chicago by Dr. Eugene Gendlin. FOT allows clients total control of the pace and the direction of their healing journey. It is particularly effective in the treatment and healing of complex trauma caused by accident, sexual, physical, emotional abuse of neglect. FOT has been especially well received in Aboriginal communities because of its humanistic, person centred approach to healing, which respects core values of respect and non interference.

Other partnerships have included Group acupuncture sessions every Monday. This supported individuals in achieving emotional wellbeing, resilience, pain relief and overall health and harmony. We worked with Hillary Graham starting every Monday since November 4th, 2019.

We continue to take a coordinated comprehensive approach to mental health which respects the model pod whole health, physical spiritual social and economic well being.

We have seen an increase in the need for mental health support services for seniors and elders. Where the detriments of health include nutrition, exercise, access to flu shots, and hearing tests.

The our growing seniors population, mental health problems and illnesses among older adults affect every family. To meet this challenge we have had to change some of our service days to meet the need. We have found we play a vital role in helping the aging population stay mentally well and manage mental health problems and illnesses.

The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre is hard at work ensuring that families mental health is recognized as a key Canadian health and wellness issue. Working with partners in the community the Mental Health outreach program is busy facilitation initiatives to enhance and promote mental health. These year they have included:

Reconciliation Talks: As indigenous people we are all here, woven together the land. As a part our our reconciliation journey there are truths to tell, stories to celebrate and relationships to grow.

Reconciliation is at the heart of our nations future and assisting in facilitation talks remains to be a priority. This year they were held in May 2019 and March 2020.



In partnership with Coast Mountain College and the Ministry of Advanced Education and training the Mental health program provided mentorship and individual support to 9 Aboriginal Women. This was to provide support during there course of the Advanced Health Care assistant program for 8 months. This support was one on one, drop in and in class support. This was a milestone for this program and was supported by the participants to have outreach services.

We continue to host a free medicine table at the front entrance for anyone who is wishing to smudge. Traditional tobacco, mint, sage and sweet grass is available daily on a drop in basis or one on one session.



Elders healing circles are held every Thursday's. Working with physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well being. Activities include check in sessions, as well as community information, resources social support and food access and training. The healing circles are committed helping one another

and learning together. Circles include how to enhance your mental health literacy, promoting mental wellness, teach tools and techniques to assist and prevent mental health. Social inclusion, having fun together, assist each other as a group to guide and support each other. This year also included families who lost their homes in fires as well as major health concerns. The Healing Circles also include knowledge of community resources that encourage recovery and support. Arts and crafts and cultural supports are available as well,

Partnership with Muhiem School. The Mental health program provides education to the school and promote awareness about the Indian residential school system and the impact this system had on Indigenous communities for more than a century. Working with the school provided a valuable partnership in healing the community with

knowledge and history and story telling. As the mental health worker, and a residential school provider the students are very responsive in learning and sharing and most of all there care.

New partnerships developing include health and fitness, with volunteers with a BSc in Kinesiology. Like the acupuncture we will work together and support clients where we can.



We have also partnered with the Senior Secondary School to make blankets for elderly care in the hospital. This was well accepted by the students to offer their time and skills for a project.

Partnership with Island Hearing clinic to offer free hearing tests for all clients experiencing mental health issues and additionally who may need support thought no matter what age.

This concludes my annual report and I look forward to a new wellness year.

ADULT MENTAL HEALTH 2019 - 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society

Contract #: 250-845-2131

Program: Adult Mental Health

Reporting Period: 01/10/2019-31/03/2020

Total Annual Service Hours: Approximately 500 hours over 5 months at 24 hours a

week.

The adult mental health program is designed to provide counselling services for families experiencing trauma, intergenerational trauma, mental health issues, and addictions. The families treated also worked on healthy relationships, overcoming domestic violence, anger management, parenting consultation, family reunification, and LBGTQ challenges. The therapist worked in conjunction with other programs at the Friendship Centre to ensure that all individuals and families received counselling with culturally safe healing activities already offered and attended at the Centre. In the first 6 months the adult mental health program serviced 39 unique individuals who received individual, couples, or family counselling and 572 therapeutic contacts were made. We began with making relationships placing an emphasis on those with barriers to accessing other services offered by the community such as Indigenous, families with young children, and those in extreme poverty or who were transient. Every client who contacted the centre was scheduled for a session within 5 business days and we were able to operate without a waiting list.

As a result of barriers to service during Covid, the CAI offered a grant for 5000 dollars enabling us to purchase 10 cell phones with prepaid minutes so clients could access the therapist via text, telephone, and secure chat. Clients with addictions noted how this support decreased their fears of being alone, and subsequent usage of substances. Those at high risk of domestic violence and child abuse now had a way to quickly access emergency help afterhours. Recently we've obtained another 2500 dollars to be used to top up the phones with pre-paid data. This has been a great factor in increasing the success of the adult mental health program in Houston.

CAP-C Community Action Program for Children 2019-2020

INTRODUCTION

CAP-C Coalition is federally administered program 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 come from the Federal Government via Public Health 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, under the Coalition Members Contracts.

The intent was to partner with other community organizations that offer services for families to connect, get information, referrals, access to public health and social services. Realizing that individual communities were the best to identify their own needs, CAP-C contracts with 6 individual centres that provide these services in their local communities.

The Northwest Coalition Members are:

Smithers POP (through Northern Society of Domestic Peace)
Houston POP (through Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre)
Terrace Patenting (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)

HIGHLIGHTS

Smithers POP – integrated the services within the community resulting in a powerful wrap around support team

Houston POP – in the spirit of self -care and self-healing, Houston POP added several new activities for their Mom's to enjoy.

Kitimat POP – it was a year for big undertakings at the Kitimat Community Development Centre, they MOVE and are settling into their new space.

Terrace POP – new group programming -family yoga

Prince Rupert Westview Day care – introduced a new interactive Literacy program



Summary of Activities: Please provide a description of activities you have provided within the last month.

Holistic Health Pilot Project

The Holistic Health Pilot Project will engage some of our most vulnerable community members in quality holistic health and wellness activities.

The program is designed to be inclusive of all people experiencing challenges to holistic health and well being. People who are suffering from complex trauma and victimization, including intergenerational trauma due to colonization and residential schools previous for current drug abuse, homelessness and/or mental illness.

Participant in the pilot project will gain hands-on experience with Indigenous arts and cultural workshops.

Posters were distributed throughout the town on a weekly basis before each workshop to notify and encourage people to join us in teamwork. This includes places such as Parent Legal Centre, The Collage, Salvation Army, Smithers Library, Positive Living North Organization, Northern Society for Domestic Peace, Office of Wet'suwet'en, Healthy Living Centre. Posters also were posted on our Facebook page every week. These tools were found useful as we had more people interested in and joining our program each week.



Please provide us with a success story as a result of your services over the past month.

Challenges:

Delays in getting started: Funding was not distributed until the last week of May.

Staff changes: As of September 20, 2019, we had a new employee working with us on the project.

Not enough time to complete the project: Aside from the reasons mentioned above, we decided to cancel the remaining workshops due to the extent of the threat of COVID-19 transition and for keeping a safe environment as of March 19, 2020.

Stories:

Many in our indigenous community are dealing with complex trauma and complex challenges, including mental illness, substance abuse, child abuse, sexual abuse and homelessness. Through this pilot project, we have provided an opportunity for our indigenous community to feel belonged and cared for by creating a safe environment so that they can share and practice indigenous culture. We have tried to empower our local indigenous experts by creating a platform so that they can share their knowledge with others. Participants have shared not only their creative work but also their stories, through communication and forming friendships. We have had a total number of 33 workshops practicing traditional knowledge and art along with outdoor activities to help our clients to become more self-reliant, confident, and to feel accomplished. We are confident to say that we have achieved our three main goals in measuring our success; that are as follows:

- 1. Reducing barriers to participation
- 2. Ensuring high-quality healing and rebuilding activities guided by indigenous cultural practices
- 3. Building partnership

We also have asked our clients to participate in an evaluation survey at the end of each workshop. We received a lot of excellent feedback on our work. I share with you a few quotes from our participants:

"Love the atmosphere, where we are all on the same page, learning a craft together and mingling with nice people in the community."

"Friendship formed. Skills developed. I want to rush home and make myself a giant birch basket now. Beautiful template. Much more professional than I expected. I hope that doesn't come out wrong! I was expecting a simple birch basket. This one is very beautiful and professional looking. Thank you so much!"

"I am so happy that I joined in! I learned a lot and feel very spiritual. Moreover, I am looking forward to burning my smudge at home!"

"I felt nervous and sad; by the end, I felt much better. Thank you!"

"Great teachers, very kind and patient!"

"I love beading; I have always wanted to learn it!"

"Mussi cho! Thank you for making me feel welcome with my handful of children!"

"lovely relaxing afternoon. Four beautiful children attended who were quiet and very respectful."

"I have always wanted to learn how to make dream catchers; thank you for teaching me this."

"Great company. Great class. Loved it all!"

"Respect for the material and teacher for passing down the knowledge. Thank you so much!"

"Gathering with other women, sharing, laughing, and meeting others is great."

"Love to be sounded by people, learn new skills and enjoy meeting others."

There is nothing more powerful than images to describe how successful we have been in achieving our goals. Here are some photos from our program.































Dze L K'ant Friendship Center August 2020

Written By Elmira Sanati Nia Holistic Health Worker

Early Years Annual Report





Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre

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Early Years

<u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of the Early Years' Service Framework is to define the service the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) funds within the early years' service area.

Vision

Children and families have the supports and services that they need. MCFD early years services are intended to achieve the following goals:

- 1 Support the well-being of children and families
- 2 Serve as barrier- free access point, particularly for family facing acute or chronic vulnerabilities
- 3 Provide clear pathways to enhanced supports and services including Infant Mental Health, Children and Youth with Special needs.



In the short term, these goals enhance protective factors and intended outcomes such as improved cultural connectedness, enhanced parent child attachment, enhanced parent efficacy, and reduced immediate vulnerability.

In the long term, these services goals help achieve social and economic benefits through enhanced family preservation and maximized developmental outcomes for children. These goals also address social determinants of health, leading to improved equity across populations.

In addition to the overarching goals, in outlining key principles and services that will guide spending across MCFD, this framework will:

Provide clarity to service providers, families, and funders regarding the early services funded by MCFD

Allow for improved referrals between early years services and enhanced supports;

Support evidence -informed investments; and Provide clarity of MCFD mandate to support collaboration with each other vested partners in the early years landscape (eg. Health authorities)

What is the Early Years Program?

The Houston Early Years Centre initiative is an outreach driven mobile hub staffed by an Early Years Resource Worker that serves the rural, northern community of Houston. The Early Years Resource Worker assembles and promotes information and resources on existing early years services, issues, and processes. In providing a coordinated point of entry into Early Years services, the Early Years Resource Worker uses outreach, community partners, and social media to connect with Early Years families and to connect those families to Early Years services and resources.

The Early Years Contract strategic plan has 5 key service features:

- 1. Supporting Families
- 2. Providing Family Navigation
- 3. Non-Child Care Early Learning
- 4. Promoting Community Belonging
- 5. Supporting Indigenous Culture, Language Revitalization, Cultural Competency



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. These weekly workshops are family Centre, holistic, culturally diverse and inclusive. These workshops offer parent support, information, resources, health prevention, skill building tools, early intervention, referrals and support services.
- 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:
 - Missing and Murdered Indigenous Woman and Girls Social Change events- raise awareness and call to action for social change in our community. Come together for a change, to have a voice and allow opportunities to heal.
 - Medicine workshops traditional medicine workshops have been offered for our Early Years program. Traditional medicine workshops focus on ethical harvesting, making salves and teas and the medicinal properties and traditions of medicines.
 - Family Photo Sessions- The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Early years program help a 3-week Christmas family photo session. This allowed family members to receive free digital images with a Christmas or winter setting. The Early Years program then hosted a Christmas card making workshop where clients could print pictures and make Christmas cards to distribute to their families. This was a huge success and helped alive stress and high costs associated with the Christmas holiday as well as brought families together and captured moments and memories for our families.
 - Strengthening Families Parenting Program- 14-week program focusing on increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce the risks of child abuse and neglect.
 - 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-judgmental atmosphere for clients to speak to some of their family and personal vulnerabilities. Staff spends on average ten to 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. Information and linkages that support young children transition to kindergarten, child care program or other referrals in the community can be made in these sessions.

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. We offer workshops and advocacy such as tenancy rights, budget workshops, parenting and family programs, and skill building and certificate workshop. Building strong relationships with community partners and agencies provides easy referral processes and utilizes community resources. 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@dzelkant.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 visit
- 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
- Victims Services
- RCMP

3. Non-Child Care Early Learning

• We are able to host a variety of events such as the Three-Year-old 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. This health fair collaborates with Northern Health for immunization, vision and hearing as well as with Child Development Centre for Ages and Stages Questionnaire. Currently at our building we have two non-child care early learning programs funded by Aboriginal Early Child Development.



• Teddy Bear Picnic annual event was hosted at the Houston Public Library. The purpose of the Teddy Bears Picnic is an annual program that includes cultural programs and resources, literacy, nutrition, child care, children's play, parenting and family skills development. It promotes awareness of the critical period of development in children's lives from birth to 6 years. The initiative partners with other groups to strengthen linkages, providing information and support as well as seed money for small projects such as producing resource materials, hosting events and activities for families and their young children.

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. Many of our families come from neighboring communities where cost of living is too high or not available. Holding space where people can come together to advocate and support each other in the fight to overcome risks, build community family and build a strong network of support. As human beings, we need a sense of belonging, and that sense of belonging is what connects us to the many relationships we develop.



5. Supporting Indigenous Culture, Language Revitalization, Cultural Competency

We incorporate indigenous culture into our programming:

- a) Using the medicine wheel for teaching
- b) Inviting elders to welcome participants to events and acknowledging the territory the event is taking place on
- c) Group drumming
- d) Indigenous style crafts and artwork
- e) Traditional medicinal workshops
- f) Inclusion of multiple generations into programming
- g) Traditional storytelling to clients
- h) Traditional storytelling and language lessons to outside partner agencies-daycare
- i) Provide cultural resources and support to other Friendship Centre contracts
- j) Incorporate land based and indigenous toys, items and stories into our programs

We strive to reduce barriers by:

- a) Providing transportation to workshops at our Centre (when able to, dependent on budget, vehicle and staff availability)
- b) Provide healthy snacks and meals to clients attending
- c) Providing childcare to clients attending (funded by different contract)
- d) Providing support staff when we have large groups (funded by different contract)
- e) Inclusion of extended family at events and workshops
- f) Partner with other community agencies to have a food bank on site to help food security for our clients
- g) Provide referrals and work with other community agencies that best support our clients and family's needs.
- h) Provide health promotion and prevention information and services
- i) Provide access to early intervention information referrals and or services
- j) Provide traditional parenting support and information to support children's social and emotional well-being.



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

Picture to Left: Gifting our Elder with Natural Tobacco pouch at our National Indigenous Day Community Event honoring his beautiful words as he opened the ceremony in a good way.





Programs offered in 2019

- The Early Years Program offered a drop-in program every Thursday from 1pm-3pm. The focus of this program is a family centered, holistic culturally diverse and inclusive safe place for families with children ages 0-6. Many of these workshops included working with medicines, harvesting, drumming, and encouraging participation and building community family. Early Years program offered programs that integrate early years services, that focused on improved and positive outcomes for families and children. Some examples of these programs are healing circles, preschool readiness events and programs,
- Preschool Indigenous Circle Time- Incorporating indigenous culture into mainstream teaching to encourage positive and healthy Indigenous culture and learning to protect, preserve and develop traditional indigenous skills and cultures.
- Community events- National Aboriginal Day, Teddy Bear Picnic, Literacy Brunch, ages and stages screening, Community Christmas Event, War Canoe, Missing and Murdered Indigenous woman and children Events, Orange shirt day and more.

Community Events-

Irrigation Lake - ParticipACTION event Sisters in Spirit October 4 2019







Medicine Workshops

The Dze L K'ant Early Years Program offers many medicine workshops throughout the year. The focus being on traditional medicines and traditions, encouraging families to share their own stories, traditions and knowledge and to provide opportunities to make salves, teas and learn from each other and our elders.

- a) The medicines found in and on the land and water help people suffering from physical, mental, emotional and spiritual ailments, along with healing ceremonies promotes holistic wellness.
- b) Opportunity to learn from elders, learn about traditional medicines, opportunity to share your own culture and experiences and come together collectively to harvest, be on the land and share traditional stories, and teachings.
- c) Provide opportunities to grow, share and come together in a collective way. To help create a larger support and community family.
- d) Children experience positive learning, traditions, bonding with parents while harvesting plants and learn about the importance of connecting to nature and land for healing
- e) Families are socially engaged, connecting to child friendly activities and expanding their community support family. Children are out on the land, learning, connecting and bonding.
- f) Enhance sense of cultural belonging and connectedness





Day Care – Story Time/ Indigenous Teachings



Early Years worker provided storytelling, language lessons, medicine teaching and other cultural teachings to outer agencies like the local daycare. The purpose of this is to:

- Increases respect and mutual understanding among those involved.
- Bridge gaps in community and build strong community supports for our early year's families. Parents have a stronger knowledge, resources and community support they need to help their children develop to their full potential.
- Aboriginal children and families have an enhanced sense of cultural belonging and connectedness and have increased socio economic resources to support the development of their children's needs
- Families have access to a range of community and social supports
- Families are socially engaged and are connected to child friendship care and inclusive community.

Goals and Success Indicators of Daycare

Goal 1: to build relationships with vulnerable families, delivering services that inclusive and culturally safe and relevant while enhancing access and reducing barriers.

Goal 2: Coordinate a preschool age appropriate talking circle to facilitate at the daycare once a week for 30 min

Success indicators:

- Having a face in the community that children are eager to come up and practice the teachings and Wet'suwet'en language
- Encouraging them to "story play"indigenous art- not written words they have pictures that tell stories" Example: little boy at daycare gave me a wooden egg to eat and said it







CULTURAL TEACHINGS

- was a story egg. I asked him what a story egg was and he said "see a story egg: there was a circle in the wooden egg that reminds him of the shapes inside indigenous art.
- Indigenous culture being honored and experienced frequently, allowing inclusion and acceptance at an early age.
- Teachings of how nature and land can heal and we can "set things down" on land and not hold it in our bodies.
- Benefits that nature ahs for medical uses, and what ethically harvesting means.
- Teaching of the importance to respect our land, indigenous beliefs and knowing around our land. Feeling of overwhelm in children will be significantly reduce having land/medicine to calm nervous system. *eg cedar brush down, cedar medicine (smelling of cedar to calm anxiety*, grandfather rock medicines- absorb energy we need to let out of our bodies.





The Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Walking Group

Our walking group was provided every Tuesday from 10am – 11:30am. Participants would gather at the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre and walk the community nature trails. Some of these walks we harvested medicines with our children, discussed various topics of interests and most of all had a great time being outside on land with our children. There are so many benefits to this walking group such as:

- Provides Health promotion, information and encourages families to get motivated and participating in a healthier, active lifestyle.
- Promotes improved mental health Being out on the land, learning about land, medicines it holds and how land can heal and hold energies for you
- Families are engaging with their children in an active fun culturally appropriate and safe space
- Learning about different plants and medicinal uses.
- Harvesting for medicine workshops and learning teachings about ethically harvesting
- Creates opportunities for families to build community support networks, and discuss struggles, culture, language and medicine.
- Supports Parents and children's emotional and social well being





War Canoe-ParticipACTIon Event June 13, 2019



Over 60 people participated in The Particiap ACTION community Better Challenge Event is a national annual physical challenge that rallies communities coast to coast to sit less and move more together! The Dze L'Kant Friendship Centre hosted a two-week walking challenge where we encouraged participants to walk and track their every step, and joined together every Tuesday Morning for a 1.5-hour walking group. We ended this challenge with a celebration event at Irrigation lake on June 13. There were Games, singing and drumming, Tia chi, and rowing in sync in the beautiful Nyibegh War canoe. Nyibegh Means stability in Wet'suwet'en. "We want to be stable in our lives and on the water. How we are living it shows while we are on the water. You can do the same thing we are doing on the canoe in your life. You can live a beautiful stable life with effort, self-control, by having fun, listening to your parents, and elders..." Mel Basil while steering the war canoe. We owned the war canoes since 2005, and worked with community in the canoe for the last thirteen years. The new West Coast Art is from Smogelgem, a Lihkts'amisyu Hereditary Chief. It is of a Lake Monster Design on the Bow and a pod of Killer Whales elders and youth at the stern





Missing and Murdered Indigenous Woman and Girls & Sisters in Spirit March

Missing and Murder Indigenous Woman and Girls & Sisters In Spirit March were two events that our Early Year's families participated and hosted in our community. The purpose of the events is to promote awareness, educate that the understanding of violence against woman, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA, First Nations, Inuit and Metis woman and Girls people in Canada have been the targets of violence for far too long. It is important for families to be able to gather together and reclaim power and place within our community sw. To gather have a voice, bring medicine and healing, practice cultural ceremony, drum, sing and call for social change and action.

A great outcome of these events is that families are inspired, connected and gather together to have a voice and heal together. Many of these woman and youth have stepped up and helped prep food, organize the event, had a voice to tell their stories, became involved by participating in the march, making signs and medicines and lead the group in song and drumming.







PAGE 14







National Indigenous People's Day June 21, 2019

National Indigenous Peoples Day is an official day of celebration to recognize and honour the heritage, cultures and valuable contributions to society by First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. It is estimated that 150,000 Indigenous children were forced into the residential schools that operated from the late 1800s until the last one closed in 1996. While at the schools the children were taught or forced to accept that they, their families and cultures were inferior to European culture and lifestyle. The children learned to be ashamed of their identity. It has been a struggle for many individuals and communities ever since to relearn, regain, and revitalize what was taken. This is an opportunity for families to have a voice celebrate their history because doing so helps to stop the loss and grow their cultures. Having families and community celebrate their history invigorates pride in being Indigenous, in their existence and in the preservation of their cultures, protocols, spirituality, traditions, and languages.

National Indigenous Peoples Day is recognized as June 21 each year and is a time for all Canadians - Indigenous, non-Indigenous and newcomers to reflect upon and learn the history, sacrifices, cultures, contributions, and strength of First Nations, Inuit and Metis people. In Houston, we celebrated National Indigenous Peoples Day was celebrated on June 20th 2019 at our community Jamie Baxter Park. We collaborated with other community agencies and partners and provided food, activities, Elder stories, indigenous dancer and Jingle Dress dancer, prayer ties, and landbased play activities for children. Over 200 people joined us in celebration.





PAGE 15



INTRODUCTION

Though out the 2019-2020 fiscal year the Connections Program hosted by the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society, worked both individually and collaboratively with individuals and families to promote, support and enhance healthy families, child safety and permanency.

The primary goal of a parent support program is to provide support and information in ways that help parents become more capable and competent. The key characteristics of family-centered practices include: treating families with dignity and respect; providing individual, flexible and responsive support; sharing information so families can make informed decisions; ensuring family choice regarding intervention options; and providing the necessary resources and supports for parents to care for their children in ways that produce optimal parent and child outcomes. Assuring that all children experience safe, stable and nurturing environments is an important goal for the Connections program, supporting the parents and their journey with MCFD and by providing a safe and culturally based youth program. The youth have been engaged in cultural activities on a regular basis and are flourishing.

All children and youth deserve to be in a place where they are safe, are treated with dignity and respect, feel valued, and have a voice in matters affecting their lives. They deserve to live in a place where their needs are met and where they have the ability to prepare for the next stage of their lives, whether that means returning to their family home and or transitioning to adulthood. The AFD and ACY workers engage in a process of supported referrals, ensuring that caseload clients feel comfortable, and supported while accessing the variety of service they need. The AFD and ACY workers are proficient in determining client needs, forming relationships, working with tantum with other service providers, family members to sustain those in need. A large area of need that is addressed is around establishing, strengthening, and maintaining culturally relevant networks of supportive and community connections.

The Youth program remains a vital service for the Aboriginal youth of Houston. It is open to youth aging out of care, here they are connected with service that help to improve outcome related to life, education, mental health, physical health, parenting and cultural connections.

The AFD and ACY workers engage in a process of supported referrals, ensuring that caseload clients feel comfortable ,and supported while accessing the variety of service they need. The AFD and ACY workers are proficient in determining client needs, forming relationships, working

with tantum with other service providers, family members to sustain those in need.

Our Client group consists of at risk Aboriginal families

Our Client group consists of at risk Aboriginal families with school age children and youth, families of school age children receiving services under CFCSA, youth up to age 26 who have aged out of CFCSA and young families with a parent (up to age 26) who has aged out of CFCSA care.

YEAR END NARRATIVE

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

Referrals to this service stream are received from MCFD offices in Smithers, Hazelton and the ASSET worker at the high school. This year we have been working closely with the ASSET worker to identify and connect with at risk youth. Our after school program, run under a different MCFD contract has been helpful with identifying and referring school age children, resulting in connecting them with our services.

Some of the community partners include, Bulkley Valley Learning Centre, Houston Link to Learning, Northern Health and Northern Society for Domestic Peace and more.

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

During this year referrals have come into this stream through, self-referrals, community partners, and the MCFD office from Smithers, Hazelton and Prince George. The amount of referrals show the importance and effectiveness of this program as well as the positivity in which the program is regarded in.

3. Aboriginal families with a you parent who aged-out of care as whose children are in care or risk of removal, will be ident & received intake into AFD service stream.

This year we identified with two young families with children in care. Both families were aware of the friendship center and its services, both families were referral through MCDF. The families were able to set up intake appts with the center and start participating in the services they required.

The AFD worker stays in contact with the MCFD worker and works closely with the family and MCFD. The AFD worker is a necessary part for good communication, provided advocacy and additional support for the parent. Keeping child protection and safety our main concern.



4. Referring social workers other referring community partners communicated within a timely manner and invited to participa coordinated service planning meeting

Communication is a priority for the connections program. When having received a referral the AFD worker will contact the client within 48 hrs, after having established contact the worker will again contact the referring agency. Coordinating meetings for a service plan is the next step, the client can request those they want to attend. The program staff maintain frequent contact with the MCFD worker and other community services. We are able to close the gaps in services and care plans thanks to our ongoing efforts to sustain open communications with all involved.

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

The connections program services an Urban Aboriginal population including many Nations. Through intake process therapeutic relationships are fostered, cultural backgrounds are uncovered and supported. Relatives and community members are identified by the clients. A sense of belonging and permanence has been felt by clients through these relationships. These connection are supported by the staff and have grown in many ways, Facebook, Skype. As these connection grow stronger we have seen a number clients participating in cultural gatherings in their home communities.

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

The AFD/ACY staff work hard to support and strengthen family members caring for children through current EFP's. BY continued one on one meetings with our clients along with group gatherings assessments and reassessments can be accomplished, allowing us to navigate the safety and supportiveness of home environments, family dynamics and the special relationship for everyone involved.

7. Collaborative service planning meetings are organized, hosted and facilitated with all stakeholder.

The Connection Program is essential in hosting, organizing and facilitating collaborative service planning meetings. Creating a successful network for our clients is vital, having the opportunity

to voice their own concerns give the client a sense of pride and confidence.

The Connections program works closely with community services, Houston Link to Learning, and local mental and addictions workers.

8. Direct in-home and outreach supports have been provided to identify, and assess risks to child safety, and support the removal of risk to child safety.

Outreach and home visit to client families are done on a weekly basis by the AFD worker on a needed basis. These families are in imminent risk of their children going into care, or who are preparing for the return of their children. During a visit the AFD worker can observe the family in their home environment and be able to see and address and child safety issues. This service allows the AFD worker to observe the family then share the findings regarding parenting style, areas of strength and weaknesses. Intervention and supports are then tailored to fit their individual needs. This set the foundation needed to help the family and the AFD worker work on removing risk to child safety.



9. Through individual and group based intervention, risks to child safety and optimal outcomes have been identified.

Through regular check in with client the staff are able to be aware of the situation and circumstances of our clients. One on one appointments are easy to access, more extensive and deep meeting are always accessible with the staff. Many of client are dealing with some kind of trauma either personal or intergenerational. Meeting with the clients is a way of supporting and strengthening relationships. These are great ways for the staff to able to identify any risks, and to make plans for to ensure the safety and development of all involved. These meeting are a way for our clients to feel heard, validated and be empowered to forward in life.

10. Meaningful, relevant and effective plans have been put in place to support the remove risks.

The plans are a result of the client's needs that they have communicated with the AFD/ACY workers through collaborative service meetings. The success of these plans shows in the number of children not entering care and the number of children returning to their homes. Violence, substance abuse and neglect are some of the risks that were removed through counselling, parents education and outreach. Improving the outcomes for the children and their families.

11. Families, children and youth have direct support that follows the as they navigate through the various systems and supports that have been set up for them.

A primary objective of the program is to connect the clients with services to meet their needs. Guiding the client through their healing process is a priority for the AFD/ACY worker, ensuring they have all the available recourses needed to be successful. Attending initial appointment with new services helps to make the client feel comfortable increasing the chance they will access the service regularly.

12. Children, youth and families will have access to an advocate to help them voice their needs, and support relationship with various involved agencies.

The cornerstone of the connections program is advocacy. The relationship between the client and FAD/ACY worker is essential. Trust is a must in order to help the client navigate through their concerns and barriers. Having a therapeutic relationship with caseload client, helps them be open and honest with their weakness, this helps the FAD/ACY worker to plan and tailor service plans that will move the client forward.

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

This year has been a year of changes from new staff to returning staff, all having a positive outcome, making our team stronger and in there helping our youth and clients thrive. All plans and activities surrounding their culture. We are and urban center that services people from many different nations. All client receive individual support in identifying and strengthens supportive connections with their community. The client then are able to share their connections with the center other programs.











Some of the challenges the program faced this year have been

Lack of resources -While Houston does have some resources there are some many in need that the wait times are very long as well as scheduled appts there are long waiting in between. There is just not enough people or funding to help fill, this gap.

- 1. **Affordable Housing** Many of our client are low income and are almost forced to live in places that are run down, high rent and in a less desirable part of town.
- 2. **Travel** Travel is a big challenge many of our client need to travel out of town for medical services. While our Center does at time provide rides to clients that are attending a program we are not able to provide rides for clients walking up the hill with all their shopping or to any out of town appts.
- 3. **Shelters** There are time when a female client is in need for a safe place and there is no place for them to go, so they don't leave a bad situation.



While I realize that most if these challenges are not in our contract mandate, they are still issues frontline workers deal with on a day to day basis. Being able to access training to help fill in the gaps between services, and the clients by being able to support them the best way possible.

Dze L K'ant

Youth Program

Youth Quotes

ACY Connections Worker

Carrie Abraham



hang with my friends

I get to get away from my siblings. Get to have good food.

Get to see Carrie

I like coming for the food, its fun get to be with my friends

Have no where else to go. Get good

The food, it chill here, get to be with my friends.

I get to see Carrie, good food and friendship.

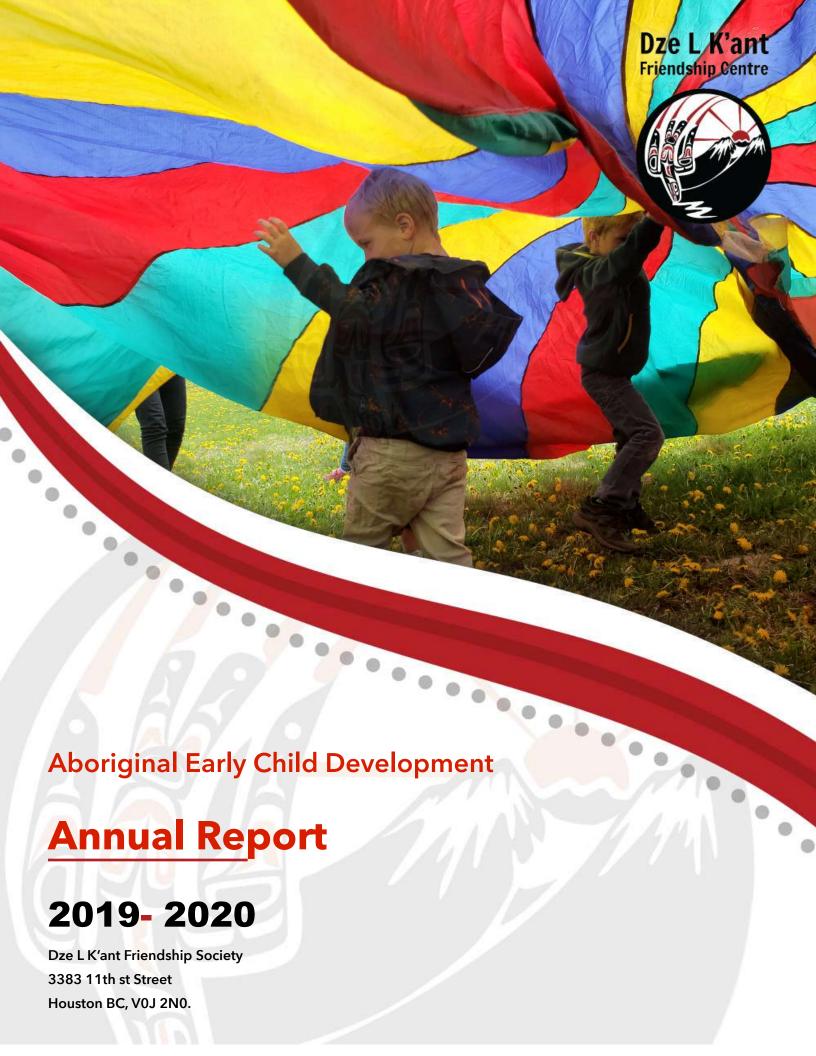
We play fun games!

Social Interaction

See Carrie

Good Food

Friendships



Aboriginal Early Child Development

Program Overview

Through out the past year, the Dze L K'ant friendship centre facilitated the Aboriginal Early childhood Development contract through the ministry of children and family. This contract provides a direct, culturally appropriate service to vulnerable indigenous families and the broader community of Houston. Families are supported to improve their parental capacity, and improve outcomes for indigenous children 0-6 years old and their families.

Supportive relationships from the basis of our service delivery. We work with parents and caregivers to address barriers that are preventing safe, effective parenting. Many of these barriers and vulnerabilities are often rooted in intergenerational trauma. Clients are offered a variety of formats, including group and individual sessions, to help empower clients in a culturally meaningful way to break the cycle of family trauma and be the best parents that they can be.



Goals of Program

- A) Provide families with access to a range of culturally appropriate early childhood prevention and intervention services that promote positive parenting and increase capacity to effectively parent.
- B) Connect families with formal and informal community supports
- C) Reduce the incidence of children born with fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.
- D) Aboriginal communities delivering a range of culturally relevant, sustainable community- based early child-hood services.

The Aboriginal Early Childhood development services incorporate four distinct service areas that are connected to enhance outcomes for children, families and their communities. The service areas are intended to achieve the following goals:

- 1 Improving parenting and family supports
- 2 promoting Healthy Pregnancy, Birth and infancy
- 3 Strengthening Early Childhood Development, Learning and care.
- 4 Strengthening Community Supports



AECD Support Services

- Enriching Programs for Children 0-6 yrs
- Confidential Counselling
- Family Support Worker
- Pregnancy Outreach Worker
- Advocacy for MCFD clients
- Support for MCFD clients
- Supervised visits
- Home Visits
- Story Circle
- Parenting Classes
- Parent Resources
- AECD Community Kitchen

AECD program Staff:

AECD coordinator 35 hrs/wkFamily Support Worker 28 hrs/wk

• Pregnancy Outreach Worker 28 hrs/wk

• Early Childhood Educator 28 hrs/wk

147 total AECD staffing hours per week

Improving parenting and Family supports

A) Provide families with access to a range of culturally appropriate early childhood prevention and intervention services that promote positive parenting and increase capacity to effectively parent.

Round Table:

Offered once per week, facilitated by the family support worker., This drop in program focuses on supporting parents by providing education, social connections, skill building opportunities and cultural activities. Participants are able to establish healthy networks with their peers as well as access to community supports and referrals. This program offers workshops, discussions, a culturally appropriate craft or activity while engaging families in conversation around parenting.

AECD Kitchen

The AECD community Kitchen is a program dedicated to help alleviate the ongoing food insecurities. The Participants of this program vary in their needs from moderate to severe food security, We reduce barriers, equip families with access, tools and knowledge around food and nutrition which helps alleviate other issues that may arise preventing effective parenting. The program is offered every Wednesday and offers two sessions with 8 family spots in each session for a total of 16 families receiving a nutritious meal. We currently have 19 families registered in this program. Partici-

pants are led through the preparation of nutritious, cost efficient meals that will feed a family. Nutrition, budgeting, meal planning and family participation are the fundamentals of this program.







Provide an enriched environment that provides and encourages development opportunities for children.

Tadpoles: Tadpoles is a play based kindergarten readiness program that involves parent participation. This inclusive program aims to promote developmentally enriching opportunities while providing parents with skills to better support their children's growth. We offer culturally rich programs that supports the vision that all indigenous children have the opportunity to experience high quality, culturally strong early learning. This program includes, a nutritious snack, child centred developmentally appropriate cultural exploration developed by a an Early child educator

Provide support to children and families with special needs.

Our centre is fully inclusive, meeting children and families we are they at and supporting them in their journeys. We offer our ECE room up as a meeting space for appointments such as Child development, speech and language and physiotherapy space for families who prefer this instead of home visits.

The 3 yr old Screening: Our trained staff, along with CDC and Northern health, Facilitated the ASQ assessment and successfully referred 3 children to outer agencies for further support. This included assisting parents with appointments with the C.D.C, Thomas Robinson Consulting, and assisting with applying for the Jordans Principle funding.

Health management for children.

We host visits from northern health twice per year for oral health, vision and hearing tests, in addition to offering vaccination updates. This allows parents to access services on a drop in basis in an welcoming non-judgemental environment.

Play Gym

Play gym is offered every Wednesday during the winter months at the Houston Community Hall. The children have room to run, jump and exert energy. We offer a multiple of developmentally appropriate gross motor toys and equipments including scooters, balls, balance beams hoops, ribbons, tunnels and so much more. Play Gym has also proved to be a great opportunity to encourage caregivers to venture from home





CREATIVE OPEN ENDED ART ACTIVITY.

on the cold winter months and create connections with other caregivers, while engaging in heathy parent/ child activity together.





ENJOYING SOME PLAY TIME WITH MOM



Family Supports

Families have a an increased access to to a range of family supports:

The AECD staff are skilled at assessing clients needs and navigating families to help provide appropriate, supportive referrals to vulnerable families. Families are met with a challenging rental crisis in Houston with projection of the crisis worsening in the near future to do the population swelling with the L.N.G project. We offer workshops and advocacy, parenting programs, and continued training certification to better equip our families and have tools to meet these challenges. The Dze L' K'ant friendship centre has strong relationship with community partners and agencies, allowing an easy referral process.

Clients can drop in to our centre during business hours 8:30-4:30 Mon- Fri . Or call to make an appointment. We also post upcoming community and centre events on our Face book page Dze L K'ant Friendship centre Houston Office.

Community Partners and referred agencies.

- Houston Link to Learning
- Ministry of Children and Family
- Northern Health Authority
- Child development Centre.
- Northern Society for Domestic Peace
- Interagency referrals to our programs including, our aboriginal Patient Liaison, Parent supports mental health supports and A.E.C.D kitchen
- Strong Start and Jump Start Programs
- Family law advice, Free service that is offered twice per month at our centre.
- Bean Stalk Daycare
- Salvation Army
- Victims Services/ R.C.M.P.
- Witset Band Office- Indian Status Assistance
- Jordan's Principal (information, and application assistance)
- Child Care Subsidy (information and application assistance)
- Thomas Robinson Consulting- Professional Support Services.

Work shops Offered By the Dze L'Kant Friendship centre from April 2019- March 2020.

- Occupation First aide level 3- This course was offered at the Houston Office, Ran at full capacity and had a 100% pass rate allowing our clients to increase their skills and certification for re-entry back into the work force.
- **Food-safe Level 1** This course was offered at the Houston Centre and received a 100 % pass rate from participants. Giving them an increased skill and an advantage when applying for employment.
- **Drivers Training Course** 4 day Program covering text book, and practical delivery of the course material to obtain a L, N, and class 5 drivers licence. Allowing participants to gain the drivers licence to reduce transportation barriers.
- **Traditional Medicine Workshops-** Focusing on medicine traditions. Combing intergenerational knowledge in making Salves, and teas, promoting holistic wellness.
- **Family Budget** Held once per month in partnership with Houston Link to Learning, this workshop gives clients tools to track their finances, plan for financial goals and to effectively develop a week to week financial plan for their family.
- **Tenancy Rights:** This workshop is aimed at empowering participants by understanding their rights, responsibilities, communicate effectively with landlords and provide resources and referrals for advocacy
- Information collaborative on Indian Status and band membership- Clients are able to gain information regarding rights, and benefits and gaining support for and during the application process.
- **Strengthening families parenting Program** 14 week program focusing on strengthening family units, communication, enhance child development and reduce the risks of child abuse and neglect.
- **medicine wheel teaching** To reinforce our connection to the medicine wheel and develop effective coping skills.
- **Traditional medicinal workshops** Traditional medicine workshops focus on ethical harvesting. Making salves and teas, and learning the medicinal properties and traditions of medicines.
- **Indigenous crafts and artwork.-** therapeutic, empowering activities, such as beading, Painting, drum making, and sewing beautiful traditional shawls and Blankets.
- **Child safe first aide** Offered to all parents with young children to increase awareness around health, safety, and life saving measures to empower parents, and increase confidence.

Community Event Highlights

- **Teddy Bear Picnic** An annual Multi agency event hosted at the Houston Public Library with a goal of connecting families to essential child development supports all in one convenient location. The event includes supports and resources pertaining to Child care, nutrition, literacy, Developmental screening, vision and dental checks all in a child centred, fun environment. The Friendship centre support this event along with other agencies by contributing financial support, and quality station support advocating our services in the community.
- Christmas Community Luncheon- The Dze L K' ant Friendship Centre Partnered with Houston Link to Learning, along with other generous community donations and supports, to host a Community Christmas Luncheon. This even took place at the Royal Canadian Legion Banquet hall where Friendship centre, Houston Link to Learning Staff and Community businesses rallied together to cook and provide a Turkey dinner for over 200 men,



women and children. The Event was a huge success, with an opportunity for the community to come together and provide and share a meal with our communities most vulnerable



Staff and Community Servers

Participation Event. Walking Group and outdoor celebration.

This year, the Dze L' Kant Friendship centre participated in ParticipAction, This is a annual physical initiative Challenge that rallies communities coast to coast to sit less and move more together! Participants were encouraged to walk and track their every step. The collective goal of the walking group was 5 klm. This group has helped clients get active while gaining social supports.

We ended the challenge with a celebration event at Irrigation lake on June 13th. There were games, singing and drumming, Tia Chi, and rowing in sync in the beautiful Nigh War canoe. Nyibegh means stability in Wet's suwet'en. "we want to be stable in our lives and on the water" (Mel Basil)



ENJOYING NATURE WHILE WALKING DURING THE PARTICIPATION EVENT WITH HIS GRANDMOTHER.





National Indigenous Peoples Day



Community Healing Practices: Connect Family spiritually to the Indigenous ways of the past and present, promoting family, Community traditions and cultural values.

National Indigenous Peoples Day is celebrated on June 21st . A Day of celebration to recognize and honour the achievements, history and rich cultures of Indigenous, Inuit and Metis peoples in Canada. As a community we recognize and honour the heritage, cultures and valuable contributions to our community.

In Houston, The Dze L k'ant friendship centre hosted a community celebration on June 20th at JamieBaxter Park . We collaborated with other community agencies and partners and provided food, music, activities , Elder stories Indigenous dancer and jingle dress dancer, prayer, and nature based activities for the children. This celebration was well received with over 200 people in attendance



PERFORMANCE BY THE SILVER -THORNE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DRUMMERS.

PREGNANCY OUTREACH:

- 1. Promote Healthy Pregnancy, Birth and Infancy
- a. Provide education and counselling and specific to prenatal, maternal, and newborn care, Well Woman Care, Well Infant Care, Harm reduction strategies.

Regular Public Health Nurse, Referral to outer agencies, Group Sessions on mental health and wellness through journaling and offering resources for

Perinatal/Postnatal Depression scale etc.

b. Provide education specific to FASD and substance abuse

For the FASD awareness month, we provided educational resources, played fun

interactive games with weekly incentives to keep people engaged in learning. In

addition we hosted Nathalie Brassard from FASCETS Canada West to present on neurological disorders. We finished off the month with a Celebration BBQ and door prizes from Community donors.

c. Provide Pregnancy Testing

Free Pregnancy tests are available and distributed as needed.

d. Provide nutritional Information and support healthy eating (voucher)

Nutritious snacks are provided during each weekly groups while providing clients

an opportunity to try new healthier food choices.

During the Summer months we partnered with the BC Farmers Market

Association Market Voucher Program to help bridge the gap in food security providing vouchers for over 15 families.



e. Facilitate Support Circles for pregnant and parenting Aboriginal families,

prenatal/postnatal drop in group, peer support network

Weekly program sessions are held at the Dze K'ant Friendship Centre in a laid

back environment giving mothers and fathers an opportunity to connect, relax and learn new

Skills through various crafting projects, mental health and wellness through

journaling and much more.

f. Provide one-on-one counselling



INFANT MASSAGE CLASS, 6 WEEK SESSIONS.



P.O.P IS NOT JUST FOR MOMS!!



FASD AWARENESS MONTH.

One on one support is available as needed with referrals to our licensed in house

mental health clinical as well as other resources in the community as needed

g. Provide Pregnancy outreach/home visits

Various home support visits have happened over the course of the year we were

able to provide a young mother expecting twins with another little one at home with some needed support as she prepared for new babies

h. Develop birth plans and action plans (pre and post natal)

We have provided support and resources to expectant mothers in their birth and action plans. Including education on pain management, natural comfort



CREATED A VEGETABLE GARDEN FOR POP CLIENTS TO ACCESS.





DESTRESS ACTIVITIES AND CONNECTING WITH OTHER MOMS.

strategies as well as positive reinforcement of healthy baby is the most important

outcome. We have also coordinated supporting families who need to stay in

Smithers who do not have their own transportation. As well as liaising with the

First Nations Health Authority to set up accommodations and food vouchers close

to the hospital ahead of time.

i. Provide newborn (essentials baskets)

Over the year we provided baskets with diapers, cream, nursing pads, newborn

outfit and more to new Mothers.

j. Provide transportation for families to attend programs/activities, medical

appointments

We offer rides with our agencies SUV when there are extreme weather

conditions, or other barriers to attend our groups. Bus passes are also available

for those travelling out of town for prenatal medication appointments.

k. Referrals to Early Childhood Development programs and other community

resources and supports

We connect families in need of additional resources, further assessments and

supports as needed on a case by case basis; Whether that is Bulkley Valley Child

Development, the local health nurse, Beanstalk Daycare or various other agencies.

Current Programming Schedule

MONDAN	THECDAY	WEDNIEGDAN	THUDEDAY	Evidov
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	Friday
Please call for appointments: Counselling Prenatal education Family Support Advocacy	10:00am - 11:30 am Tadpole play group Come & play! Kids ages 1-6 years old Socialize, crafts, circle time & more!	10:00am – 11:30 am (Winter Months Only) Active play gym @ the community hall (2302 Butler avenue). Join us for active play with a range of indoor equipment. Run, Jump, Throw for children ages 18months – 4 years.	10:00 am – 11:30 am Tadpole play group Come & play! Kids ages 1-6 years old Socialize, crafts, circle time & more!	Please call for appointments: Counselling Prenatal education Family Support Advocacy
	DROP IN	Parent participation encouraged. **DROP IN** 10am -12pm Community Kitchen Join us to make healthy, family friendly meals to take home. 2 Time slots available Sign up and Registration required.	**DROP IN**	
1:00pm - 3:00pm Round Table Parent Support	1:00pm - 3:00pm Early Years Program	1:00pm-3:00pm Community Kitchen	1:00pm - 3:00pm Pregnancy Outreach Program	1:00pm-2:30pm Sobriety Circle & Parenting
Program				support circle.
Join us for a craft, chat with other parents & professionals about the joys & challenges of the early years. Child minding available	Join us for a craft, chat with other parents & professionals about the joys & challenges of the early years. Child minding available	Join us to make healthy, family friendly meals to take home. 2 Time slots available sign up required. Child minding available. ***Please sign up****	For expectant families, up to 1 year after birth. Information, crafts, speakers & activities. Child minding available for older children.	Child minding available
** DROP IN**	**DROP IN**		**DROP IN**	
3:00pm-5:00pm Monday-Friday After school program Free drop in program for kids ages 8-12 years.	3:00pm-5:00pm Monday-Friday After school program Free drop in program for kids ages 8-12 years.	3:00pm-5:00pm Monday-Friday After school program Free drop in program for kids ages 8-12 years.	3:00pm-5:00pm Monday-Friday After school program Free drop in program for kids ages 8-12 years.	3:00pm-5:00pm Monday-Friday After school program Free drop in program for kids ages 8-12 years.
3:00pm- 8:00pm Teen Program Monday - Friday Free drop in program for teens 13- 18 years.	3:00pm- 8:00pm Teen Program Monday - Friday Free drop in program for teens 13-18 years.	3:00pm- 8:00pm Teen Program Monday - Friday Free drop in program for teens 13- 18 years.	3:00pm- 8:00pm Teen Program Monday - Friday Free drop in program for teens 13-18 years.	3:00pm- 8:00pm Teen Program Monday - Friday Free drop in program for teens 13-18 years.

AECD Programs

CONTACT US

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

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