

Xyólheméylh

Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children & Family Services Society



Annual Report 2022-2023



Cover artwork: Veronika J, age 11, (National Indigenous Peoples Day Contest, 2023)



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Message from the Board of Directors President



On behalf of the Xyólheméylh Board of Directors I am pleased to tell you about the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

After three years of Covid it was good to see the restrictions being lifted and to begin gathering in person again. On November 21, 2022 we held our Annual General Meeting. It was the first in person AGM in three years. We raise our hands to Marion Mussell from Sqwa First Nation; Peter John from Chowéthel First Nation; and Dr. Wenona Hall from Sq'ewqeyl First Nation for their dedication and commitment to the Board over the years. We welcomed new Board members Joshua Bailey from Kanien'kehá:ka First Nation, Phil Hall from Sq'ewqeyl First Nation and Angelina Bowen from Haisla First Nation. We also thank everyone from the communities we serve for participating in the process.

We made excellent progress towards our strategic goals this past year. The Board met to renew our commitment to the seven strategic goals that are outlined in this Annual Report.

Throughout 2022-23 we heard of the ongoing discoveries of unmarked graves at the sites of former residential schools across British Columbia. In our own territory, the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre started the search for unmarked graves at the former St. Mary's Residential School in Mission. They are using ground-penetrating radar, combined with archival research and oral testimony from those who survived, to locate the remains of Indigenous children who died at the school. This work is part of a larger three-year project to find unmarked graves in up to nine potential gravesites from three schools: St. Mary's Residential School in Mission, Coqualeetza Residential School in Chilliwack, and All Hallows Residential School in Yale. As one of our offices was located at St. Mary's, we held healing circles to discuss the strong emotions that many of our staff and Elders are dealing with. In the Spring of 2023 we renovated and moved into a new building down the street from the Friendship Center in downtown Mission.

We raise our hands to our caregivers and parents for their love and support of our children and youth. We thank the communities we serve and our stakeholders for their collaborative support. And we thank our Xyólheméylh work family of staff and Elders for their dedication and hard work.

Jennifer Janik

Melath'i:yatel - Jennifer Janik
President, Xyólheméylh

Board of Directors: Jennifer Janik (President), Jade Victor (Vice-President), Jolene Irons-McDivitt (Secretary), Glenda Campbell (Treasurer), Tammy Bartz, Joshua Bailey, Phil Hall, Angelina Bowen.

Message from the Executive Director of Programs



In the four years I've been with Xyólheméylh , I have seen positive change which gives me hope for the future. I am reminded daily of the legacy of colonialism and intergenerational trauma faced by Indigenous people and the impact it has had on families which has highlighted the need for deep and lasting systemic change. There is so much more still to be done. However, we are seeing incremental positive outcomes and healing. We are hopeful that *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*, will continue to facilitate better outcomes as we recognize an inherent right of self-government, which will help keep Indigenous children and youth safely connected to their families, cultures and communities...

For the last three years we have focused on strengthening families and working collaboratively with communities. Our work with lats'ó:lmexw (away from home) families has shown positive progress. The number of children coming into care has decreased by over 10 per cent and our out of care child services increased with an increase in extended family care. This means less children coming into the system and more children in the care of family and extended family. Our Family Service caseloads have seen an increase in families proactively requesting our support services.

Our work with Stó:lō communities has shown positive outcomes, with out of care placements increasing and a number of prevention and family strengthening projects that you can read about in this annual report. I'm grateful to the Stó:lō communities we serve and thank them for their support and willingness to walk alongside us.

Thank you to the Board of Directors and ELT (Rod Spitzig and Penny Trites) for their support. I am grateful to our Elders who share their wisdom and teachings with myself, staff, caregiver support parents, children, youth and families. This past year two of our beloved Elders - Mary Malloway and Gil Poitras - passed away. They are missed dearly but we are so appreciative for all they did to help families, children and youth. Thank you to our caregiver support parents who open their hearts and homes to children and when possible, including the families as an extension of their own families.

Finally to our staff – thank you to all of you who come to work everyday to support the children, youth and families we are privileged to work with. Our staff work with a good heart and a good mind and I am fortunate to witness this every day. The past few years have been very difficult for our families and staff due to the COVID 19 pandemic and the toxic drug supply. Many people have experienced loss and I want to acknowledge the resiliency of our families and staff. We continue to work within a framework of family support and strengthening. Family and community is the best place for our children – which is supported by the federal legislation and is driving our practice. My hands go up to each and every one of you – in whatever role you fulfill with Xyólheméylh. Thank you!

Kyla Darby
Executive Director of Programs

Message from the Executive Director of Administrative Services



We continued to make progress on our strategic goals during the 2022-23 fiscal year and operations slowly returned to normal after two years of continuous change and adaptation as a result of Provincial Health Orders.

In my role of Executive Director of Administrative Services (EDOAS), I am privileged to work with the Administration, Finance, & Human Resources Departments. Some of the accomplishments this year are:

The Human Resources Department was expanded in 2021-22 and continued to make progress on reviewing and rewriting policies, developing training and education strategies that prioritize gaps in leadership skills and training, reviewing OHS policies to ensure they are up to date and continued progress on Indigenizing Human Resources. The latter endeavor will involve reviewing hiring practices, policies and will involve involvement and guidance from the Elders.

Our Administrative staff have continued to support our front-line staff, while at the same time managing to keep our vehicles and offices operational. We moved into a new office location in downtown Mission in the Spring of 2023. We continue to work with communities in the hope of sharing space to help build better relationships and outcomes for our children & families. We continually strive to integrate Halq'emeylem into our everyday operations of greeting clients and visitors and ensuring staff understand the core values.

The Finance staff continued to provide services while following all federal, provincial, and accounting regulations and having a clean financial audit. They reviewed payment processes and procedures, developed a training manual for Directors and Team Leads and performed a budget review.

I am honored to be the Executive Director of Administrative Services and to support all the Indigenous children and families living within the xáxá témexw té Stó:lō. I am grateful for the support of the Elders, staff, supervisors, team leaders, managers, directors, and ELT members. I would like to thank the Board of Directors for all of their support, dedication, passion, and leadership in always wanting to make Xyólheméylh better and challenging us to find ways to provide better support to our children, families and communities we work with.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rod Spitzig'.

Rod Spitzig
Executive Director of Administrative Services

Our Vision, Mission & Core Values

Vision

“We advance our inherent right to provide a healthy, safe and nurturing environment for all our Indigenous children and families living within our xáxá témexw té Stó:lō.”

Mission

“We endeavor to ensure the safety and well-being of children by working with and supporting all Indigenous families while respecting their cultural diversity.”

Core Values

Honour - *S'olhstexw*

We honour generations of diverse traditions and cultures.

Engage - *Lexws'ó:les qas Yóyestel* (Be willing to do one's work) (Working together)

We engage and foster safe family ties and cultural connections in the best interests of the child.

Accountable - *Telómelthet* (Acknowledge)

We are accountable to children, families, communities, stakeholders and each other.

Respect - *Ólhet* (Respect someone)

We respect our roots in xáxá témexw té Stó:lō and endeavor to provide services and programs that meet the unique cultural needs of all Indigenous people.

Trust - *Q'élmet*

We trust in the ability of our children and families to grow and develop in a healthy way.

Our Elders - SI:YÓLEXWE



Top row left to right: Amy Victor; Rosemary Trehearne; Laurie Backman; Darlene Tommy; 2nd Row: Julie George; Sherry Epp; Violet George; Louise Silver-Kaarsemaker; 3rd row: Roger Andrews; Desta Branham; Cynthia Myran; Maria Reed; 4th Row: Donna Simon, Leo Nolin. Allan Mason. Photos by Dan Ludeman

Xyólheméylh has an Elders Advisory Committee which represents various First Nations Communities in Stó:lō territory as well some away from home Indigenous communities. They ensure we are delivering services in a culturally appropriate and sensitive way.

Having a team of Elders, from different backgrounds and cultures, has enabled Xyólheméylh to match the right Elder to best meet the specific need of the individual request.

Elders are now fully involved in all aspects of operations. They offer recommendations and guidance on policy and practice to staff and leadership. They also provide input and evaluation of services around the role of culture in day to day operations. Elders now have a place in training and lead in offering healing through traditional ways of dealing with stress and grief.

Elders play a major role in services through their participation in all collaborative practice circles and direct support to staff, youth and families.

They meet with social workers and their clients to give recommendations on how the social workers and families can support the children and families in a culturally sensitive way.

Our Elder advisory members are an integral part of how we, as an organization, are continuing to move forward in a good way. Our “knowledge keepers” have been an amazing support to our staff and families throughout this year.

We have 18 Elders on our Elders Advisory Coun-

cil and a number of Elders who are involved in other initiatives with us. Our Elders being partnered with youth is going well and is continuing to expand.

The Elders teach us that for us to do the very best to serve others, that it starts with each of us reflecting inwardly and taking care of ourselves.

They also teach us about taking time to pause and reflect, about the importance of understanding and using our gifts of kindness, sharing, and loving that are within each of us. These gifts are useful, even necessary, to those who are called to the service in helping others.

Over the years, the staff’s view of and requests for Elders has grown. As with the uptake of staff there has been an even bigger request for Xyólheméylh Elders’ involvement by youth and families.

For many of the staff it is transformative when the Elders share their life experiences, the knowledge they’ve accumulated over years, their backgrounds.

Elders convey a calming influence whether they’re working with a staff, youth or family. They bring new ideas and a different perspective on matters to staff and families who haven’t been brought up in their culture. Just having an Elder in the room and doing ceremony and cultural protocols has a calming effect to whatever the conversation is.

Our Elders - SI:YÓLEXWE

Thank you to all our 2022-23 Elders Advisory:

- Laurie Backman;
- Jeanette Diablo;
- Julie George (Lexlexwenel);
- Violet George;
- Roger Andrews;
- Maria Reed (Waabigekek Ikwe);
- Louise Silver-Kaarsemaker (Masquaelta);
- Donna Simon;
- Rosemary Treherne (Tha tisia);
- Amy Victor (St'enilh:ot);
- Allan Mason;
- Sheree Epp;
- Leo Nolin;
- Desta Branham;

- Darlene Tommy; and
- Cynthia Myran.

Also thanks to our other Elders:

- Charles Ayotte;
- Yvonne Tumangday;
- Reg Phillips;
- Ron Penner;
- Ellery Edel; and
- Rocky LaRock.



The Elders during their retreat at Harrison Hot Springs; above: Roger Andrews, Cynthia Myran and Allan Mason; Julie George.

In Memory of Qwetoselwet (Mary) and Gil

We said goodbye to two of our beloved Elders in 2022-23. We will miss Qwetoselwet - Mary Malloway from Yeqwyeqwi:ws First Nation who passed away in February 2023 and Gil Poitras who passed away in April of 2023. Both were loved by their Elder colleagues, staff and families.

Qwetoselwet - Mary Malloway

Qwetoselwet- Mary was from the Máthexwi First Nation and lived on Yeqwyeqwi:ws First Nation. Mary had eight children and numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren. Over the years Mary welcomed many children into her home, including 14 Foster Children.

Mary was a residential school survivor and spent five years at St. Mary's Residential School in Mission, BC. She could see her family house across the river in Matsqui and remembered crying, not understanding why she couldn't go home. It was there that she decided she wanted a large family so that her children wouldn't be lonely like she was.

A few years after leaving the school, Mary met Frank Malloway at Coqualeetza. They were married five months later, and started a family, having her first child at 18 and her last one at age 30. She said she didn't know how to cook and had to learn fast with so many people to feed and look after. It was also then that she started learning about her culture, the language that had been forbidden and the Longhouse ways. Mary served on the Xyólheméylh Elders Advisory from its inception in 1992 and believed strongly that children need to remain connected to their parents, even if they can't live with them for a while. Her advice for social workers at Xyólheméylh was to talk to children at their level. "Kids know when you are sincere and when you're not. Even little babies know," said Mary. "Every child should matter to someone."

Gil Poitras

Gil was Métis and originally from Regina, Saskatchewan, but lived on Coast Salish territory since 1958. His father Joseph Poitras, raised seven kids on his own after the divorce from Gil's mother Deanna. One of the things he wished he had learned as a child was his language, but his parents were both in residential schools and were scared to speak their language. Gil was most proud of his children - a boy and a girl, now in their forties and thirties respectively.

Gil was a Star Elder with MCFD for the last eight years and worked with Circle 5, as well as Métis Family Services, where he presided over ceremonies, healing and talking circles, working with youth as well as helping Indigenous people who find themselves in the court system. Gil joined Xyólheméylh as an Elder four years ago and enjoyed working with Indigenous people. "I get as much out of it as my clients," said Gil. Once a year he led a trip to gather medicine with youth in Merritt, teaching the youth to gather sage and make tobacco offerings. At Xyólheméylh Gil provided counsel, traditional wisdom and worked with staff and clients to ensure Indigenous culture is embedded in the organization.

Visions & Voices Youth Advisory Group

The Visions and Voices Youth Mentorship Program was established eight years ago for youth ages 13 and older who have been in care or previously in care with Xyólheméylh. The youth meet monthly, share a meal and organize events. By doing this they build leadership skills as well as connect with their Indigenous culture. The group also acts as an advisory committee for Xyólheméylh, ensuring our programs are responsive to their needs.

In 2022 they began the process of creating a new role of Youth Programs Coordinator which is a dedicated resource to coordinating the group. This will allow the group to grow in size and put on more events and consistent programs.



In 2022-23 Visions and Voices organized a variety of events including a Tie Dye Meet and Greet; a kids play night for children five to 12; a Fright Night at Halloween; a sunflower growing contest; and volunteered with an animal shelter. They also organized several classes including ribbon skirt workshops, facilitated by local Elders who shared teachings about ribbon skirts and showed Indigenous youth how to make their own skirt.

They also organized a wood carving group for youth 16 to 18; and Kitchen Teachings where youth learn about nutrition, kitchen skills, budgeting, grocery shopping and make their favorite recipes.

Our Organization

Our programs and services are created and delivered with the support of our Elders Advisory Council with special attention on strengthening culture and identity, while honoring the strength of families.

- We strive to work in a holistic way to keep families together and reintegrate children back with their families and extended families.
- Our service delivery is done with an open heart and an open mind focusing on the best interests of the family while keeping children at the center.
- We work to ensure children are connected to their family, and community while striving to ensure their inherent rights to heritage and identity are upheld in all we do.

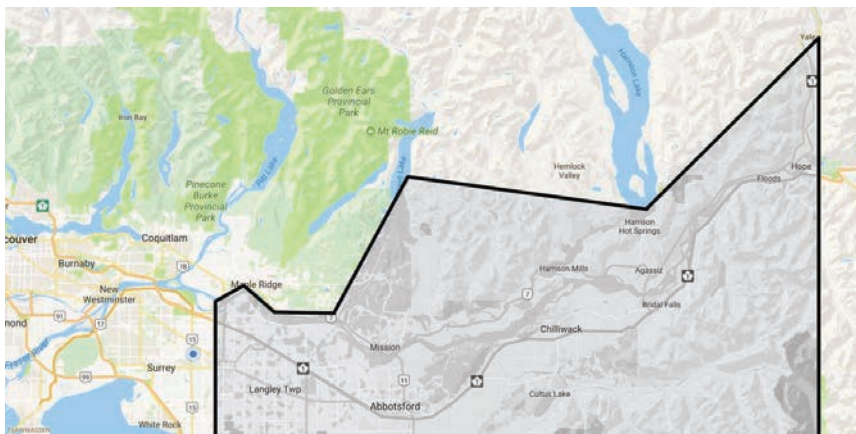
We work with 17 First Nations Communities – Athelets (Atchelitz); Xwchíyò:m (Cheam); Chowéthel (Chawathil); Leq’a:mel; Máthexwi

(Matsqui); Pópkw’em (Popkum); Sxwoyehà:là (Squia); Shxwhá:y (Skway); Sxwoyehá:lá (Shxw’ow’hamel); Sq’ewá:lxw (Skawahlook); Sq’ewqeyl (Skowkale); Sqwá (Skwah); Th’ewá:li (Soowahlie); Semá:th (Sumas); Ch’iyáqtel (Tzeachten); Yeqwyeqwi:ws (Yakweawkwoose); and Xwoxwelá:lhq (Yale).

We also work with Láts’elmexw (away from home) families. In fact, the away from home children, youth and families we serve accounts for 85+ per cent of our work. Over 33 per cent of the children, youth, and families we serve are Métis.

We operate with offices located in Agassiz, Chilliwack (our head office), Mission, Abbotsford, Langley and Surrey. Currently we have offices in the following Stó:lō Communities: Chowéthel, Xwchíyò:m, Leq’amel, Sxwoyehà:là, Shxwhá:y Village and Ch’iyáqtel First Nations. Our goal is to have lease agreements in all the Stó:lō Communities signed on to be serviced by our organization.

Our Geographic Service Area



Our Geographic Service Area (GSA) covers Yale to the East, Langley/Surrey Ministry Fraser Region boundary on the West (196th Street), Maple Ridge/Mission Ministry Fraser Region boundary on the North (Wilson Street) and the Canadian/US border to the South, including the Reserves of Member First Nations, and does not include the Reserves of non-Member First Nations, as set out in the map.

Community Profile: Sq'ewqeyl (Skowkale) First Nation



Sq'ewqeyl First Nations Chief Mark Point-Xwemxwe'meleq - believes that the time is right for First Nations people to begin the process of looking within to find solutions to problems in their communities. "We have the means ourselves to find solutions to our problems. Our people in the past survived for centuries before the xwelítem (settlers) came. We have to be resilient and we have to become self-sufficient if we're ever to realize the return to a semblance of life as Stó:lō people."

"It's about starting the conversation and asking if we are at a point in time in our own history that we can begin the dialogue, the process of finding solutions to our problems ourselves. I believe that we have to. We have to begin the work, begin the mindset that we have within ourselves to find the solutions," says Chief Point.

That is the thinking behind the Resilient Communities Project that he is working on with other Stó:lō First Nations. Their first meeting was on Sept. 22, 2022 facilitated by Four Directions, and was to begin the conversation about what the short term, mid-term and long-term goals are, and to identify how to begin implementing solutions.

We meet monthly with Designated Representatives for these communities to ensure communities voices are heard. We are signatories in Information sharing agreements with Chiefs from the communities signed on to be served by Xyólheméylh, and the Province so every community knows where their children are in BC.

Staff work to ensure that they are following the new Federal Legislation C 92 – *An Act Representing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Children* in planning with these communities.

A Culturally Vibrant Workplace

One of our seven strategic goals is to ensure a culturally vibrant workplace. Culture is embedded in all we do. In 2022-23, we increased our efforts to use more Halq'emeylem in our day-to-day operations. This included translating our core values into Halq'emeylem and ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the values and how they apply to our work. We are also looking at having a sacred space in each office and a place where Elders can meet with staff.

Sound Human Resources Practices

Our priorities in 2022-23 were Collective Bargaining, reviewing HR policies, implementing a bi-weekly on boarding training process for new staff; implementing a database to track everyone's training and a training portal where staff can see what's coming up and register for training. .

One of the priorities is developing a structured training and mentoring program for social work staff, developing in house training for family strengthening staff, supervisors and administrative staff.

An overarching priority for the team is Indigenizing Human Resources which is going to be a complex and multi-year endeavor. This means taking colonial processes inherited from MCFD and the corporate world and trying to find better ways of doing things inspired by our Indigenous roots.

This will include revamping HR policies, examining the language we use and hiring practices, and bringing in more culturally appropriate policies. The HR team are reaching out to external organizations that are undergoing the same process, as well as working with Elders.

A Place Where Employees are Engaged, Make a Difference and are Accountable

Infrastructure

Building 1 at Coqualeetza was demolished in April 2022. Plans are underway to build a new building on the site . We also found new space for our offices in Mission and moved in the spring of 2023. This move will mean our organization is no longer occupying spaces in former Residential Schools.

Business Excellence Awards

We were honoured to be nominated for a Business Excellence Award from the Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce for a non-profit that has made a significant contribution to the overall health and liveability of Chilliwack! This nomination is the direct result of the amazing work of our staff and it is a great honour to be nominated for this. This recognition demonstrates how we work with our HEART values and how we are

walking together with our community members. Congratulations to the Ann Davis Society which won the award in the category.

Christmas

The holiday season is always a busy time of year at Xyólheméylh. We organized Christmas hampers for over 100 families in Stó:lō territory as well as 150 youth. We also organized two children's Christmas parties in December with food, prizes and an appearance by Santa Claus. And, we organized a special luncheon for our Elders.



Drew Paddon, Jade Victor, Jennifer Janik, Kyla Darby, Penny Trites and Rod Spitzig at the BEA Awards, January 28, 2022.



Photos clockwise from top: Elders Christmas Party - Jade Diablo, Desta Branham, Debbie Branham; Laura-Dawn Wilkin; Christmas Hampers; Krista Sidhu and Breeanne Bereton; Bill and Marion Mussell, Kyla Darby; Tyler Epp and Sheree Epp. Opposite Page: Laura-Dawn Wilkin and Kyla Darby from Xyólheméyllh , Rod Santiago and Maria Cargnelli. from Archway Community Services.

Our Programs

Building and Strengthening Relationships with Communities

This includes information sharing agreements, partnering with community organizations to develop strategies for away from home children youth and families, and improving how we support and communicate with Caregiver Support Parents. Two examples of this work in 2022-23 include our MOU with Archway Community Services in Abbotsford and our Caregiver Support Network.

MOU with Archway Community Services

Xyólheméylh and Archway Community Services entered into an interagency collaboration agreement on Tuesday, Sept 27th in a signing ceremony. The ceremony joined the two families of Archway and Xyólheméylh. The agreement will strengthen services for Indigenous individuals who access Archway's child, youth and family programming.

Over 40 individuals attended the ceremony including Indigenous elders, leaders from the



Màthxwi (Matsqui) and Semà:th (Sumas) First Nations, city councillors, MLAs, and representatives from Xyólheméylh, Archway, Abbotsford School District, Foundry Central Office and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MFCD).

The goal of the partnership is to ensure that services provided by Archway and Xyólheméylh are integrated, coordinated and culturally safe for Indigenous clients. The partnership also enables Indigenous children, youth, and families to access a broader range of culturally safe services provided by both agencies.

While Indigenous individuals have long been eligible and included in many Archway services, Archway committed to a more inclusive and intentional approach to understanding the history, culture, protocols and priorities of Indigenous Nations in their 2019-2023 strategic plan.

Going forward there will be regular meetings between representatives of Archway and Xyólheméylh for information sharing, guidance, and reviewing gaps and successes in community services for Indigenous individuals. Archway staff will have the benefit of an Elders Advisory group from Xyólheméylh who will work directly with Archway. Their guidance will reduce barriers to access and deepen and broaden the cultural safety of services across Archway and in specific programs within the Archway Counseling, Child, Youth and Families department.

Caregiver Network

Caregiver Support Parents can often feel isolated and not part of a larger support network. Xyólheméylh and MCFD wanted to fix that by organizing a Caregiver Support Network in collaboration, where caregivers could meet each other, discuss their challenges and issues, receive guidance from the Elders and bring their concerns to staff. The first ever Caregiver Network meeting was held in January with a small group of caregivers invited to kick off the event with Xyólheméylh's Elders, staff from MCFD and Xyólheméylh in attendance. The event was hosted by Inderjit Aujla, Xyólheméylh's Director of Operations, Resources, and Wanda Smith, Director of Operations for MCFD.

The program is a collaboration and partnership for the caregivers, run by the caregivers, one community, caring for our children. It will provide an opportunity for caregivers to learn and engage in Indigenous ways of being while caring for Indigenous children and youth in their homes.



Wanda Smith and Inderjit Aujla,

Strengthen and ensure culturally relevant practice and delegated programs that are compliant with standards

In 2022-23 we worked on cultural training for all caregivers, created a group supervision model which included the involvement of Elders, developed annual homecoming trips for CYICs and OOC placements, and developed and implemented a caregiver recruitment plan.



Enhance and ensure family strengthening programs are culturally relevant and promote family and community involvement.

In addition to the programs listed on the opposite page, Xyólheméylh presented at the Our Children, Our Way conference. The Xyólheméylh team who presented included Stacia Jones, Terri Brunelle and Teresa Gallis, pictured above with Cindy Blackstock. They presented on the Family Cultural Connections Workers and Elders programs and the Collaborative Practice model.

2022-23 Prevention Funding Initiatives

Enhance and ensure family strengthening programs are culturally relevant and promote family and community involvement.

Total distributed to 17 communities: \$505,000

Men & Women's Wellness Groups	Provide support to the women and men with the goal to give them the tools and skillset to utilize in their homes, families, and community. Opportunity to work on themselves through self care and self awareness.
Community Gardens, Youth and Elder Gardening,	Provide tools and raised beds for community. Food sustainability.
After School Programs	Tutor, Supplies (Snacks, Learning Materials), Instructor, After-school support.
Community Cultural Day	Community engagement and cultural awareness
Canoe Club / Journey	Provide cultural awareness and teachings of traditions and protocols for community.
Community Gatherings, Elders Gatherings, Youth Gatherings	Community reconnecting with one another to identify supports.
Youth Mentorship	Provide youth mentorship supports to youth struggling in school and with their personal lives
Arts, Crafts, Language and Cultural Activities	Connect families through art, culture.
Summer Camps	Provide summer camps for our youth, with ages ranging from kindergarten to grade 12. Cultural, Language, and land-based healing along with strengthening our youth's math, English, social, and reading skills to prepare them for their next year.
Sweat Lodge	Sweat lodge ceremonies encourage sweating out of toxins and negative energy that creates disorder and imbalance in life. In this way, the sweat lodge ceremony cleanses the body, mind and soul.
Drum Making	Connecting our youth with Elder's with drum making sessions
Boys and Girl's Self Esteem Groups	Build connections with community, self-esteem, healthy relationships, confidence building, self-improvement
Open Gym	New sports equipment for open gym night
Mental Health Program	Deeper understanding of oneself, development of coping strategies, inspire change and improve quality of life through self-awareness and self-exploration.
Equine Therapy	Incorporating horses into the therapeutic process.
Youth Programs	Provide a safe space for youth to engage and build community relationships.
Elders programs	Weekly Lunches, support group for our Elder's.
Food Hampers	Provide support to families when they are needed.

Caregiver Appreciation



We are enormously grateful for our Xyólheméylh Caregiver Support parents who open their homes and hearts to children and youth who need them. They provide love, nurturing, structure, stability while working with the child's care team to ensure the children's needs are met. After two years of not being able to show our appreciation with a gathering, on October 19, 2022 we held an honoring ceremony at Coqualeetza Longhouse. Staff and caregivers shared a meal, the caregivers were blanket-ed and several witnesses expressed appreciation on behalf of Xyólheméylh.

Cultural Gathering March 2023



On Saturday, March 18, 2023 approximately 100 people came together to celebrate our annual Cultural Gathering. The event was held at The'i:tseliya, S.A.Y. Health and Community Centre in Chilliwack and included Indigenous performers from across Canada.

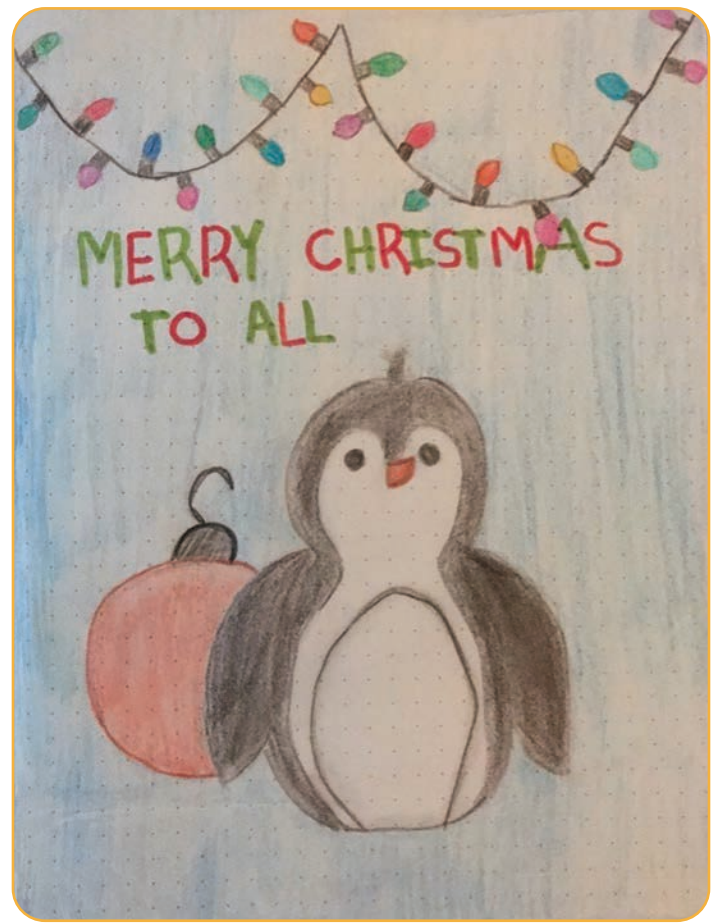
Voices of Children & Youth

We held our third annual writing and/or art contest, asking children and youth what being Indigenous means to them and to express their feelings in art and writing. The children and youth expressed their connection to the land, nature, animals, and their families. They also expressed their hopes and dreams as well as their sadness with discrimination and racism.

“Many artists have painted or drawn pictures of wolves howling at a full moon. In my artwork, I have used the dream catcher as my moon because I want the dream catcher to catch and protect all my hopes and dreams of being a person who is known to protect friends, freedom, family, loyalty, and teamwork,” said Emiley, 10, of her artwork, shown below left.

We also held an art contest at Christmas, and used the winning art in two Christmas cards.

Below: Emiley, 10; Oceanna, 17.





Top right to left: : Isabella, 14; Daxtyn, 7; Below: Honestii, 6.



Caseloads - 2021-23

First Nation	Year	FS	FDR	SR	In Care	OOC-CS	YAG	EFP	Total	New YSS	New Total
Leq'a:mel	2021-22	9	1	11	4	4	0	0	29		29
Leq'a:mel	2022-23	4	11	13	4	2	0	0	34		34
Máthexwi	2021-22	5	5	8	4	2	0	0	24		24
Máthexwi	2022-23	2	14	9	2	4	1	1	33		33
Semá:th	2021-22	9	6	5	6	2	2	0	30		30
Semá:th	2022-23	6	10	4	6	7	2	4	39		39
Shxwha:y Village	2021-22	3	5	4	4	0	0	0	16		16
Shxwha:y Village	2022-23	0	3	0	13	1	0	1	18		18
Athelets	2021-22	1	3	3	0	0	0	0	7		7
Athelets	2022-23	1	0	0	0	4	0	2	7		7
Th'ewáli	2021-22	3	6	4	7	5	0	2	27		27
Th'ewáli	2022-23	4	4	3	2	0	1	5	19	1	20
Sxwoyehà:là	2021-22	2	4	7	0	0	0	1	14		14
Sxwoyehà:là	2021-22	0	3	7	1	0	0	0	11		11
Sq'ewqeyl	2021-22	5	5	4	2	0	0	2	18		18
Sq'ewqeyl	2022-23	2	4	2	5	0	0	4	17	1	18
Ch'iyáqtel	2021-22	6	1	5	2	0	0	0	14		14
Ch'iyáqtel	2022-23	5	12	8	4	0	0	0	29		29
Yeqwyeqwi:ws	2021-22	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	4		4
Yeqwyeqwi:ws	2022-23	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2		2

FS Family Services
 FDR Family Development Response
 SR Voluntary Service Request
 OOC-CS Out of Care Child Services
 YAG Youth Agreement
 EFP Extended Family Plan
 NYSS New Category - Youth Support Services

Caseloads - 2021-23

First Nation	Year	FS	FDR	SR	In Care	OOC-CS	YAG	EFP	Total	New YSS	New Total
Sqwa	2021-22	7	10	12	4	3	0	1	37		37
Sqwa	2022-23	7	9	18	2	2	1	2	41	2	43
Xwchíyò:m	2021-22	6	4	9	12	5	1	2	39		39
Xwchíyò:m	2022-23	4	4	7	13	10	2	2	42	1	43
Chowéthel	2021-22	11	22	2	7	4	2	7	55		55
Chowéthel	2022-23	9	18	6	10	10	0	6	59	4	63
Sq'ewá:lxw	2021-22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Sq'ewá:lxw	2022-23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Xwoxwelá:lhþ	2021-22	2	1	1	2	0	0	3	9		9
Xwoxwelá:lhþ	2022-23	5	2	0	2	2	0	0	11		11
Shxw'ówhámél	2021-22	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	6		6
Shxw'ówhámél	2022-23	1	5	1	7	0	0	0	14		14
Pópkw'em	2021-22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Pópkw'em	2022-23	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1		1
Total Files	2021-22	71	76	77	56	25	5	19	329		329
Total Files	2022-23	51	99	78	72	42	7	28	377	9	386

Off Reserve Files

Year	FS	FDR	SR	In Care	OOC-CS	YAG	EFP	Total	New Youth Support Services	New Total
2021-22	341	292	534	371	62	33	47	1680		1680
2022-23	358	265	527	341	73	34	60	1658	5	1663

Looking Ahead

Our goals for 2023 - 2024 are:

1) Ensuring a Culturally Vibrant Workplace

This includes initiatives to expand and strengthen the role of Elders, developing strategies for youth/Elder engagement, enriching cultural teachings internally, ensuring our offices physically reflect Indigenous culture, and increasing morale and a sense of belonging with staff.

2) Sound Human Resources process and procedures

This includes reviewing HR policies and procedures to ensure they are up to date, reviewing the on-boarding process and ensuring the process involves cultural protocols and teachings.

3) A place where employees are engaged, make a difference and are accountable

This includes improving internal communication with staff, staff recognition and appreciation, training, establishing Wellness Committees, and improving our performance management and evaluation procedures. It also includes developing a facilities strategic plan.

4) Sound Financial Management and Reporting

We will be reviewing our Finance Policies to ensure they are up to date and implementing a new ADP Payroll System

5) Building and Strengthening relationships with communities

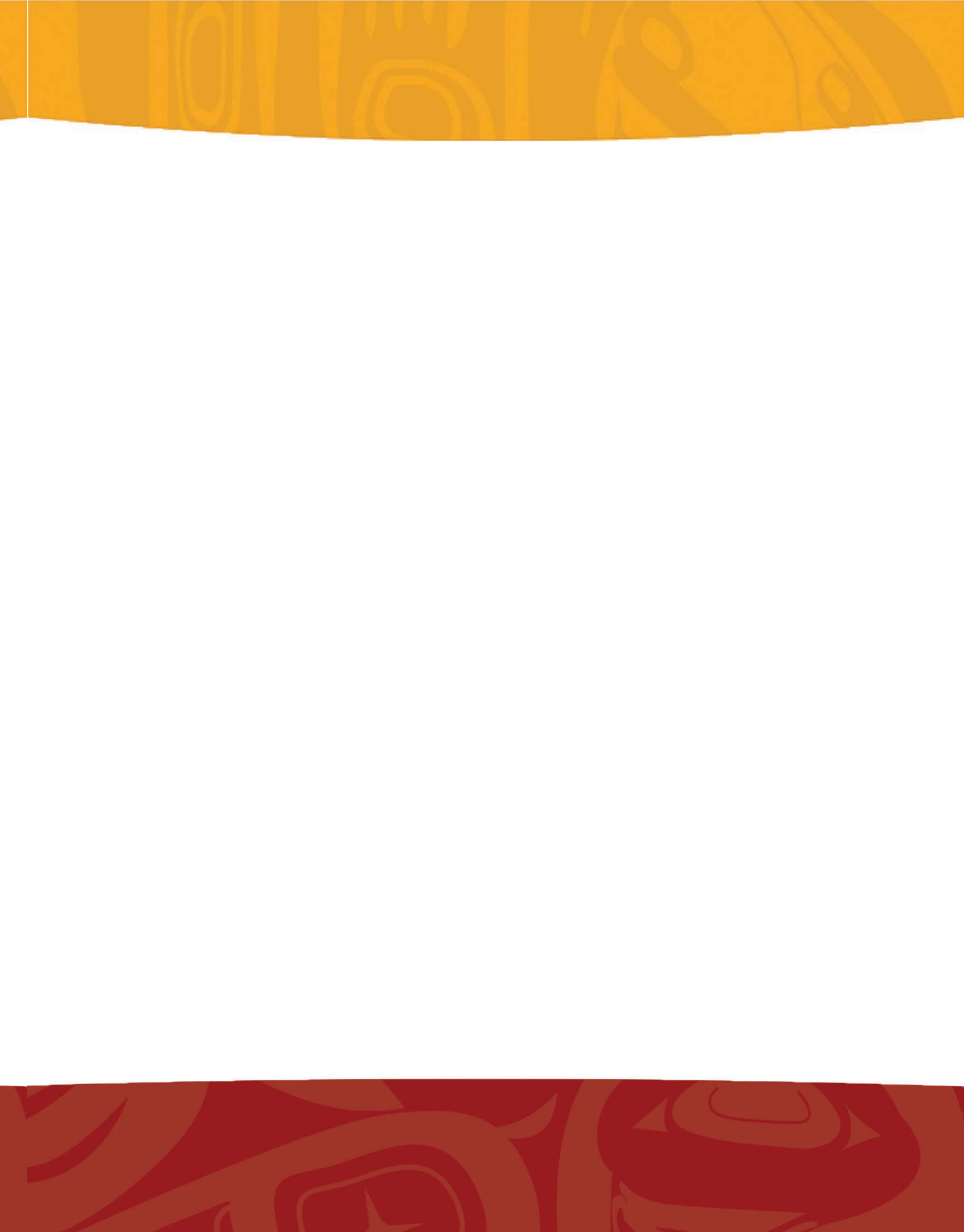
We have information sharing agreements and are working towards Community Walking Together Protocols with the communities we serve. Partnering with community organizations to develop an urban strategy for away from home children, youth and families we serve is very important, communities, and improving how we support and communicate with Caregiver Support Parents.

6) Strengthen and ensure culturally relevant practice and delegated programs that are compliant with standards

This includes increased use of prevention services and family strengthening meetings; increased support to families for children to remain safely with their families; increased use of out of care options; ensuring permanency plans for Children and Youth in Care (CYIC) are at the forefront of planning; increased support for youth transitioning out of care; increased support for caregivers; and increased focus on culture and accessing the knowledge of Elders.

7) Enhance and ensure family strengthening programs are culturally relevant and promote family and community involvement.

This includes ensuring that collaborative practices are embedded in all basket practice; ensuring culture is incorporated into the work of our teams with families; and that Elders and Youth voices are included in programming.





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