



SAIK'UZ

What We Heard Report



CARRIER SEKANI
FAMILY SERVICES

APRIL 2026



Hadih!

On behalf of Carrier Sekani Family Services, I want to thank you for sharing your thoughts and your stories with us. This jurisdiction journey we are on comes with unique obstacles to navigate, and we are grateful to all of you for your continued support and guidance.

'Jurisdiction' is not new to Saik'uz First Nation. I want to acknowledge the decades of advocacy and resiliency of the Child Wellness Committee, Matriarchs, Elders, elected leaders, and community members who have never stopped fighting for the rights of Yinka Dene children and families.

In this report you will find an overview of what Saik'uz community members have shared with us on the journey so far. This is only the beginning of an ongoing relationship-building process with communities.

CSFS is committed to improving how we communicate with Saik'uz and ensuring all community members have a voice in the future of child and family services. I look forward to more conversations and am excited to see this good work continue.

Awetza.

Lincoln Hallgren

Executive Director Jurisdiction

Nezkeh ba For our Children

Project background

CSFS is working with Saik'uz First Nation on the right to be the decision-maker for child and family services. 'Nezkeh ba (For our Children)' represents our collaborative journey to stand up a Carrier Sekani child and family well-being law based in traditional governance. This law will serve as a framework for Saik'uz to develop their own community-specific regulations through.

This law will not be new to our people; Yinka Dene had laws to protect and raise children in a good way long before colonial governments came to these lands.

What is new is the legal authority being recognized at a federal level through the passing of 'An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families'. The Act reaffirms our rights as Indigenous people to self-governance as outlined in Section 35 of the Constitution Act.

The right to decision-making for children and families is inherent and was never surrendered by communities. Together, we are reawakening laws that cared for Yinka Dene and saw children raised on their lands, with their families, and surrounded by their clans.

Learn more about the jurisdiction journey at

www.csfs.org/jurisdiction



What we've heard so far...

CSFS is gathering feedback from communities through in-person community meetings and drop-in sessions. Working together with Saik'uz First Nation, community input is being gathered through workbooks, group discussions at scheduled events, and short-form questions shared at event booths.

31

community
workbooks received

251

responses
recorded at
scheduled events

130

responses to
short-form
questions

Hooghun yats'oolhtuk

Let's talk about it



**Enter our
prize draw!**

In your community,
what does a child
need to thrive?

Share your thoughts on a
paper below. Don't forget to
include your name and contact
information!




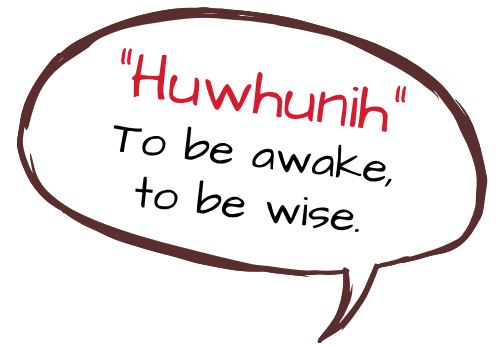
Scheduled Session

April 14, 2026

Community members were asked to share their ideas on community-based governing bodies. These bodies will work together under the new child and family law to strengthen communities and support family wellness.

Whu Neeh Nee "Wise Ones"

 A group of representatives appointed by Nations responsible for providing guidance on, and oversight of, ongoing initiatives and regulations under the law.



"How do you see your Nation choosing representatives?"

You said...

Hold a
community
vote

Have an application
and screening
process for
potential members

Ensure there is
representation from
elders, women, men,
and youth

Members should be
from different families
and people who are
not on other
committees

"What qualities should members have?"

You said...

Compassionate, empathetic, and actively involved in the community

Have traditional cultural knowledge and understanding of Saik'uz traditions

Upstanding members of the community who are trusted by families

Knowledgeable about legal concepts, both the 'old ways' and the 'news ways'



"If no one in community is available, how would you want to fill the positions?"

You said...

Work closely with
the Saik'uz Child
Wellness
Committee

Have Junior
Elders and Elders
step in to support

Collaborate
with other
Nations



Elders Council



A council made up of two to four Elders from each member Nation who make decisions about how children are cared for when consensus cannot be reached among families.

“How do you see your Nation choosing representatives?”

You said...

Should have
equal gender
representation

Have
representation
from each clan and
from different
families

Members should
be chosen based
on merit, not
‘popularity’

“What qualities should members have?”

You said...

Knowledgeable about traditions and able to pass on teachings

Good relationships in Saik’uz and knowledgeable about families

Unbiased with the best interest of children and community at heart

Frontline experience and has previous training (ex. Designated Representative training)



“If no one in community is available, how would you want to fill the positions?”

You said...

Work with
neighbouring
Nations

Open membership
up to those living
away from
community

Look to Junior
Elders or lower the
age requirement for
‘Elder’



Community Wellness Team



A community-based group that collaborates with CSFS on prevention programs and monitors the well-being of children and families in the community.

How would you like to see the Saik'uz Community Wellness Team (CWT) supported? How can CSFS support the current CWT better?

You said...

More mentorship
and training for
members

Clear structure, roles,
and accountability that
can be clearly
communicated to
members and the
community

More safeguards for
both CWT members
and the families they
serve

Improve availability
of child and family
programs and
increase social worker
support

Clan House



A Nation-owned building in the community with culturally-informed services where children and families can go when they are in need of a safe space.

If a child in Saik'uz needed a safe place to stay, what would you want them to experience in a Clan House so they feel safe, cared for, and connected to their family and culture?

You said...

Cultural activities and teachings

Mental health support and resources for children with complex needs such as FASD and autism

Safe visiting spaces for friends and family

Building security measures and accessible infrastructure



Community Workbooks

Musi to the Child Wellness Committee for guiding the creation of the Saik'uz Community Workbook.

Common themes at-a-glance

Is it important that Saik'uz First Nation is the decision-maker when it comes to our children and families? Why or why not?

You said...



It is our right and responsibility as a community to look after own children and families

Saik'uz knows its children and families best

We can keep Saik'uz children in the community and with their families where they belong

Keeping Saik'uz children connected to their culture, land, and language is the most important thing



TRANSFORMING
to OUR OWN
LAWS¹³

What do you think is the most important thing Saik'uz First Nation can do to keep children connected to the community?

You said...

Create opportunities for cultural learning and participation in community events

Create more opportunities for children to participate in recreational activities such as sports

Promote family gatherings and teaching children their genealogy to strengthen family ties

Prevention, wellness, and sobriety supports for parents, including aftercare and support to maintain healthy lifestyles



What would you like to see CSFS do more of, or do differently, to help keep Saik'uz children safe?

You said...

Host more parenting and life skills workshops

Improve communication and relationships with Saik'uz to work together better

Create more opportunities for recreational activities children and youth can participate in

More drug prevention and support for those living in addiction



What does your community need to be better prepared to respond to a situation where a child is not safe?

You said...

Safe places and more homes for placements in the community

Community cohesion and working together to support families

Prevention supports to identify and address problems before escalation

Clear communication on child welfare processes and resources for families



How can CSFS and Saik'uz First Nation work together to better support parents and families?

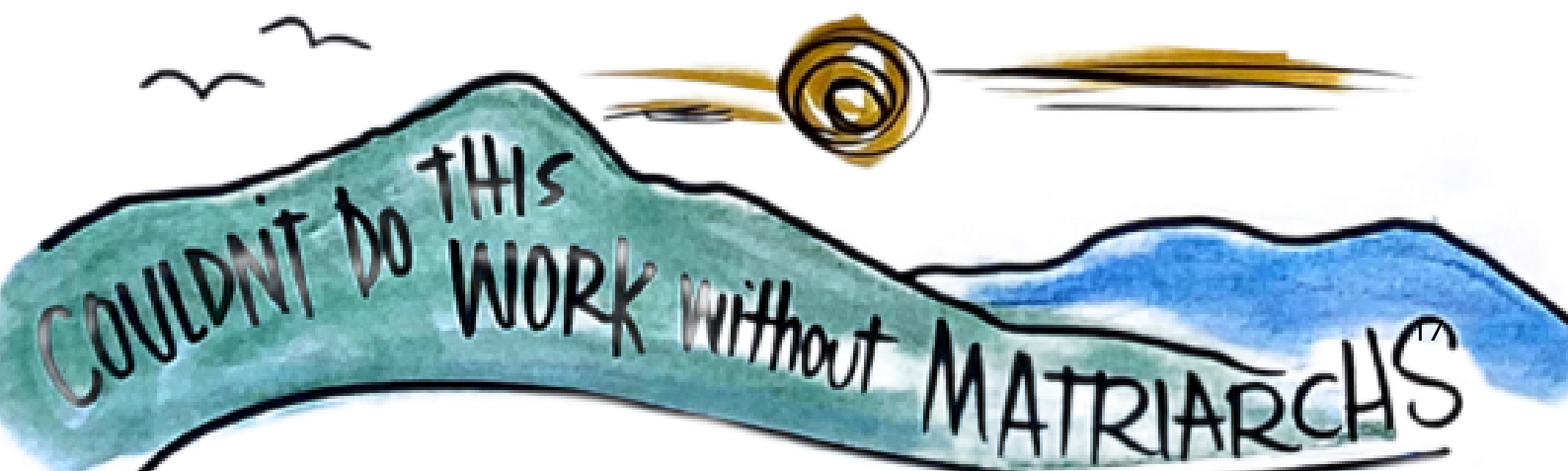
You said...

Be more present in community and build relationships with families

Improve communication about children in care and explain child welfare policies to help prepare and support parents

Host more workshops and community events for children, youth, and families

Improve collaboration and work together to keep families and communities informed



When it comes to raising children and keeping them safe, what is each community leader's role and responsibility?

You said...

CHIEF & COUNCIL

COMMUNITY GROUPS

- Prevention support for families
- Provide activities and stability for children
- Foster community belonging and cohesion

- Listen to and advocate for the community
- Understand policy and procedures
- Stay informed on community needs

CLANS & HEREDITARY CHIEFS

- Share knowledge and pass on cultural teachings
- Teach the potlatch system
- Support children and families

- Hands-on support for families
- Look out for all children
- Know child welfare policies to keep everyone safe



- Provide guidance to children and families
- Advocate for families
- Pass on cultural knowledge and practices

- Help and support one another

CHILD WELLNESS COMMITTEE

MATRIARCHS & ELDERS

FAMILIES

Short-Form Questions

January 13 - 15, 2026 | Saik'uz Annual General Assembly

Total responses: 109

We asked you what you think is important for raising children in a good way and keeping them connected to their culture.

You said...

Number of times the theme appeared in responses



Language

22



Hunting

10



Family

9



Activities

7



Community

7

January 30 - 31 | Saik'uz Community Health Fair

Total responses: 21

We asked you what you think children in Saik'uz need to thrive.

You said...

Number of times the theme
appeared in responses



Rec activities

9



Culture

4



Role models

4



Love & Connection

3



Community

3

Moving forward

We are continuously learning and listening to your feedback on how we can improve this relational process. We want to thank everyone who has shared their input and provided guidance on how we can build trust and a stronger relationship with Saik'uz.

We commit to:

- Improving communication with Saik'uz First Nation and building stronger relationships with community members.
- Working closely with Saik'uz First Nation on the jurisdiction project to centre the work in community needs.
- Creating more opportunities for community members to make their voices heard.

How will my input be used?

The feedback you share will assist in developing Saik'uz's own regulations under the Carrier Sekani child and family well-being law.

Your voice is guiding the development of community programs, service delivery and capacity building as we look ahead to providing child and family services for the next generations of Yinka Dene children, youth, and families.

“Sitting and listening, I've learned a bit more and strongly feel that this is going to benefit our community as well as our Nation. For Our Children.”

Community member feedback, April 14, 2026



Appendix: Record of CSFS Jurisdiction Engagement Activity with Saik'uz First Nation

This list reflects CSFS engagement activities within Saik'uz First Nation and partner events in the surrounding area. It is not a comprehensive list of all CSFS Jurisdiction engagements across member Nations. Sessions are ongoing across member Nations and urban centres.

Saik'uz First Nation

Saik'uz Community Health Fair, Info Booth | January 30 - 31, 2025

Saik'uz Community Meeting, Jurisdiction Presentation | November 13, 2025

Saik'uz Annual General Assembly, Info Booth | January 13 - 15, 2026

Saik'uz Community Engagement Session | April 14, 2026

Urban

All Nations Jurisdiction Picnic in the Park (Prince George) | July 18, 2025

Matriarchs Voices, Jurisdiction Input Session (Prince George) | August 20, 2025

Foster Parent Conference, Presentation & Info Booth (Prince George) | October 8, 2025

Jurisdiction Key Message Validation Session (Vanderhoof) | February 4, 2026

Youth Conference, Chaperone Workshop (Prince George) | March 21, 2026

Community Development Symposium, Info Booth (Prince George) | March 25 - 27, 2026

Virtual

Skak ha ba bay / Nezkeh ba (For our Children) Introduction Webinar | February 24, 2026

UPDATED APRIL 2026



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