

BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations

FosterlineBC



Summer 2014
Volume 12, Issue 2

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Publications Mail Agreement #40889526

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Publication of *FosterlineBC* has been made possible through funding

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The BCFFPA is a provincial organization for foster parents, run by foster parents. We are a registered Society aiming to bring foster parents, social workers and others together in order to continuously improve the standard of care for BC's children in care. BCFFPA provides education, training and professional development as well as advocacy, support and assistance for the foster parents of BC.

**FosterlineBC** is a quarterly publication.

**Submissions**—Forward articles, personal stories or ideas to the BCFFPA office. Materials may be edited for length and suitability.

**Advertising**—Please contact the BCFFPA office for advertising opportunities, sizes and rates.

## President's Report

Firstly, what I need to tell everyone is that I am self diagnosed as ADD. I would like to keep my message brief, however the older I get, it seems to be getting worse. With that I do promise that even though I may stray off topic from time to time I will always come back full circle, so just be patient with me.

I would like to send a huge thank you to all who joined us in Prince George where the weather co-operated for us to have an amazing AGM. No long johns required. Candida, Rocky and the Prince George group were lovely hosts.

The Board has decided that we will host the 2015 AGM in Whistler! That should be equally amazing. I hope by telling you about it now, you will get the opportunity to squirrel away the needed dollars to attend. This year's AGM saw a significant increase in our attendance; we are looking forward to the same next year.

I would like to thank the office, Ronda, Tanya and of course Jayne our executive director. JOB EXTREMELY well executed. Behind the scenes they work their tails off so that we can all benefit at the event. I would like to congratulate all board members, but in particular Tamara Smith and Rocky Hindmarch for their succession to their current positions. I look so forward to working with all members to see where we can take this new Board. We of course will be honoring our past president, Heather, in our continuance of the many things the Board started under her leadership. I want to extend huge gratitude to Heather for allowing me to be myself and bring my ideas forth. We did not always see eye to eye, but I always knew my voice was heard. I would also like to thank her for her tireless efforts and dedication to our families and children. I would say that I will miss her but she isn't going far as she is staying to work with the Board on different projects.

My message as the incoming President is this: we need to think of ways in which we can accomplish more with less. We as foster parents can certainly relate to that already, but I am challenging everyone to do the same. Our Board, in particular Jayne, has worked hard to continue to trim our office expenses. We will continue to work hard at being fiscally accountable. I believe we are a team, a large family. With all teams and families we don't always agree but I want to work hard with the Board to build a strong, healthy team—one that will be inclusive of all our partners, MCFD and of course you, our members. These goals are only achievable if everyone comes to the game. Recent discussion with MCFD and some of our partners have indicated we all want the same thing. I look forward to this happening. It is time we came together again to benefit our children in care.

Big words for me will be "inclusiveness", and of course "diversity". Those who know me and my family will understand why this is an important issue for me. More importantly, I have had support cases in which there are concerns for our children around inclusiveness and of course their diversity. I use those words for all children in care—all have unique needs around inclusiveness and diverse backgrounds which should be considered and planned for. We are different from one another, but we are all one family. It is time we all sat at the same table to work through the challenges that face us all.

As I move further into my role as President, I am afraid that my availability for front line support will diminish. I am saddened by that as I enjoy providing direct support to foster parents. We will continue to provide support as we can as well as referring calls to the regional agencies.

Finally I would like to say how honored I am to be able to be a part of this membership. I would like to thank everyone who supports BCFFPA's membership and the work we do. We would like to see our membership continue to grow. We know that change is on the horizon for the Ministry and together we can all support those changes and ease the transition to move forward.

I hope that your summer is full of fun family memory making days.

Russell Pohl  
President

## Notes from the Office

Congratulations to our Board of Directors members who have moved into new positions! The coming months are sure to be a flurry of activity and new ideas under the energetic leadership of Russell Pohl, our new President.

Past-President, Heather Bayes, and I worked closely together for just short of four years and I would like to thank her for her wise leadership and stewardship of the Federation. Heather led the Federation through a significant change in operations and rebranding process, not to mention ensuring BCFFPA's ongoing involvement in many MCFD partnership initiatives. BCFFPA has a solid strategic plan and is stronger because of Heather Bayes. I'm happy to say that she continues on as Chair of our BCFoster Basics video series which launched in May.

We have just heard that our MCFD Liaison, Faye McClinton, is planning to retire. We wish her the best and extend our thanks for spending these past two years with us. Faye has been a tremendous advocate for the Federation.

Our office staff are already planning AGM 2015 in Whistler! If you've never attended a BCFFPA annual general meeting before, 2015 would be the perfect year to do so. We have a fabulous venue in one of National Geographic's 25 best ski resorts where you will be informed, pampered and entertained. We hope to see you there!

Jayne Wilson  
Executive Director



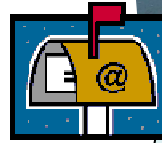
**fosterlineBC**  
**1-800-663-9999**  
**We're here for you**

## BCFFPA's *FosterlineBC* magazine is going digital...

... well, mostly. To keep the skyrocketing cost of regular postage from overwhelming our budget, we are joining our partners in the current trend to deliver our newsletters in a digital format.

We will keep a reduced number of printed copies of future magazines on hand. *If you would like to receive a printed copy, **PLEASE LET US KNOW** and we would be happy to send you one!* We have been encouraged to hear from other agencies that this shift in delivery method has not impacted the satisfaction of the people they provide services to. We hope the same is true for BCFFPA and our foster caregivers continue to enjoy our newsletter issues. By posting our magazine online and sending through e-mail, we are able to redirect some of our precious funding to our other services.

Please call us at 1-800-663-9999 if you would like to be put on our mailing list for printed copies of future *FosterlineBC* magazines.



## Thank You!

To our generous 2013-2014 Funders and Donors,  
our heartfelt thanks!

(And thanks to our relentless & visionary donations team)

|                                       |                                 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Accent Inns                           | Mr. Mom's World                 |
| Ayrlinx Telecom Services Ltd.         | Natural Trekking                |
| BC Lions                              | Nintendo of Canada Ltd.         |
| Brentwood Town Centre                 | Northern Lights Wildlife        |
| Canucks Sports & Entertainment        | Old Spaghetti Factory (Canada)  |
| Captain Kid's Fun Centre              | Panago                          |
| Castle Fun Park                       | PNE                             |
| Capilano Suspension Bridge Park       | Prince of Whales Whale Watching |
| Charlie's Chocolate Factory           | Purdy's Chocolates              |
| CKNW Orphan's Fund                    | Red Robin Restaurants           |
| Coquitlam Centre                      | Richmond Centre                 |
| Delta Grand Okanagan Resort           | Rocky Mountain Soap Company     |
| Delta Sun Peaks Resort                | Science World                   |
| Giggle Dam                            | Splashdown Waterparks Inc.      |
| Granville Island Brewing              | The Bay, Richmond Centre        |
| Grandview Lanes                       | The Bay, Willowbrook Mall       |
| Grouse Mountain Resorts Ltd.          | The Big River Brew Pub or       |
| Hell's Gate Airtram                   | The Zone Bowling Centre         |
| HR MacMillan Space Centre             | The Keg                         |
| IKEA Richmond                         | Vancouver Aquarium              |
| McDonald's Restaurants of Canada      | Vancouver Lookout               |
| Megson FitzPatrick Insurance Services | WildPlay Maple Ridge            |
| Metropolis @ Metrotown                | Wings Restaurants & Pubs        |

### Thanks to:

- TransCanada Pipelines for the donation of Selena Gomez tickets!
- BC Lions for the donation of BC Lions tickets!
- BCFFPA Locals for fundraising gift baskets for the AGM!
- Our fierce and funny Master of the Auction—Kari Beppele!

## This Year's Bursary Winners!

Congratulations to this year's winners of BCFFPA bursaries! We wish you much luck with your endeavors.

### Maurice Graydon Bursaries (4):

- |              |                     |
|--------------|---------------------|
| ★ J. Drake   | ★ A. Shaw           |
| ★ P. Khtaria | ★ D. Holding-Mabley |

### General Scholarship Fund (1)

- ★ H. Hejazi

### Natural Child Bursary (1)

- ★ L. Findlay

### William Curtis Bursary (1)

- ★ S. Inkster



### Our Mission

The BCFFPA represents and supports all Foster Parents to provide quality in-home foster care in British Columbia

### Our Vision

Supporting children and youth to reach their full potential through excellence in foster care

### Our Belief

Resilient Foster Parents = Empowered Children and Youth

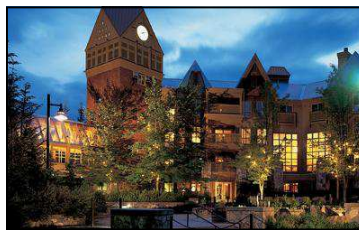
## BCFFPA AGM 2015 heads to Whistler Village

Join BCFFPA's Board of Directors and staff in beautiful Whistler Village next spring for our Annual General Meeting and Conference. We have negotiated very reasonable get-away rates at Hilton Whistler Resort & Spa! Spend an afternoon wandering the village shops or take the gondola to the top of the mountain. There's so much to do and see, we hope you don't forget to attend the workshops or the banquet!

Back by popular demand are the Banquet Evening Dance and our Friday night Wellness Room where our guests can enjoy refreshments by the patio campfire and relax with a foot massage.



We're mixing it up a bit in 2015 by spreading out our Camp for Kids fundraisers with a 50/50 draw during the workshop day lunch hour, the bucket draw on Friday night at the Wellness Room and our ever popular auction, hosted by ICS's Kari Beppe, on Saturday at the Banquet.



Our room block is now in place for reservations. Book soon to ensure you receive the foster parent rate!

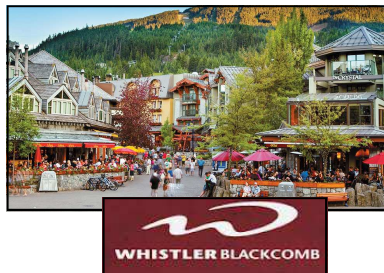
Hilton Room (2 double beds) **or** King Junior Suite — \$135/night  
Underground parking is available at the reduced rate of \$15/day.

*Please be sure to specify the event name **Foster Parents** when reserving to access negotiated rates.*

**Ph: 604-932-1982 or toll free at 1-800-515-4050.**

**E-mail: [reservations@hiltonwhistler.com](mailto:reservations@hiltonwhistler.com)**

Individual reservations must be guaranteed with a credit card or advance deposit. The Hilton will accept cancellation of guest reservations up to **14 days** prior to arrival.



Fill out our workshop topic survey at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FZBCPDR> and let us know what topics you'd be interested in for our workshop day.

Stay tuned for more information. We hope to see you in Whistler in May 2015!

## Camp For Kids Fundraising Record!

This year we raised over \$7000 for our fund to send foster children to camp! Thanks to CKNW Orphans' Fund and to those who participated in the AGM fundraising activities we were able to send 29 kids to camp this summer!

We hope that those who won the gift baskets during the Loonie auction and bucket draws have a chance soon to relax at the hotels that generously donated free nights and the fun family activities across the province.



## What's New With Rider Insurance?

The Extended Property Damage (Rider) Insurance Program is now processing claims for accidental damage to foster homes done by foster children on January 31st, 2014 or thereafter. This increase in coverage applies to all BC foster parents with contracts through the Ministry or Delegated Aboriginal Agencies or those contracted homes who have purchased the Rider coverage.

The claims, adjustment/investigation, and settlement process will be the same as will the deductible payment process through MCFD. Give us a call if you have any questions!



## Adoption Report by the Representative for Children and Youth—Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond

*Finding Forever Families: A Review of the Provincial Adoption System* was released on June 19th. Highlighting the over 1,000 children in BC waiting for adoption placements, Ms. Turpel-Lafond recommends six steps to assist the province in improving its adoption and permanency planning outcomes.

The report states that the average length of time a child spends in foster care has increased from 5.5 years (2001/02) to nearly 8 years (2011/12). Post adoption assistance rates are significantly lower than higher level foster care rates which poses a barrier to adoption by foster parents. The report further states that, though those who foster-to-adopt receive approvals on average in just under 10 months versus the norm of 13 months for general applications, they did not know the length of time these children had been living with their foster parents and whether or not the decision to proceed to adoption was timely.

To read the whole report, see the link at:  
<http://www.rcybc.ca/content/publications/reports.asp>



# Transgender People (reprinted from kidshealth.org)

Usually, kids don't think too much about their gender. It feels normal and natural for many girls to be female and for many boys to be male. But that's not true for everyone. Transgender people who are born as boys feel they should be female, and those who are born as girls feel they should be male.

People who are transgender feel like they're living inside a body that's all wrong for them. They often say they feel "trapped in someone else's body."

## What Being Transgender Means

When we think of ourselves as male or female, it's called **gender identity**. Everyone has a gender identity — the inborn sense of ourselves as being male or female.

Most people's gender identity matches their anatomy. But those who are transgender feel different from their physical appearances.

What society expects of men, women, boys, and girls also affects what we feel about ourselves. Every culture has "rules" about what is expected for men and what is expected for women. These expectations can include things like hairstyles, clothing, and jobs — and how people should act or behave.

Society doesn't have to state these rules because we see them all over. So most people grow up believing men should act a certain way and women should act a certain way without thinking about it much. Transgender people, though, have a very different sense of themselves.

Some transgender people know they feel "different" from the time they're young children. Others start sensing it around puberty or even later. When people who are transgender become aware that they feel mismatched with their bodies, they may feel confused and emotionally conflicted.

Some decide to physically change their bodies — through surgery or taking hormones — to match the gender they feel they really are. Physically becoming the opposite gender can be a long, complicated, and expensive process.

Not all transgender people decide to get surgery or hormones, though. Some are most comfortable keeping their physical anatomy but dressing as the opposite gender. Some aren't completely sure what they want yet, but may start by asking to be called a new name and use the pronouns that go with that name (such as "Amanda" instead of "Anthony" and "she" instead of "he").

Once transgender people start living their lives as the opposite gender, many issues may come up — like how to fill out forms

that require checking "female" or "male," and even which public bathrooms to use.

As with any group, not all transgender people want or think the same things. It all depends on what that particular person needs to feel most comfortable in both body and mind.

## Transgender Terms

The word transgender doesn't only mean that a person identifies with the opposite gender. It also can be used by people who don't feel like they're either completely male or completely female.

In addition to transgender, people use other words to describe feeling different from the gender they were born with, such as *gender variant*, *MTF* (for male to female), or *FTM* (for female to male). Some don't want to be called by any of the terms typically used to describe people who are questioning their gender. They just want to be known as who they are, unique in their own special way.

## Gender Identity vs. Sexual Orientation

Being transgender is not the same thing as being gay. Being transgender is about *gender identity* — the way people see themselves and the gender they identify with. Being gay or lesbian is about *sexual orientation* — the gender someone is attracted to.

Gay men are attracted to other men and lesbian women are attracted to other women. And most of the time, they're comfortable with the gender they are.

Because sexual orientation is different from gender identity, a transgender teen can be straight, gay, or bisexual — just like other teens can.

## What Is Cross-Dressing?

People who dress in clothes usually associated with a different gender are sometimes called cross-dressers. Not all people who dress as the opposite sex are transgender. Some are, but many are making a clothing choice for fun, comfort, or as a way to express their personal style — not because they see themselves as the other gender.

## What Causes People to Be Transgender?

Many health experts believe that being transgender isn't caused by any one thing. What makes a person comfortable or uncomfortable with his or her anatomy is unclear, but they believe it's the result of a complex mixture of biology, psychology, and environmental factors — and not simply a matter of choice.

## Helping Transgender Teens

The idea that people can feel that they're in the wrong gender bodies



Transgender People Continued...

is something that many people have never heard of or don't understand. Being transgender is something some people feel uncomfortable thinking or talking about.

For some parents, learning that their son wants to be a girl (or their daughter wants to be a boy) can be shocking. In the beginning, parents may feel a range of emotions, including disappointment and a sense of loss. Some parents, though, may have already suspected it and are not really surprised.

Even when the news is unexpected or difficult to hear, it's important for parents to react with love and understanding. Experts say that even a slightly accepting attitude is helpful. Since gender identity is not a choice, trying to force a child to change his or her gender identity is not helpful and can lead to problems.

If your teen is transgender and you are having difficulty understanding and accepting what it all means, consider meeting with a psychologist who specializes in supporting transgender people. Talking through your reactions and receiving guidance can help you understand what is happening and identify ways you can best support your child.

For people who are transgender, the realization that they feel different from others also can be very difficult. They may face rejection, discrimination, and even anger from people who don't understand transgender identity, and it can be a challenge to deal with others' reactions. Not everyone is tolerant or accepting, and transgender teens can face situations that can feel hostile and be unfair. This may lead to feelings of depression and isolation.

Advocacy groups and a growing number of health professionals can help transgender people find acceptance, support, rights, and appropriate medical care. Many expert medical centers are available to help transgender people — and their families — address the complex physical and emotional issues they might face.

Like everyone, transgender people want to feel accepted, understood, and supported.

Reviewed by: Nadia Dowshen, MD

**Tickets to Events for BC Foster Parents**

BC foster parents can receive tickets to events through *Kids Up Front Foundation*. To be placed on the mailing list e-mail the Provincial office at [office@bcfosterparents.ca](mailto:office@bcfosterparents.ca) or Debbie Drewitz at [drewitz@telus.net](mailto:drewitz@telus.net)




**BCFoster Basics Videos**  
by BCFFPA

Late in the 2013-2014 fiscal year, we received approval from MCFD for our BCFoster Basics video series which will be hosted on YouTube. Over the next six months we will be filming short informative videos on many topics taken from the Foster Family Handbook and BC's child welfare policy documents. Each one of the videos will be hosted by a BC foster caregiver or fostering professional. Foster parents are sometimes too busy to find the answers they need so our videos will have up-to-date information available to you 24/7—to view at your convenience. Our hope is that you will find our presentations entertaining, engaging and informative.

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FOR FOSTER PARENTS

AND BECAUSE  
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FOLLOW OUR NEW ONLINE LEARNING SERIES AT



BCFFPA YOUTUBE CHANNEL  
[WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/USER/BCFFPA](http://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/USER/BCFFPA)

| Programs and Services in 2013-2014             |             |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| General, Information & Intake Calls/E-mail     | 5,412       |
| Fostering Information Calls                    | 442         |
| Intakes/Potential Foster Parents               | 277         |
| Insurance Claims                               | 31          |
| Insurance Workshops                            | 7 + webinar |
| Insurance Workshop Attendees                   | 94          |
| Insurance-Related Calls/E-mail                 | 652         |
| Network & Partnership Meetings                 | 243         |
| Volunteer Support Hours                        | 1,575       |
| Volunteer Peer Support Providers               | 8           |
| Support Communications (calls/e-mail/meetings) | 1,327       |
| BCFFPA & Rider Brochures Distributed           | 680         |
| Newsletters Distributed                        | 12,200      |
| Website Updates                                | 134         |
| Website Total Visits                           | 21,768      |
| Monthly Average Website Visits                 | 1,814       |

**"Motions From The Floor"**  
... our members asked us to take action  
on the following items this year

**MOTION (07/AGM/2014)** that BCFFPA establish why numbers are dropping in foster homes and children in care.

*In process.*

**MOTION (08/AGM/2014)** that BCFFPA obtain information on the numbers of foster homes and how many are active.

*In process.*

**MOTION (09/AGM/2014)** that BCFFPA seek a copy of the "foster parent evaluation form" used by social workers when children leave a home.

*In process.*

**MOTION (10/AGM/2014)** that BCFFPA form a committee to further research the possibilities of a foster parent union. That BCFFPA contact unions and have representatives attend next year's AGM to discuss the benefits of a foster parent union.

*Initial research and conversations point to a few barriers to the formation of a foster parent union in BC because BC foster care-givers are contractors, not employees. In fact, those who do not receive a service payment (ie. Regular and Restricted care homes) have often been viewed as "volunteers" though they do have a contract to perform a service and receive maintenance funds. Having said that, there is a precedent in Washington state for a foster parent association affiliating with a state workers' union that we will be doing more research into.*

**MOTION (11/AGM/2014)** that BCFFPA contact all Community Service Managers (CSMs) at the Ministry to reinforce the importance and need for their attendance at all quarterly partnership meetings.

*In process.*

**MOTION (12/AGM/2014)** that, as a provincial body, BCFFPA pursue inclusion on the Provincial Quality Assurance committee (or its equivalent) as well as participation on any regional Quality Assurance committees.

*In process.*

BCFFPA represents *you*, your needs and your day to day practice as a professional caregiver in the province of BC. As a member of BCFFPA you can play a direct role in ensuring that all changes in the province's foster care system are in the best interests of children and the dedicated individuals who care for them day to day. We are currently seeking BCFFPA member foster parents who are active in their fostering communities to be **regional delegates for Vancouver Island and Vancouver Coastal regions**. Please call the provincial office for more information!



✓ **Master Water Safety**

Water-related activities are popular for summer physical activity and to beat the heat. Before venturing to the lakeside or ocean or even to the community swimming pool, make sure you brush up on the basics!

- If the kids aren't confident swimmers, arrange for some lessons.
- Make sure they swim with a buddy.
- Know the rules of the pool/park and if there is a supervisor on duty.
- Watch out for the "toos" - too tired, too cold, too far from shore, too much sun, too hungry...
- Be aware of tides and currents.
- Lifejackets must fit snugly and be worn when boating—or even when paddling around in an inflatable craft.
- If they can't swim well, don't allow them to go deeper than where their feet touch.
- Don't dive in shallow water.
- Walk on wet surfaces, never run.

✓ **Beat the Heat and Sun**

Heat-related illness occur when the body's temperature control system is overloaded. Children up to 4 years of age are most at risk though anyone can get sick from the heat if they aren't properly hydrated or sheltered from the sun. Even strenuous exercise can be hazardous if done for too long.

- Cars become furnaces quickly—never leave children or pets unattended in a car even with windows open.
- Loose, lightweight, cotton clothing keeps us cooler than tight clothes or synthetic materials.
- Don't forget the sunscreen and the hat!
- Drink water frequently.
- Schedule outdoor activities for morning and evening hours to avoid the peak heat hours.

✓ **Combat the Bugs**

Protect yourself and your family by preventing bites and diseases transmitted by insects.

- Use an effective insect repellent while playing outdoors.
- Stay away from long grasses and leafy foliage—keep yards trimmed to keep ticks out.
- After walks in grassy areas, check for ticks on clothes or skin immediately.

**Have a Safe and Enjoyable Summer!**





## MCFD's Residential Redesign: Caregiver Support Networks Progress Update

Submitted by Annette Harding—Residential Redesign Project Team, Caregiver Support Networks Project Lead

Following up on the information provided in the *FosterlineBC* Winter 2014 issue about the launch of the Caregiver Support Networks project, the provincial project team welcomes this opportunity to provide you with a progress update and information about what is happening over the Summer and early Fall.

Local project coordinators have been busy setting up, facilitating and recording feedback at community meetings involving foster caregivers, community agencies who support foster caregivers and children in care, and ministry staff in the 9 start-up communities; Dawson Creek, Delta, Duncan, Chilliwack, Houston, Penticton, Smithers, Trail and Tri-Cities.

The coordinators have also undertaken a range of individual outreach approaches to engage foster caregivers so that as many people as possible can have their say and provide input on a range of topics that will guide the final design of the Caregiver Support Network model in BC. The topics are:

1. Why Caregiver Support Networks? & What is a CSN?
2. "Lead Home": Roles and Responsibilities
3. "Lead Home": Competencies & Selection Criteria
4. Network Member Homes: Roles, Responsibilities & Process for Identifying who will be in the first Network
5. Transition Phase: Orientation/Team Building/Training
6. Planning for Ongoing Evaluation of Caregiver Support Networks
7. Supports for Foster Caregivers & Networks, Who Provides & Role Clarity

What we heard from people resulted in a number of changes to the design and development process, including a revised description of Caregiver Support Networks.

Feedback from Worksheets #2 & 3 has been used to develop the process for selecting the new Support Homes and the content of their contract.

Worksheet # 4 feedback has provided endorsement and confirmation of the expected roles and responsibilities of Network member Homes and provided the MCFD leads in each of the communities with good ideas on how to go about identifying potential Network member homes for the different types of Networks being planned (eg. geography or neighbourhood, specific needs of children such as Safe Babies, complex behavioural needs and age groupings).

Community feedback on Worksheet # 5 is in the process of being reviewed to help shape the key content and best processes to support the Transition and Orientation phase which will begin when the Support Home and Network member homes have been identified (projected for late August/September).

Survey says:  
Over 50% of respondents voted to change the working title of "Lead Home" to **Support Home.**

July and August are going to be exciting months as the *Notice of Opportunity* to inspire applications from interested foster caregivers will be posted in each of the 9 communities. Community panels, that will include a foster caregiver, are in the process of being formed to assess and select the new Support Homes. As Support Homes will be assisting with peer mentoring, support and relief care for foster caregivers in their Network, a geographic restriction for potential applicants will be clearly stated. To ensure that all foster caregivers in the province know what is going on regarding the initial start-up of the Networks, the *Notice of Opportunity* will be posted on the BCFFPA and Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents websites and the foster parent training and support agencies websites around the province. Foster caregivers residing within the geographic boundaries will also receive more personal notifications about this opportunity.

Keep watching your "go to" fostering community websites for the *Notice of Opportunity* and Frequently Asked Questions in early July 2014.

Please send any questions you may have to:  
[residentialredesign@gov.bc.ca](mailto:residentialredesign@gov.bc.ca)



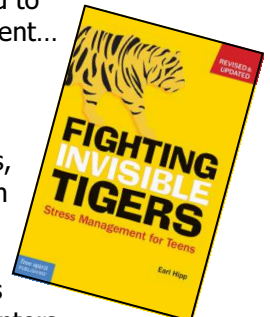
*The core values, principles and beliefs of long term foster parents are all similar. We work hard, we love the kids, we try to help and our families are bigger and better because of it!*

...Coast Fraser Caregiver

### Stress Management for Teens

All teens get overwhelmed, frustrated, feel inadequate, tired or stressed out by the challenges they face every day. Earl Hipp's book *Fighting Invisible Tigers—A Stress Management Guide for Teens* teaches them what to do about the stresses they experience. He gives practical advice that covers what all teens need to know about stress AND life management... coping skills, assertiveness, building supportive relationships, taking risks, making decisions, staying healthy, dealing with fears and misconceptions, learning positive self-talk and so much more!

It's a must read for parents and teens and available through Amazon or Chapters.



## Why Do I Need a BCFFPA Membership?

I am pleased to report that it has been another successful year at the BCFFPA Provincial Office, as we have continued to work towards an increase in our numbers for membership. This year we had the highest membership revenues in 3 years!

BCFFPA's current full and associate membership total is 703. Of this number, 646 are foster caregivers which is approximately 21% of BC's foster parents.

Remember, *we are a Federation created and governed BY foster parents FOR foster parents with the support of the Ministry of Children and Family Development.* Our mandate is only to represent foster caregivers as only other caregivers can. We ensure that foster parents' voices are heard by policy-setters and social workers, and especially when there are change initiatives underway, such as the current Caregiver Support Networks being formed in 9 communities.

By supporting BCFFPA, you build our capacity to support you and your caregiver communities.

### JOIN TODAY!

We currently have active Local Foster Parent Associations in each of the following communities. Check our website for direct contact information...

|                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| Sunshine Coast | Kelowna        |
| Tricities      | 100 Mile House |
| Surrey         | Salmon Arm     |
| Mission        | Vernon         |
| Chilliwack     | Prince George  |
| Cranbrook      | Quesnel        |
| Kamloops       |                |

BCFFPA Local Foster Parent Associations host regular meetings for support, family activities, networking and education. Our Locals are often sponsored and supported by community MCFD or foster support agency offices! Ask us about starting a Local (or joining an existing Local) today.

...so we know there are about 70 foster parents in Kelowna and the surrounding area. If 50 of those foster parents pay a membership fee for one year, revenue would be \$1500. Of that, \$1000 would be redistributed to the Kelowna Local Foster Parent Association and \$250 would be distributed to the Interior Macro Board to help pay for community and regional activities. The BCFFPA office would keep \$250 of the total revenues (17%)—which essentially pays for the cost of postage and paperwork. It's one way we can support foster parents to come together as a community.

## Free at Last

by Charles Fraser - April 25, 2014

The day I let go  
Of ego thoughts and belongings  
I instantly became free  
Like a balloon  
Tied to a Foster child's arm  
That slips off, and  
Everyone who witnesses  
Looks in pure awe,  
As the balloon  
Moves quickly to the universe  
Everyone stands transfixed  
Until the plastic orb  
Goes out of sight  
Nothing will ever be the same, and  
That is okay, this is enlightenment!  
True liberation, something I sought all my life.  
This transcended unions, governments,  
Protests, activism and volunteering,  
It was these commitments, that  
Allowed me to enter this mindfulness state  
Other's apathy released my string  
Some live and learn, others,  
Just live.  
Love is the answer, of that,  
I am convinced.  
Children are the purest form  
Ours to protect,  
In their innocent eyes  
Can be found the most  
Precious qualities on the planet  
Spiritual intelligence,  
Can short circuit hard hearts!  
Do not do to children,  
What was done to you!  
"Suffer not the little ones."  
The answers to universal peace  
Can be found here,  
Nurture this and behold  
What the human potential is capable of  
If given a chance.  
One day, if you go to Heaven  
You will be amazed how many  
Colored balloons adorn the streets!





## Awesome Opportunities for Young People in Care!! Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks

Hello to all you wonderful foster families!

First of all, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all you do for our province's amazing young people. We want to especially celebrate the incredible impact of those many special foster parents who, unconditionally, listen to and cheer on their foster children; maintain strong, life-long bonds; become vocal allies in the youth in care movement; and go above and beyond to support young people in pursuing the healthy goals and relationships of their choosing. We've witnessed countless children and youth in and from care who have thrived with the compassion, guidance and wisdom shown by their foster families—many of them members the BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations.

Involvement in the programs and services here at Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks can also make a real difference in the well-being of our young people who deserve all the support and community the world can offer; once involved, youth often report feeling like they wish they got involved sooner as they now have a larger family, life-long friendships, a stronger belief in themselves and passion about their future. But! They can only become involved if they know about us and are encouraged to get in touch. Any youth in and from care anywhere in B.C. (including those who've spent time in foster homes; group homes; mental health, addiction and custody centres; in the care of a relative and on youth agreements) are eligible for our programs.

### Current Opportunities for Your Young People:

We offer youth in and from care ages 14-24 from across BC many [meaningful opportunities](#) to develop skills, access educational opportunities, connect with peers, have their ideas heard, and build on their network of supportive people. FBCYICN [membership](#) is free and members are encouraged to be involved at any level—be it simply staying in touch or taking on significant leadership roles.

✓ **BURSARIES:** Money toward [post-secondary education or training](#) and [transitioning out of care](#)

Deadlines: Both applications due July 11th, 2014 @ 4:30

✓ **YOUTH RETREATS:** Weekend retreats (Steering Committee Meetings), three per year, where youth participate in skill-building workshops, fun activities and consultations with other youth in and from care and their allies from across the province. No young person from care ages 14-24 in B.C. will be turned away due to lack of travel and retreat-cost funds.

Next Date: Oct 30th-Nov 2nd

✓ **POWER PAGES MAGAZINE:** Having writing, artwork or photography published in our provincial magazine for youth in and from care and their allies—youth receive an honorarium of up to \$50/edition

Next Deadline: August 15th

✓ **LEADERSHIP + VOLUNTEERING:** Taking on meaningful [volunteer](#) and leadership opportunities – ranging from facilitating activities to leadership teams all the way up to staff and board positions—we're always looking to connect with all young people from care to find out what they're interested in and how they would like to develop their skills in a fun and supportive environment. We provide lots of training, support, honorariums and references. We currently have an opening for a paid youth staff position to coordinate our youth retreats!

Youth Staff Deadline: July 15th

View current opportunities and job postings here:  
<http://fbcyicn.ca/get-involved/>

✓ **LOCAL YOUTH in CARE NETWORKS:** Joining our supportive [Local Youth in Care Networks](#)— groups of youth in/from care who gather with adult allies in their community for support and fun. If you would like to help support/start a local in your community, be in touch with Program Manager Chris: [chris\\_buchner@fbcyicn.ca](mailto:chris_buchner@fbcyicn.ca)

Active Locals: Victoria and Kelowna

In the works: Fort St. John, Powell River and Kamloops

✓ **121 SUPPORT:** We offer young people in or from [care](#) an opportunity to receive guidance about different barriers they may be facing. We offer support by listening, asking questions, providing referrals, creating support plans to meet individual needs and individual [advocacy](#) to help young people best navigate the system. If you are a foster parent and would like to learn more about us and how our provincial programs and services support young people in and from care to thrive, please contact us anytime!

E-mail: [info@fbcyicn.ca](mailto:info@fbcyicn.ca)

Phone: toll free 1-800-565-8055

On Facebook: [Federation of BC Youth In Care Networks](#)

Website: [fbcyicn.ca](http://fbcyicn.ca)

The Federation of BC Youth In Care Networks: By coming together, we're not alone!



...supporting BC's youth in and from care...

## 2014 Annual Regional Reports

### Coast Fraser Report—Monica Buchanan

The Coast Fraser Region has had some transformational processes—a new delegate and inactive Locals. Foster parents requiring support has been about the same as last year. In order to adequately support the Locals and continue with ongoing development, there needs to be two delegates for the region. While a process of electing a second delegate commenced in the Fall of 2013, the second position has not yet been filled.

Abbotsford Local remains inactive and currently there is no attempt to re-establish. The Ridge Meadows contact declares that their status is currently inactive—as it has been since summer of 2013, however, they managed to host the Santa Breakfast, Fishing Derby, and “Wind-up Picnic”. All events were well attended by foster parents in the area.

Chilliwack, Surrey, and Sunshine Coast Locals host meetings whenever they can though, as often happens, attendance can be a bit of a challenge. Surrey Local is experiencing challenges establishing partnership with the MCFD office in the area.

Tri-cities and Mission Locals are active and functioning well. Mission Local reports that both executive and foster parent support meetings are regular; that they are conducting training independently and jointly with MCFD; and overall the Local is functioning with no major concerns. Tri-cities also reports positive functioning with ninety active foster parents and handling between 20–25 phone calls monthly for support and general inquiries. This Local executive meets regularly and the network for support to foster parents is very strong. In addition, Tri-cities is cited for one of the pilot communities for the Caregiver Support Network project rollout. MCFD’s target dates are for the Fall of 2014 or into the beginning of 2015.

Contacts in all areas of Coast Fraser report ongoing challenges with maintaining positive relationships with some workers. This has been a continuing problem over the past few years. Surrey and Langley continue to report the most concerning cases. These issues have been difficult to address with former regional MCFD leads.

The region welcomes Jodi Higgs, who has taken over from Debbie Verkerk as the PCRS foster parent support worker for the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley. This is an MCFD funded position. In addition to individual support, Jodi holds regular support and educational groups for foster parents.

The Fraser region welcomes a new MCFD Executive Director of Service. Karen Blackman comes to us from her previous post in Prince George.

### North Regional Report—Rocky Hindmarch

I took over the Northern Delegate position part way through the year. I went down to Richmond for a face-to-face meeting in the Fall, and found that to be quite interesting and informative. It was also nice getting to meet everyone on the Provincial Board.

The North Region is an interesting place. It's absolutely massive, but we all seem to be having the same issues. Earlier in the year, here in PG we had a Partnership Event that I helped to put together. It was pinpointed that two of our main issues with fostering in our area that we need to work on are 'Transitions of Children' and 'Communication Between Workers and Foster Parents.' The event went well, but now a year later it appears as though we haven't come very close to bettering these issues. So we can call this a work in progress. We have several people in the area who have been working to improve this situation.

Prince George welcomes a new MCFD Executive Director of Service, Ed Berry, who is himself a former foster parent.

I've been making a few connections with foster parents in other communities throughout the North. My hope is that we can open more Locals throughout the area. I'd also love to be able to have more foster parents trained in peer support and advocacy so that it's not just two or three people supporting this huge area.

We had a few foster parents go to the lower mainland Stand Together conference, as well as to the BCFFPA AGM, and the FAFP AGM down in Penticton. There have been several courses here in the North that some foster parents have been attending. Partnership meetings are still happening as well.

The Prince George Local has been meeting monthly. We continue to try to make fostering a more pleasant experience for caregivers in the North. There aren't a lot of people who attend these meetings, and we would welcome other foster parents. We believe that the fostering climate in the North is taking steps in the right direction. The more foster parents who become involved in the Local, the more we are able to support positive changes.

We've been quite busy planning the upcoming AGM here in Prince George. This has been quite a process, but it seems as though things are coming together and it will be a great event. I hope that many foster parents from the North, and from the rest of the province, will be able to attend. It's a great way to connect with foster parents from other communities. It also gives us the opportunity to meet people from other Local BCFFPA Boards, from the Provincial Board and to meet stakeholders who work in the fostering field.

I'm happy to be a part of the Provincial BCFFPA Board, and I'm hoping to assist in making fostering a more positive and happy experience for the foster homes and foster children in our communities.



## Interior Report—Yvonne Langlois (Macro Board)

The last year has seen many changes in the Interior. One of the concerns we have is that the Ministry is not replacing the social workers or administration staff as they leave. We are finding that many offices are down to two administrative staff. Social workers are having problems returning calls as they have larger case loads. Foster parents are still having to apply for any extra funds if their foster kids need anything. Foster parents are needing to think up creative ways to stretch the dollar. Many foster parents are not receiving assistance with graduation costs or sport activity expenses.

Some Interior foster parents are meeting with MCFD every two months. Protocols are generally being completed in a timely manner.

Most areas we receive reports from have a noticeable decline in foster homes. In the last three years the Kamloops area has lost 150 foster homes. This is due to retirement or closures. New foster home approvals are delayed due to social worker shortages. Many areas do not have enough foster homes to place children in their home communities.

It is sad to see that there has been a lack of training for caregivers. Foster parents are not showing much interest. Some functions that have been offered over the last year have had poor turn outs. Some of the functions that foster parents have attended are BBQ, Bowling, Christmas and Easter parties.

The Macro Board has seen some changes as well. We would like to wish Mary Ann and Petey the best on their new endeavors and to thank you for representing your area so well. We welcome Carol and Judy to our Board and thank you for stepping in.

Kevin Daniel left us a few months ago to start a new job. Good luck! You will be missed. You have given this Board many good years with your knowledge and information. Thank you to the rest of the Board members for representing our foster parents once a month on our conference call. Hope everyone has a great time at the 2014 AGM.

## Vancouver Island Report—No Delegate

Our Vancouver Island Delegate resigned in early 2014. We do not have an annual report regarding Island activities.

This year we have had 20 calls for support from the Island. We have good connections with the Island agency regional coordinators and refer support calls as we can. We are hoping to do a 'meet and greet' road trip up the Island to meet with foster parents, agency staff and our Ministry friends in the coming year.

We are currently seeking a Vancouver Island foster parent with an active BCFFPA membership to hold the Delegate position. If you are interested, please call the BCFFPA provincial office.

## Read Your Contracts Carefully Before Signing

We caution caregivers to CAREFULLY read and understand your contract or modifications to the contract before signing. Ask all your questions FIRST! Once you have signed it is difficult to have it changed, and you may find yourself out of pocket.

## Extended Health Care Packages by Canada Financial

Canada Financial's Ian Bideshi is available to put together individual extended health benefit insurance packages for foster parents. Currently he is offering a 10% discount for foster parents who utilize Canada Financial's services.

Ian has helped over 110 foster parents and has saved them thousands of dollars over the past 15 years. Canada Financial also offers segregated funds which have some guarantees for your investments.

Contact Ian at 604-862-4262 for more information.

## BCFFPA Wish List

Budgets are always tight and it's difficult to keep our technology up to date. Over the past two office moves, our furniture has taken a beating. BCFFPA is seeking donations for the following items:

- Sectional desks
- Steno chairs
- Meeting room chairs
- Reception chairs—or a sofa in good shape
- Coffee table or side table
- 3 new desktop computers
- Digital camera
- InDesign desktop publishing software
- Photoshop picture editing software
- Tablets for Board members
- Sponsor for a children's reading corner

If you are interested in making a donation or know someone who is, please contact Jayne for details. Our thanks to you!



# Community Resources

## Provincial Resources

|                                                                                                        |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations</b><br>www.bcfosterparents.ca                           | 1-800-663-9999 |
| <b>After Hours Foster Parent Support Line</b>                                                          | 1-888-495-4440 |
| <b>Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents</b><br>www.fafp.ca                                          | 1-866-291-7091 |
| <b>Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks</b><br>www.fbcyicn.ca                                       | 1-800-565-8055 |
| <b>Adoptive Families Association</b><br>www.bcadoption.com                                             | 1-877-236-7807 |
| <b>Pacific Post Partum Support Society</b><br>www.postpartum.org (also supporting adoption placements) | 604-255-7999   |
| <b>Parent Help Line</b>                                                                                | 1-888-603-9100 |
| <b>Parents Together</b>                                                                                | 604-325-0511   |
| <b>Parent Support Services of BC</b><br>www.parentsupport.bc.ca                                        | 1-800-665-6880 |
| <b>Representative for Children &amp; Youth</b><br>www.rcybc.ca                                         | 1-800-476-3933 |
| <b>FAE/S Support Network</b>                                                                           | 604-507-6675   |

## Coastal Fraser

*For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.*

|                                                                                                        |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Hollyburn Family Services</b><br>www.hollyburn.ca                                                   | 604-987-8211 |
| <b>Vancouver Aboriginal Child &amp; Family Services Society</b><br>www.vacfss.com                      | 778-331-4500 |
| <b>Family Services of Greater Vancouver</b><br>www.fosterhub.ca                                        | 604-279-7100 |
| <b>Fraser Valley Foster Parent Association</b>                                                         | 604-533-1924 |
| <b>Abbotsford Community Services Foster Parent Caregiver Support</b>                                   | 604-859-2165 |
| <b>South Vancouver Youth Centre</b><br>www.svyv.ca<br>(Ask about their foster parent support workers!) | 604-325-2004 |

## Island

*For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.*

|                                                                    |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Foster Parent Support Services Society</b>                      | 1-888-922-8437 |
| FPSSS (Victoria)                                                   | 778-430-5459   |
| FPSSS (Nanaimo)                                                    | 250-390-9686   |
| FPSSS (Campbell River)                                             | 250-286-0555   |
| <b>Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents</b><br>(Nanaimo office) | 250-591-0069   |

## Interior

*For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.*

|                                                                           |                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Okanagan Foster Parent Association</b><br>www.okfosterparents.ca       |                |
| Central Okanagan                                                          | 250-868-9285   |
| North Okanagan                                                            | 250-558-0939   |
| South Okanagan                                                            | 250-488-0561   |
| Shuswap                                                                   | 250-253-4499   |
| <b>Okanagan Metis Children &amp; Family Services</b>                      | 250-868-0351   |
| <b>Interior Community Services</b><br>www.interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca | 1-877-376-3660 |

## North

*For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.*

|                                                                                                      |                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>AXIS Family Resources</b><br>(24/7 support)<br>www.axis.bc.ca (satellite office locations online) | 1-877-392-1003<br>Press 205 |
| <b>North Peace Community Resources Society</b><br>Fort St. John                                      | 250-785-6021<br>(ext. 235)  |

*We are in the process of developing our Community Resources page. Please submit your relevant contacts to [jayne@bcfosterparents.ca](mailto:jayne@bcfosterparents.ca).*



## Advertise Here! (1/2 page size)

### Readership, Exposure & Frequency

- **FosterlineBC** reaches over 3400 foster parents, agencies, community service locations, businesses and other individuals 4 times each year.
- Increase exposure for your business by advertising in **FosterlineBC**

### Cost

- 1/2 page ~ 4 issues per year ~ \$925
- 1/2 page ~ single issue ~ \$250
- 1/4 page ~ 4 issues per year ~ \$650
- 1/4 page ~ single issue ~ \$175
- Business card ~ 4 issues per year ~ \$475
- 1/4 page ~ single issue ~ \$125

For information on advertising in FosterlineBC, contact a staff member at BCFFPA! **1-800-663-9999**

**1/4 Page Size**

**Business Card Size**

**'IT PAYS TO BE A MEMBER'**

Please complete & return to: **BCFFPA - 131 Eighth Street, New Westminster, BC V3M 3P6**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City & Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Association \_\_\_\_\_

Level of Foster Home: (tick one) Restricted \_\_\_\_ Regular \_\_\_\_ Level I \_\_\_\_ Level II \_\_\_\_ Level III \_\_\_\_ Contractor \_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_

This is a: **New Membership** \_\_\_\_ (OR) a **Renewal** \_\_\_\_ .

**1 year:** individual \$30.00 \_\_\_\_ OR couple \$35.00 \_\_\_\_

**2 year:** individual \$50.00 \_\_\_\_ OR couple \$60.00 \_\_\_\_

\*\$10.00 of this membership fee will be used by the provincial body for administration of the program and development of services to foster parents. The balance of the fee will be returned to your region or local association.

I/we contract with (i.e. delegated agency regional agency MCFD etc.) Name: \_\_\_\_\_ OR my affiliation with the BCFFPA is (i.e. staff, MCFD, non-foster parent): \_\_\_\_\_. As members of the B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations, I/we agree to abide by the By-laws, Policy and Procedures, and Code of Ethics of the Federation. \_\_\_\_\_

[signature(s)]

Please bill my VISA \_\_\_\_ M/C \_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations**

131 Eighth Street

New Westminster, BC V3M 3P6