

GOOZIH DUST'LUS



May/June 2024

Tachick Lake Road to the New Healing Centre

Bringing Tradition Home

Reconnect with tradition
in your home - creating a
pathway between family
life and culture

Celebrating Generosity
BBQ event honours contribution
towards Foundry Burns Lake



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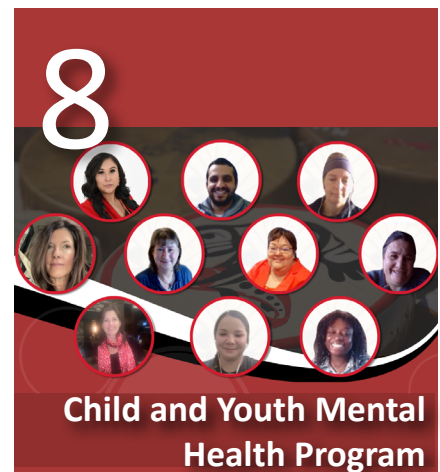


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A Message from the Executive Director of Health Services

Travis
Holyk

In the spirit of celebrating National Nursing Week this month, I would like to extend our deepest appreciation to all the Carrier Sekani Family Services (CSFS) nursing staff serving wholeheartedly across communities. Your dedication and compassion are truly commendable. We remain grateful for your invaluable contributions to promoting medically sound and culturally informed health services. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to CSFS' mission to serve and advocate for holistic health and wellness services.

CSFS' commitment to work together with member Nations to provide vital resources, create services and support for Indigenous youth across the region has led to key partnerships that have supported our continued health and wellness initiatives, and led to new developments. Together, we continue to highlight the importance of investing in the well-being and future of youth in community. As an example of our work with community partners, we express our appreciation for Rio Tinto and their donation of \$600,000 towards the ongoing project. Making the centre a reality would not be possible without donations such as this, as the capital project was

ambitious. Thanks to the Foundry Team for ensuring we make a positive impact on the lives of young people in the Burns Lake area.

On that same note, CSFS is excited to lead the development of a Foundry centre to serve families and youth in Vanderhoof. Foundry Vanderhoof will serve the immediate community, with plans to provide satellite services to Nadleh Whut'en, Stelat'en, and Saik'uz First Nation, as well as Fraser Lake to improve youth services along Highway 16. The initial process will include the formation of planning and engagement committees and initiation of capital process, which will include site selection. More information will be provided soon.

May 2024 marks the start to our last seasonal Addictions Recovery Program at Ormond Lake Camp (Nadleh Whu'ten) as we look to transition the Carrier Sekani Family Services Healing Centre at Tachick Lake, a residential treatment program located on Saik'uz First Nation territory. The new centre will run year-round and will continue to follow land-based healing programs for individuals on their healing journey. Medical withdrawal management (detox), supported by a team of nurse practitioners and nurses, will be

available at Ormond Lake this year as part of the transition plan.

The proposed opening of the centre early next year marks a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to address addiction within the communities we serve. We are excited for this next step forward that would not be possible without all of the hard work by the trailblazers who pushed for addiction services as a core program since the beginning of CSFS. We would like to specifically thank and acknowledge the community of Nadleh Whut'en for providing cabins, and for healers, hunters and cooks who donated their time when funding was limited because they recognized the need. Ormond Lake did land based healing before it was even the phrase used to describe this activity.

On behalf of CSFS leadership and staff, we would like to recognize and commend your continued support and dedication to our organization's mission. Together, we continue to strive for the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples.

Mussi cho,

Travis Holyk

Tachick Lake – Road to the New Healing Centre

From the CSFS Addictions Recovery Program

May 2024 marks 30th and final year of CSFS' Addictions Recovery Program (ARP) at the Ormond Lake Cultural Healing Camp on Nadleh territory. By spring 2025, the ARP team with the Addictions and Substance Use Withdraw nursing team will be moving to its new location at the Tachick Lake Healing Centre. This transition is a bittersweet one. The Addictions Recovery Team will honour the lessons, memories, tears, laughs, and stories we experienced at Ormond Lake, and we are looking forward to the future and expansion of our work to a year-round facility.

ARP's vision statement remains "Culture is Healing." Our vision statement guides us to continue integrating traditional and Western treatment strategies. ARP's mission statement is "To create a healing environment by utilizing a holistic approach that promotes a cultural lifestyle free from addictions and

restores a sense of pride in the Carrier and Sekani culture."

We believe the Carrier Sekani culture and spiritual way of living, which honours and respects all of creation, will empower and strengthen First Nations communities

As per FNHA's Toxic Drug Reports, Indigenous people in BC account for 3% of the population but recorded 17.7% of toxic drug deaths in the first six months of 2023. Since the Province declared a public health emergency in 2016, toxic drug poisoning has taken the lives of 2,091 First Nations people.

Through interactions with the ARP, clients have identified that the loss of traditions and weakening of cultural identity is a main factor behind their addictions. This is a strong reason for our need to transition to an all-year-round healing facility. This sentiment follows the vision that was shared by

Nations' Elders at the birth of CSFS.

We believe in providing support that addresses addictions from an intergenerational lens that helps clients connect to traditions and the land. It's important for everyone involved to participate, pay attention, and build capacity within people and the Nations we serve. Tachick Lake Healing Centre will help us realize our vision of year-round on-the-ground services. As we look to step into the new centre, we acknowledge and thank the community and leadership of Nadleh Whut'en for their commitment to continuously assisting and allowing us to provide our seasonal treatment services on their territory.

If you need to access CSFS addictions recovery services or more information on this subject including programs offered, contact: Renee John at arp@csfs.org.



**Top: Tachick Healing Centre,
Saik'uz First Nation**

**Left: Ormond Lake Camp,
Nadleh Whut'en**



Nadleh Baby Welcoming Ceremony | March 2024

Bringing Tradition Home

An Indigenous parenting program with traditional values for parenting in today's world.

By Meagan Howard-Gibbon



Growing up as a city kid far away from my Nation, I often felt disconnected from my culture. The absence of tradition left me feeling isolated and unsure of where I belonged. This feeling is something that many Indigenous people who, like me, straddle the line between Western and Carrier culture are familiar with.

As I've matured, I've made an effort to bridge that gap. Engaging in Bah'lats, embracing drumming, and supporting community events have become transformational in strengthening the connections to my roots. As I look towards parenthood, I feel compelled to bring tradition into my own home and everyday life. This shared experience of reconnection is what spurred the creation of Bringing Tradition Home, a program that invites participants to connect to their culture.

Bringing Tradition Home creates pathways between family life and connections to culture. At the heart of the program lies the wisdom of Elders and Knowledge Holders who share insights, traditions, ceremonies, and stories passed down through generations. Parents and caregivers have a chance to discuss their experiences in an open environment with other caregivers and a trained facilitator. This is a program that blends tradition with present-day caregiving.

"When you bring up children knowing and appreciating their culture, they grow up developing a sense of identity and belonging. They become strong, independent adults who feel confident about their heritage, language, traditions, and customs," says Raelene Fietz, Family Preservation Worker. "The support and relationships are great when it comes to being a family unit and it's not just the mother's role to guide and nurture children. It takes a whole village! This can include aunts, uncles or even grandparents. This support ensures that children can grow and become who they were created to be."

Parents are often the first and most significant influencers in a child's life. They serve as role models and guides in shaping their children's beliefs,

values and behaviours, including those related to culture.

"In Carrier culture, mothers are often regarded as the main caregivers of children. Their tireless work is often done quietly and is all-encompassing," Raelene says.

"They are the caregivers, educators, and guides for our young ones, and they taught emotional support and health and wellness through hands-on techniques. These important roles are pivotal in shaping the lives of young ones and are often taken for granted.

"Similarly, fathers stand as pillars of guidance, instilling values of honour, respect, and tradition in their children. Through their actions and teachings, they show us our strengths. Whether through teaching traditions such as hunting, or being a leader in the community."

The influence of parents extends far beyond the walls of the home, shaping children's attitudes, beliefs, and aspirations as they navigate the world. Let us take the time to appreciate parents and caregivers who serve as conduits for cultural knowledge, ensuring that traditions, languages, values, and practices are preserved and passed on to future generations.

Sarah's Story

Updates from our Jurisdiction department

Content warning: this article deals with discussions of child removal. Please take care before reading.

A short story by Mary Teegee - Gray

It is a hot, sticky day — dust from the unpaved roads seems to linger in the stagnant air — this doesn't dissuade the children from playing in the open fields by the dusty street. Even the birds are too hot to sing so the only noise on Wells Street is the sound of laughing and shrieking coming from the wild and free children unencumbered from worry and hurt; even for just a few happy moments.

An older child comes running into the field yelling "the welfare is coming — the welfare is coming!" All children stop what they are doing and run to hide in the trees, some jump into the muddy ditches. Only a scant few minutes later, a blue slow moving sedan with government stickers comes lumbering down the road, seemingly heavy with the weight of its mission. I run so fast through the bushes to take the long way back home.

My heart is going to burst but I don't stop for fear they will catch me. I rush into my house where my father is watching the 1976 Olympics and my mother is beading at the table, all is good, I am safe. That evening I hear my parents saying that the Jones children were taken away, my mother crying as she knew we would probably never see them again."

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Sarah's Story represents an experience known all too well by Carrier and Sekani families. The removal of children from communities is one of the darkest stains of colonization that continues to impact families. While these stories are painful, they are important to keep

close to our hearts as they remind us why jurisdiction is vital for the future of Nations and for children.

Carrier and Sekani people have always looked after children. Pre-contact, children were surrounded by culture, clan and community. Traditional child rearing practices saw children raised by a community of care where everyone had a role and responsibility in raising a child. Every child knew and experienced love.

On February 9, 2024 the Supreme Court of Canada made a landmark decision when they upheld C-92, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families. With the Act being recognized as constitutional, the pathway under C-92 for Indigenous Laws to have paramouncy over provincial child and family service laws is reaffirmed. This decision by the Supreme Court confirms the way for Nations to focus their time and resources to the work that matters: caring for children.

In co-creating child and family law together CSFS and member Nations are breathing life into Carrier and Sekani laws that have existed since time immemorial. This Carrier and Sekani child and family law, this law of love, will not be new to Carrier and Sekani people; however, it is now in 2024 that Carrier and Sekani people are able to stand on the shoulders of those who came before and witness the Bah'lats, the knowledge and traditions passed down by the ancestors, be recognized by the Courts of Canada as the rightful law of the land.

Together with Nations, CSFS is working toward a future where Carrier and Sekani children are surrounded by their culture, where families continue to be heard and supported; where Nations continue

to be guided by traditional wisdom and practices. The future is Carrier and Sekani children living up to their fullest potential.

Learn more about the jurisdiction journey at www.csfs.org/jurisdiction.



Dakelh Word Search

Nadut'en Dialect

Find and circle the words below.



L	I	C	'	I	L	H	G	I	K	T	G	B
H	H	E	I	K	'	R	H	T	H	E	K	W
C	S	D	I	L	K	W	'	A	K	H	N	I
,	S	H	W	D	B	B	D	'	D	T	I	D
A	T	E	T	D	E	'	I	E	'	A	I	Z
D	L	B	E	E	S	K	'	I	Y	U	'	E
E	'	U	L	T	T	K	H	H	N	E	O	E
E	U	G	O	S	L	'	E	I	E	R	T	H
Y	M	U	S	A	Z	I	T	S	D	E	S	N
H	U	I	N	N	K	W	'	U	B	A	D	A
K	N	T	S	'	U	N	C	H	U	A	N	'
G	T	S	H	O	O	N	L	I	S	R	Y	H

- Beesk'iy (Seagull)
- Bus (Cat)
- C'adeeyh (Ant)
- C'ilhgik (Mouse)
- Detsan (Crow)
- Dilkw'akh (Frog)
- Esbay (Sheep)
- Khida (Moose)
- Widzeeh (Caribou)



Source of spelling: www.firstvoices.com



Program Highlight:

Child and Youth Mental Health Program



Child and Youth Mental Health Team (From Top): Kristie West; Ishnoor Singh Ghuman; Jen Smith

Centre: Denise McKinley; Catherine Weilmeier; Corinne Dawson; Angela Bouet

Bottom Row: Michelle Prevost ; Jennifer Wolf; Rita Onwunali

CSFS' Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) program provides a wide range of free and voluntary mental health services to children and youth under the age of 19 and their families. While services are typically provided to children between 6 and 18, we provide support to children under the age of 6 with their caregiver actively involved. Our mental health services are designed to support children and youth who experience significant difficulties with their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. Our services are client and family-centered, trauma-informed, and collaborative.

We know that childhood and adolescence are crucial stages of development. Prioritizing positive mental health during these formative years sets the foundation for overall well-being, leading to

better emotional regulation, coping skills, and positive relationships in adulthood.

"The goal of Child and Youth Mental Health is to provide culturally responsive mental health services to children, youth, and families, and by extension to communities. We prioritize collaboration and connection with other service providers to be able to provide the most comprehensive support to children and young people," shares Catherine Weilmeier, CSFS CYMH Clinical Supervisor.

The CYMH program follows the 'every door is the right door' policy, meaning children or youth can access support and assistance regardless of where they initially seek help. Our caring, professional clinical team includes Mental Health Clinicians and Mental Health Support Workers.

The team has training in trauma-informed approaches (including intergenerational trauma and complex trauma), sand tray and play therapy, suicide risk assessment and safety planning, infant mental health, emotion-focused family therapy, and dialectical behaviour therapy. Some clinicians are also trained in early psychosis intervention, art therapy, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing and trauma-sensitive yoga to name a few. Individuals who choose to access our services can do so at no cost. By reducing barriers to access, young people can receive early intervention and support, which is essential for mitigating the long-term impact of mental health challenges.

The CYMH program offers individual, group and family work along with mental health consultation provided to CSFS member nations. Our

services are provided in the office, in community and, most often, in the school setting during the school year. Some of our recent group offerings have included Mental Health Outdoors, emotion coaching for caregivers of children 12 and under, and grief and loss family groups. Plans are in the works to provide additional groups including dialectical behaviour therapy, mindfulness, and trauma-sensitive yoga.

"We welcome self-referrals and community referrals with informed consent from the child or youth seeking help. For referrals under the age of 12, we will need parental or guardian consent and hope for their active involvement in the therapeutic process. For referrals for ages 12 and up, we need the youth's

consent. While we do encourage and appreciate parental/guardian involvement in the therapeutic process with young people, youth do have the option of attending on their own," Catherine continues.

"When children and youth face obstacles in seeking help, it can be stigmatizing. They may feel ashamed or reluctant to disclose their struggles. Sometimes the youth aren't ready to commit to therapy yet, so they can choose to start their journey by accessing one of our drop-in sessions at the high schools in Vanderhoof, Fraser Lake and Fort St. James. We collaborate with Connexus Community Resources to provide this service on alternating weeks. The CYMH Virtual Counselling Program also provides virtual mental health services (individual and

group) which increases accessibility to timely services. We recently participated in the launch of the Atsoo Program and look forward to continued connection going forward as we work together to support children, youth, families, and community."

If you would like to access any of our services, please visit the Mental Health and Wellness Services webpage, download the referral form, and submit the completed form to the confidential fax line listed on the referral. For those who would like to self-refer, you can also contact the Burns Lake office at 250-692-2387 and we would be happy to help you complete the referral and answer any questions you might have about our services.

COVID Booster

Vaccination clinics

Vaccines Available in
Community

For More Information, Contact
Your Local CSFS Nurse

Visit Your Local Health Centre



Everybody is
welcome!
(Ages 6 months+)



CULTURE CORNER



United Children and Families Together 'Alhka Skak Tl'a Bilgehn Lhtuz Deenyaay'

Hereditary Chiefs Cindy Lowley-Patrick & Eugene Patrick

Oral traditions ensure that knowledge, wisdom, and cultural practices are passed down from generation to generation. Prioritizing teaching wisdom to young generations and families presents opportunities to instill deep connections to their heritage and community. The United Children and Family Together (Alhka Skak Tl'a Bilgehn Lhtuz) program aims to do just that.

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On March 25 and 26, CSFS Community Engagement Facilitators and Hereditary Chiefs Cindy Lowley-Patrick and Eugene Patrick facilitated a two-day 'Spring Culture Session' in Burns Lake on the traditional territory of the Ts'il Kaz Koh. What they thought was going to be a single session with 50 attendees turned into a two-day event with nearly 150 people attending each day.

At CSFS, the role of community engagement is to keep building trust with the communities we serve. By partnering with each Nation, staff can understand their needs, and develop plans to improve the lives of children and families.

"Being present in community, talking to Elders and engaging with the youth

are some of the highest requests we've received from communities. A lot of our children are of cross-Nations with different community backgrounds. For example, their parents or grandparents could be from two different nations like Skin Tyee and Wet'suwet'en First Nation. Eugene and I decided it was important that we bring the spring culture sessions to six Nations – Ts'il Kaz Koh, Cheslatta, Lake Babine, Skin Tyee, Nee Tahi Buhn and Wet'suwet'en - so that we can all learn from each other," explains Cindy Lowley-Patrick.

Hereditary Chiefs, Knowledge Holders, and Elders attended the event to speak about their different roles in the community. Activities ranged from making ribbon skirts and beading, to hunting tips, traditional dancing, and drumming. The hall was filled with excitement, cooperation, and unity.

"Utilizing our own Hereditary Chiefs, Elders, Knowledge Holders, and youth proves to be the most effective way to reach our people. The two days of discussions and sharing from Nation to Nation shows how we can empower families to participate and practice cultural activities so that they can have a strong and thriving family unit," shares Eugene Patrick.

Attendees were grouped into different stations and presented with questions relating to child safety, culture, and language. Each station worked on their assigned questions and then presented their thoughts.

"We encouraged people to ask questions about generational sharing and motivated every member of the family to work together with the Chiefs and Elders. We set the stage for trust building by reiterating that we were only there to help. Each question created wonderful discussions and had all age groups sharing great ideas with one another. This type of interaction is crucial for children and youth to get a sense of belonging. This way their voices are heard, giving them the encouragement that they need to be excited to participate in future community activities," explains Cindy.

Hereditary Chiefs and Elders walked participants through a range of traditional teachings. Hereditary Chiefs Bruce Alec and Peter Alec discussed trapping and hunting processes, while Elder John Casimel shared moose hide teachings.

Hereditary Chiefs Ronnie Alec and Leno Adam explained Potlatch protocols to the youths, and how to properly conduct themselves during

the business. Barb Williams and Knowledge Holder Marie Patrick explored genealogy, fish harvesting and traditional rites of passage that youth can go through. Hereditary Chiefs Helen Michell and Mable Jack worked as a niece-aunty team sharing their life experiences and talked about their roles as Hereditary Chiefs. Knowledge Holder Marie Patrick led beading and moccasin making group. Finally, Knowledge Holder

Pius Charlie and Hereditary Chief Herbert William demonstrated how to make a medicine bag by sewing them together.

Through storytelling, songs, and ceremonies, Indigenous Elders impart valuable insights about their history, customs, and relationships with the land, ensuring that Indigenous heritage remains alive and relevant. These types of engagements play an

important role in not only building relationships, but further bringing community together to celebrate Carrier and Sekani culture. We look forward to hosting more events like this with our communities in the future.

For more information about future community engagement events, please contact: clowley@csfs.org or epatrick@csfs.org



Spring Culture Session Activities in Burns Lake

Photo Submissions



Photo By: Robin Nooski



Photo By: Michelle Pierre



Photo By: April Tom

Want to share your photos?

Send us your best photos, and we'll include a number of them right here in the next issue!
Submit your photos to David Sikobe at dsikobe@csfs.org.

Celebrating Generosity: BBQ event honours \$600,000 contribution towards Foundry Burns Lake

On the evening of April 12, Carrier Sekani Family Services (CSFS), Foundry, and Rio Tinto hosted an open community barbecue in Burns Lake to celebrate Rio Tinto’s generous \$600,000 contribution to the construction and operation of Foundry Burns Lake. The event highlighted the collaborative effort between community partners to address the health and wellness needs of young people aged 12 to 24 and their families in and around the Burns Lake area.

Toni Carlton, Foundry Provincial Director for Community, Culture and

Connection hosted as the emcee, and Rhea Brown and Ron Charlie of T’sil Kaz Koh Band started the evening in a good way with a welcome to the territory, prayer, and drumming. Speakers included Randi Mondor, CSFS Director of Primary Care-Health, and Rio Tinto representative Aman Parhar, Communities and Social Performance Advisor. Each emphasized the transformative impact of the youth wellness centre to the youth health landscape as well as the importance of partnership and community support towards transformational initiatives like Foundry Burns Lake.

Youth speakers Hadley William and Dylan Benedict from Burns Lake shared their aspirations on having a well-developed youth centre accessible in their community. Their words served as an important reminder of the critical need for the youth supports and the potential it holds for generations to come. The event concluded with a BBQ served by youth volunteers, creating space for attendees to chat and share with one another.





CARRIER SEKANI
FAMILY SERVICES

Photo By: Kayla George