



GOOZIH DUST'LUS



Nov / Dec 2025

Inspiring Caregivers

Know what took place at the Foster
Caregivers Conference in Prince George

Junior Canucks Visit Yekooche

Skak ha ba bay / Nezkeh ba (For our Children)

Matriarchs provide insight
and guidance on child and
family matters

CARRIER SEKANI FAMILY SERVICES PRESENTS



2026 HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

COMING
MARCH 6 - 8, 2026
BURNS LAKE, BC

AGES 16+



CARRIER SEKANI
FAMILY SERVICES

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Jurisdiction: Skak ha ba bay / Neḡkeh ba



Sobering Centre Winter Warming Supplies Station

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A Message from our CEO

Warner
Adam

Hadih and season's greeting,

Stepping into the final months of the year, I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all of you, warm wishes to you and your families. May this season bring peace, connection, and renewal as we usher in the new year.

The jurisdiction project continues to gain momentum. Our teams are working hard to plan for increased opportunities for community members to learn about the project and provide their input. In 2026, we will continue hosting in-person sessions across the territory and will launch a series of virtual engagements and webinars.

These community conversations are the heart of the jurisdiction project. They ensure the work remains rooted in the strengths, realities, and teachings of our Nations. The child and family well-being legislation we are developing together is not CSFS's law; it is the Nations' law. I encourage Elders, Knowledge Keepers, youth, parents, and caregivers to attend sessions and share your voices. Each teaching offered strengthens the foundation of this work, and we are committed to learning from you as much as we share with you.

As winter settles in, we are reminded that this season brings challenges as well as blessings. The cold, the long nights, and the quiet can be difficult, yet they also teach us to

slow down, gather close, and care for one another. This is a time when the strength of community stands strong. I urge each of us to look out for one another, check in on those in need of support, and share our time and resources together. In doing so, we embody the spirit of community that our ancestors entrusted to us.

From all of us at CSFS, we wish you a peaceful holiday season filled with warmth, connection, and the teachings that guide us safely through the ongoing winter months.

Zundala Hunzu,

Warner Adam
CSFS Chief Executive Officer

Inspiring Caregivers, Inspiring Communities | Foster Caregiving & Resource Services at CSFS



Carrier Sekani Family Services (CSFS) continues to champion the importance of culturally grounded foster caregiving across Northern BC by offering caregivers support and guidance in their journey. In October, CSFS hosted a special event for foster caregivers featuring author and educator Jo Chrona, who presented on Indigenous learning and anti-racist education, offering insights into how caregivers can support culturally responsive education and development for Indigenous children.

Additionally, the CSFS Jurisdiction Team shared updates on their plan for the future of jurisdiction within CSFS member Nations. This initiative reflects a broader movement toward self-determination and culturally appropriate care, ensuring that decisions affecting Indigenous children are made by their own communities.

Caregivers are needed

Foster caregivers play a vital role in the lives of those they care for. Whether providing short-term, long-term, or respite care, caregivers

help children navigate being away from home as well as commit to the child's cultural identity by attending community events, family gatherings, and cultural activities. CSFS works directly with approved contracted caregivers and therapeutic staffed homes to ensure Indigenous children receive the care they need while remaining connected to their family and community.

Are you interested in becoming a caregiver? Anyone can be a caregiver, though Indigenous caregivers are especially needed. If you are over the age of 19 and committed to providing a nurturing and culturally respectful environment, then you can be a caregiver. People who are single, partnered, LGBTQ2S+, working, and Elders can apply, regardless of home or vehicle ownership.

Individuals are encouraged to consider becoming foster caregivers, refer others who may be interested, or help spread awareness by sharing resources and information.

For more information, go to www.csfs.org/foster





Junior Canucks Bring the Hockey Spirit to Yekooche

In November, Yekooche welcomed the Junior Vancouver Canucks in partnership with the CSFS Health Promotion and Physical Literacy Program. The team included Vancouver Canucks legend and ambassador Kirk McLean, along with the club's longtime NHL mascot, Fin the Whale.

The visit was part of the Canucks for Kids Fund's mission to ensure every child in B.C. has a chance to play hockey. The event gave Yekooche children a chance to play floor hockey while bringing the community together to share a meal and connect with the guests.

The event concluded with a powerful drumming performance by the Yekooche Youth Drummers, followed by smiles and photos with the Canucks team. Special floor hockey equipment was donated to the school to help promote physical activity in the community.

Autographs and photo opportunities with Kirk and Fin capped off an unforgettable day. Special thanks to Yekooche for opening their doors and hearts to this initiative, and to the Junior Canucks team for making a difference in the lives of children across the province.



Program Highlight: Health Promotion & Physical Literacy



Physical health and literacy are foundational to individual and community well-being. For Indigenous communities, access to consistent health and recreation services can be limited. Recognizing this, the CSFS Health Promotion and Physical Activity program has been working diligently to bridge these gaps by bringing holistic, community-driven wellness initiatives directly to communities.

Over the past year, the program has expanded significantly, offering a wide range of activities and services that promote physical, emotional, and spiritual health. From youth sports camps to women's wellness events and rehabilitation services, the program is making a tangible impact across multiple communities.

A Year of Growth and Impact

Reflecting on the past year, Dana Thorne, Health Promotion and Physical Activity Manager, shared that the program has seen strong participation and growing interest across communities we serve.

"We had three swim days out of Burns Lake, where we picked up kids and took them to the pool in Houston. We also ran soccer, basketball, and paddling camps, and continued our learn-to-lift and hiking groups," says Dana.

The skating program has also expanded, with beginner and advanced sessions now offered in both Vanderhoof and Burns Lake.

"We're seeing kids come back and progress through the levels. Some have graduated from the learn-to-skate program, and now we've had to extend it to a level one skating program," added Amy Merritt, Director of Health Promotion and Physical Activity.

The department also hosted a successful hockey tournament in early 2025, with over 80 players and a strong community turnout. Plans are already underway for the next tournament in March 2026.

Strong Women, Strong Communities

Strong Women, Strong Communities is a women's health series in collaboration with the CSFS Calls for Justice program that brings wellness opportunities to women in remote and underserved communities. "The goal was to deliver programming through our five pillars of health: physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual," explains Dana Thorne.



The series began with weekly sessions in Burns Lake, including yoga and self-defence classes. However, based on community feedback, the format evolved into one-day interactive events featuring keynote speakers, workshops, and wellness services like somatic healing and pampering stations.

“These events are not just about physical activity,” says Amy Merritt. “They’re about creating safe, respectful spaces where women can access healthcare, share experiences, and receive support.”

Expanding Rehabilitation Services

The program has also made strides in rehabilitation services by adding a physical therapist and occupational therapist to serve multiple communities. “We’re partnering with UBC/UNBC to create practicum opportunities and grow the rehab program with professionals who want to stay and work in the North,” says Amy.

A kinesiologist has also been added to the team to ensure continuity of care after physiotherapy. “It’s about making sure that aftercare plans are in place and people continue to receive support,” continues Amy.



To learn more about the Health Promotion and Physical Literacy program, visit: www.csfs.org/hppa



Looking Ahead

A new partnership with the Canucks brought hockey and equipment to Yekooche, with hopes of expanding to other remote communities. “We’re excited to continue this partnership and bring more recreational opportunities to our youth,” shares Dana.

Additionally, the team is working on a Men’s Wellness Strategy, with a new coordinator position currently open. “We’ve identified that men are among the least served when it comes to accessing health and social services,” says Amy. “This initiative will help us understand their needs and develop programming that resonates with them.”

As the program continues to grow, the team is actively recruiting for several key roles, including a dietitian, physiotherapist, and the Father’s Wellness Coordinator. These positions are vital to expanding services and ensuring that all community members have access to the support they need.

“We’ve accomplished a lot in just two years,” says Amy. “From a small team, we’ve built a department that’s reaching every community and every stage of life. It’s exciting to think about what the next two years will bring.”



Jurisdiction: Skak ha ba bay / Nezkeh ba (For Our Children)



A Gathering of Matriarchs

Matriarchs have always been at the heart of Carrier and Sekani families, providing guidance, passing on traditional knowledge, and stepping in to resolve conflicts. As we move toward communities having the legal authority to make decisions about their children and families, the strength of the Matriarchs grounds our collective work in traditional wisdom and community-based care.

The fifth Matriarchs' Voices was hosted in Prince George on August 19 and 20, 2025. Beginning in 2021 with the inaugural meeting in Osoyoos, the Matriarchs' Voices group is a growing collective of community Matriarchs providing insight and guidance on child and family matters. These sessions foster knowledge sharing across communities and provide guidance on the development of a Carrier Sekani child and family well-being law based in traditional governance.

Matriarchs provided feedback on what children, families, and communities need to thrive. Common themes from the group discussions included the importance of genealogy, preserving and passing on traditional practices like food harvesting and ceremonies, and creating better access to life skills and mentorship programs for children and youth. After two days together, a shared vision was clear: all Yinka Dene children have the right to know who they are, where they come from, and that they belong.

The feedback from the Matriarchs will join a growing collective of community voices guiding the future of child and family services across Carrier and Sekani territory. Community conversations about the jurisdiction project are ongoing, with sessions hosted in Nadleh, Stellaquo, Takla, Yekooche, Prince George, and more to come. These sessions are part of an ongoing relationship to strengthen community capacity and plan for a future that meets the unique needs of each Nation.



Lucy Smith | Smogilthjim

Lake Babine Nation

Hear from Matriarch and
Hereditary Chief Lucy
Smith on her vision for
the future.



Stay tuned for announcements of sessions being hosted in each community. If you can't make it to an in-person event, you can share your thoughts on the jurisdiction journey through the online survey at www.csfs.org/jurisdiction.



Mental Health Diagnosis

How to receive a mental health diagnosis

Have you been wondering how to get a mental health diagnosis in Northern BC? There are different options available, however the process starts the same.

How to Access Specialized Diagnostic Assessments Through NHAN

The Northern Health Assessment Network (NHAN) provides specialized diagnostic assessments for children and youth (ages 18 months to 18 years) who may have:

- Intellectual developmental disorders
- Confirmed or suspected prenatal substance exposure (e.g., alcohol) impacting development
- Genetic disorders with additional developmental concerns
- Complex presentations beyond the scope of community health teams

These assessments include **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)** and **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)**.

1

Step 1: Get a Referral

Start by asking your family doctor or nurse practitioner for a referral to NHAN. This is the first step to accessing services.

2

Step 2: Assessment Coordination

Once referred, the **BC Autism Assessment Network (BCAAN)** will coordinate your assessment. They aim to schedule it as close to your home as possible, typically in **Prince George**.

3

Step 3: Receive Your Results

After the assessment, you'll receive a **Clinical Outcomes Form** detailing the test results and recommendations.

Private Assessment Options

Families may choose a private assessment through a qualified BC specialist, provided it meets provincial standards and Autism Funding eligibility requirements. This includes completing:

- **Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS)**
- **Autism Diagnostic Interview – Revised (ADI-r)**

Important details:

- **Cost:** Parents pay for private assessments.
- **Funding:** Status First Nations families may apply for support through Jordan's Principle (requires a letter from your care provider).
- **Bring:** The Non-BCAAN Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder form to your appointment.

Important Note

Currently, there are **no publicly funded options for adults** seeking Autism or FASD assessments in BC.

ADHD Assessments

- **Adults:** A family physician, psychiatrist, pediatrician, or registered psychologist can diagnose ADHD.
- **Children:** Your primary care provider may refer you to a pediatrician for diagnosis.

Mental Health Diagnoses

Your primary care provider can assess mental health concerns and may refer you to a psychiatrist for a second opinion. Mental health disorders in BC include conditions that affect thinking, emotions, and behaviour causing distress and impaired functioning.

Common categories include:

- **Mood Disorders:** Depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, postpartum depression/anxiety
- **Personality Disorders:** Borderline Personality Disorder
- **Dissociative Disorders:** Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)
- **Other Conditions:** Schizophrenia, psychosis, substance use disorders

Who Can Help?

- **Family Doctor:** Provides general health care and referrals
- **Nurse Practitioner:** Can diagnose, prescribe, and manage care
- **Psychiatrist:** Specializes in mental health and medication management
- **Psychologist:** Focuses on therapy and non-medication treatments; can diagnose mental health disorders
- **Pediatrician:** Specializes in children's health

Member Nations may access mental health diagnosis support through their regular primary care physician to start any diagnosis processes. For ongoing support, our Mental Health and Wellness services are available to offer counselling services, therapy, crisis intervention response, workshop facilitation for communities, and referrals to additional specialized services.

Dakelh Word Search



Saik'uz Dialect

Find and circle the words below.



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

- Bat (Gloves / Mittens)
- Dzoot (Coat)
- Ketsih (Socks)
- Bedat'ih (Mirror)
- Keron (Shoes)
- Tl'asus (Dress)
- Bets'usti (Pajamas)
- Kesgwut (Moccasins)
- Ts'oh (Cap)



Source of spelling: www.firstvoices.com

CULTURE CORNER

Where Mosquitoes Came From - Tsin Tsin, George George Jr.



This story shared with us by Tsin Tsin, George George Jr from Nadleh Whut'en Band, and was discovered by George in a collection of cassettes recorded by his father. The story was first shared by George's grandfather, Maxime George, in 1961.

George shares the story with us at the Carrier Sekani Child, Family and Youth Legislation – Leadership Forum, held in Prince George, in October this year.

—

"Long ago, in a small community, a brother and sister fell ill. Their mother, worried they might spread the sickness, told them to stay in the cellar until they recovered. She tied two strings outside, one for food and one for water. "Pull whichever you need," she said. "I'll come and bring it to you."

For days, the children stayed in the cellar, pulling the strings when they needed something. Each time, their mother came with food or water. But one day, the older sister pulled the water string, and no one came. She tried again. Still nothing.

"What's wrong?" she asked her little brother. "Why isn't anyone coming? I'm so thirsty."

"Let's go look," he said.

They climbed out and went to their house. It was empty. They checked other homes, no smoke from chimneys, no voices, no people. The entire village was silent.

Then, far outside the village, they saw a small fire. Curious to find out where everyone went, they approached the area. On reaching they found a man beside the fire and immediately realized what had happened; that he was a cannibal who had eaten their people.

When he saw them, he grinned. "Come help me," he said. "We're going to eat tongue." They had to stop him before he harmed anyone else. Quickly the older sister spoke up.

"That's not how you make tongue?" The cannibal frowned. "Oh? Then how do you make it?"

"I'll show you," she said. "First, dig a

deep hole. Then heat a lot of rocks until they're red-hot."

The cannibal did as she said, eager to learn. He dug a pit and heated the rocks. "Now what?" he asked.

"Throw the hot rocks into the pit," she told him. He obeyed, filling the hole with the red hot rocks.

"Thank you," he said, standing at the edge of the pit.

At that moment, the girl shouted, "Now!" Her brother pushed the cannibal into the pit. He fell among the burning rocks, screaming in rage. As he burned, he cursed them: "I hope my ashes suck the blood out of all of you forever!"

The fire roared, and soon the pit was filled with ashes. But then something strange happened; the ashes rose into the air, swirling and changing. They became tiny, biting insects.

And that, they say, is how mosquitoes came to be.

CSFS Sobering Centre Winter Warming Supplies Station



The CSFS Sobering Centre is excited to be offering additional services throughout the winter months.

We invite Community members to come meet our Wellness Workers who will be handing out gloves, toques, hand warmers, a warm beverage and snack. Donated winter clothing will be offered when available.

These services will be offered from **December 9th** to the end of January, Tuesday through Sunday evening from 8:00 to 9:00pm (subject to change), on the front steps of the **Sobering Centre at 1133 2nd Ave, Prince George.**



Nee Tahi Buhn

You're in **healing hands** with Carrier Sekani Family Services



Key Survey Results

Staff members at CSFS...

...are easy to talk to.

78%

answered yes

...explain things clearly.

73%

answered yes

...treat me with respect.

85%

answered yes

...are involved in care or
treatment options.

58%

answered yes

...deliver high-quality services and
programs.

75%

answered yes

...follow up on appointments
and action items consistently.

63%

answered yes

CSFS provides a variety of holistic services to member Nations – have you explored all the services we have to offer?

Impact reports have been made for each member Nation to identify community needs and provide information on available services. These reports are a powerful tool for understanding and accessing information. Here are four services that you told us you wanted to know more about:

To view the Nee Tahi Buhn Report, other Nation impact reports, or to find programs and services in your community, visit www.csfs.org/healinghands, where the information is available for you.

13%

of respondents have heard of:

- **Mobile Diabetes:** Mobile Diabetes works to bring nurses with specialized knowledge and training in diabetes to clinics across Northern BC and to meet one-to-one with patients. The program provides diabetes screening and assessment, laboratory testing, counselling, endocrinologist consultation, and ongoing follow up.
 - **Who is eligible:** Members living in/away from community
 - **How to access:** In person, virtual
 - **Phone:** 1-866-899-6855 or (250) 562-3591
- www.csfs.org/mobile-diabetes

- **Who is eligible:** All Nations
- **How to access:** In person, virtual
- **Phone:** (250) 562-3591

38%

of respondents have heard of:

- **Sexual Violence Survivor Support Program:** The Sexual Violence Survivor Support Program provides mental health and wellness support, resource information, and advocacy for survivors of sexual violence. Support workers can provide short-term mental health and wellness support, referrals to counselling programs and support, and accompaniment to court, police stations, and hospitals.
 - **Who is eligible:** Individuals aged 19+ living in/away from community
 - **How to access:** In person
 - **Phone:** (250) 564-4079
- www.csfs.org/services/sexual-violence-survivor-support-program

33%

of respondents from Nee Tahi Buhn have heard of:

- **Community and Family Development:** Community Development works to see that every Carrier and Sekani child knows their culture and that families are thriving and supported. The team partners with Nations to better understand community needs, develop prevention plans, and support communication between CSFS and Nations.

50%

of respondents from Nee Tahi
Buhn have heard of:

- **Women's Groups:** Women's Groups create safe spaces for women across Nations to collaborate and learn principles to live healthy and authentic lives. Groups focus weekly on life skills, emotional wellness, and building resiliency while using simple but effective tools to support one another.
- **Who is eligible:** Women living in/away from community
- **How to access:** In person, virtual, by phone
- **Phone:** 1-877-792-1089 ext. 4010 or (250) 645-5341

Thank You For Your Support!



We are pleased to announce that we have recently received generous donations from local businesses to support the **Emergency Relief Fund**. This fund is essential in providing aid to members of the Nations we serve during times of crisis when no other funding is available.

- The Pepper Tree Hair Salon
- Save On Foods Pine Centre
- Earls
- Spruce Kings
- Up The Creek
- Alder Hills Golf Course
- Pine Valley Golf Course
- YXS Prince George
- Andres Electronics
- Betulla Burning
- Northern Lights Estates Winery
- Canadian Tire
- Capabilities
- Corlanes
- Sutton Hotel Vancouver
- Ramada Prince George
- Four Rivers Co-op Vanderhoof
- Marriott Prince George
- Coast Hotel Prince George
- Van Horlick's



CARRIER SEKANI
FAMILY SERVICES

Photo Submissions



Photo By: Rob J Abram



Photo By: Nathan Paul Dennis



Photo By: Michelle Harper

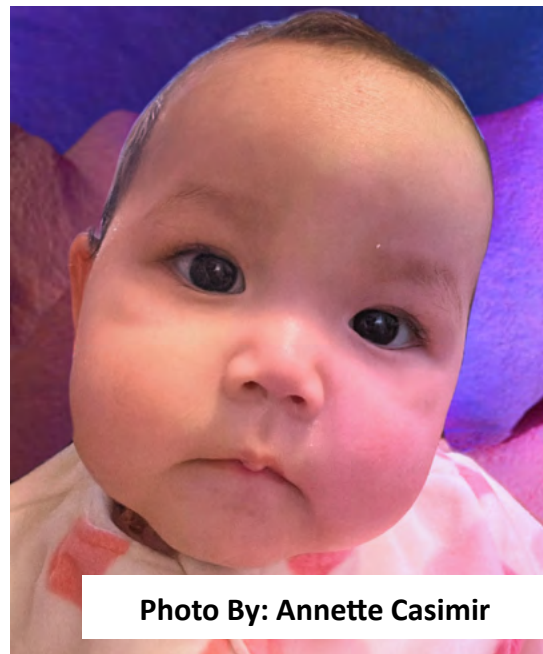


Photo By: Annette Casimir

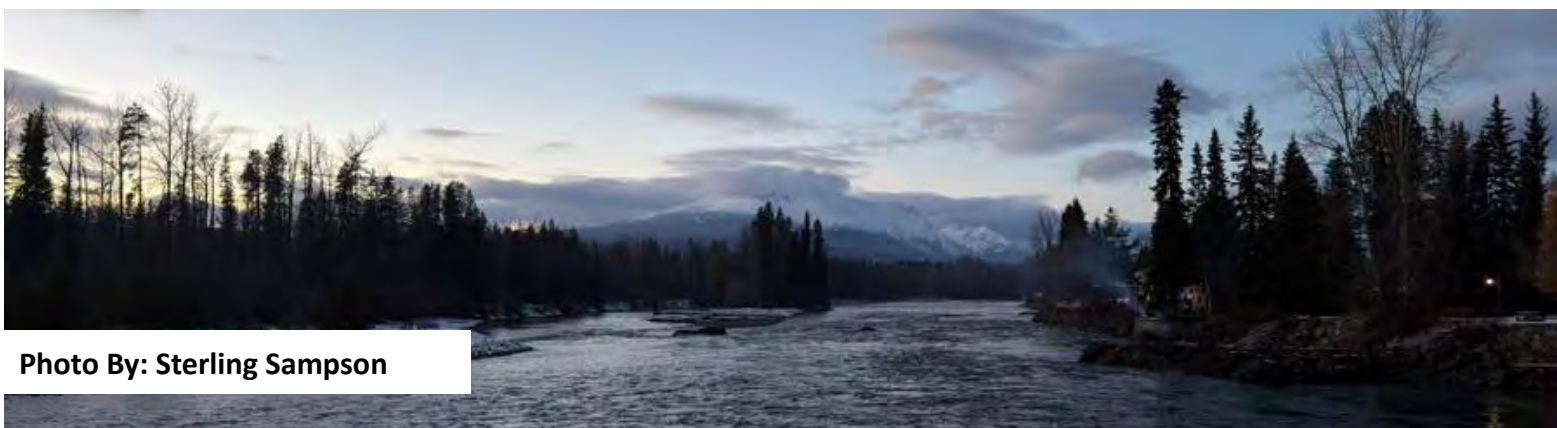


Photo By: Sterling Sampson

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.



Photo By: Eileen David



Photo By: Monique William

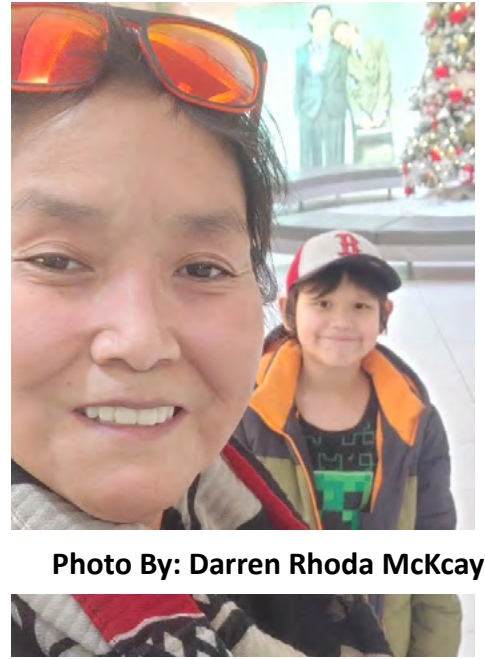


Photo By: Darren Rhoda McKcay

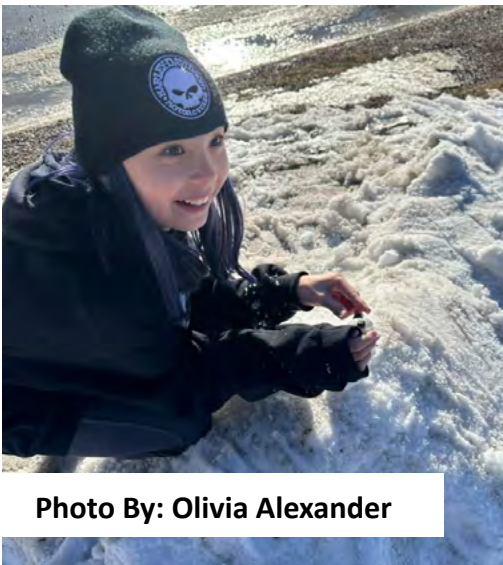


Photo By: Olivia Alexander



Photo By: Toni Mae



Photo By: Curtis Williams



Photo By: Renica Whaling



Photo By: Glenda Alexander



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Photo By: Shirley Bock