

# GOOZIH DUST'LUS



CARRIER SEKANI  
FAMILY SERVICES

May / June 2023



## Celebrating Mental Health Week

Highlighting the various positions we offer to help with improving mental health

## Nursing Practicum Student's Experience

Kelsey Johnson spent five weeks at Takla Nation as part of her practicum

## Protecting our Earth for Future Generations

Peggy West from Takla Nation shares her thoughts on protecting the Earth



Photo by Kelsey Johnson  
Inside of Takla Health Centre

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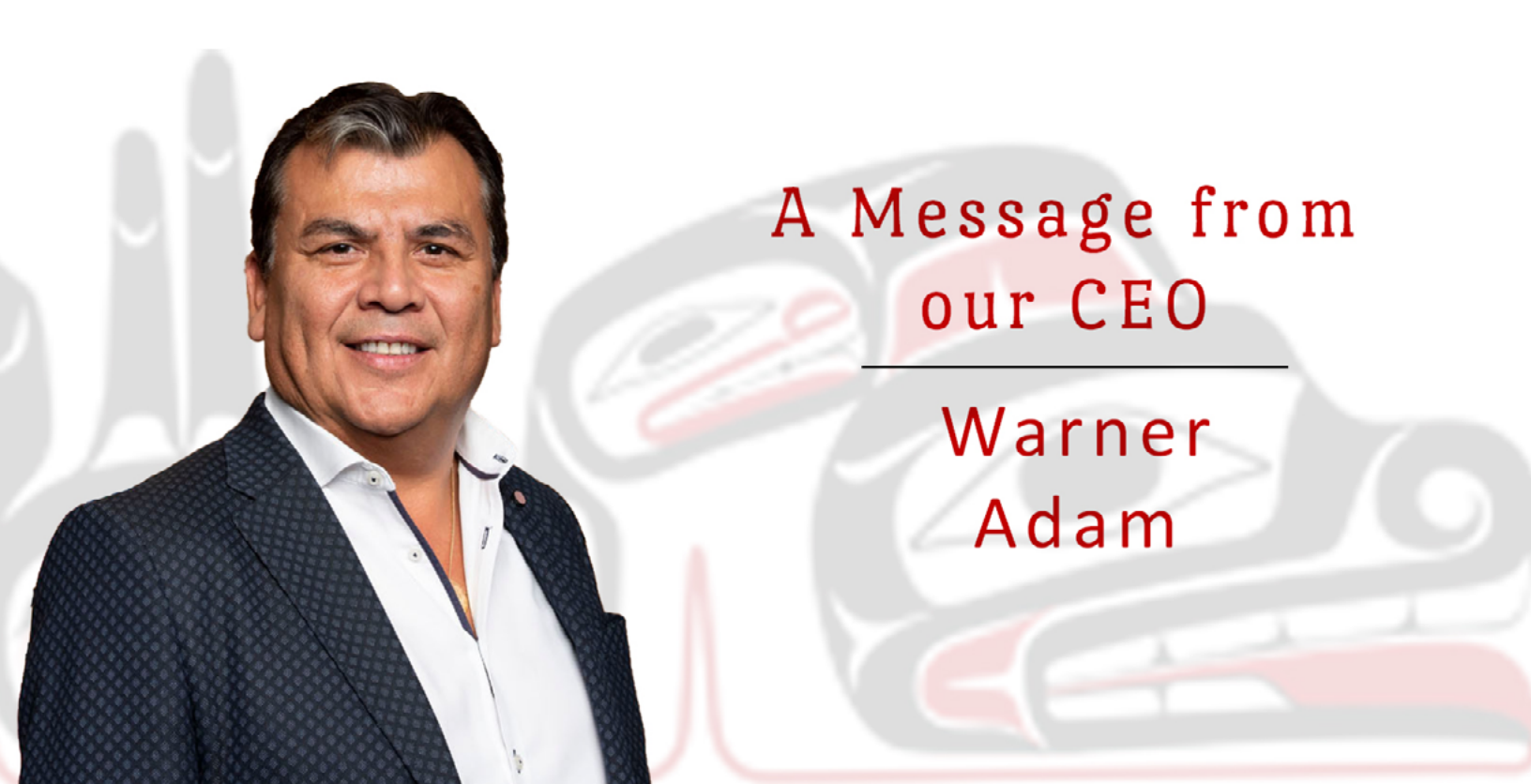


**Kahe dee'zeelhe**



**Early Child Development Program Highlight**

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## A Message from our CEO

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Warner  
Adam

**H**adih everyone,

I hope you all are enjoying the transition from a long winter into spring – I know I am appreciating the longer days and new growth in the land around us. I am happy to greet you again and share some exciting updates from Carrier Sekani Family Services.

First of all, I am pleased to report that the development of the Tachick Lake Healing Centre has been progressing according to our plans, and that we will be announcing the official ground blessing for the centre later this season. This centre will be a crucial asset in promoting health, and emotional and spiritual well-being for our people across Northern BC, and I am thrilled for construction to begin later this year. As we begin this journey, our message is clear –Nah Zul Deez T'iah (your spirit is precious). It is our intent that the centre will be a place for physical and cultural healing and a place of respite for your spirit. A place of sacred grounds for unleashing our power of healing is finally going to be a reality. The toxic drug crisis, among many traumas in B.C., continues to disproportionately affect Indigenous people, but our goal with this new centre is to help curb that trend. We are building the operational

aspect to include excellence in services, teachings and healing. We will have a full report on this development as a feature story – coming your way soon.

In addition to the Tachick Lake Healing Centre, we are also excited for the upcoming official announcement of the ground breaking for the Burns Lake Foundry. This project has been in the works for some time now, and we are thrilled to see it come to fruition. The Foundry will be an essential part of our organization's continued growth, and we look forward to seeing the positive impact it will have in Burns Lake and the surrounding communities. Dr. Holyk and his staff have been working hard at including youth and community members throughout the process, and I know that Burns Lake Foundry will be well-received.

As we move forward, we are also pleased to announce the recent restructuring of some program areas and the creation of the Child Safety department, which will be led by Joan Conlon, Director of Child Safety. Our focus is to reassert our authority to make good decisions for our children and families. We will be working directly with Nations and Matriarchs to determine the best path forward, and

to build strong programming for each community. The department of Child Safety will also be working closely with our Jurisdiction department, led by Stephanie Konefall, to work with new federal legislation and to make new laws that give us the ability to care for our children.

Let me be clear – this programming will be for the Nations, by the Nations. As such I have a Chiefs' Steering committee to guide the work for completing the Carrier and Sekani Child and Family legislation – similar to the Matriarch Committee. We also have formed a men's and fathers' committee to provide us insight and guidance as we forge new pathways for healing and re-building of our communities.

We believe this new department will be a vital component in ensuring the safety and well-being of our children. The department of Child Safety will report directly to me, and I am confident in Joan's expertise that we will be successful in retaking that authority from the Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD).

Historically and currently, Indigenous children are grossly overrepresented in the child welfare system, and it is

our objective to address this issue and overhaul the system. Through our work, this discrimination will end, and we will put programming in place to ensure it does not happen again.

Overall, these updates are a testament

to our continued commitment to rebuilding Nations. We remain focused on delivering quality programs and services that meet the needs of those we serve. Thank you for your ongoing support, and we look forward to sharing more updates with you soon.

Awetza,

Warner Adam

CEO of Carrier Sekani Family Services

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## Northern Medical Program Student Appreciative for Visit To Nadleh

Chelsea Tancon is a student of the Northern Medical Health program in Prince George, and is originally from the K'omoks First Nation territory – Denman Island. Chelsea is in her second year of the University of British Columbia (UBC) Northern Medical Program, and is training to be a physician. She is one of the many students who recently visited the Nadleh Health Centre in April. Chelsea learned a lot from working with Indigenous communities in remote areas. Here's what she said about her visit:

“The whole visit was a beautiful experience. When we arrived, we were warmly welcomed to the health centre by traditional drummers and singers. It was a special way to immediately connect with the culture, traditions and leadership systems. There is still so much to learn and do about bridging health inequities for Indigenous communities in remote areas like Nadleh, Takla and so on. Most times, patients have to travel for hours to get primary and emergency care. Visits to health centres like Nadleh and Stellat'en expose us to the nature of the job and what is expected of us. They most importantly begin the conversation of attracting the next generations of physicians to rural medicine.”

Patients in rural communities often encounter barriers to healthcare that limit their ability to obtain the care that they need. Understanding the geographical realities for how



Chelsea Tancon with her family

health care services are delivered to Indigenous communities can provide avenues for medical students to develop close relationships with patients, build a sense of community, and understand Indigenous practices as it relates to health and wellness.

“There is powerful nation rebuilding happening across Indigenous communities in Canada, and we as health professionals are given these opportunities to learn and participate in community engagements. The UNHBC, First Nations Centre, PG traditional drummers invite our group for tours, learning events and community potlucks so that we can begin building those community relationships. I also attended the CSFS healing fire at Moccasin Flats,

and it was such a pleasure to talk with Elder Henry.

Thank you CSFS for making space and taking time to help us with our learning for family practice through these visits.”

After graduation, Chelsea hopes that she can be a clinical advocate working in primary care as a clinician, while also engaging in advocacy work. She has worked as a paramedic, mental health rehabilitation worker, first aid attendant and so much more. Chelsea encourages aspiring physicians or medical practitioners to continue to ask questions and seek out more opportunities to serve Indigenous communities.



DENTAL 9:00-5:00  
X-RAY CLINIC 9:00-5:00  
PHYSIO 9:00-5:00

# Nursing Practicum Student's Experience at CSFS

Kelsey Johnson was born and raised in Prince George and will be graduating from UNBC with a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing in May 2023. Recently, Kelsey finished her fourth-year clinical practicum with Carrier Sekani Family Services under Judith Sandford, Nurse Manager. As part of her final clinical practicum, Kelsey visited Saik'uz, Yekooche, and spent five weeks in Takla. In the next paragraphs, she tells us about her time working with CSFS, communities, mentors, and people she met along the way.

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Hadih! Sih soh zeeh, Kelsey! (She/her). Sa at neeh, UNBC student RN. Habts kedeezit, Lheidli T'enneh.

When I was placed with CSFS for my last fourth-year clinical practicum, I wasn't sure what to expect.

Judith Sandford was my nursing preceptor and mentor for the duration of my final clinical practicum and I would describe her as a determined and experienced advocate for safe and culturally competent care for CSFS clients.

I began my journey with CSFS at the Sk'ai Zeh-Yah Drop-in Centre with Janet Gardiner, CSFS Primary Care Nurse. After witnessing Registered Nurse (RN) Janet provide OAT – Opioid Agonist Therapy – to vulnerable and marginalized youth, I am motivated to get OAT certified myself. The team at Sk'ai Zeh-Yah go above and beyond to provide low barrier harm reduction resources.

After visiting Saik'uz and Yekooche on day trips, I went to Takla Nation for five weeks.

I was really taken aback by the beauty of the Takla Landing area. The scenery is gorgeous, serene, and the air is fresh. My favourite thing about Takla was the welcoming and friendly community members. Everyone waved and smiled while driving by.

I am grateful for the time I spent with the people of CSFS. With a background as an emergency room nurse at the Surrey General Hospital, I was able to learn specialized emergency room protocols from RN Jennifer Lee.

I was impressed by Cody Johnny, Takla Patient Liaison, and Natalia Laskowski, the Takla Health Manager. Their commitment and work ethic had a major positive impact on me.

It was an honour to witness cultural activities at the Takla Landing Potlatch

House. I observed moose carvings, teachings and stories, beading, and dreamcatcher making. It was heartwarming to see the children participating in the activities. I was invited to a dinner, and that had a warm sense of community and it felt like one big family.

I am grateful to have worked with the people at CSFS. Every person had something new to teach me, and I learned a lot from all of them. I am definitely interested in rural Indigenous health, and I would love to be a part of the CSFS family one day.

Misyh did nee, CSFS for helping make my last nursing clinical practicum an excellent learning experience.

Nanyoost'en!



# Kahe dee'zeelhe – Our Journey

A new section with updates from our Jurisdiction department

## A Re-Introduction

Jurisdiction works in support of CSFS member Nations to reassert authority over child welfare. So, what does that look like in practice?

Over 30 years of research, planning and community consultation is now shaping the transition of legal authority and responsibility from the Government of BC, centring the well-being of children in family services and advocating for the inherent rights of member Nations to raise their children in a good way.

You can follow the Jurisdiction story and find updates on the work here in the Goozih beginning with this issue.

## Drum Making for Children in Care

Creating opportunities for staff to participate in Carrier Sekani cultural practices is key to socializing Jurisdiction to working with and within communities. In early March, Hereditary Chiefs and Jurisdiction Community Engagement Facilitators Cindy Lowley-Patrick and Eugene Patrick led CSFS staff in a drum making session as part of the Jurisdiction department's bi-annual 'Foundations' training. Staff were also joined by Hereditary Chief and Elder Matriarch of Caribou Clan Rosie Pierre, and hereditary chief and Grizzly Bear leader Peter (Damian) Pierre. After two days of drying, tying and adding artistic touches, the team closed the session with a drum circle wherein members learned each Clan's entrance song.

The drum making session was grounded in reciprocity. Each one of the 73 deer-hide drums will be gifted to Carrier children in care living in the Vancouver area. The session was born out of a commitment made by Jurisdiction team members who attended the opening of the Vancouver CSFS office last summer.



The team met with Vancouver staff to explore ways to bridge CSFS staff and stay connected with Carrier Sekani children living in urban communities.

The drums will serve as cultural ties for children in care; they are tangible connections to each child's heritage and a reminder that no matter where they are, there is a community of love and support behind them.

## Reflections on the Practicum Experience

*Rachel, a Social Work student at the University of Northern British Columbia, began working with CSFS Jurisdiction in 2022 and finished her practicum this April.*

"My time at CSFS has impacted my learning extensively. It has allowed me to do some deep reflection and shift



Jurisdiction Practicum Student, Rachel

how I do my work, from decolonizing language to building policies, work and services on cultural foundations.

My biggest takeaway from my practicum is relationship building for research. It is more than just gathering information – I must listen. Go in person, make a connection and show my efforts. To decolonize research efforts and work towards reconciliation, I must build relationships that promote sincerity and a willingness to learn and respect Indigenous culture by listening.

I am so thankful for my time here. I have grown on all levels, and I will never forget the kindness shown to me on my educational journey."

## Coming Up: 'So has nees yeh' Documentary

Members of the Jurisdiction team have been working alongside Hereditary Chiefs and Knowledge Holders from Saik'uz First Nation, Skin Tyee First Nation and Lake Babine Nation to film a short documentary funded by the First Peoples' Cultural Council 'Braided Knowledge' grant. So has nees yeh (To Be Raised in a Good Way) is a story of inter-generational knowledge sharing and cultural teachings.

Look for the documentary on the [CSFS YouTube channel](#) on June 23.

# Mental Health Week

## The many ways CSFS Mental Health Services can serve you

**M**ental health is a crucial aspect of our overall well-being. It influences our thoughts, emotions, and behaviours, all of which shape our lives. For Mental Health Week (May 1 – 7), we want to encourage self-care and dispel the myth that mental health support is only about one-on-one counselling and therapy. Mental health is supported by individuals, their families, and their communities. While mental health is your responsibility, at Carrier Sekani Family Services (CSFS), we offer a wide array of services beyond clinician care that can assist you along your mental health journey. Mental health support encompasses a broad range of occupations that work together to help individuals maintain good mental health.

**CSFS Wellness Workers** promote holistic self-care with our clients, including mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical well-being. They provide support for people who are looking to attend treatment, and are looking for assistance in completing their applications for treatment. They will also assist with psycho and social education, which includes written material and workshops on topics such as “how to manage substance abuse of a loved one,” and “stages of change to help with addiction recovery.” Our Wellness Workers are often peers, and have earned a certificate or diploma in a helping profession.

**Elders and knowledge holders** play a vital role in Carrier and Sekani culture in promoting mental health. They possess a wealth of knowledge and experience that can be shared with younger generations, and are considered the keepers of tradition and culture, which can help promote a sense of belonging and identity. Our mental health services partner with Elders and knowledge holders to lead ceremony, provide one-on-one

time with clients, and offer direction and advice for traditional healing.

**CSFS Mental Health Support Workers** provide one-on-one education and support with our clients. Services offered include post-therapy maintenance support, group psycho-social education, which includes providing written information and workshops on topics such as how to manage mood disorders like anxiety or depression or coping with grief. We are always open to ideas of what type of information our community members would like to hear. Support workers also co-facilitate group sessions, conduct suicide risk assessment and care plans under direct clinician supervision. They also offer emotional support, and encourage individuals to achieve their goals. Our Mental Health Support Workers have a minimum of an undergraduate (bachelor) degree in a mental health field.

**CSFS Mental Health Clinicians** are professionals who specialize in the treatment of mental health conditions. They include psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers, and clinical counsellors. They use a variety of therapeutic techniques, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, to help individuals manage their symptoms and improve their overall well-being. Services offered by Mental Health Clinicians include one-on-one therapy, group therapy, and suicide risk assessment and care plans. They also work closely with other mental health professionals, such as primary care physicians and nurses, to ensure a coordinated and effective treatment plan. Our Mental Health Clinicians have a minimum of a graduate (master) degree in a mental health field.

**CSFS Child and Youth Mental Health Workers** specialize in the mental health needs of children and youth. They

provide a range of services, including counseling, behaviour management, and family support. They also work closely with other professionals, such as teachers and pediatricians, to build connections between youth and the adults who care for them.

Mental health support encompasses a broad range of occupations that work together to help individuals maintain good mental health. During Mental Health Week, it's essential to recognize the valuable contributions of these various CSFS positions and the diverse range of services they provide. Whether it's a wellness worker offering stress management techniques, an elder providing guidance and support, or a mental health clinician using therapeutic techniques, each profession plays a vital role in promoting mental wellness. At CSFS, we are able to provide an array of services that are culturally-safe and evidence-based. However, it's crucial to remember that mental health support starts with you and is not a one-size-fits-all process. Individuals should explore different options to find the support that works best for them.

### Accessing our services

If you would like mental health assistance from any of the positions listed above, please reach out to:

- Prince George Office: 250-564-4079
- Vanderhoof Office: 250-567-2900
- Burns Lake Office: 250-692-2387

We also have free mental health booklets [available for download on our website](#) that cover:

- Self-Care After Trauma
- Continuum of Care – Mental Wellness
- Coping with Grief



## Program Highlight: Early Childhood Development

Carrier Sekani Family Services is pleased to announce that Little Angels Daycare and the Head Start on Reserve Outreach Program will be coming under the umbrella of the CSFS Early Childhood Development Department. These programs were originally ran by Ts'il Kaz Koh (Burns Lake Band), and will now be transferred to CSFS as of May 1, 2023. We are excited to offer these programs to the members we serve in the Burns Lake area.

The Little Angels Daycare provides a safe and reliable childcare environment for children ages 0-6 years old, allowing families to work or attend to other responsibilities.

The daycare provides a play-based environment that stimulates all areas of development. Little Angels creates a safe space for children to build relationships with each other in a supervised environment. Children who attend daycare are usually exposed to a diverse group of children from different backgrounds, which can help them learn about

different cultures and develop social skills such as respect, cooperation, and communication. Activities may include free play, arts and crafts activities, outdoor play, age-appropriate learning activities, music and movement and dramatic play etc. We offer a mix of structured and unstructured activities to meet the different interests of the children.

Please note that the daycare centre currently has a waitlist for new clients, but we always encourage interested families to contact us for information and pre-registration.

The Head Start on Reserve Outreach Program is intended to enhance early childhood development, school readiness, and overall family health and wellness for First Nations children from birth to age 6. Our program will create a collaborative environment with the families to create a plan that is appropriate for each child. The Head Start program fosters physical, cognitive, emotional and social growth. The Carrier life cycle model acknowledges that the

period from conception to 6 years has the most influence during the brain's development, as it is during this time that children begin to interact with their environments and form bonds.

Dawne Persson, Director of Early Childhood Development, is confident in the programs her staff will be providing. "I love that the centre is operated by professional, thoughtful, kind, and caring individuals who show a deep respect for the children, their rights, and their families."

For more information on the Little Angels Daycare or the Head Start on Reserve Outreach Program, please phone 250-692-7703, or stop by the centre to speak to us at (675 LDSS Lakers Street). You can also contact us through email - [nshumka@csfs.org](mailto:nshumka@csfs.org) or through Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/LittleAngelsDaycare7703>.

# A Foot in Both Worlds

## Reflections from the Nowh Guna' (Our Way) Carrier Agility Training

**H**adih! My name is Olamipo Bandele, I am the digital writer for CSFS.

When I was hired to work for CSFS in September 2022, I understood that there was a lot of unlearning and relearning that needed to take place in order to best serve the organization's strategic goals. As part of the onboarding process, staff are required to take the Nowh Guna' (Our Way) Carrier Agility Training to increase cultural competency within the workforce.

The Nowh Guna' training can be taken by anyone but is specifically designed for service providers who work with or in service to Indigenous populations – to provide them with the skills, knowledge and attitudes in order to provide culturally responsive care or services.

As a new immigrant from Nigeria, it can be easy to get swayed by the stereotypes the media perpetuates of Indigenous people and cultures. Most of these stereotypes are based on oversimplified assumptions and usually neglect the trauma, history, and beliefs of Indigenous people.

I went into the training with an open mind, and I was not disappointed. The training was a safe space where I was comfortable, respected and felt like I could express myself without the fear of judgment. A lot of the training exercises were introspective and collaborative which encouraged participants to examine their blind spots to gain insight and understanding about the history, philosophy and Carrier values.

Participants read historical accounts and scripts around the forced assimilation of Indigenous populations into Euro-Canadian society. Some of the accounts were jarring and cruel, while some were filled with hope and

retribution. For example, we read an account of a Carrier chief describing first encounters with Europeans. We also read accounts from Bridget Moran, who advocated for Indigenous social rights during the 60s Scoop. We also learned about the Indian act, passed in 1876. It was a flawed piece of legislation that led to a ripple effect which created the residential school system, imposed restrictions on Indigenous rights and freedom, and perpetuated cultural genocide.

The Carrier agility training explored various topics such as preserving Carrier language, the Carrier life cycle model, and strategies for building trust with Carrier people. Carrier people have a deep connection to the land, the natural world, and ancestors which are closely tied to tradition.

We are all part of a larger life cycle and Indigenous spiritual practices teach that. The Bah'lats is organized around the clan system and is the core economic, political, and spiritual institution of Carrier people. These

systems have often been disrupted and undermined by colonialism, but many Indigenous communities are working to revitalize and strengthen their traditional governance systems as part of efforts towards reconciliation and self-determination.

Having my feet in both worlds has provided me with new perspectives on cultural sensitivity, but most importantly, I now feel better equipped to serve Carrier Sekani Family Services with its goals of supporting nation rebuilding and restoring Indigenous self-determination. I took the training virtually through Zoom, and it did not detract from the experience. The Nowh Guna' facilitators actively engaged us by using real world and personal experiences to enhance our learning experience. The good news is that the training will be held in person this fall, so be on the look out for that.

For information on upcoming Nowh Guna' training dates, visit [www.csfs.org/culturetraining](http://www.csfs.org/culturetraining).



**Olamipo Bandele at a Healing Fire event in Prince George**

# CULTURE CORNER



## Protecting Our Earth for the Generations to Come

By: Peggy West, Takla First Nation

**H**adih! My name is Peggy West. I grew up in Takla Landing, and I'm from the wolf clan. I really enjoy talking to and meeting new people. I wanted to share with you all the importance of preserving and respecting our Earth, and how it is central to our people's traditional ways.

Everything is connected. I grew up on the land. As a child, I knew that life came from the land. Long before I was born, animals have been of part of this earth and going about their lives as they have been instructed to do so.

I was really in touch with the land when I was growing up. There were a lot of activities that we did in nature, such as swimming in the lakes and berry picking. It was our way of life. Day to day life was basically making sure there was water in the house, gathering our food, and bringing wood into the house. We would cut the wood and pack it in, and it kept us warm throughout the winter. Even the dogs were trained to help us and we were always going out to get wood for the house. My dad would get a moose, and the dogs would help bring it in by pulling the sled.

We need to appreciate and be grateful for all the gifts the Earth has to offer, down to the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the plants and animals

we eat, the animals. It's all good for us.

Dakelh people have always been caretakers of the land. Our people – the Yinka Dene – translates to “people on the land”. We understand that if we take care of the Earth, we take care of ourselves. Right now, we're doing a pretty good job of destroying the Earth, and so we're destroying ourselves. The more I hear about pollution and the destruction of our environment, I think the biggest thing is to continue to be mindful of it and to get the word out. I know that we can't entirely go back to how our people used to live off the land, but I think it's important to be mindful of it, as there is still a benefit from getting your own food from the land, and to be present on the land.

Today, I still do my own traditional food preserving with jarred salmon and berries. I don't actually go out in the woods anymore, but I get the gifts from my relatives. My son still does traditional hunting, fishing, and trapping. No matter how bad things get, I prefer to get things like salmon from the source. It makes me happy to see our traditional ways of being are still happening. For the most part, we try to keep our areas clean, and make sure that nothing bad goes into the creeks and lakes.

The younger generations need to stay healthy by accepting the gifts that the land has to offer. It's really tough to know what to do because they get so used to how easy it is to get things. If anything happens, and you're in a crisis, it's important to have that awareness and education of living off the land and what gifts nature has to offer. Having that awareness will help heal your physical being. More and more I see the problem of obesity and diabetes from the reliance on junk food. I never saw that when I was a kid.

It's very important to save our Earth. It's our future generations that we're trying to set up for success. I'm concerned what will be left for them if we don't take care of it now.

Mussi cho.

## Perinatal Services at CSFS

**D**id you know CSFS offers perinatal services? We sat down with Jennifer Scott, CSFS Perinatal Clinician, for insights on her work and services.

### What are perinatal services?

Perinatal Services are pre- and post-partum supports. I generally define it as pregnant and child services for twelve months and under – the two-year window from when one is pregnant to when their infant becomes one year old.

I offer counselling services to women who are expecting a baby, recently gave birth, experienced a miscarriage, or had their pregnancy end prematurely. This covers anything under the perinatal umbrella, which includes mental health and substance use counseling.

### What do you enjoy most about the work you do?

I value connecting with other programs within CSFS and wrapping around a mother to make sure their children aren't removed from community and are well taken care of. I've worked with families for my entire social work career, which started in 2006, and I enjoy serving mothers, supporting their mental health needs and hopefully having that translate to more families staying healthy

and together. That's always my goal: working with families and with moms, meeting them where they are at, and providing the services they need.

We've had some really good success in supporting clients connected to us, with their families' support, as we work together with nurses, nurse practitioners, and maternal child health workers. For example, in some cases, we develop calendars for our clients highlighting our daily visits to help them show MCFD that children are well taken care of and remain safe within their family home. I'll support with whatever the mother needs and will work with her to keep the family healthy and together.

### How can people access your services?

I offer my services in-person at the Yu Be-Yah Clinic and virtually over Zoom. In some cases, I will go to the family home, but that is dependent on the family's capacity, who and how many people are in the home. You can't really do counselling sessions if it's a full house. I work with the family or the mother, the client, to do the sessions in a way that works best for her and makes it easier to access our services.

If you are in search of perinatal services, you can phone the clinic and

connect with me through our medical office assistant. You can also email me at [Jscott@csfs.org](mailto:Jscott@csfs.org). I serve clients from CSFS Member Nations who are located in Prince George as well as those in remote locations with access to internet.

I'm here and you can connect with me. If you have questions on postpartum depression, pre- or postpartum substance use and anything around that area you are looking for support with, I'm here to serve.

*Jennifer Scott is a clinician and a registered social worker, serving as Perinatal Clinician, who has been work for CSFS for about nine years. Her training includes Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, Relapse Prevention and Dialectical Behavioural Therapy.*



## Gathering Our Voices Youth Conference

**F**rom March 21 – 25, Youth Care Workers Kindra Scott and Dalbir Dhaliwal attended the Gathering Our Voices Youth Conference on the traditional territories of the Musqueam and Squamish Nations in Vancouver, BC. The experience was inspirational for both Youth Care Workers and the two youth who also attended the conference.

Over the course of four days, the group learned about Indigenous youth leadership and brought back tools, resources, and opportunities to share with the Niwh Hiskak Habibeh (For Our Children) team and CSFS Member

Nations. Youths had the opportunity to participate in a variety of workshops such as Two-Spirit Identity Resurgence, Takpannie photography, a bird sanctuary tour, traditional crafts and archery. Both youth and staff felt at home and learned a lot from the speakers and activities they engaged in including opening ceremonies, dance parties, artisan markets, recreational time and so much more. It was a great opportunity for connection building and empowering Indigenous youth care workers. From arriving at the airport in Prince George to parting ways at the end of our time together, there were many shared laughs, experiences and

memories that will have a huge impact moving forward.

Mussi Cho to CSFS for supporting our group on this adventure!



# Photo Submissions



Photo By: Samaz Katerri



Photo By: Steph Stacey



Photo By: Charlotte Stevens

## Want to show off 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 Jordan Cryderman at [jcryderman@csfs.org](mailto:jcryderman@csfs.org).

# Soo Kwun Be Nawhenije

**"In a good way, by the fire, people are healing"**

On April 12th, CSFS hosted a Healing Fire for the unhoused in front of the Prince George Courthouse. This is a continued effort in supporting vulnerable populations in community, and increasing awareness about the opioid crisis and lack of affordable housing. The event included a traditional smudging ceremony, drumming and singing. Soup, coffee, hygiene kits and snacks were provided. Housing is a basic human right, and access to safe and adequate housing is essential. Everyone has a part to play in undoing the ways in which colonization has shaped housing policy, planning and practice.

Sophie Samycia, CSFS Family Preservation Outreach Coordinator, says that their intention is to create a sense of community.

"Overall, the impact of support for the unhoused population is immeasurable and can make a world of difference in the lives of those who are experiencing homelessness," says Sophie. "By providing support and resources to unhoused individuals, communities can help to address these systemic issues and work towards healing and reconciliation. Additionally, having a sense of community and belonging can be particularly meaningful for Indigenous people, as we place a strong emphasis on community and interconnectedness."

The sacred fire was a success through the contribution and collaboration of other organizations.

"I would like to express my gratitude towards the following; our Elders Henry Joseph and Roy Nooski, The UHNBC Drummers, Undu, HeBear Consulting, Tl'azt'en nation, Saik'uz, PGNFC, First Nations Health Authority, PGNAETA, Chee Mamuk, Cheslatta, Stellat'en, Lake Babine, Ts'il Kaz Koh, Nak'azdli, Tl'azt'en, Nadleh, Nazko,

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It is our hope that this community support will help to uplift and empower Indigenous people who are experiencing homelessness, and

promote a more just and equitable society for all.

A group meets weekly via zoom to plan the healing fires, share resources and work together towards a future where the unhoused have adequate housing. If you want to join us, we welcome the support. For more information about the healing fires, please email Sophie Samycia at [ssamycia@csfs.org](mailto:ssamycia@csfs.org) for inquiries.





CARRIER SEKANI  
FAMILY SERVICES