

# GOOZIH DUST'LUS



CARRIER SEKANI  
FAMILY SERVICES

May / June 2021

## Wiping of the Tears

A healing ceremony to honour those who survived residential schools, and those who were lost

## Prayer's Answered

After more than five years of waiting, Trina Nooski is now a successful recipient of a new kidney

## Where Do They Go?

How resources in Prince George for the homeless population is lacking





Maureen Thomas dancing at the  
Wiping of the Tears Ceremony



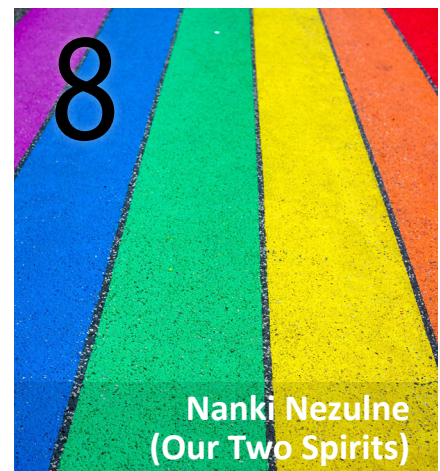
# CONTENTS

## News

- 2 **Update from the CEO**  
Warner Adam shares his thoughts on staying vigilant as we draw nearer to the end of the pandemic
- 4 **Wiping of the Tears Photo Gallery**  
A selection of photos taken during the three day event
- 6 **Traditional Healing Beds**  
Marlene Ketlo describes the healing properties of the traditional Carrier Tse beds
- 11 **Youth in Care Week**  
How CSFS celebrated this year's youth in care week
- 12 **COVID Vaccine Clinic**  
The House of Ancestors clinic proved to be a huge success

## Features

- 10 **Guest Writer**  
Patrick Coon: How the resources for the homeless population in Prince George is lacking
- 12 **Photo Submissions**  
Share your photos right here



**Writer / Editor / Designer:** Jordan Cryderman  
**Editorial Director:** Marlaena Mann  
**Managing Editor:** Andrea Palmer  
**Editors:** Mick Harper  
 Brooke Wiebe



## A Message from our CEO

Warner  
Adam

**H**adih everyone!

First of all, I wish you all continued good health and wellness, and send my sympathies and condolences to anyone who has experienced hardships or loss during this pandemic. It has been an extraordinarily difficult time for us all.

It's important to remain calm during difficult times, and I see the many kindnesses you have all been sharing, and I'm so honoured by your spirit of compassion. It is important that we stay kind as we approach the positive changes that are hopefully coming our way soon.

We are now hearing about a restart plan led by provincial leaders and health experts. I welcome this news wholeheartedly, and look forward to seeing a resumption of what we miss as 'normal life' connections with each other and activities. The end is in sight – but we must remain vigilant. Please continue to take personal responsibility in protecting you and your loved ones by following provincial health guidelines.

The restart plan is only that – a plan. There are variables which may affect target dates. We will only progress in returning to normal if we are able to keep our transmission rates down in BC. An important part of this is continuing to get vaccinated and following recommendations from the Provincial Health Office. The leadership team is working closely with me in planning our return to normal as soon as possible, and we are working with provincial authorities to do so in a safe manner.

I know we are all looking forward to picking up our regular lives, and I must continue to encourage anyone who has not yet received a vaccine to please register for and get one so that we can all 'restart' our lives as soon as possible and contribute to the overall success and timeliness of the plan. We know the vaccines are safe, and we know the vaccines are helping us all get through the next weeks and months of a successful restart.

You can also register to get your vaccine at [www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca](http://www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca).

I would also like to take this time to congratulate all of the students who are graduating as we head into the summer – whether that be from elementary, high school, or post-secondary school. I know that the past year was not easy on you. I know that you are not able to celebrate as you normally would, but please know that we are all proud of you. As we draw nearer to the end of this pandemic, we look to you to lead us to a stronger future.

Mussi cho again to you all for the hard work you have been doing to support each other and our communities. Indigenous people have always been resilient, and this past year has demonstrated that. The light is almost here, and we will be able to all come together soon.



# Wiping of the Tears

## Honouring the 215 children found at the former Kamloops Residential School Site and all others affected by Residential Schools

*Warning – some may find the material in this article triggering or distressing. If you are suffering or need someone to talk to, the National Indian Residential School Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day, and can be reached at 1-866-925-4419*

**F**rom June 18th-20th, Carrier Sekani Family Services (CSFS), along with the Nadleh Whut'en and Stelat'en First Nations, hosted a Wiping of the Tears healing ceremony at the former site of the Lejac Residential School.

The intention of this ceremony was to not only honour the 215 children found buried at the former site of the Kamloops Residential School and release their souls to the creator, but to honour all children who have been lost. As well, it was meant to uphold the survivors as they continue their healing journeys through traditional healing ceremonies and access to mental health services.

All were invited to attend the ceremony, including those from other nations and non-Indigenous peoples. This was a time to grieve, and to let go of the pain, guilt, or other emotions and thoughts people may have been carrying as a result of the recent triggering and devastating news.

The ceremony followed like a wake, which involved three days of mourning. During the ceremony, everyone supported each other in their pain and grief, which then gets lighter over the three days.

We had many activities planned throughout the weekend to aid people with their healing. There were Tse (medicine) Beds, Spruce Brushing, individual Letting Go ceremonies, smudging, and energy work. Many formed drumming circles and sang traditional songs for hours. There were also four sacred fires burning continuously during the three days, which were monitored by fire keepers.

During the closing ceremonies, we were graced by many special guests, including an opening prayer by Wet'suwet'en elder Rita George, Chief Corrina Leween, Taylor Bachrach, Chief Terry Teegee, and Kukpi7 (Chief) Wayne Christian. There were also a number of traditional songs performed by Candice George, Tannis Reynolds, and Saik'uz drummers Jasmine Thomas, Gladys Michelle, and Maureen Thomas. All of the closing ceremony speeches can be found on the [Carrier Sekani Family Services' YouTube page](#).

To close the ceremony, everyone was invited to write their thoughts on a piece of paper and then burn it. By doing so, you let go of those thoughts or emotions and are then released

to the creator – it is no longer your burden. People were also smudged a final time before leaving by Elder Minnie Thomas of Saik'uz, who prepared a fire in the east for the papers to be burned in.

Healing the spirit can last a lifetime, and this event was one step along that journey. By accepting the past and letting that pain go, the future generations can learn from us and ensure that Indigenous people are never treated this way again.

This event wouldn't have been possible without the support of so many partners, including the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), the Nadleh Whut'en, Stelat'en, many of the CSFS staff who planned the event, including Marilyn Janzen and Rhoda Hallgren, as well as those who volunteered their time to help during the event. Special thanks are also in order for the Horizon North camp that is situated near the Lejac site. They heard that we ran out of sandwiches, and with little notice, provided hundreds of sandwiches for the event – Snachelya.

Every Child Matters.





**Attendees surround the residential school survivors during the closing song**



**A drumming circle**





**The children's shoes memorial at the healing ceremony**



**Kukpi7 (Chief) Wayne Christian teaches a youth about the significance of his rattle**



# Traditional Carrier Healing Beds

**D**uring the three days of the Wiping of the Tears healing ceremony at the Lejac Residential School site, there were traditional Tse Beds offered for healing purposes. These are also known as medicine beds.

There were two beds set up at the event. Hot rocks were placed in a small hole that were placed under the cedar wood beds to create heat. Local medicinal plants and spruce branches would be placed on top of those rocks. The rocks were then sprayed with water to create steam. Participants that were laying on top of the beds would have the benefit from the medicines come up through the steam that was created.

Marlene Ketlo of the Nadleh Whut'en helped organize the Tse beds and assisted those through the process.

"Our people would have the pit dug up with the hot rocks in there," says Ketlo. "And then they put Juniper, Yarrow, and Spruce in that order on top of the rocks, and then a blanket on top and then lay on it. The only reason these are not ground level is so that it will be easier for the elders to get on."

These specific Tse beds were created with elders in mind, and for the first time, the beds were raised off of the ground to assist with elders getting up and down. This Carrier healing

method is used for all kinds of ailments.

"It's good for people that have arthritis, bone pain... it's like being in a sweat lodge. It's good for physical or mental ailments – whatever you want it to be."

Laying on the Tse beds is good for your physical and mental wellbeing. Physically your body relaxes, and with that, your mind.



Marlene Ketlo with an elder after her session on the Tse bed



# A Mother's Prayers Answered

*"I'm just happy to have a second chance at life."*

**A**fter a long wait, Trina Nooski has finally received a new kidney – and a second chance at life.

Since 2015, Trina has been battling Stage 4 kidney disease with medications and countless doctor appointments. Doctors told her that she would need a new kidney in order to return to normal life.

A family member of Trina's was found to be a compatible donor; however, that all changed in 2019 after Trina became pregnant with her fifth child. Miraculously, Trina gave birth to a healthy baby boy. Unfortunately, not only did the pregnancy add stress to her kidneys, it also changed Trina's blood and, as a result, her family member was no longer a compatible kidney donor.

Trina was then placed on dialysis to keep her stable. This was only a temporary measure as what she really needed was a new kidney.

Since her family member was no longer a match, Trina and her family have been lobbying for people to get tested in the hopes that a compatible donor could be found.

Then, two years later, on May 21st 2021, Trina's prayers had been answered – a donor had been found.

"I was crying, and happy, and shocked," says Trina. "Overwhelmed. Feeling everything."

Things were moving fast after that, as Trina and her family were told to get to Vancouver the following day. On May 22nd, Trina would be in surgery for her kidney transplant. The surgery was a success.

"The first week after my surgery was pretty tough," says Trina.

Four weeks later, Trina says that recovery is going smoothly.

"Completely different story. It's amazing right now because I'm walking around and don't have to go on dialysis anymore. I'm just happy to have a second chance at life."

Trina says that recovery could take up to six months, but she's more focused on the freedom and joy of returning to a normal life with her family.

"Right now I have to take a lot of medication. And I still have to watch what I eat. They said it could take up to six months to be back to normal. I'm just really happy... being the mom that I

can be to my children, and returning back to work hopefully soon."

Trina, her husband Kirk, and their youngest child, Easton, will have to stay in Vancouver for a minimum of three months while Trina recovers. Such a long stay is financially straining, and so Trina's family has set up a silent auction to help the family during their time of need.

For more information on the silent auction and how you can help Trina Nooski and her family, head to the Kidney ForTrina Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/kidney.fortrina](https://www.facebook.com/kidney.fortrina).

Please join us in wishing Trina a healthy and speedy recovery!





# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

*The Nanki Nezulne (Our Two Spirits) Program celebrates Pride Month with the LGBTQ2+ community!*



**T**he Nanki Nezulne (Our Two Spirits) LGBTQ2+ program is still a fairly new CSFS program. That being said, there are already updates and exciting news to share.

The staff have already experienced a growing response to services and affirming care that Nanki Nezulne provides, and are seeing more clients as a result. Although the Nanki Nezulne program is predominantly an online service, the program is planning some new and exciting in-

person events. Stay tuned to hear more in the near future.

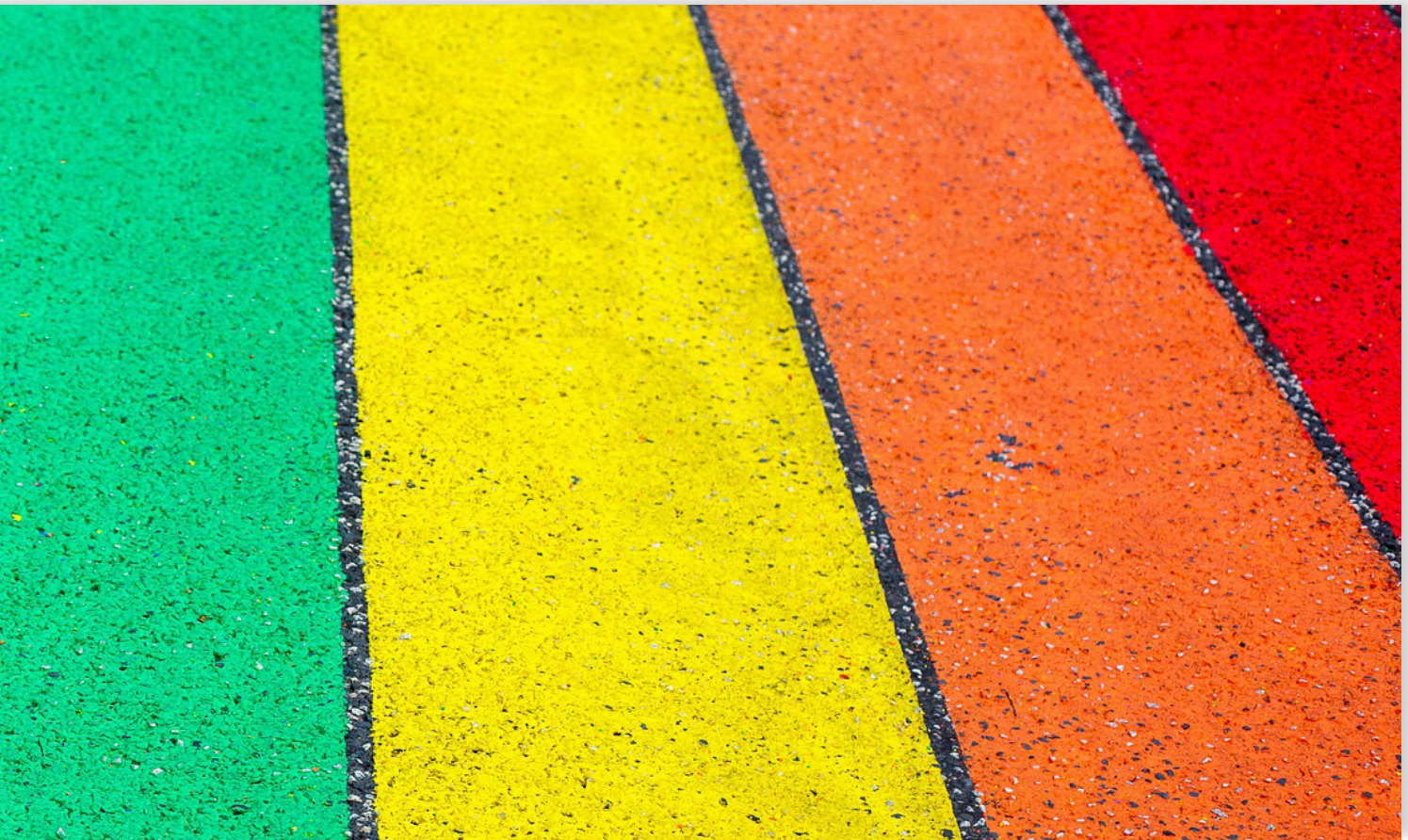
Brittany Clark-Wakefield, a Nanki Nezulne Mental Health Clinician, says that the program is opening new ways to provide service to the community.

“Individual counselling is still available for CSFS community members,” says Clark-Wakefield. “The program is opening up a LGBTQ2+ Peer Support Group for community members to connect, celebrate and share



# NANKI NEZULNE

## OUR TWO SPIRITS



experiences. For more information about this, please reach out to Hunter Brazzoni and/or myself.”

The presence of the program has been felt throughout the whole organization. Nanki Nezulne continues to collaborate with existing CSFS programs, services, and community partners on education, and how programs can provide LGBTQ2+ affirming care and inclusivity within their respective services and their delivery.

Of course, June is Pride Month for the LGBTQ2+ community across the globe, and Nanki Nezulne celebrates with you.

“Pride Month is a time to commemorate LGBTQ2+ community members and their resiliency, diversity and activism towards social equity. Unity and affirmation of LGBTQ2+ community members and its allies throughout Pride Month rejuvenates agents of change 365 days of the year towards a more

inclusive and equitable society. Nanki Nezulne (Our Two Spirits) promises to provide continual support, uplift our gender and sexually diverse community members as we remind them that they are valued, deeply cared for and celebrated.”



# Guest Writer: Where do they go?

By: Patrick Coon - Sr. Family Preservation Outreach at CSFS

The Family Preservation Outreach Program at Carrier Sekani Family Services (CSFS) helps people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. We do our best with the resources and funds that are available to us via CSFS and within the community. When applicable we help clients pay their damage deposit or rent and attend rentals to view a potential home. If we are unable to assist financially, we will empower the client(s) with a list of community resources, how to apply, and assist with submitting documents.

Within the past year, the program served over 49 individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. Our clients include elders, youth, families, and people who have disabilities. Many of these people have been evicted for various reasons, leaving them homeless.

If we aren't able to find them a permanent place to stay, we help people with temporary residencies, such as hotels and motels, but that's only temporary – where do they go once the temporary stay funds have

been depleted? Shelters are typically full, and affordable housing is scarce in Prince George.

Majority of the housing posted for rent is not within the means of our clients. Many clients also experience racism; for example, the landlord meets the clients in the driveway and says “this isn't going to work out.” The landlord won't show the place to the client at all. We encourage our clients to continue searching, continue tapping into community resources and keep us posted on results of their efforts. The majority are good, fair, impartial landlords; it will take great effort to find those good landlords and we won't give up on the search. We support the client through the entire process.

There are so many people in need in Prince George, and our resources are limited. As a result, we've had to turn people to other services as we are at our limit.

During the 2020-2021 winter months, the Family Preservation Outreach Program purchased sleeping bags,

sleeping pads, blankets, insulated tarps, portable hand and toe warmers, tents, and boots. We handed these supplies out to those that are homeless in the downtown core. We also organized a used jacket collection so that they could be handed out to those in need. However, there still was not enough to go around. For a place that can reach temperatures as low as -35 C or lower, what these people have to endure is inhumane, and more has to be done for them.

There was a rally recently held in Prince George in support of the homeless population. At the time of the rally the city was constantly evicting the homeless from areas that they've set up their tents and throwing away their belongings that CSFS purchased. This is not the solution. They have nowhere else to go. Housing resources and affordable rentals are scarce in Prince George, and it's time for that to change.



Tim Deboer at the rally



Patrick Coon speaking at the rally



# Youth in Care Week

May 31 – June 6 was Youth in Care Week in British Columbia. It is a time to raise awareness, and to recognize the youth in care as individuals with their own dreams, talents, and aspirations.

This initiative started after a group of youth in care wanted a week where they could celebrate their siblings. After this, the province of BC proclaimed that BC Child and Youth in Care Week is a time for everyone to support and celebrate those youth and children who are in care.

For this year's theme, we wanted to help the youth in care feel like they belong no matter where they are, and so we asked community members to share a message with the youth.

**Wyonna Batoche, CSFS Youth Care Worker and former youth in care:** "Even if you're not living with your parents, or if you've living in a group home or foster home – you still belong. You belong to your nation, you belong to your family, and you belong to your clan."

**Ellen Lorentz, Burns Lake Band:** "You belong to so much. You are our future, so we need to take care of you."

**Cheryl Boyd, CSFS Integrated Services Team Lead:** "My whole team here supports a child. A child can come talk to me at any time. They can talk to any of the guardianship workers. Everybody supports a child in care at this office."

**Johnny Ketlo III, Nadleh Whut'en:** "If you live in Prince George, or Vancouver, or even beyond in the world... I would say come here. You're always welcome here. Knock on a door and you'll probably get fed bannock and soup. It's always a place you can come back to, and it's a place you should be."



**Xsgalipliip Hill, Youth Centre Team Lead**

**Serina Greene, Nadleh Whut'en, former youth in care:** "You could be whatever you want to be in life. You got to reach for the stars and you got to believe in yourself, and know how much people have your back... You could be my next chief."

**Damien Ketlo, Nadleh Whut'en:** "You never know what opportunities are going to come... The journey never ends, keep an open mind, stay positive, and just make the best of your situation, because we all do belong."

**Yvonne George, Stellat'en First Nation:** "Just like our fingerprints, we're all unique. You were created to serve a purpose in life that you will find... something will come to you."

**Theresa Nooski, Nadleh Whut'en:** "Just because you're not in our community, you're still part of our community. I believe if a kid feels like they don't belong, you will find somewhere that you do belong."

CSFS created a video with these messages, and more, over on our YouTube page. Be sure to head to our channel at [www.youtube.com/CarrierSekaniFamilyServices](https://www.youtube.com/CarrierSekaniFamilyServices) and subscribe to be notified about our updates and future videos.



# Photo Submissions

Photo By: Tracey Joseph Williams



Photo By: Geraldine Joseph

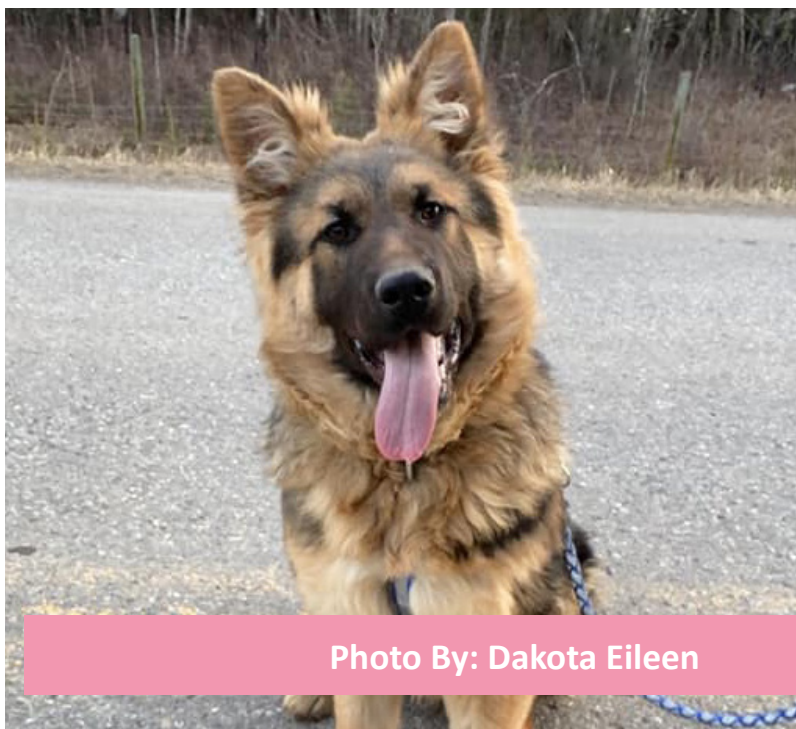


Photo By: Dakota Eileen

## 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).



# Vaccine Clinic a Success

The urban and away-from-home Indigenous vaccine clinic at the House of Ancestors was a huge success with over 1,000 vaccinations given out during the duration of the clinic.

The clinic was a partnership between Carrier Sekani Family Services, First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), Northern Health, Central Interior Native Health, the Prince George Native Friendship Centre, and the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation.

Any Indigenous peoples over the age of 18 were invited to book an appointment to receive their first dose of the Moderna vaccine at the House of Ancestors from May 11th to May 19th. Walk-ins were also welcome – nobody was turned away. The staff were delighted to see such a positive response to the clinic, as over 200 vaccines were administered each day.

Deborah MacArthur, CSFS Community Health Nurse, was optimistic for the future after the clinic.

“The only way that we are going to get out of this pandemic is by everybody getting vaccinated, or as many people as we can, to get back to any type of normalcy.”

It was a culturally-safe and low barrier environment at the House of Ancestors. For example, families were allowed to come in together in order to support each other.

Travis Holyk, CSFS Executive Director of Health Services, said that this accommodating environment was a key factor for many people.

“We heard a lot of people say, ‘I wouldn’t have come without a relative being with me.’ In terms of vaccine hesitancy, it isn’t necessarily that people are against vaccines, so providing encouragement, and support in those situations, where people have fear of needles, it allowed them to come in and be vaccinated.”

For elders whose first language was not English, it was crucial to have a family

member with them to translate and support them through the process.

As BC ramps up the vaccination process, people are beginning to receive their second doses. Stay tuned on when the next vaccine clinic will be available in your area.

It’s not too late to get your vaccine. To register, please go to the Get Vaccinated website at: [www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca](http://www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca).



CSFS nurse, Deborah MacArthur, administering the Moderna vaccine.

## Have stories or news you would like to share with us?

Email your submission to our Digital Writer, Jordan Cryderman: [jcryderman@csfs.org](mailto:jcryderman@csfs.org)

## Contact Us

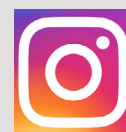
Carrier Sekani Family Services

987 - 4th Ave

Prince George, BC V2L 3H7

T: (250) 562-3591

General Email Inquiries: [Communications@csfs.org](mailto:Communications@csfs.org)





A cardboard sign with the text "EVERY CHILD MATTERS" in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. The sign is decorated with hand-drawn elements: a large orange shape at the top, a blue heart on the right, and a purple shape on the left. The sign is attached to a wooden post with yellow and orange ribbons. The background is a blurred green field.

**EVERY  
CHILD  
MATTERS**



**CARRIER SEKANI  
FAMILY SERVICES**  
Creating wellness together.