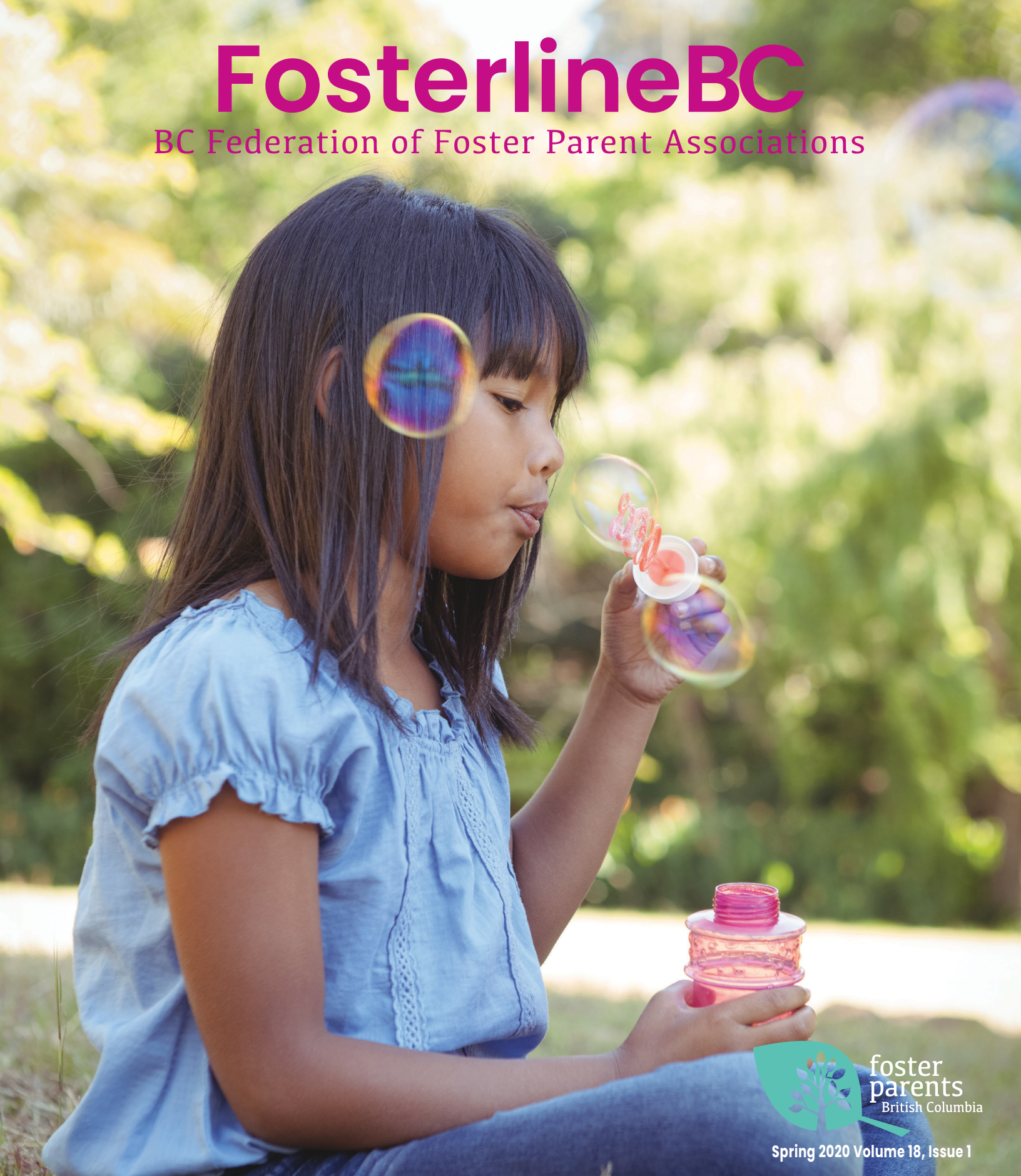


FosterlineBC

BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations



Spring 2020 Volume 18, Issue 1

**THE PAINFUL LEGACY OF
RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS AND THE
OVERREPRESENTATION OF
INDIGENOUS YOUTH IN CARE**

**SOCIAL WORKER SPOTLIGHT:
MEET TAMMY NEWTON FROM
SECWÉPEMC CHILD
& FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY**

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE
FEDERAL INDIGENOUS CHILD
WELFARE LEGISLATION
(BILL C-92)**

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BC FEDERATION OF FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATIONS (BCFFPA)

Provincial Office
208 – 20641 Logan Avenue
Langley, BC V3A 7R3

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Coast Fraser Delegate	Jeanette Dyer
Interior Delegate	Raquel Lesieur
Northern Delegate	Vacant
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PROVINCIAL STAFF

Executive Director	Jayne Wilson jayne@bcfosterparents.ca
Office Manager	Ronda Sweeney ronda@bcfosterparents.ca
Solutions Manager	Annette Harding annette@bcfosterparents.ca
Communications Coordinator	Michelle Relevante michelle@bcfosterparents.ca
Solutions Coordinator	Krissy Ramcharan krissy@bcfosterparents.ca
Fund Development & Outreach Coordinator	Anita Cymet anita@bcfosterparents.ca
Solutions Assistant	Tanya Pitts tanya@bcfosterparents.ca
Administrative Assistant	Denise Douglas denise@bcfosterparents.ca
Reception	Gabby Cousins gabby@bcfosterparents.ca

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Submissions — Forward articles, personal stories or ideas to the BCFFPA office. Materials may be edited for length and suitability. To be added to our Foster Community Resources list as a regional or agency contact, please email Michelle Relevante at michelle@bcfosterparents.ca.

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

President's Report



I would love to say welcome to Spring but I'm looking out my window at probably two feet of snow so all I can say is welcome to warmer weather! Depending on where you are in the province, you may already have spring-like conditions. For the rest of us though, we will have spring in a couple of months.

I hope you all were able to enjoy your Christmas break with your children and I'm sure you are all as happy as I am that school is back and life can return to normal – or as normal as it is in a foster family.

We are continuing to work with the ministry with the Foster Parent Rights document (in hand). Our goal is to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Rights become part of the foundational knowledge of all Ministry workers. It may be that policy is changed to accommodate the goals of the Rights document – or we could pursue a Memorandum of Understanding (which is, essentially, a working agreement between the Ministry and BCFFPA), or, if we can garner support for it and go through the lengthy process, we may approach the provincial government and ask that the Foster Parent Rights are legislated. Just know that we have the same goal as you do – to know that foster parents are treated with respect and as a member of the team.

I'm sure you are all aware that the face of fostering is changing with the Federal Legislation (Bill C-92) which came into effect January 1st. With the priority that children be placed with family, friends, and community members, there will undoubtedly be a reduction in the number of children coming into foster care. In relation to this, our focus as foster parents will need to be on ensuring that community connections are being pursued for the children in our homes and that we are participating as part of the care planning team. We'll also need to work together with Ministry and DAA workers to ensure that transition plans are in place.

One anticipated outcome is that, though children may return home, they may also return to foster care. We need to continue with our recruitment of new foster homes but more importantly, retention of our existing skilled homes is critical. We have been in discussions with the Ministry regarding this issue of retention. We are also continuing to advocate for comprehensive support and training for the kinship or out-of-care homes.

We will continue to keep you informed of our efforts and results as we move forward in consultation with the Ministry on these major issues.

Thank you for the work you do. Fostering is one of the hardest jobs and probably the least understood by the general public.

Sincerely,

Marcy Perron
President

Notes from the Office



We're at the very beginning of 2020 and we already have a full schedule for the year ahead. Our members may want to watch their mailbox for a set of revised draft Bylaws which will come out in March for your review. You will be welcome to send in any questions or concerns you have. If there is need, we will

schedule conference calls with our legal counsel in order to address any significant concerns well in advance of the membership vote.

As Marcy said in her President's report, we have scheduled regular discussions with the Ministry leadership to address the ongoing problem that foster parents in some areas aren't treated with much respect. Most of you know that changing a challenging culture takes time, but BCFFPA keeps at it until we find a solution.

Speaking of solutions, we've added another staff member to our Solutions Program team to assist with the continuous intakes and to migrate our documentation to our brand new (and very secure) database. The database will allow us to provide accurate tracking of statistics including numbers of cases, what concerns are most prevalent in the province, how many hours are spent on each support/advocacy case, and the outcomes of each situation. We have made considerable headway in our partnerships with Ministry leadership in the province and will be meeting with foster parents and Ministry workers in 3 communities in the coming few months to discuss situations that have impacted several foster homes.

BCFFPA attends periodic meetings hosted by MCFD's Strategic Priorities team where we discuss a best practice future state for our sector. Together, the larger advisory team is diving down rabbit holes, answering tough questions, discovering successful practice in other jurisdiction. We are also looking at how we can shift practice in BC for a long term, sustainable, successful system that supports the best interests of children and youth as well as those who work within the system to provide care and a solid foundation for the work to be done. Some very exciting ideas are being shared that I'm hopeful will be worked into the future design for fostering.

Many of you will have seen the attractive messaging and graphic layouts on our social media pages. Michelle Relevante has taken on the role of Communications Coordinator and is doing an impressive job! I'm so happy to see the numbers climbing with our social media audience. We're engaging a whole new and younger demographic. Think future foster parents!

With that I'll leave you in Michelle's capable hands. I know you'll find this issue of FosterlineBC magazine very informative.

Regards,

Jayne Wilson
Executive Director

OUR MISSION

To represent and support all foster parents who provide quality in-home family care in BC.



OUR BELIEF

Supported and resilient caregivers raise empowered children and youth.



OUR VISION

Supporting children and youth to reach their full potential through exceptional care.



The BCFFPA is a provincial organization for foster parents, run by foster parents. We are a registered non-profit charity which aims to bring together foster parents, social workers and other stakeholders who are working to continuously improve the standard of care for children in our province.

We provide information to the general public about fostering and recruitment services to the Ministry of Children and Family Development and Delegated Aboriginal Agencies. We offer our community a support network through our local Branch affiliations and our Solutions Program, opportunities for education, a hub to share news across our sector and insurance resources for foster caregivers. For over 50 years, we have consulted about the revision and development of policy and practice within BC's child welfare sector.

BCFFPA's structure facilitates contact with all foster parents in the province. We provide funding to our Branches and Regional Councils, and we maintain a Board of Directors that represents our diverse BC culture. BCFFPA's Board of Directors provincially, regionally and at a community level are all volunteers, elected by their foster parent membership community.

Programs and Services

BCFFPA has been serving BC's foster caregivers and our broader fostering community since 1967. We strive to meet the needs of all caregivers by maintaining an involvement in the provincial government's development of fostering policy and practice guidelines. In order to effectively address the diversity of our community's needs, we provide several core programs and respond to additional needs as we are able.

Recruitment



BCFFPA facilitates the Provincial toll free FosterlineBC. Those who are interested in fostering can call for basic information about fostering and complete an intake form. FosterlineBC toll free line is BC's main access for information, referral and support for all foster caregivers.

Community Capacity Building



BCFFPA facilitates opportunities for foster parents to network with other caregivers and agency workers within the fostering community through hosted events and community meetings.



BCFFPA supports the development and operations of community level foster parent groups called BCFFPA Local Foster Parent Associations or Branches. Our Branches meet regularly to offer support, mentorship, family activities and education workshops.



Through our Solutions Program, BCFFPA provides direct advocacy and support for foster caregivers who encounter challenges with placements, contract issues, investigations, and other foster-related interactions. We provide training to interested foster parent community members across the province.



BCFFPA has been working with the BC government for over 50 years to ensure fostering policies reflect best-practice and a positive, nurturing environment for BC's children and youth in foster care. BCFFPA works in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and all contracted regional support agencies providing services to BC's foster caregivers.

Provincial Information



We maintain a website that provides information for new and experienced foster caregivers including the steps to becoming a foster parent, policy updates, the BC Foster Basics video series, policy links, news releases, ongoing project updates, event details and regional information.



BCFFPA produces a provincial newsletter for our community members 3 times each year that contains current news from across the province.

Rider Insurance Program



BCFFPA administers an insurance program that, in many situations, covers the damages done to the property and belongings of all MCFD and DAA contracted foster caregivers in BC. The Rider Insurance Workshop is available for presentation across the province so that caregivers, social workers and agency staff are aware of program details and how to access the Rider program for claims.

Supplementary Education for Foster Parents



BCFFPA develops and offers workshops to address the current issues that foster parents and the broader fostering community need to hear about. Current workshops cover themes such as grief and loss, permanency, communication, working in partnership, accessing and providing support and advocacy, and safeguarding.

Financial Support



BCFFPA raises funds to provide financial support through grants and bursaries that are accessible by BCFFPA member foster parents, birth children of foster parents and youth in and from care.

- Camps for Kids Grant
- Medical Travel Grant
- General Scholarship Fund
- Natural Child Bursary
- Merv Davis Bursary
- William Curtis Memorial Fund
- Fine Arts for Kids Fund
- JCW Excellence in Writing Grant

Get to know our new Board Member and Interior Delegate, Raquel Lesieur!

Interior Delegate Report by Raquel Lesieur

What made you decide to become a foster parent?

Fostering is something I grew up around. My parents and grandparents fostered, and I have fond memories of not only seeing the joy it brought to the children that came into our lives, but the joy fostering brought my family. I knew growing up that fostering would be something I would eventually do, as I also appreciated the unique relationships I had with the children that came into my grandparents' and parents' homes.

How long have you been fostering?

My partner and I have been fostering for 10 years.

What's the best thing about being a foster parent?

For me, the best thing about fostering is that it gave my partner and I the opportunity to have our adoptive daughter come into our lives.

What do you wish more people knew about fostering?

I wish more people knew that you don't need to foster in isolation. There are agencies and foster parent groups that are helpful and able to offer support.

What about BCFFPA's mission and mandate really motivates you?

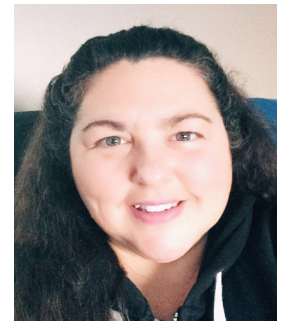
I believe in what the BCFFPA does for foster families, and I want to be involved in the Federation to learn even more about what it has to offer and what it does so I can better inform other foster parents that are not currently connected with the BCFFPA.

What are you most excited about in your new role on the BCFFPA Board of Directors?

I am most excited about the opportunity to be a voice for the foster parents of the Interior region, for a chance to network, and for the learning experiences ahead.

Can you share one fun fact about yourself?

I love doing crafts with my kids. I have a craft bin that comes with us when we go camping.



Happy 2020, everyone!

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season, and that your new year is off to a positive and exciting start.

As your new Interior Delegate, I would like to briefly introduce myself. My name is Raquel Lesieur, and I reside in Kamloops with my partner and our two daughters. I have been a foster parent since 2009, and I am also an adoptive parent. I have held a position on the BCFFPA Kamloops Branch for the past 5 years as a Social Convenor, and I now look forward to expanding my duties within the BCFFPA as your new Interior Delegate.

It appears that a majority of the concerns and "trickies" that foster parents are voicing are relevant across the Interior Region. Foster parents are still feeling the effects of high social worker turnover rates, and that foster homes are feeling at times that they are not getting what they need for the best interest of the child(ren) in their care. The lack of available respite within communities is still a struggle. Foster parents are being encouraged by social workers to utilize other foster parents for respite if possible, but that becomes a challenge when other foster parents are also feeling overwhelmed. Other concerns that have been brought up among foster parents is that they will receive a call to take a child(ren) and then no one shows up, and there isn't a follow up call about plans changing, which is causing frustrations.

The Kamloops Branch will be hosting many activities for families and kids – stay tuned for announcements!

Coast Fraser Delegate Report

by Jeanette Dyer

Here we are again another Christmas past and a new year beginning. I hope you all had a good Christmas and I wish everyone a Happy New Year.

I am still reaching out to all of you in the Coast Fraser region to contact me with your concerns, events and any news in and around your local area.

Our Branch in Mission is actively working to keep the information coming and sharing with our foster parents. Abbotsford does not yet have a Branch so Mission includes any and all Abbotsford foster parents on our contact list if they provide their contact numbers, or email address. We stay in fairly close contact with the MCFD office so we can keep foster parents aware of any new workers, changes in the office and to keep up with MCFD expectations for the foster homes.

In Mission, we have had staff changes, retirements and workloads being added to remaining workers which makes them harder to reach. That's a concern for some of us. However, our office has always been supportive and great to work with.

Right now, we are asking MCFD personnel to come to our meeting to address the new forms we are being asked to use. Some foster parents are not aware of these forms so some explanations and examples will be helpful. This will also give us an understanding of the need for uniformity across the board.

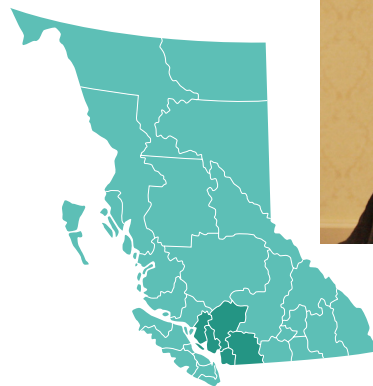
We had a fun Christmas get together put on by the Mission office that included Santa and a gift for our kids. If the kids faces were any indication, a great time was had by all.

The fostering connection group hosted by Abbotsford's Archway Community Services is ongoing with a Life Books focus. They have been holding both morning and night groups with supplies provided. You just bring your pictures and memorabilia and learn fun ways to put a Life Book together.

Upcoming dates for the Life Book group are:

- Jan 30th at 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM
- April 30th at 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
- Sept 17th at 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Child care can be available if pre-registered.



Plans are in the works for the Mission Branch to host a workshop in the Fall in partnership with Archway Community Services. We've invited Dr. Deborah McNamara to talk about nutrition, and Andrea Chatwin who will speak about building relationships with birth families. This is a full day workshop to be held in Abbotsford on Sept 24th, 2020. Stay tuned for announcements! This workshop is open to anyone interested such as foster parents, parenting grandparents, social workers, etc.

Upcoming events at Archway Community Services in Abbotsford:

- February 12th: Family is Family
- March 31st: In the Moment
- April 21st: FVCDC presenting occupational therapy
- May 12th: Court preparation with Karen Hedman
- June 9th: Documentation: Observing and Recording with Objectivity

Please note that the schedule and content may change without advance notice. Please contact the Archway Community Services' Caregiver (Foster Parent) Support Program at 778-880-8555.

About concerns around here the question of retention keeps coming up. Highly qualified, trained, experienced homes sit empty. Foster parents are having to find jobs or consider downsizing their homes due to loss of income. These are huge issues for our foster parents.

Remember, BCFFPA is here for you. If you want to start a Branch in your area, call the office at 1-800-663-9999 and we will help you get started.

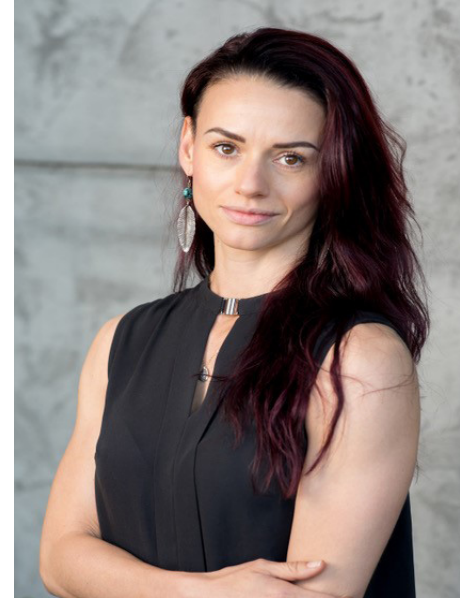
Until next time. You can reach me at jfcdyer@gmail.com or 604-826-9348.

The Painful Legacy of Residential Schools and the Overrepresentation of Indigenous Children and Youth in Care: An Interview with Dr. Brittany Barker

by Michelle Relevante

Twenty-four years after the last residential school closed its doors, its painful legacy continues to impact the lives of its survivors, their families and communities. The intergenerational trauma resulting from the residential school system is still felt by those whose lives have been scarred by it. Today, over 60% of youth in care in British Columbia are Indigenous while only accounting for approximately 8% of the total youth population -- an overrepresentation that Dr. Barker's research suggests cannot be attributed to coincidence. I interviewed Dr. Brittany Barker, whose doctoral research sheds light on the relationship between the residential school system and the overrepresentation of Indigenous children and youth in care today, as well as the broader impacts associated with the child welfare system among young people who use drugs in Vancouver, BC.

Dr. Brittany Barker completed her PhD in epidemiology and public policy at the University of British Columbia in the spring of 2019. Her doctoral research, funded by a CIHR Doctoral Research Award, assessed long-term drug and health-related impacts associated with exposure to the child welfare system among two cohort studies of people who use drugs (the At-Risk Youth Study and the Vancouver Injection Drug User Study) at the BC Centre on Substance Use (BCCSU). She is currently a CIHR-funded Health System Impact Fellow in Research and Knowledge Exchange at the First Nations Health Authority and the BCCSU, working to support Nation-based, community-driven harm reduction in First Nation communities in BC. Brittany works, plays and lives on the traditional and unceded territories of the xʷməθkəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-waututh) Nations in Vancouver, BC.



On the general intent of her doctoral research...

The general intent was to examine the relationship between the child welfare system and substance use outcomes among studies of younger people who use drugs in Vancouver, BC. She also sought to examine possible intergenerational impacts of the residential school system on the overrepresentation of Indigenous youth in care today; to investigate the relationship between the child welfare system and injection initiation among street-involved youth; and to evaluate if utilizing services while aging out of care was associated with improved long-term health-related outcomes among younger people who use drugs.

On the key findings of her research...

Dr. Barker's research provides compelling evidence of the intergenerational trauma associated with the legacy of the residential school system and the overrepresentation of Indigenous children and youth in care today. This was one of the first studies to show among a cohort of Indigenous people who use drugs, those who had a close family member that attended a residential school had an elevated risk for having been personally taken into the child welfare system at some point in their childhood.

The study assessed whether familial exposure to the residential school system was associated with an increased likelihood of involvement with the child welfare system among a cohort of youth and young adults who use drugs in Vancouver. The study found that Indigenous participants who had a parent that attended a residential school were more likely to be placed into care compared to Indigenous participants who reported no immediate family exposure to the residential school system. While it's true that neglect is the most common reason youth of all ethnic backgrounds are removed from the parental home and placed into care, this dynamic is more pronounced among Indigenous families involved with the child welfare system. The number one reason that Indigenous youth are taken into care is neglect. Breaking down neglect, it may look like housing instability, food insecurity, lack of medical care, parental substance use, and lack of basic necessities that are often indirect indicators of poverty and remnants of trauma from the residential school system.

Given the widespread abuse and neglect inflicted on children of residential schools, compared to those who did not attend a residential school, many residential school survivors are vulnerable to risk factors associated with diminished parental capacity including problematic alcohol and drug use, domestic violence, suicidal behaviours, and poor physical and mental health.

They also encounter barriers with engaging in healthy relationships and healthy parenting towards their own children given the lack of positive parental and familial role modeling that was taken from them as children.

On how the study fits into the broader literature and what the next steps might be...

The findings of the study contribute empirical evidence to the lived knowledge of Indigenous people that the intergenerational trauma from the residential school system continues to negatively impact Indigenous families and communities today. As for possible next steps, this research should be replicated with a larger sample and different groups of Indigenous people to see if the findings hold true.

Among non-Indigenous and Indigenous street youth, the study strengthened evidence that youth involved with the child welfare system are more vulnerable to homelessness, substance use, and other chronic health-related issues. It was found that among street youth who inject drugs, those who had been in care were more likely to initiate injection drug use earlier in their lives – before the age of 18.

On policy recommendations and specific examples of system changes that Dr. Barker envisions resulting from her doctoral research...

Dr. Barker believes that having a legislative framework like the Federal Indigenous child welfare legislation (Bill C-92) will help protect Indigenous children, families and communities. We need to defer to First Nations and Indigenous communities when it comes to capacity-building and how best to proceed. However, it is not enough to have a legal mechanism and the current bill is missing dedicated funding for First Nations and Indigenous communities to resume jurisdiction over child welfare.

Prior research suggests that more resources are needed to support vulnerable parents at risk of having their children taken into care. We need to invest in policies and programs that might help reduce the disproportionate number of Indigenous children in care. One specific example would be the Nurse-Family Partnership. The Nurse-Family Partnership is an evidence-based prenatal and infancy intensive nurse home visitation program that has been proven to improve the health, well-being and self-sufficiency of young, first-time, low-income parents and their children. It has also been proven to be more cost-effective and less traumatizing to children than being taken into child welfare custody. It may work well in Indigenous communities if the program is provided by nurses with Indigenous cultural safety training and adapted to be consistent with local community values and protocols.

There are several policy opportunities to improve the health and well-being of vulnerable youth in care. The research supports widespread calls to extend care and services to facilitate successful transitions to independence among those who age out of foster care. Young people who use drugs and utilized a higher number of transitional services while aging out were significantly less likely to use drugs daily or be homeless. • • •

Indigenous

Indigenous refers to three distinct groups: First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples

Intergenerational Trauma

Intergenerational trauma is the transmission of trauma from one generation of trauma survivors to the next. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart defined it as a “collective emotional and psychological injury over the lifespan and across generations”. It often refers to untreated trauma passed down in families where a child grows up with trauma and it becomes a cycle until it is broken.

The term intergenerational trauma was originally introduced to describe the enduring trauma among Holocaust survivors and their families following World War II. It is also referred to as transgenerational trauma or historical trauma and has since been applied to Indigenous Peoples who have experienced extensive trauma due to colonization.

Residential School System

The residential school system was a powerful mechanism of colonization in Canada implemented from 1874 to 1996 as part of a national assimilation strategy by the federal government in partnership with various religious denominations. Over 150,000 Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families and placed in residential schools where every aspect of the children’s lives was regulated. Without the influence of their parents and Elders, children in residential schools were stripped of their Indigenous identity and torn from the traditions of their families. The widespread cases of physical, sexual and psychological abuse and even deaths in residential schools only compounded the trauma of the survivors of the school system.

Social Worker Spotlight: Meet Tammy Newton from Secwépemc Child & Family Services Agency

Tammy is a mother of 3 children —ages 20, 15 and 12. She has been married for 16 years. She has been doing frontline protection for 15 years and holds two Bachelor's Degrees and received her Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) in 2004 from the University College of the Cariboo (now Thompson Rivers University). Tammy also holds a Bachelor of Arts: majoring in Psychology, minoring in Criminal Sociology.

Tammy has training and experience in trauma, domestic violence, probation, crisis intervention, child protection and resources. She has been an Acting Team Leader for Intake, family service, guardianship and resources. She has served in an isolated, predominantly First Nations community in Northern British Columbia and worked in child protection in Nova Scotia.



Get to know her in this interview and learn how she is a ray of sunshine in a world that needs it.

What inspired you to pursue a career in social work?

I have wanted to be a social worker since I was in elementary school. I have a school treasures book from my childhood which documents my childhood dream of becoming a social worker. I have always wanted to make a positive difference in the lives of families and children.

Social work is a vast field. What made you want to narrow your path down to working with children and families particularly in Resources?

I love children and I strongly believe that we need to protect our most vulnerable and valuable population. I chose to move into the Resource side of child welfare to have a better understanding of the work in all areas, not just protection. It allows me to see a different perspective in considering all aspects of supporting children and families.

What do you see as the top issues facing social workers today?

One issue is that education and training does not prepare you for the real world of child welfare and the work that is done on behalf of children and families.

Another issue is how to connect children with their culture which is a holistic, lived experience, into the daily lives of Indigenous children and families. We tend to be oriented toward checkboxes, list and tasks but this type of work does not support a way of life that is outside mainstream culture.

Care plans are also an issue. Care plans are a living, breathing document of goals and strategies for each child. Indigenous culture is a daily lived experience and cannot be easily made into a “task” to be checked off. How do social workers ensure that children are being exposed and immersed in a rich and significant culture while still meeting the requirements of the job in a checkbox fashion? It is not an easily definable task.

Another issue is how to carry a level of risk in a safe and supportive manner so that we are not dealing with complicating factors, but actual child protection concerns. It is important to know and understand the difference between what a protection concern is and what is simply ineffective parenting strategies and/or undesirable behaviours with adults.

How do you define success as a social worker?

I believe that my success as a social worker is best defined when we can resolve protection issues to get children home, or at the very least to maintain safe connections to family, community and culture. I strive very hard to ensure that my practice is nonjudgmental, inclusive, supportive and consistent.

“Talk less, listen more. Listen to the family. Give people room to fail in a supportive manner so that we know where we need to strengthen. Don’t be afraid to explore ways of helping with other coworkers in different practice roles. We don’t have all the answers ourselves and it’s ok to ask for help and guidance. Some of the best ideas come from brainstorming with others.”

How do you encourage foster families to work toward maintaining cultural and community connections for the children in their care?

I encourage foster families to continually work toward maintaining cultural and community connections by explaining how it is in a child's best interests. I also connect them to an Elder who can guide them or to the Band Rep/Band Social Worker who can assist them by providing teachings, guidance and the importance of why each cultural piece is done. We are often fearful of the unknown so by making culture familiar to our caregivers, it takes a little element of fear away. The rich, deep cultural experiences should be highlighted and celebrated.

It is also important to honour the 7 sacred teachings of humility, honesty, wisdom, love, respect, courage and truth. Regardless of personal heritage and culture. These teachings should be present in all the work we do as social workers. These are the teachings we want our caregivers to embrace and teach our children. They are essential teachings and are valuable in guiding our young people in a positive and holistic manner. We also look to the medicine wheel and encourage caregivers to ensure a balance for and with the children we serve.

How do you avoid burnout?

You need to find activities that you really enjoy and ways of relaxing so you can recharge. I do a lot of painting, taking walks with the dogs and/or children and spending time with family. It also helps to debrief events that are bothering me with other coworkers. To avoid burnout, I take part in the "fun" activities like being on the Social Committee, participating in cultural events and giving back to those who are less fortunate.

Not always is burnout recognized early enough. It's about knowing your limits and finding solutions, rather than focusing on the problems. It's easier to recognize burnout in others so we all need to be supportive of others when they are going through it.

What do you think is the key to strengthening the foster care system when the removal of a child is unavoidable?

Inclusion of family and community is essential. Even parents that have made pretty serious mistakes still love and want their children. We need to keep children connected to family, culture and community. By being open to bringing culture into the home, we ensure children have what they need to be more successful.

How do you build trust and find ways to explore solutions together when working with other members of the child's care team?

I am a firm believer in "No decision about me, without me". By listening and finding solutions that support all members of the team in a holistic manner, we can have better outcomes and a higher success rate. You also need to see the family as experts in their own lives and our job is to support them to make safe decisions in a supportive environment. A supportive environment builds trust which helps guide them to make the best decisions for the children we are all tasked to protect.

What has been your proudest moment as a social worker?

I have no one single proudest moment of being a social worker. Every day that we can connect children back to family, community and culture is a proud moment. A time that does stick out to me was when I removed a young lady's infant on the side of the road due to intoxication. I inquired as to what family could support her and even though we had to bring the baby into care temporarily. I strongly encouraged mom to focus on the solution. I treated her with respect, dignity and care. Many years later, she reached out to tell me how instrumental I was in her success in resolving the issue and becoming a spokesperson for issues she faced. She went on to be, not only a successful parent, but also a productive member of society, doing good work.

Another time, I was working with a young mom who was working through domestic violence. The removing worker was not very kind and demanded that mom hand over the baby. I got down to the floor in front of mom, talked calmly and spoke of how hard it must be to allow someone to take her baby out of her care and that we would support her through this. I encouraged her to take her time, give baby lots of kisses and hugs and reassure her baby that mom would see her very soon. I waited patiently for mom to perform this and when mom was ready, she would only hand the baby to me. By showing care, consideration and dignity for what people are going through, they are more likely to receive help and work collaboratively toward getting their children home. A proud moment as a resource social worker is when caregivers can support children within their families and become an extension, not only of the family, but an extension of the community. I love when our caregivers can build trusting relationships and build those bridges with family and community, even if the kids can't go home. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)

What changes would you like to see in the system to break the cycle of family trauma so that youth in care can look forward to brighter futures?

One way is to have people in various communities be already assessed as safe so that children do not have to be moved from their community and culture. When that is not possible, we need to ensure that we do everything in our power to create a safe, trusting relationship with family and community.

We also need to listen to what the children want and find safe solutions to what they want. Again “No decision about me, without me” is a philosophy for which we all need to subscribe. Also, understanding the effects of trauma so that we can reduce or eliminate it. Trauma-informed practices are essential.

What advice would you give to new social workers entering the field?

Do not forget to include caregivers and Resource workers when planning with children and families. We can be your best support and are an essential part of the care team. Many of us also come with other skills and experiences that can be shared to support you as a new worker.

Talk to seasoned workers about how they’ve succeeded so far in the field. Many hands make light work. It’s always good to remember that your mood does not dictate your manners. Treat every person you meet with dignity, worth, consideration, without judgement, and always ask “how can I help?” • • •

**Join us for our next
Annual General Meeting
and Conference at
Tigh-Na-Mara Seaside
Spa Resort & Conference
Centre in Parksville!**

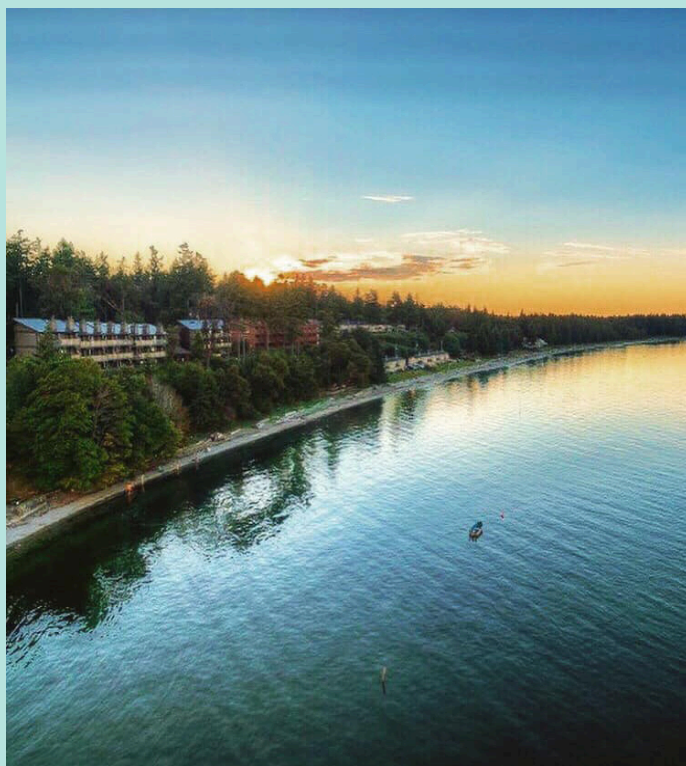
October 2 and 3, 2020

Join us at Tigh-Na-Mara Seaside Spa Resort and Conference Centre in Parksville. The conference will feature workshops, guest speakers, a meet and greet, dinner and fundraisers.

Call 1-800-663-7373 to book a room and quote “**BCFFPA 2020 AGM & Conference**”.

Room rates are \$164.

Full information and registration package will be available in June 2020.



TIGH-NA-MARA
SEASIDE SPA RESORT & CONFERENCE CENTRE

JCW Excellence in Writing Grant

Former president Russell Pohl and his husband Darrell Ewasiuk have generously provided funds to establish a bursary in the name of our Executive Director whose passion is the art of writing.

Application Criteria: Any youth (17–24) who has been in care of the Ministry who intends to further their education in the field of writing – whether it be journalism, screen or play writing, poetry, travel, creative, political, or non-fiction, can apply for this bursary to cover the cost of courses that will further their skills. Submission of a 500-word short story or essay about their future goals, accompanied by a description of their desired education program or receipt for the program they intend to pursue, should be submitted. One bursary of \$2,000 per year is available until funds are expended.

Natural Child Bursary

The Natural Child Bursary was founded in 1991 and is intended for children born or adopted into a family providing foster care in BC.

Application Criteria: The eligible youth must be the child by birth or adoption, as stated above, to a foster family who have been members of BCFFPA for three consecutive years since 1990. This can also apply to the child of an individual who is an Honorary Life Member. The youth must reside in BC, have graduated from high school and is interested in extending his/her education in any field of study. High grades, although considered, will not be the only determining factor in the allocation of bursary funds.

General Scholarship Fund

BCFFPA occasionally receives funds from donors that they request be put toward scholarships for children and youth who were formerly in care. The Board of Directors has outlined a General Scholarship Fund into which we can place donations from these generous donors. Unless directed to do otherwise, scholarships will be distributed under the name of the donor(s) until the funds are expended. One bursary will be distributed annually.

Application Criteria: Former foster children residing in BC, aged 19, who show an interest in continuing their education (whether to complete high school, attend a business/vocational school, college or university). High marks, although considered, will not be the only determining factor in awarding this bursary.

We want to help!

Apply for BCFFPA Bursaries by May 31, 2020

*All application forms are available at
www.bcfofsterparents.ca

BCFFPA Camps for Kids Grant

BCFFPA's Camps for Kids Grants were established by BCFFPA to alleviate some of the costs foster parent members encounter when sending their foster, adopted or birth children aged 6–19 to camp. Bursary amounts have been raised to \$300 per "campership."

Application Criteria: BCFFPA foster parent members in good standing who require assistance can apply. Also accessible to non-members via limited lottery – up to 4 grants of \$150 each will be drawn from a pool of applications. Foster parent must provide proof of payment of the camp deposit along with any other relevant documentation prior to awarding the grant.

Merv Davis Bursary

The Merv Davis Bursary was established for foster children residing in the Fraser River corridor area who have reached the age of 19 and wish to continue their education.

Application Criteria: Any youth who has been in care of the Ministry, residing in Coquitlam, Maple Ridge, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody or Pitt Meadows, and reaching the age of 19, who intends to further their education, whether to finish high school, attend business or vocational school, college or university, and where other funds available are inadequate, is eligible to apply. High marks, although considered, will not be the only determining factor in the allocation of the bursary.

William Curtis Memorial Fund

The William Curtis Memorial Fund was established in January 1979 for foster children who have reached the age of majority and wish to continue with their education. It is awarded annually.

Application Criteria: Former foster children residing in BC, aged 19 who show an interest in continuing their education. High marks, although considered, will not be the only determining factor in awarding this bursary.

BCFFPA's Outreach Program

In 2020–2021 one of BCFFPA's priorities is to increase community outreach. We will be visiting communities in BC to speak with parent advisory committees, services clubs, law offices and corporations to increase awareness about the realities of fostering. We think everyone should know about the positive impact that foster parents have on their communities. We'll also do our best to dispel some fostering myths and answer questions.

If you know of a school PAC, business or service club who would be interested in hosting a short learning session about the fostering community, please contact BCFFPA at 1-800-663-9999. Our Outreach Coordinator, Anita, would be happy to speak with you.



Find BCFFPA on
CanadaHelps.org
and help us expand our
work for the community.



TELUS' Mobility for Good™ program is now in British Columbia!

Youth from care can apply for a FREE cell phone plan with TELUS to help them stay connected.



TELUS' Mobility for Good™ program will provide youth with access to a TELUS cell phone plan at \$0 per month, which will include unlimited across Canada talk and text and up to 3GB of monthly data usage. This service will help youth to stay in touch with friends and workers, and access important services and resources, including employment and academic opportunities. Youth who do not have a phone will have the option of receiving a smartphone from TELUS.

Who is eligible?

Young people who were in permanent or temporary care of Ministry of Children and Family Development/Delegated Aboriginal Agency or on a youth agreement as of their 19th birthday OR eligible for the Agreement with Young Adults Program, AND who are:

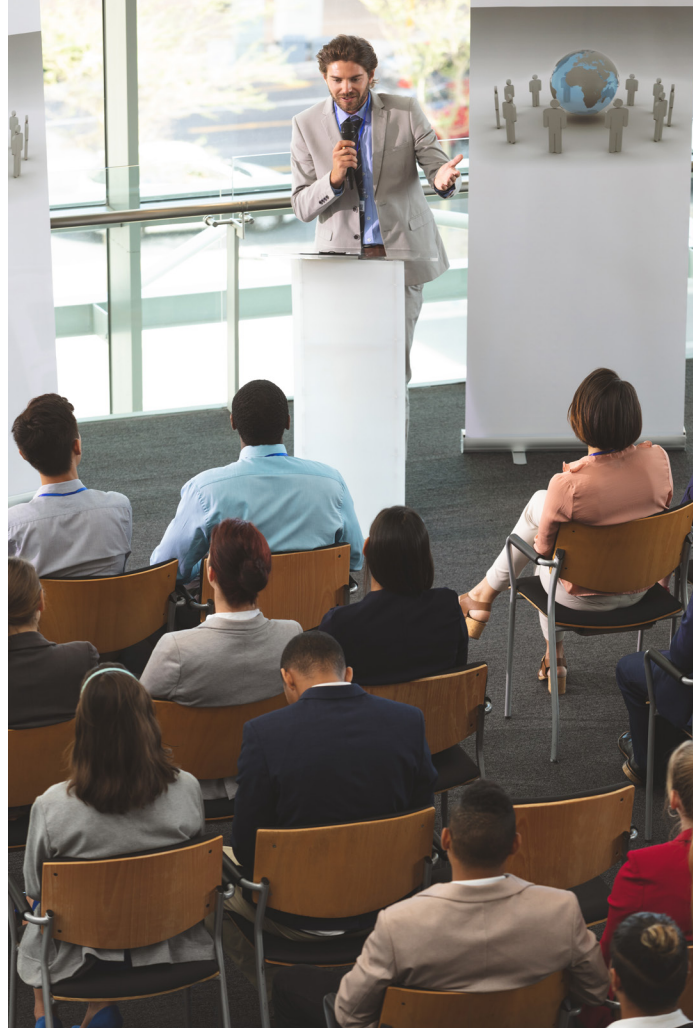
- Aged 19 to 26 at the time of application
- Able to pay any applicable overage costs (data or additional features); youth can set up alerts to prevent incurring data overage costs
- Willing to fill out surveys and share information with Children's Aid Foundation of Canada and TELUS to help evaluate the program and measure its impact
- Able to sign up for a new cell phone plan within 4 months of applying to Children's Aid Foundation of Canada
- Have not previously participated to the TELUS Mobility for Good program through the Ministry of Children and Family Development

For more information on the TELUS Mobility for Good Program or to apply, please visit: www.cafdn.org/for-youth/telus-mobility-good/british-columbia/

Thank you, Rotary Club of Langley Central!

The Rotary Club of Langley Central has been an integral part of the community since 1980. The Rotary Club has become the largest club in Langley and over the years has supported many important causes throughout the Lower Mainland. The BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations is proud to have the support of the Rotary Club of Langley for the health and wellness of foster parents and children.

The Rotary Club of Langley has funded BCFFPA in the amount of \$5,000. These grant funds will be used to support training workshops for foster parents throughout the Lower Mainland. These workshops will equip foster parents with the tools and knowledge they need to raise happy, healthy children in their care.



Not covered by a group health plan? Concerned about health & dental expenses?

Find the coverage that's right for you and your family with a **Health Assist plan** from **Green Shield Canada (GSC for short)**.

gsc healthassist®

You can choose a plan that offers prescription drug coverage, dental or a combination of both. Plus, all plans provide coverage towards vision care, extended health care (like registered massage therapists and chiropractors), and emergency medical travel protection. Your acceptance is guaranteed for many plans – no medical questions asked*. Best of all, Health Assist plans are easy to understand and easy to get.

**It's all about you and what you need.
Want more info?**

Contact

Candace Dodson-Willis

in strategic alliance with Group One
Candace_Dodson@icloud.com

Plans provided by **Green Shield Canada (GSC)**

*Acceptance is guaranteed for select plans as long as GSC receives the initial payment; other plans require completion of a health questionnaire and medical underwriting.

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FEDERAL INDIGENOUS CHILD WELFARE LEGISLATION (BILL C-92)

An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families

Infographic developed by BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations (BCFFPA)

What steps did it take to develop the legislation? When did it go into effect?



What is the purpose of the legislation?

With the legislation, the Federal government has created its own child welfare law that applies to Indigenous peoples across the country. The legislation intends to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in the child welfare system. It also affirms the rights and jurisdiction of Indigenous peoples in relation to child and family services and sets out principles applicable, on a national level, to the provision of child and family services in relation to Indigenous children, such as the best interests of the child, cultural continuity and substantive equality. These principles must be followed by every person providing services to Indigenous children.



What changes come with the legislation?

The legislation reforms the way child welfare is delivered to Indigenous children. We are moving from a situation in which only provincial/territorial laws have typically been applied to one in which there are potentially three layers of laws that interact: Indigenous law, federal law and provincial/territorial law (*Child, Family and Community Service Act* or *CFCSA* in British Columbia).

As the legislation affirms the inherent right of Indigenous peoples to exercise jurisdiction over child and family services, it provides an opportunity for Indigenous peoples to choose and implement their own solutions for their children and families and emphasizes the need to shift from removal to prevention. Indigenous communities and groups will be free to develop policies and laws in the provision of child and family services based on their particular histories, cultures, and circumstances.

FEDERAL INDIGENOUS CHILD WELFARE LEGISLATION (BILL C-92)

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Infographic developed by BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations (BCFFPA)

What is the primary consideration in the case of decisions or actions related to child apprehension?

The best interests of the child must be the paramount consideration. Primary consideration must be given to the child's physical, emotional and psychological safety, security and well-being, to having an ongoing relationship with their family and with the Indigenous group, community or people to which they belong and to learning about and practicing the child's Indigenous traditions, customs and language.



What happens if there is conflict between the laws?

If there is a conflict or inconsistency, the provision that is in the law of the Indigenous group, community or people prevails to the extent of the conflict or inconsistency. Where there is a coordination agreement in place between the Indigenous community, federal government and provincial government, or where a reasonable attempt had been made to develop a coordination agreement.

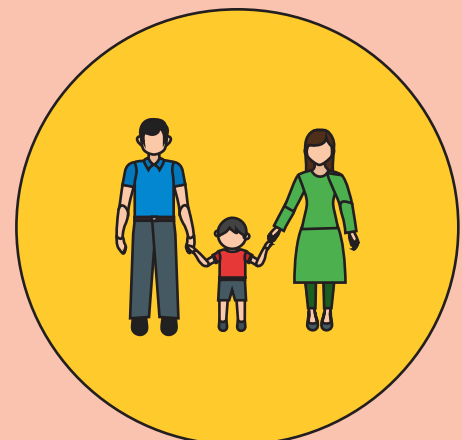
What happens if the conflict is between two Indigenous laws?

The provision that is in the law of the Indigenous group, community or people with which the child has stronger ties prevails to the extent of the conflict or inconsistency. The child's habitual residence as well as their views and preferences, their age and maturity, unless they cannot be determined, and the views and preferences of their parent(s) and the care provider will all be taken into consideration.

How is the 'best interest' of an Indigenous child determined?

To determine the best interests of an Indigenous child, all factors related to the circumstances of the child must be considered, including:

- the child's cultural, linguistic, religious and spiritual upbringing and heritage;
- the child's needs, given the child's age and stage of development, such as the child's need for stability;
- the nature and strength of the child's relationship with his or her parent, the care provider and any member of his or her family who plays an important role in his or her life;
- the importance to the child of preserving the child's cultural identity and connections to the language and territory of the Indigenous group, community or people to which the child belongs;
- the child's views and preferences, giving due weight to the child's age and maturity, unless they cannot be ascertained;
- any plans for the child's care, including care in accordance with the customs or traditions of the Indigenous group, community or people to which the child belongs;
- any family violence and its impact on the child, including whether the child is directly or indirectly exposed to the family violence as well as the physical, emotional and psychological harm or risk of harm to the child; and
- any civil or criminal proceeding, order, condition, or measure that is relevant to the safety, security and well-being of the child.



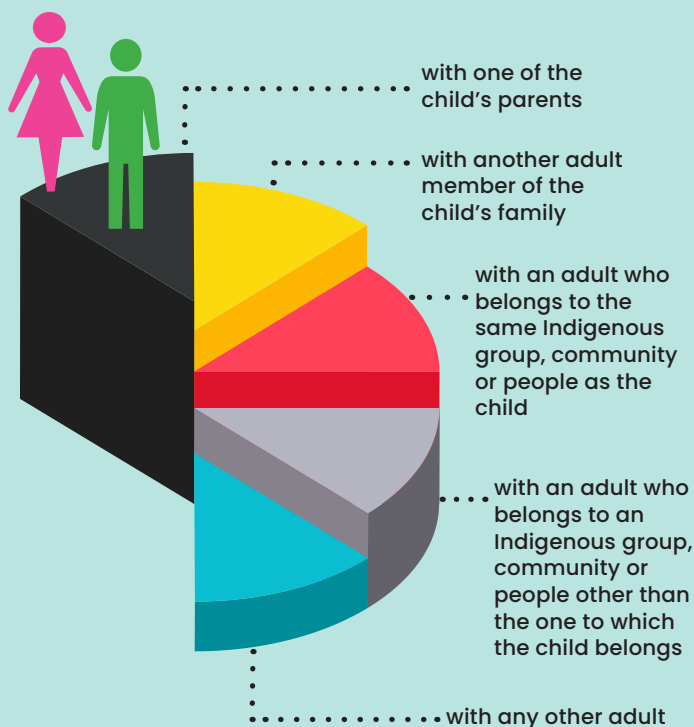
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Infographic developed by BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations (BCFFPA)

How does the legislation impact placement decisions relating to Indigenous children?

When it is consistent with the best interests of the child, the following order of priority must be followed:



Additional consideration:
place with or near
children who have the same
parent or member of the
child's family

Who is considered the "care provider"?

Under the CFCSA, care providers would include those to whom the parent has directly given care of the child or those individuals other than the parent who have custody of the child under the Director's supervision. In these situations, the Director does not have care or custody of the child.

The Director has primary responsibility for children in the custody, care or guardianship of the director, with the director authorizing, via the Family Care Home Agreement, for the foster caregiver to carry out the Director's rights and responsibilities. Foster caregivers are considered as key service providers working on behalf of the Director but not care providers who have guardianship responsibilities independent of the Director's responsibilities. This means that foster caregivers are not parties to court proceedings and are not provided notification of significant measures like parents.



What is the role of foster caregivers in promoting attachment and emotional ties to family members when a child is unable to live with their family?

As part of the child's care team, foster caregivers must:

- Arrange access and visitation with family members
- Promote and support ongoing contact
- Support a child through changes in placement or transitions out of care



FEDERAL INDIGENOUS CHILD WELFARE LEGISLATION (BILL C-92)

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Infographic developed by BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations (BCFFPA)

How will the Resource Worker Policies be updated to in light of the new legislation?

Policy 1.1 – *Working with Indigenous Children, Youth, Families and Communities* – has been updated to reflect the requirements of the federal legislation. It supersedes other policies regarding Indigenous children. Over time, other policies will be amended to reflect Policy 1.1.

Who should be notified before taking any significant measures in relation to the child?



What would classify as a 'significant measure'?

A significant measure is a step the Director would take when:

- the Director makes an application for a court proceeding that requires notice to any party under the CFCSA (with the exception of applications for the director to have access to a child, access to a record or receive financial maintenance),
- the Director removes the child or enters into/ renews an agreement for the child to be in care,
- the Director enters into/renews a Youth Agreement,
- the child has a new placement or change in placement, or the CFCSA Director consents to the child's adoption,
- the Director withdraws from court proceedings or returns the child to the parent.

*Significant measures do not include processes for obtaining, gathering or assessing information, leading up to the director making a decision. They also do not include agreements where the Ministry's role is mainly to provide financial support. Foster caregivers, although care givers, are not included in notice of significant measure.

How is the legislation going to change the care of Indigenous children currently in the continuing custody of a Director under the CFCSA?

Until Indigenous laws are in place – services to Indigenous children will continue to be provided by the Director under the CFCSA. However, every Indigenous child and family services provider will have to apply the best interest principles set out in the Federal Act. This means, for example, that when an Indigenous child comes into care, child and family services providers will always have to consider:

- the child's physical, psychological and emotional safety, security and well-being;
- the importance for that child having an ongoing relationship with their family and community; and
- preserving the child's connection to their culture.

Reassessment of safe placement with parents or family members will be conducted on an ongoing basis, including when:

- A previously unknown family member is identified
- A change of placement or legal status is being considered
- Requested by the child's Indigenous community
- A care plan is reviewed

How can foster caregivers get training or more information on the Federal legislation?

There will be an online training available to resource workers and foster caregivers in Spring 2020 to be launched by MCFD's Learning and Development.

For questions, foster caregivers can call BCFFPA at 1-800-663-9999 or email office@bcfosterparents.ca



PRIDE IN-SERVICE TRAINING – FAQs

January 2020



Ministry of
Children and Family
Development

What is PRIDE In-Service?

PRIDE In-Service is required training for all BC Caregivers (Foster Parents) that have not completed the BC Foster Care Education Program (53 hour In-Service Training). PRIDE In-Service is approximately 50-55 hours of online training, facilitated by a group of specialized virtual facilitators, and is completed over a 40 week period.

Is the BC Foster Care Education Program still available for Caregivers?

No, the PRIDE In-Service has replaced the BC Foster Care Education Program.

If Caregivers have completed some but not all of the modules in the BC Foster Care Education Program are they required to complete the PRIDE In-Service training in full?

Caregivers, please consult with your Resource Worker to discuss your learning needs. Resource Workers, please contact the Caregiver Training Team to discuss the training options for Caregivers.

Are Caregivers who have completed the BC Foster Education Program required to take the PRIDE In-Service?

PRIDE In-Service is a recommended and available training for all caregivers; however, it is not required for Caregivers who have completed the BC Foster Education Program.

Are Restricted Foster Parents required to take PRIDE In-Service?

No, Restricted Foster Parents are not required to take the PRIDE In-Service. They are required to take PRIDE Kinship.

What department is offering the PRIDE In-Service to Caregivers and staff?

PRIDE In-Service is supported by the Learning & Development Branch of MCFD.

How many modules are in PRIDE In-Service?

There are 10 core modules in PRIDE In-Service. There is also a supplemental module that addresses problematic substance use.

I have a Caregiver who does not have internet access and/or a computer, what do I do?

Please contact the Caregiver Training Team to discuss the training options.

How are Caregivers referred to PRIDE In-Service?

The Resource Worker refers Caregivers to PRIDE In-Service.

How long does it take for Caregivers to be enrolled?

Caregivers are enrolled on a weekly basis.

When can Caregivers be referred to PRIDE In-Service ?

Part I of PRIDE In-Service is now open for registration. Part II will follow at a later date.

Does the PRIDE Pre-Service have to be completed prior to starting the PRIDE In-Service?

No. PRIDE Pre-Service is for Applicants applying to become a Caregiver. PRIDE In-Service is for approved Caregivers in BC. (If Caregivers were approved before PRIDE Pre-Service was launched, they may not have completed PRIDE Pre-Service).

How do Caregivers navigate technical challenges with the training?

When Caregivers register for PRIDE In-Service, they will receive a User Guide. If additional technical support is needed, the Caregiver Training Team is available by e-mail at MCF.CaregiverTraining@gov.bc.ca or phone at 250-480-8459.

Will Caregivers receive feedback on their progress through the training?

The Caregiver Training Team may check in on Caregivers depending on their progress (e.g. within the first two weeks and at the mid-way mark); however, Caregivers are ultimately responsible for their own progress and completion.

Will Resource Workers receive the PRIDE In-Service Caregivers' eBooks and Connections documents?

No, the PRIDE In-Service does not include printed eBooks and Connections documents.

Will Resource Workers receive feedback on the Caregivers' progress throughout the training?

The Caregiver Training Team will provide an update to Resource Workers when the Caregiver has completed PRIDE In-Service. Resource Workers can contact the Caregiver Training Team for status updates by emailing MCF.CaregiverTraining@gov.bc.ca or phoning 250-480-8459.



Don't foster in isolation! Our Solutions Program Team is here for you. We can all do so much more together than we ever can alone.

About the Program

The BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations (BCFFPA) has received Provincial MCFD funding to provide expanded support, advocacy and mediation services for all foster families across British Columbia. These services will complement the support services offered by the foster parent support agency contractors in the Service Delivery Areas. BCFFPA's Solutions Program service differs from supports provided by the contracted agencies. Whereas contracted agencies provide a myriad of services to the community including basic support for common needs of foster parents such as taking notes in a meeting or talking through a contract concern, some do not provide advocacy and they may not have access to the necessary Ministry staff to sort through the problem.

The Ministry and BCFFPA recognize the need for a new approach to help address the current challenges with retention and reducing the loss of new foster caregivers. The systemic issues that lead to the loss of foster parents is mitigated by working in partnership and applying a solutions focused perspective.

BCFFPA's direct advocacy activities include working with foster parents and Ministry staff to assist in the resolution of complex support situations such as:

- Investigations and quality of care
- Contract and payment
- Care team and planning concerns
- Foster parent adoption processes
- Placements of children



The value of BCFFPA's service is in our solutions focused perspective, our peer support model, and long history and experience working within the Ministry's policy and practice framework. The Benefits of our approach include:

- Efficient and effective resolution of issues assists with retention of valuable experienced foster parents
- Peer support builds healthy communities and strong resource networks
- Partnerships with contracted foster parent support agencies builds a continuum of accessible support to address situations that require expanded service
- A partnership approach to identifying solutions to difficult situations builds understanding, goodwill and strengthens relationships

The Solutions Program can be accessed through our toll free line at 1-800-663-9999 or 604-553-8844. Our service is available to all foster caregivers in the province and we regularly accept referrals for service from contracted agencies, Ministry, and Delegated Aboriginal Agencies.

Six Things Doctors Learned in 2019 that Parents Need to Know

by Dr. Michelle Ward

As a paediatrician and a mom, I try hard to stay on top of new advancements in kids' health. But with so much news and information being published each month, I'm always worried that I'll miss something. I know many parents feel that way too. So, here are six game-changing new guidelines and studies from 2019 that are important for both doctors and parents.

Get rid of your gentian violet for thrush

You may know gentian violet as the purple dye that has long been recommended for treating oral thrush or other fungal infections on the skin. But this product has now been pulled from Canadian pharmacies. Health Canada completed a safety review and concluded that, based on animal studies, there is a "potential link between gentian violet and cancer." Still, some parenting, kids health, and online pharmacy websites still recommend or sell the product. Ask your primary care provider for a prescription antifungal instead, and return any old gentian violet you may still have in your medicine cabinets to the pharmacy.

Give peanuts and eggs to your infant early if allergies run in your family

For decades, doctors have said to hold off on giving infants foods that are common allergy triggers but new research is turning that advice on its head. Studies now show that introducing these foods early decreases the risk of developing allergies. In a statement published in January, the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS) is now advising that commonly allergenic foods— especially peanuts and cooked eggs—should be introduced around 6 months of age for infants if they, or a family member, have eczema, hay fever, asthma, or food allergies. You can do this by mixing a small amount of peanut butter or mashed cooked eggs into other purees or giving it on the tip of a spoon. Make sure to keep giving these foods a few times a week in order to maintain tolerance. So far, the science is not as strong that giving wheat, milk, and other allergenic foods early prevents allergies, but parents can go ahead and add them to their infants' diets too.

Stop arguing about screen time and make screen use meaningful instead

In many homes, parents and their kids argue about how much screen time is too much. But, new guidelines from the Canadian Paediatric Society say parents should focus more on how screens are used rather than on how much they are used. While a 2017 statement for younger children recommended no screen time for kids under two and less than one hour for those two to five, the new guidelines for school-aged kids and teens don't give a time limit. Moderation is still important, but the statement says that parents should help their kids choose "meaningful" screen activities—those that are developmentally appropriate as well as educational, social or active. Screen time should not interfere with normal routines such as sleep or mealtimes. The CPS says that parents can model the behaviours they want to see by playing video games or watching shows with their child to make them social activities, turning off their own devices an hour before bed and not checking phones during meals.

Choose other antihistamines over Benadryl for allergy symptoms

Although Benadryl and other generic allergy medications that contain diphenhydramine have been parents' and doctors' choice for allergies for decades, experts now say that they should be replaced by other antihistamines. The Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (CSACI) says these older medicines are not as safe or effective as newer antihistamines and should not be used routinely for hives or hay fever in children or adults. They are no longer recommended for anaphylaxis in children either.

Diphenhydramine, the active ingredient in Benadryl and many other medicines, is sedating, affects memory and concentration and can interfere with learning and school performance—and at high doses, the side effects are even more serious. Parents can choose from alternatives such as Reactine, Alerius, Claritin, Allegra and their generic equivalents. For children under two parents should consult their doctor before using any allergy medications.

Don't keep kids in "bedroom jail" after a concussion

It used to be that a concussion meant no physical activity, no school, and no screens until the symptoms had resolved, but keeping a child quiet and still for days or weeks is not fun for kids or their parents.

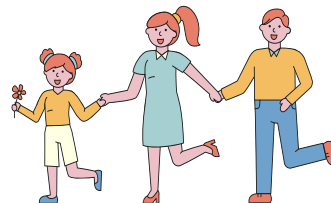
Now, concussion experts recommend a shorter rest period and only reducing, instead of stopping, cognitive and physical activity in the days following a concussion. The Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation and Parachute Canada say kids should rest their bodies and brains for only 24 to 48 hours before gradually adding activities again. This helps kids get safely back to their normal routine quicker and can prevent some of the potential long-term complications of a concussion, such as academic problems, social isolation, and depression. Even when your child has symptoms, such as a mild headache or decreased concentration, new activities can be added daily, as long as your child is able to tolerate the symptoms and they don't get worse. A doctor's approval is needed though before your child or teen goes back to sports or driving. And make sure they avoid any activities that might cause another head injury.

Lock up cannabis products—especially edibles

With cannabis edibles hitting store shelves in most provinces this month or early in the new year, experts are warning that these products should be kept out of reach of kids. Many edibles appear identical to sweet treats such as gummy bears, gummy berries, sour keys and chocolates as well as baked goods like cookies, granola bars and rice crispy bars. The problem is that even one candy or one bite can be toxic for kids because the edibles are so potent. The Canadian Paediatric Society is collecting data on serious and life-threatening recreational cannabis exposures in children and in the first three months of legalization, they found 11 cases. Seven cases were "unintentional" cannabis ingestions and six of these involved candies or chocolates belonging to parents, caregivers or grandparents. So, don't leave cannabis gummies or cookies on the counter. Instead, treat them like potential toxins for your child and lock them up.

With this new information under your belt, you can ring in the new year. But, staying on top of kids health information is just like parenting—as soon as you think you've got it, it changes. So, stay tuned for new developments in 2020.

Michelle Ward is a paediatrician, associate professor and journalist in Ottawa. This article was originally published on Today's Parent and reprinted with permission.



Announcing a new option for Family visits in the South Fraser area!



The Village Work & Play Space is the brain child of Brenda-Lee Hunter who is a former foster parent and has worked for over 20 years, providing supervision services for MCFD.

Some of the frustrations she observed during family visits over the years were the lack of comfortable surroundings in the MCFD offices, the lack of privacy in malls/fast food restaurants and the less-than-normal situation of having a supervisor hovering over the family. None of these situations provide an environment conducive with promoting bonding and attachment for the families.

The other challenge faced by many foster parents is that they do not have enough time to meet all the visitation requirements of the numerous children they care for. That is where the Village comes in. Its welcoming environment and attachment based Play Space is chalked full of interactive activities for children of all ages. Unlike other community drop in programs, they are open for drop-in activities from 9:00am to 3:00pm. Its location makes it very convenient for those relying on transit and provides the opportunity to access other community services such as the park, library and Timm's Centre.

For foster parents who require supervision services for visits, reports are provided to the SW in easy read form which addresses the specific needs and concerns of each family. These visits can take place during regular hours or be scheduled around the needs of the foster parent and child's family. Transportation services can also be arranged. In order to use these services, the social worker must contact Brenda-Lee directly.

The Village is a Social Purpose business model and is open to the community for Co-work space, child minding and parent-tot socializing. This gives the families using supported access services the opportunity to enjoy relationships with other community members when feasible.

Service costs:

Drop-in Daily rate \$6/child or \$10 family rate
Drop off Baby sitting \$7/child /hour
Private Supported Family Access \$40 per hour

Contact info:

Brenda-Lee Hunter (778) 839-1963

ECMM Village is located at 20471 Douglas Crescent, Langley

email: ecmmvillage@gmail.com

FaceBook: The Village Work & Play Space

WHAT IS THE PROVINCIAL TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM?

- The program waives tuition and mandatory fees for B.C. students who are former youth in care between the ages of 19 and up to their 27th birthday.
- The program applies to full-time and part-time certificates, diplomas and undergraduate degrees at 25 public post-secondary institutions, Native Education College and 10 Union Institutes.
- Currently, 806 former youth in care are benefiting compared to about 189 former youth in care in 2016-17.
- Students are enrolled in all types of programs—social work, academic arts, nursing, pre-medical studies, trades, business administration and graphic design.

Quick Facts:

- About 2,200 students in the post-secondary education system may be eligible.
- Top three schools with the most students receiving the waiver are VIU (93), Camosun College (90) and the University of the Fraser Valley (62).
- \$3.6 million paid in tuition and fees to 24 public post-secondary institutions and Native Education College for 806 students as of February 2019.

Quotes:

- *"People should keep in mind that youth in care come from very traumatizing pasts. Communication is something that a lot of youth in care really struggle with because they are moving around so much or are isolated."* Rose, Selkirk College
- *"Overall, it's been a big stress reliever and allowed me to focus on my studies."* Kyle, SFU
- *"Now, my narrative is more than my past. I identify as a university student, professional and activist."* Ruby, VIU

Timeline:

- **Pre-September 2017:** A voluntary patchwork of bursaries and grants at 11 public post-secondary institutions
- **September 1st, 2017:** Expansion to all 25 public post-secondary institutions
- **Budget 2018:** \$2 million annually for the provincial tuition waiver program
- **Budget 2018:** Expansion of the Ministry of Children and Family Development's Agreements with Young Adults
- **June 2018:** Announced \$250,000 contribution to the Youth Futures Education fund for additional wrap around supports
- **July 1, 2018:** expanded to 10 union-based training providers

WHAT IS THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA?

- from British Columbia;
- aged between 19 to 26 years; and
- have been in care for a minimum total of 24 months.
- attend a B.C. public post-secondary institution, Native Education College or one of 10 union trades training schools.
- **Care is defined as:**
 - Continuing Custody Order
 - Temporary Custody Order
 - Special Needs Agreement
 - Voluntary Care Agreement
 - Youth Agreement
 - Adoption
 - Extended Family Program
 - Permanent Transfer of Custody Order
 - Temporary Transfer of Custody
 - Interim Custody Order
 - Child in Home of Relative

HOW DO I APPLY?

- Want to learn more? Visit gov.bc.ca/tuitionwaiver
- Got a question? Email tuitionwaiver@gov.bc.ca
- Current students can visit the institution's financial aid office and complete a consent form to validate your eligibility.



HONOURABLE MELANIE MARK

Hli Haykwhl Wíi Xsgaak

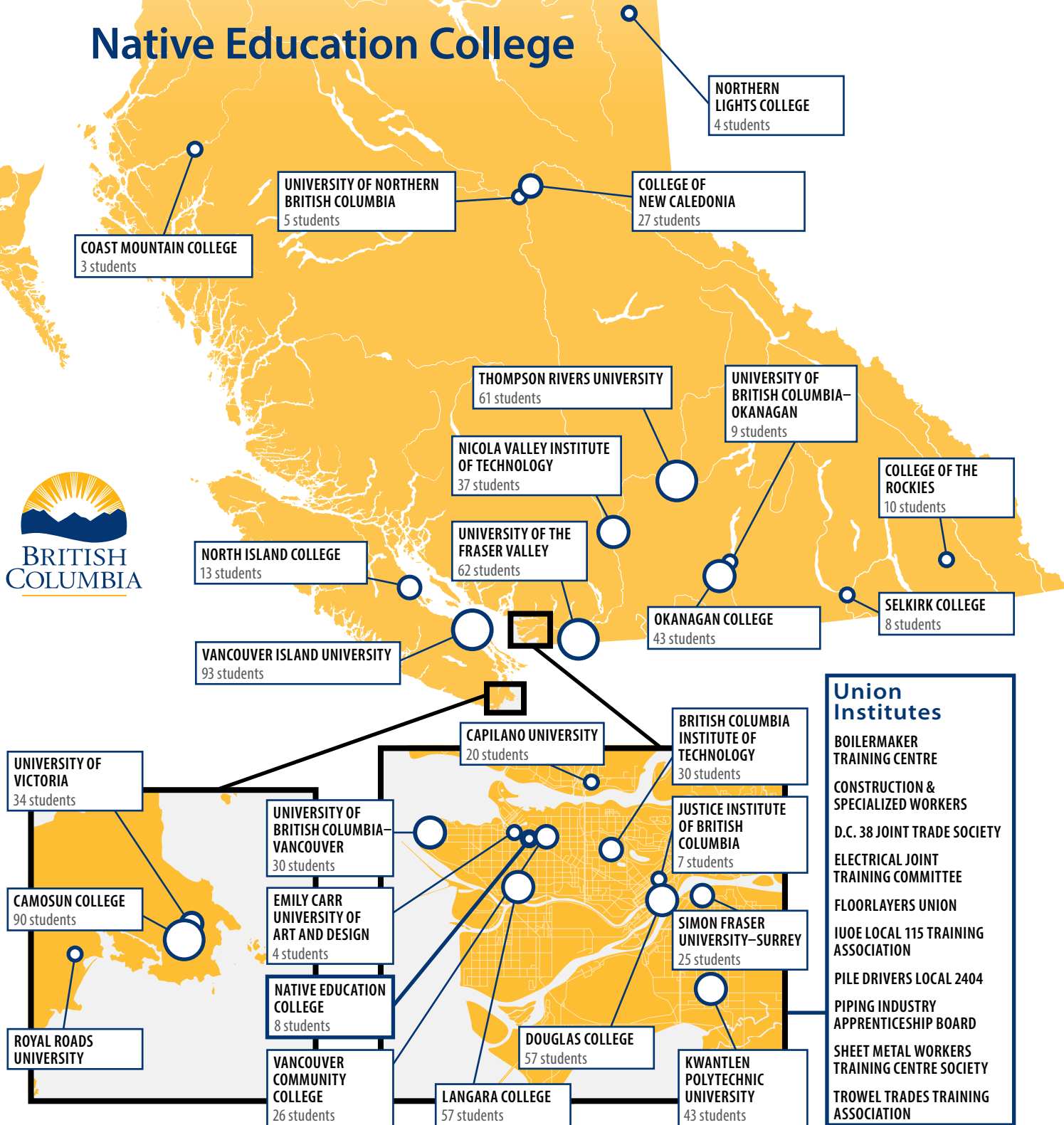
MINISTER OF ADVANCED EDUCATION, SKILLS AND TRAINING

WHERE CAN I STUDY?

25 post-secondary institutions

10 union institutes (*all Lower Mainland*)

Native Education College



New BC Foster Basics Videos Posted!



Our YouTube learning channel is an accessible location that hosts informative videos which serves BC's foster parents and sector stakeholders.

New videos on the following topics:

Engaging and Working With Indigenous, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Communities
(Facilitated by Cultural Facilitator/Trainer, Frank Hope)

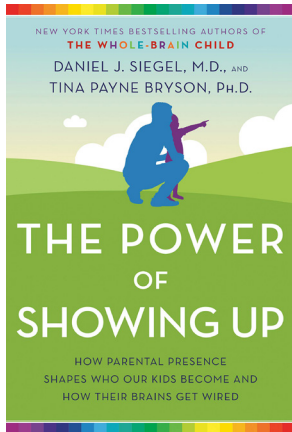
How Foster Parents Can Support Permanency Planning
(Facilitated by MCFD Team Lead, Wanda Smith)

The Professional Side of Fostering
(Facilitated by foster parents, Chad and Tanya Hooker)

 **[Youtube.com/BCFFPA](https://www.youtube.com/BCFFPA)**



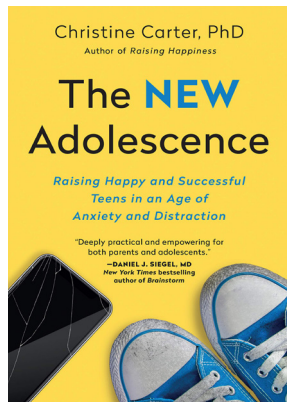
RECOMMENDED READS



The Power of Showing Up by Daniel J. Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson (Released January 7, 2020)

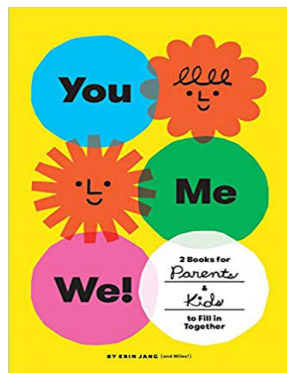
Based on the latest brain and attachment research, *The Power of Showing Up*, answers the question: What's the one thing a parent can do to make the most difference in the long run? Siegel and Bryson explains that the research is clear: show up. Showing up means bringing your whole self and offering a quality of presence. One of the very best scientific predictors for how any child turns out—in terms of happiness, academic success, leadership skills, and meaningful relationships—is whether at least one adult in their life has consistently shown up for them.

Every child needs to feel what Siegel and Bryson call the Four S's: Safe, Seen, Soothed and Secure. Full of neuroscience research and a deep empathy for children's needs, this book is an empowering read for any adult with a child in their life needing new tools and ideas. It is a must-read for parents, educators and caregivers.



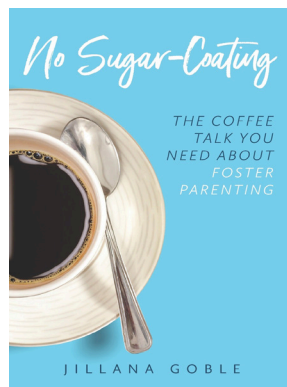
The New Adolescence: Raising Happy and Successful Teens in an Age of Anxiety and Distraction by Christine Carter (Release Date: February 18, 2020)

Are you looking for road-tested, research-based solutions for raising happy, healthy, and successful teenagers? In this book, you'll find practical guidance for various topics which include fostering real-world, face-to-face social connections, overcoming distractions and having effective conversations about difficult subjects. In this age of distraction, anxiety, and accelerated change, caring adults are always on the lookout for new ways to cope with modern pressures as well as strategies to help young people thrive. This book is a must read for caring adults who are supporting pre-teens and teens. Dr. Christine Carter seamlessly combines research—including the latest findings in neuroscience, sociology, and social psychology—with her own experiences as a mother of four teenagers.



You, Me, We! by Erin Jang (Release Date: February 18, 2020)

An activity book for both the kids and kids-at-heart? What a great idea! You get a set of fill-in books with activities created by the author, Erin, with her 7-year-old son, Miles. This book is a product of all the inspiration she found when she and her son are playing together. Activities are suitable for ages 7 and up and will help you capture a moment in your relationship. This activity book is perfect for inspiring bonding between a child and a foster/adoptive/biological parent. Whether you're learning more about each other, creating memories or looking for something to do on a snow day, this book is guaranteed to help you connect with each other in a fun and collaborative way!



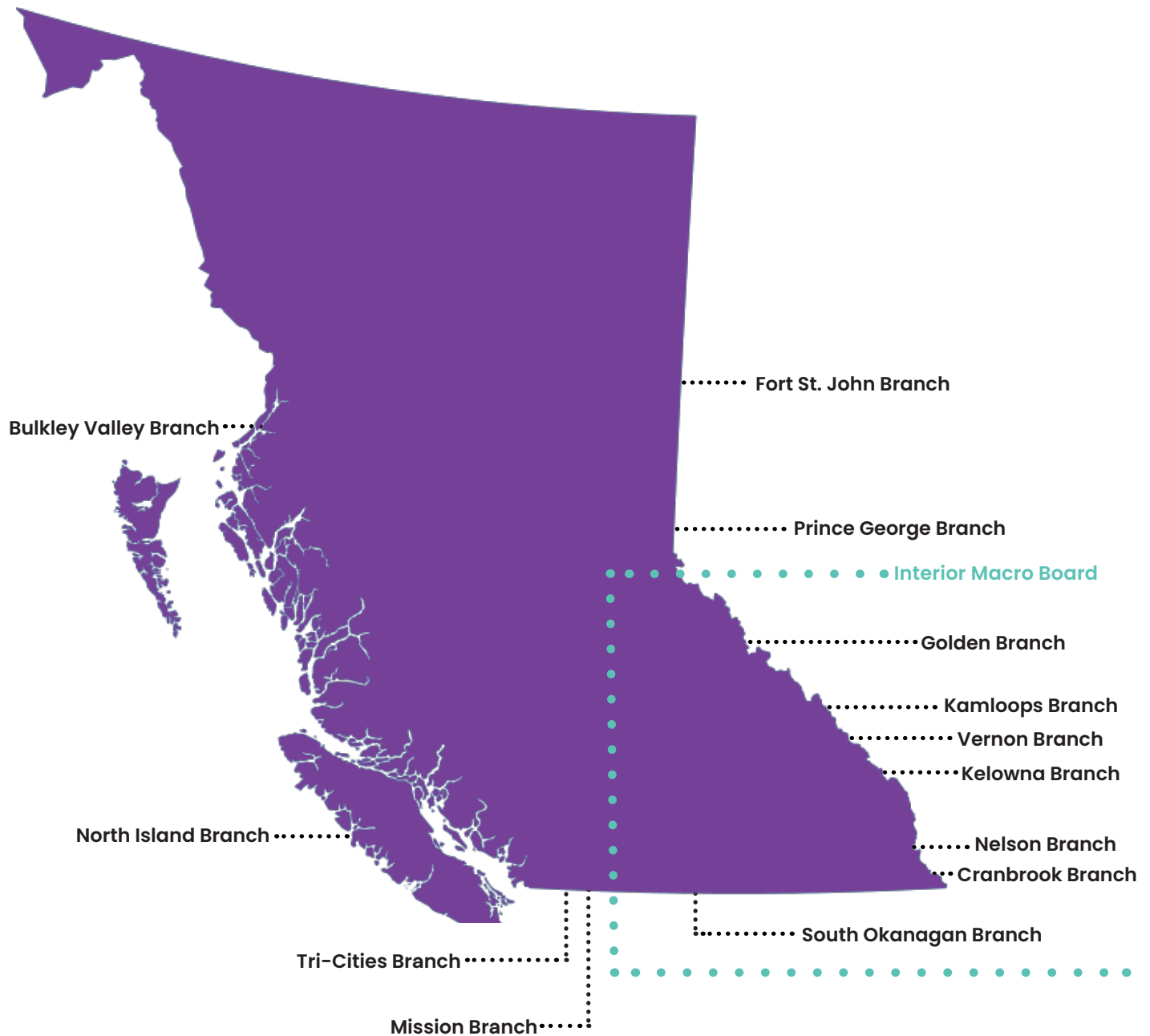
No Sugar Coating: The Coffee Talk You Need About Foster Parenting by Jillana Goble (Released September 22, 2019)

Reading *No Sugar-Coating* by Jillana Goble is like having an honest and balanced conversation with a foster parent. It's a short book that is packed with insights – You can probably finish it in a day or two!

Jillana writes about the joys and challenges of fostering as well as the lessons she's learned from her years of fostering. The author looks back at her beginnings as a foster parent and tries to answer the question: What do I wish I'd been told before I started fostering? Whether you are a prospective or a seasoned foster parent, you'll appreciate this book for its depth, scope, readability and honesty.

Join a Branch and be part of a powerful community of caring foster parents!

A strong community of care like our Branches makes sure nobody goes it alone. There are active foster parent branches in every region and if there isn't one near you, it's easy to start one!



BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations was created in 1967. Our structure supports volunteer-run Branches across the province. Foster parents join together to meet monthly to support each other, discuss the work of fostering, host an educational workshop, plan family events and offer mentorship to new foster parents in their community. Branches often enjoy strong partnerships with their community's Ministry office or contracted foster parent support agency and gather together to discuss sector concerns, successes and common initiatives.

85% of the membership fees paid to BCFFPA are redistributed to our Branches across the province. The funds you give to us for membership in turn provide for your very own community's activities, meetings and workshops. The provincial office hosts bi-monthly calls with Branches to make sure that their voice is heard as we advocate for policy and practice development and changes that affect present and future BC foster parents.

You can start a Branch when you have five BCFFPA member foster parents interested in doing so. Any time of the year, any season, any day—we'll be happy to help you along the way!



JOIN A BRANCH, START A BRANCH

Community is important for foster parents. Gathering together on a regular basis gives foster parents the much needed sense of community that is essential when they're working within the complex child welfare structure. Nothing beats a group of like-minded people who share similar experiences.

When foster parents come together in a Branch, they are able to communicate to BCFFPA's provincial office the successes and issues experienced by their fostering community. This better informs us so that we are then able to represent the interests and activities of your community in our discussions with the Ministry.

For more information about joining or starting a branch in your community, please call 1-800-663-9999.



Did you know?

Each year, approximately
42% of all adoptions
in BC are foster parents
adopting the children in
their care.

Foster parents make great adoptive parents!

Being adopted by their foster parents means stability and less disruption in the child's life and relationships. The message children hear when they're adopted is "I'm wanted, loved, and know where I belong."

If you're thinking about adopting your foster child, post-adoption assistance may provide funding for services and maintenance. While financial assistance continues, decision making and legal responsibility for the child shifts to you, the new adoptive parent.

Visit www.bcadoption.com or call us at **1-877-ADOPT-07** to learn more about adopting your foster child.



AEP-Online Refresher

*Learn the essentials for building
a strong adoptive family!*

This convenient online course has been designed especially for foster parents who need to meet the mandatory adoption education requirements in BC in order to adopt their foster children. Get more info and sign up at bcadoption.com/aep-refresher-child-home.

Foster Community Resources

Provincial Resources

BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations www.bcfosterparents.ca	1-800-663-9999
After Hours Foster Parent Support Line	1-888-495-4440
Indigenous Perspectives Society www.ipsociety.ca/foster-caregiving	1-844-391-0007 (ext. 229)
Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks www.fbcyicn.ca	1-800-565-8055
Adoptive Families Association www.bcadoption.com	1-877-236-7807
Pacific Post Partum Support Society (also supporting adoption placements) www.postpartum.org	604-255-7999
Parent Help Line	1-888-603-9100
Parents Together	604-325-0511
Parent Support Services of BC www.parentsupport.bc.ca	1-800-345-9777
Representative for Children & Youth www.rcybc.ca	1-800-476-3933
FAE/S Support Network	604-507-6675

Coastal Fraser

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

Hollyburn Family Services www.hollyburn.ca	604-987-8211
Vancouver Aboriginal Child & Family Services Society www.vacfss.com	778-331-4500
Foster Hub www.fosterhub.ca	1-877-926-1185

Fraser Valley Foster Parent Association	604-533-1924
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South Vancouver Youth Centre www.milieu.ca/svyc	604-325-2004
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Island

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

Foster Parent Support Services Society	1-888-922-8437
FPSSS (Victoria)	778-430-5459
FPSSS (Nanaimo)	250-390-9686
FPSSS (Campbell River)	250-286-0555

Interior

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

Okanagan Foster Parent Association www.okfosterparents.ca	
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Central Okanagan	250-870-8991
North Okanagan	250-558-0939
South Okanagan	250-462-6907
Shuswap	250-515-1522

Okanagan Metis Children & Family Services	250-868-0351
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Interior Community Services www.interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca Support to Family Care Network www.icsfp.info	1-877-376-3660
East Kootenay	250-426-6013
West Kootenay	778-460-5174
Cariboo	250-609-2017
Kamloops and area	236-421-0031

North

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

AXIS Family Resources (24/7 support) www.axis.bc.ca (satellite office locations online)	1-877-392-1003 Press 205
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Community Bridge Fort St. John www.communitybridge.ca	250-785-6021 (ext. 235)
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IT PAYS TO BE A MEMBER!

Please complete and return to BCFFPA: 208-20641 Logan Avenue, Langley, V3A 7R3 or join or renew via our website at www.bcfosterparents.ca

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ City & Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____ Region: _____

Local Association (BCFFPA Branch) _____

Level of Foster Home: (select 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 regional board 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 BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations, I/we agree to abide by the Bylaws, Policy and Procedures, and Code of Ethics of the Federation.

[signature(s)]

Please bill my VISA _____ M/C _____ # _____ Expires _____ / _____

Get social with us!



@fosterparentsbc



@fosterparentsbc



@BCFFPA



[Youtube.com/BCFFPA](https://www.youtube.com/BCFFPA)

