

# Quarterly Report

October - December 2021



## Executive Summary

heñle? kʷ, waʔ, hello Community Leadership, Community Members and Relations.

We acknowledge the past twenty-one (21) months as some of the most challenging in recent history as Indigenous people and particularly as a Society. As the global pandemic halted much of the world to complete standstill due to Covid-19, overdose deaths among First Nations young people surged dramatically and disproportionately in the BC Drug Overdose Crisis. May 27, 2021 entered into Indigenous history as yet another humanitarian and existential crisis of Indigenous peoples; and BC Wildfires devastated and threatened lives, traditional land and food sources, residential and livelihood security as evacuation orders, alerts and fear held our people and communities' captive throughout the summer months. The November 15, 2021 Flood event that resulted in evacuations, left communities landlocked and cut off from basic needs across the Nicola Valley was nothing short of devastating. Our hearts and prayers extend to all of you as we continue to face seemingly insurmountable challenges. Hope *is* on the horizon and it is through our collective efforts, extension of ongoing support and resiliency as Indigenous peoples, we will rise from these devastations.

Our communities impacted, Scw'exmx Child and Family Services Society (SCFSS) mobilized resources in every way possible. We provided support during these significant environmental changes while undergoing critical change management within four (4) strategic priorities as identified in our Board of Director's **Call to Action** and **2021-2026 Strategic Plan**, developed in coordination with Community Leadership:

~ Culture of Caring | Protection to Prevention | Growing our People | Infrastructure Alignment ~

In midst of these challenges our SCFSS Family demonstrated humble tenacity on behalf of our cultures, communities, families, young people, children, and one another.

We worked with communities toward the development of consistent engagement and fiscal support to identify needs and priorities through a prevention and community lens. We continued to move away from the historical approach of protection services toward a collective approach to build community capacity and resources. We acknowledge there is much to do to change the current position and perception of SCFSS as a delegated agency. We continue to evolve as a Family of professionals, community members and Relations who advocate for overall health and wellness of family and community, through traditional values for the sake of our children and young people and families. We take action alongside our communities to identify key roles and responsibilities of SCFSS to support inherent rights over children and family. We continue to work in collaboration with Band representatives, Community Members, Relations and Elders to ensure our approach remains respectful, meaningful and represent the unique needs of nle?kepmx and sylx people.

Despite significant changes *within* SCFSS in midst of numerous environmental challenges we demonstrate endurance to maintain the vision set before us by our Ancestors. We remain connected and united: *healing does not exist in isolation nor silos*. It is imperative we draw together in these precarious times as our journey unfolds **to work collectively to exercise nle?kepmx and sylx inherent rights as we empower children, young people, and families**.

kʷukʷscemxʷ | limləmt | thank you  
Lisa Post, Executive Director

Scw'exmx Child and Family Services Society (SCFSS) is family-centered and guided by nle?kepmx and syilx traditional knowledge and principles. SCFSS utilizes prevention strategies with a collective goal to keep children with their families and communities. SCFSS engages family, community, and Elders to support cultural identity, familial and territorial connections to bring and keep children home. SCFSS recognizes historical challenges, guided by traditional strength and wisdom to build family and community capacity in a monumental shift from protection to prevention.

**\*Message from kwúk'wpi? | yilmíx'wm** *\*an excerpt from SCFSS 2021-22 Strategic Plan*

One voice is necessary as our communities walk together on a new path of reflection, understanding and change. At this crucial moment in time, we reflect on our histories as nle?kepmx and syilx people, and the trauma brought by colonization. It is time to be healthy and strong people again. We remain watchful as we begin the hard work ahead of us to care for our children, young people, families and communities. We are all somebody's seventh generation. It is through this work our children will not know the same trauma experienced by the seven generations before them.

## Strategic Directions

Our following four (4) Strategic Directions reflect the needs of the communities we serve:



### Culture of Caring

Change necessitates the priority of healing through the wisdom of our ancestors. We must apply traditional knowledge within practice frameworks as we prioritize culture and language throughout the delivery of our programs and services. As we continue upon this pathway, we engage with Elders and Community Leaders for guidance to ensure nle?kepmx and syilx traditional values are reflected in the development of protocol agreements, policies, governance, and laws.

### Protection to Prevention

Historically a protection-based agency, our Board of Directors and Community Leadership prioritize an urgent and immediate transition from governmentally imposed policies, procedures, and practices to the use of culturally reflective prevention-based strategies across all SCFSS programs and services.

### Infrastructure Alignment

Nomadic for years, SCFSS seeks to establish roots and infrastructure stability. Community consultation is crucial as we reassess our infrastructure in support and proximity of our five Member communities. This change must encompass the needs of our communities and presents an opportunity to work collaboratively with our communities and entertain space-sharing potential aimed at increasing community capacity.

### Growing our People

We support the wellness, growth, and healing of our community members. One Voice is necessary as SCFSS and Member communities introduce a new way of thinking. We recognize Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) through intergenerational trauma that continues to impact generations of our people. Alternatively, we acknowledge Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG) as the healing that occurs when we share and collaborate with each other and our communities. This philosophical change will shift our practice models, programs, services, and work culture as we ensure our people possess the tools and skills to embrace change.

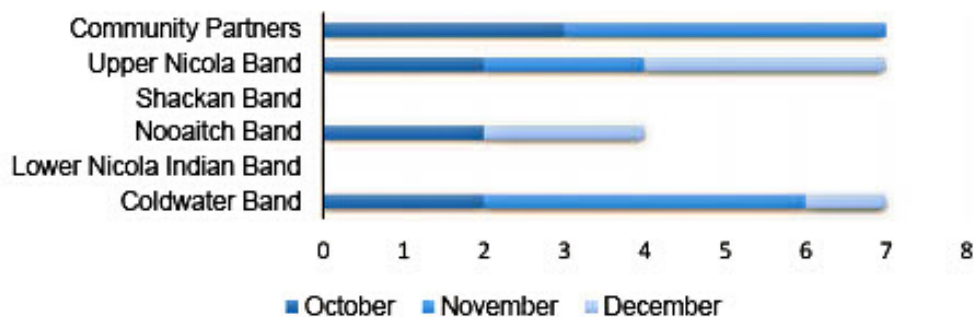
## Culture of Caring

### Strategic Goal: *Communicate with One Voice*

***Establish community presence | Support community prevention | Promote community advocacy | Gather feedback and share success***

The Community Services Team works towards the strategic goal to “*communicate with One Voice*” and “*Return rights and responsibilities to our people through the development and implementation of Governance and Laws*”. As such, the team’s priority is to build community capacity, support community prevention activities and ensure SCFSS’s presence and visibility within each community.

### Quarter 3 Community Meetings



The Community Services Team continues to build trusting relationships and increase community engagement. We worked together with community Band Representatives to support their community prevention activities and ensure programming to create stronger, healthier families. We ensure community-guided frameworks are utilized throughout the organization, and new staff receive a thorough orientation of our Communities, and the direction they provide to us as outlined in the Strategic plan, nle?kepmx and syilx Frameworks, and Community protocol agreements.

### COMMUNITY PREVENTION BUDGETS\*

Lower Nicola Indian Band LNIB	Coldwater CWIB	Upper Nicola UNB	Shackan SIB	Nooaitch NIB	TOTAL Funding
\$379,500	\$496,800	\$744,964	\$237,500	\$358,398	\$2,217,162

\*Indigenous Services Canada

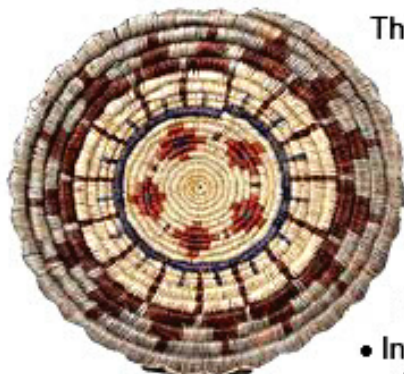
### The significance and story behind our logo:

The basket is significant in both nle?kepmx and syilx culture as the basket weaves represent divine creation. The outer circle represents the world around us that gives us support and sustains our people. The inner circle represents the people of the communities that hold us all together in strength and spirit. The five communities that SCFSS serves and is guided by are represented by the five points of the basket. The sun burst peaks represent our ancestors that watch over us and guide the work that we do. The large hand is an adult guiding, loving and holding up our most precious gifts – the children. The child’s hand is loving, guiding and teaching us along our journey together. The water is our healing and the two water lines represent the nle?kepmx and syilx people.



**Strategic Goal: Integrate Language & Traditional Teachings**

**Weave nle?kepmx and syilx culture into all aspects | Immerse nle?kepmxcin and nsyilxcən**



The Culture and Language Team is committed to working with children, young people, and families to incorporate nle?kepmxcin, nsyilxcən and Traditional values into current and future programs across SCFSS, as we:

- Share cultural teachings and language with children, young people, families, caregivers, community and SCFSS employees.
- Access and utilize the Land for culturally significant practices and healing.
- Increase culturally grounded programs and services with a consistent approach.
- Support SCFSS employees incorporate Framework of Practice and syilx Captiᓄ. Ethic Protocol Agreement into practice and programs.

**LANGUAGE**

nle?kepmxcin	nsyilxcən	immersion
80% of staff completed nle?kepmxcin level 1 lessons by our Language Teacher and 40% of staff	Inclusion of “nsyilxcən words of the week” and lesson planning to coordinate syilx language learning.	Communications standards established for all employees to ensure email, telephone greetings and voicemails to reflect nsyilxcən and nle?kepmxcin introductions

**Weave nle?kepmx and syilx culture into all aspect**

Resident Elders work consistently alongside team members and are designated to specific teams within SCFSS. Elders supported Teams through these activities: Family Trees for the purpose of reunification, facilitated on the Land and traditional teachings, engaged in 1-1 support and counselling, engaged in Family Circles. Resident Elders and Cultural Coordinators share workload responsibilities across all program areas to ensure our Relations have access to supports grounded in nle?kepmx and syilx culture.

We developed & delivered an introductory grief and loss series *Our Traditional Practices: When Communities Suffer Loss* with 18 employees, caregivers and community members who participated. An extended version is under development and date set in January 2022 for young people, families, caregivers, community members and SCFSS employees.

*Reconnecting through Traditional Smudge and Brushing* session for twenty-seven employees, Relations and community members in the aftermath of the November Flood event.

**Reclaim Cultural Identity**

Cultural coordinators planned activities and programs according to each season and 13 moon calendar. Collaboration took place between prevention and protection teams to develop a traditional framework for Reunification. Elders played an integral role in all discussions and planning.

The Cultural Team facilitated a Winter Solstice Pipe Ceremony with 2 pipes raised in LNIB, 2 pipes raised in CWIB, 1 pipe raised in UNIB and 1 pipe raised the City of Merritt. All Carriers raised their pipes on the Winter Solstice, shared strong prayers to help those who have suffered during the summer wildfires, recent flood event and the ongoing challenges associated with covid-19. Unable to hold the gathering due to covid-19 restrictions, the ceremony once called, cannot stop. The pipes were raised from the homes of each Carrier who received a bundle for their calling to help. Unable to feast, the burning of a traditional meal closed the ceremony. Packages of giveaways were hand delivered into our five communities: **Coldwater (9), Lower Nicola Band (7), Upper Nicola (8), Shackan Band (6), and City of Merritt (9)**. Three youth assisted in preparation of the ceremony and learned how to build a bundle, the traditional practice and protocols of the giveaway, the importance of the feast and the purpose of the ceremony.

*"Each one of us can make a difference together. We can make change for the future. By touching so many lives, we are able to change the spirit of our people." - Victor York | Elder*

**Strategic Goal: Grow Caregiver networks in alignment with traditional/community networks**

**Recruit community caregivers | Develop community-advised caregiver resources  
Integrate culture to strengthen community caregiver supports**

In October, the Resource Team recognized Caregivers with a token of gratitude for their continued dedication to our five (5) communities' children and young people. In November, we supported Caregivers during their evacuation to bridge ESS supports as well provided support to those who remained in Communities with limited access to supplies and increased transportation costs to source supplies, etc. The Resource Team funded an additional \$750.00 to support the care of SCFSS children and young people in Caregiver homes. We acknowledged the various hardships and challenges to alleviate additional expenses and stresses associated with the floods.

Despite challenges associated with various environmental factors over the past six months, the Team will facilitate a training/informational session in February 2022 designed specifically for Caregivers.

CAREGIVERS	TOTAL	COMMUNITY					
		LNIB	CWIB	UNB	SIB	NIB	Urban
Kinship Homes	42	8	12	5	0	0	17
Indigenous Foster Homes	9	1	2	1	0	1	4
Non-Indigenous Foster Homes	8						
Group Home Placements	1	1					
	<b>60</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>21</b>

**Strategic Goal:** *Incorporate learning from Elders and Knowledge Keepers*

**Share traditional knowledge | Reclaim cultural identity | Establish Elders as advisors and decision-makers**

**Strategic Goal:** *Return rights and responsibilities to our people through the development and implementation of Governance and Laws.*

**Elders as Advisors and Decision Makers**

Through the collective work of our Family Navigators, Family Circle Coordinators, Resident Elders, Prevention and Protection Teams, children returned home and remain with families in a supported environment. Through Family Circles and Elder engagement, meetings with parents, family, Elders and community, the team support families to create their own plans, strengthen relationships and their family.

**Share Traditional Knowledge**

The HR team begins interviews with a prayer, as it sets the cultural framework for all candidates seeking a position at SCFSS. From an HR perspective, we introduce culture and language in the hiring process to ensure candidates are open and willing to engage with traditional practices. In interviews taking place over Zoom, it is essential to open the interview with a grounding prayer. As the candidate and interview panel sit in different locations, disembodied in cyberspace, the prayer brings all individuals together to share the same virtual and spiritual space with good intentions. SCFSS acknowledges cultural differences in our applicants, but as we prioritize language and culture in our transition, we anticipate candidates will remain open to culture, given their candidacy at an Indigenous agency.

**Increase understanding | Create partnerships | Establish One Voice | Return authority to community**

At Scw'exmx Child and Family Services Society, our communities lead the pathway for our vision of working collectively to exercise nte?kepmx and syilx inherent rights as we empower children, young people and families.

*"Our team as a whole needs to learn from our people to grow our understanding of what's happening with our people. Through this, we can help and grow with them." – Sonny Oppenheim | Elder*



## Protection to Prevention

### Strategic Goal: *Bring and keep our children home*

**Prioritize prevention and early intervention measures to keep children with families and community | Reunify children in care to families and community | Develop community caregiver programs and support networks**

In our shift from Protection to Prevention we emphasized collective and holistic connections between teams and communities, as:

- Families and communities are supported to keep and bring children and young people home.
- Elders lead us in prayer, community representation, guidance, and consultation according to community and traditional knowledge.
- Decisions are made by family, community, and Elders not SCFSS employees or local authorities.
- Family Circles are held at every crucial decision-making point to ensure decisions reflect family, community, and traditional values.
- We work together, for the health of our families, our communities and one another.
- We engage with community, traditional values, and language as part of our practice and our existence.

### Prioritize Prevention and Early Intervention Measures to Keep Children with Families and Community

Since June 3, 2021, the Protection team met regularly to intentionally transition away from Provincial practice and terminology to that which represents SCFSS vision, *Practice Frameworks and Captive Ethic Agreement*. The new teams are described as follows:

- Agency Navigation Team | Reunification Coordination Team
- Short Term Protection Services | Youth Services Team
- Caregiver Resources

The outcome of this collaboration focused on a family centered, community-based collective approach wherein teams work to strengthen families, restore traditional practices, reunify children and young people with families and communities. Each team is comprised of a Resident Elder, Child/Youth Mental Health Clinician, Family &/or Youth Prevention Services team member, Circle Coordinator, Social Worker and Administrative support team. Collectively the teams promote family and community engagement with SCFSS vision and community direction to prioritize prevention and early intervention measures to keep children and young people with families and in communities.



### Reunify Children in Care to Families and Community

The Reunification Planning Committee comprised of members from Protection, Prevention, Culture/Language Teams, and met monthly over the past year to develop a formal approach to “Bring our Children Home” to family and community. Reunification must assume a traditional, cultural, and collaborative approach to preserve and strengthen the family. Reunification recognizes the importance of the lifelong role birth families, community, culture, and a sense of belongingness has as imperative to every child and young person. When reunification occurs, efforts to ensure sustainability of wraparound Community programs, services and supports is necessary. Emphasis on a three-phased **collective** approach of **STABILIZATION, MAINTENANCE** and **SUSTAINABILITY** is the core focus in the development of this new program.

#### The Reunification Coordinator:

Emphasizes preventative measures to reunify family units, guided by preventative measures and nle?kepmx and syilx traditional knowledge and principles.

Works collectively with the family unit, other SCFSS teams and community resources to preserve and reunify the family unit through culturally appropriate services and enhance the wellness of children, young people, and families in the Nicola Valley.



#### Strategic Goal: *Align our programs and services with our Vision*

**Strengthen and preserve culture and language | Promote prevention as a family and community responsibility | Support family and community through prevention activities**  
**Transition from provincial practice to community-guided frameworks**

The Protection and Prevention teams, Resident Elders and Community representatives meet quarterly to ensure necessary supports and services are in place for children, young people and families connected to SCFSS.

#### Strategic Goal: *Shift our focus from fear to love*

**Ensure effective change management strategies | Humanize client experience | Ensure transparent and respectful communication**

*“For generations, our children have been the ones on the front line of federally and provincially legislated cultural genocidal regimes. Our families and communities were fractured but never broken. To achieve healing, justice and hope for each child ever removed from their parents, families, and communities, it is up to us to provide a new reality for generations to come.”*

~ SCFSS Call to Action, September 2020

**Strategic Goal: *Build community engagement and capacity***

**Engage in community prevention | Advocate for the community | Facilitate community planning and development | Ensure traditional research in policy development**

Nam ʔes zúminstm is the foundational framework of practice for working with families and children in nleʔkepmx communities within SCFSS grounded in the people’s voices, experiences, and culture.

We take direction from Upper Nicola Band through the kʷu stəmtimaʔ and their Captikʷʔ Ethic Agreement that outlines their unique approach to how we are to deliver services. The collaborative work in establishing this protocol defines how SCFSS will support UNB Relations.

**Scw’exmx Child and Family  
Nlaka’pamux Framework of Practice**

**NAM ʔES ZÚMINSTM**



Prepared by the Nlaka’pamux communities of  
Coldwater Indian Band, Lower Nicola Indian Band,  
Noolatch Indian Band, and Shackan Indian Band

Coordinated by Scw’exmx Child and Family Services Society

June 25, 2018

**OUR CHILDREN, OUR RESPONSIBILITY**

**Captikʷʔ ETHIC AGREEMENT**

**Between**

**UPPER NICOLA BAND**

(Hereinafter referred to as “UNB”)

**And**

**SCW’EXMX CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES SOCIETY**

(Hereinafter referred to as “SCFSS”)

This Agreement made as of the 28<sup>th</sup> day of January 2021.

**Strategic Goal:** *Build trusting relationships*

**Promote community and parent advocacy | Follow community direction | Engage with community**

In mid-October SCFSS Leadership, Board of Directors and the five (5) Community Chiefs participated in our annual Strategic Planning session. This session focused on the reinforcement of SCFSS’s direction by Community Leadership through the facilitation of a SWOT analysis: **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats. The sessions emphasized the importance and significance of our shift from Protection to Prevention.

**PROTECTION PROGRAM**

DESCRIPTION	TOTAL	COMMUNITY					
		LNIB	CWIB	UNB	SIB	NIB	Urban
Children involved with Protection Services	32	0	9	11	2	3	11
Youth Agreement 15-19 years	9	1	3	1	0	0	4
Adult Youth Agreement 19+ years	3	1	1	0	0	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Intakes/Investigations</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Removals*</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>				
<b>Reunification Plans</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>

*Total # Children Removed	Executive Director & Community Notified	Placement Family	Placement Extended Family	Placement Community	Placement Indigenous Foster Home	Placement Non-Indigenous Foster Home
2	Y	1			1	

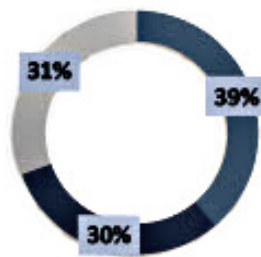
The Protection Team made significant strides in their shift from Protection to Prevention. This incremental shift emphasized decolonization of historic constraints and intrusive legislation and policies. The team works closely with Community Band representatives, Family Circle Coordinators, Family Wellness Navigators, Youth Wellness Navigators and Resident Elders to strengthen families and promote family & community as decision makers in our work together. An example of this significant change is represented in MCFD (Ministry of Child & Family Development) child removal reversed through family, community, Elder and SCFSS collaboration.

### FAMILY PREVENTION PROGRAM

PREVENTION SUPPORT	Total QTD	LNIB	CWIB	UNB	SIB	NIB	Urban
Families and Couples	32	8	3	3	3	3	12
Family Circles	11	2	7	1			1
<b>PROTECTION Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>
Families and Couples	10		3	1	4		2
Family Circles	14	1	6	1		3	3
Youth Transition Circles	11	1			1	5	4
<b>PREVENTION Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Total Referrals to the Family Prevention Team</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>

Family Wellness Navigators evacuated in November returned back to office in December and continued to provide our families that remained in phase 3 & 4 sectors of the evacuation order support services.

### FAMILY CIRCLES



■ Reunification Circles ■ Youth Transition ■ Prevention Circles

The Family Circle team maintained services throughout the Evacuation order and held two crucial Family Circles in Kamloops in our temporary office space at the Delta Hotel.

Relationship and Cultural Program Coordinator hosted a Traditional Brushing Off Ceremony that grounded families during the aftermath of the Flood event and provided new insight within their healing journeys.

*"As human beings, we have a gift of choice and what matters most is how we exercise those choices."*

- Marcel Shackelly | kwúkʷpi?

## YOUTH PREVENTION PROGRAM

COMMUNITY		LNIB	CWB	UNB	SIB	NIB	Urban	TOTAL QTD
Youth Wellness - Female		1	1	1	2	1	9	15
Youth Wellness - Male		1	2				6	9
Youth Transition		3	1			1	1	6
Total by	Community	5	4	1	2	2	17	31

The Youth Services Team provided support sessions at Upper Nicola and Lower Nicola Band schools, Merritt Secondary, Kengard Learning Centre/SCIDES and Diamondvale school. Within these important group and individual supports we shared cultural teachings: medicine harvesting, washing at the river and smudging with our Resident Elder team. The team created safe space in collaboration with Merritt Secondary School and the Gender & Sexuality Alliance group. Professional development emphasis to address BC Drug Overdose Crisis and direct impact to young people across our five (5) communities: Problematic Substance Use Training and research and collaboration with Indigenous expertise to address escalated issues with local drug dealers.

Key Community collaborations:

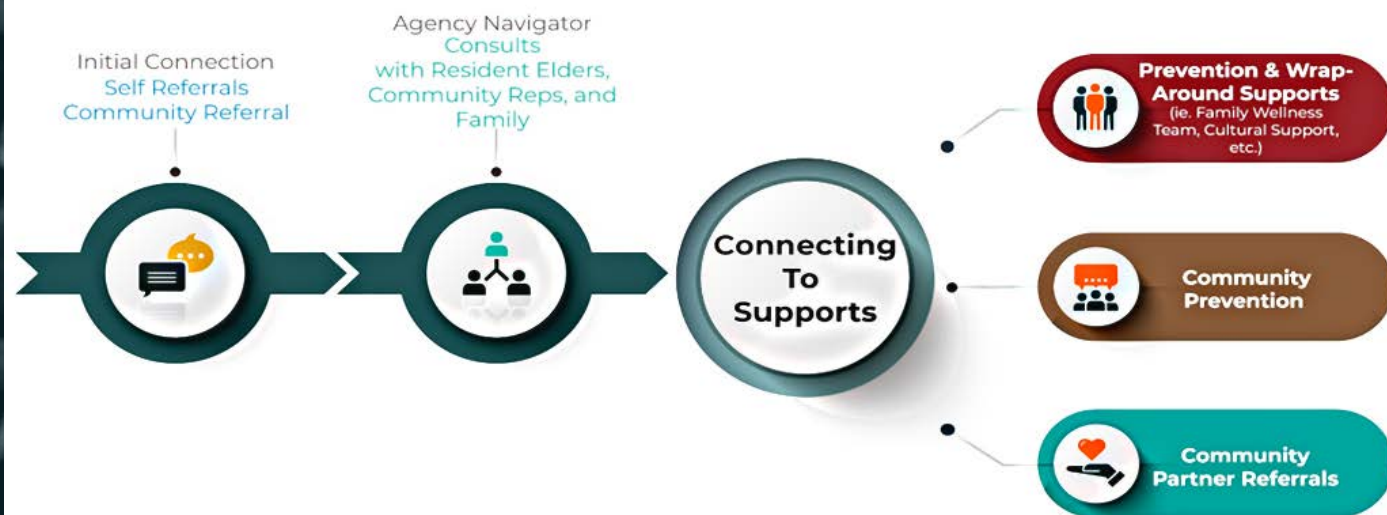
**Nicola Valley Youth Collaboration:** Scw'exmx Health, Nlaka'pamux Health, Conayt, School District #58, Merritt Community Policing, Nicola Valley Indigenous Justice Society, Interior Community Services

**High Risk Collaboration:** Mental Health, Probation, Indigenous Restorative Justice, Indigenous RCMP

## CHILD & YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

COMMUNITY	LNIB	CWIB	UNB	SIB	NIB	URBAN	TOTAL
October	9	7	3	0	3	20	42
November	6	6	3	0	3	16	34
December	6	6	3	0	3	9	27

The Child/Youth Mental Health (CYMH) team provided confidential therapeutic services to children and youth impacted by various measures of intergenerational trauma. Significant reduction in services over Q3 in direct correlation to the absence of two CYMH team members on leave of absence and November flood evacuation. New CYMH On-Reserve Clinician will work with three (3) Band schools to encourage future supports beginning February 2022.



## Growing Our People

### Strategic Goal: *Engage Community Expertise to Support our Vision*

Attract and recruit community members | Ensure community and culturally advised recruitment | Build professional capacity through community expertise

#### HUMAN RESOURCES

RECRUITMENT <i>October - December</i>	Totals	Band Member	Indigenous Community Member	Indigenous Non-Community Member	External
Postings	13				
Applicants	43	10	3	7	23
Screenings	25	9	1	6	9
Interviews	14	5	1	3	5
Hires	8	2	1	3	2
Secondment	6	3	2	0	1
On boarded	4	0	1	1	2

**Band Member:** Coldwater, Lower Nicola, Coldwater, Upper Nicola, Shackan Nooaitch registered Band Member

**Indigenous Community Member:** Indigenous person connected to, but not registered to one of five (5) communities, ie Band Member spouse/partner, child or relation

**Indigenous Non-Community Member:** a person who identifies as Indigenous and is not a Band or Community member

**External:** a person not included in the above categories

#### Secondments: building professional capacity

SCFSS is committed to our strategic plan, and in close collaboration with our communities, we begin to build professional capacity in community through Secondment Agreements. Secondment Agreements are fixed-term placements of SCFSS staff into a different role within community or internally at SCFSS. It gives staff the opportunity to meet community & SCFSS strategic needs, develop new skills, and bring expertise and experience to build capacity in a new role.

Secondments	Community   SCFSS
Director Relations	UNB
ESS Support	CWB
Emergency Services (3)	SCFSS
Reunification Coordinator	SCFSS

Secondment Agreements strengthen our community relations while supporting our communities' professional capacity. These Agreements pave the way for future community engagement as we grow our people, align our infrastructure, develop a culture of caring, and shift from protection to prevention.



**Strategic Goal: Retain those Committed to our Vision**

**Establish training and development programs | Uphold employee relations**

**Onboarding & Orientation**

Culture and Language is incorporated into Orientation and On-Boarding training for all new staff. Orientation sessions are facilitated monthly for one full week as Resident Elders share the history of nle?kepmx and syilx people and nations. HR developed and implemented this Orientation in collaboration with the Culture and Language, Community Services and Operations teams. During Orientation Week, new employees spend five days learning about SCFSS:

- nle?kepmxcin, nsyilxcən and traditional values with the Culture and Language team and our Elders;
- Tour and engagement with our five (5) member Communities;
- Policies and procedures review with HR and Operations;
- New employees finish the week with an engagement session with the Executive Director to reinforce the SCFSS Call to Action, Strategic Plan and Vision.

By building these connections early, we supported staff to create long, healthy, trusting relationships with all teams, our Resident Elders, communities, and one another

**Strategic Goal: Build Professional Capacity**

**Ensure culture and language are integrated into training and professional development | Strengthen Human Resources policies, programs, and ethical practices | Access expertise to strengthen community capacity**

**ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS**

Leadership Strategic Planning	13 partners
Internal Professional Development	8 sessions
External Professional Development	28 staff
Secondment Hours	464 hours

**Strategic Goal: Adopt, Embrace and Implement Cultural Practice Frameworks**

**Lead effective change management | Integrate culture and language | Decolonize Human Resources policies and practices**

**nle?kepmxcin & nsyilxcən**

As we decolonized our HR model, SCFSS HR incorporated culture and language into processes and documents. We included opening prayers and introductions into interviews and engaged community members, Elders, and Culture and Language staff into our hiring panels. Job descriptions and postings used nle?kepmxcin and nsyilxcən and emphasized the requirement for knowledge of nle?kepmx and syilx culture, traditions, and values. We looked for experience and traditional knowledge in our candidates and used a holistic lens over a western one when hiring, with a willingness to train the right candidates, especially our community members.

## Infrastructure Alignment

### Strategic Goal: *Realign budgets to shift from protection to prevention*

#### Assess community demographics | Work with funding agencies to ensure community and prevention funding

Funding is an integral component allowing SCFSS and our Communities to further our work together. Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), primary funder to SCFSS and our five (5) member Communities through Community Prevention funding, possesses a better way to fund prevention activities ON-RESERVE based on the needs of each community: Needs Based Funding. Three years into this needs based approach to funding, prevention services have expanded at SCFSS.

Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) continues to limit our Urban/Off-Reserve population in a discriminatory approach through funding SCFSS based on population and the number of children in care. We challenge these discriminatory funding models to align with the federal funding approach and Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) orders while Communities pursue jurisdiction.

Currently expanding our Community Prevention Services team, we seek to build and expand capacity in community through the recruitment and retention of specialized human resources to assist children, young people and families in each community, both On and Off-Reserve.

### Strategic Goal: *Improve Information Technology support in current and post Covid-19*

#### Mobilize work environments | Expand connection through virtual platforms | Enhance IT services in community

The Operations team continually updates SCFSS guidelines in the provision of essential services as it relates to Covid-19 Protocols and Safety Measures. Priority was placed on virtual interactions with colleagues, children, young people, families, and communities when restricted by Provincial Health Officer (PHO) orders. We took all precautions to eliminate risk of transmission while we continue in-person interactions, specifically with those most vulnerable, IE; children, Elders, and those who are not vaccinated. In midst of provincial restrictions, we created new and meaningful ways to communicate to ensure services and programs are delivered in the safest way possible. SCFSS continues to operate faithfully in alignment with all Society, Community, and Provincial COVID-19 Safety Protocols to ensure provision of essential services. The following chart represents current (effective January 2022) SCFSS safety protocols. Measures as updated with each new PHO order:

Building Entry Expectations	Gatherings (Indoor & Outdoor)	Client Interaction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No request required, unless after-hours</li> <li>- Complete screening questionnaire upon entry</li> <li>- Continue to sanitize hands and areas of touch, including bathrooms after use</li> <li>- Use of water coolers permitted</li> <li>- <b>Masks: Mandatory within all buildings, as well as when interacting with others. Exception when alone in own personal workspace</b></li> <li>- Maintain social distancing (6ft) when interacting with others</li> <li>- <b>Any staff member directed to work from home in order to reduce numbers within office must submit a Face-to-Face form if access to office is required. This form is to be submitted to associated TL immediately after-the-fact, indicating which staff member(s) they were in direct contact with during their visit. TL must then submit form to Cely-Rae for contact tracing purposes</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Indoor work-related gatherings amongst staff and clients are to be put on hold, unless deemed essential and planned in conjunction with Cely-Rae and Kristy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1-1 staff and client interactions are permitted to continue</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Indoor personal gatherings are restricted to one household plus 10 other individuals, or one additional household if everyone is vaccinated against COVID-19                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>If there are unvaccinated members of your family, no gatherings are permitted</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>- Limit outdoor gathering size to under 50 individuals, with safety protocols and procedures implemented – submit detailed Safety Plan to Cely-Rae</li> <li>- Maintain social distancing (6ft) when interacting with others and continue to wear a face covering</li> <li>- Continue to abide by PHO Orders and Province-wide restrictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Continue to submit Face-to-Face forms</b></li> <li>- Meetings/sessions with clients permitted within offices while adhering to applicable PHO Orders and agency protocols</li> <li>- <b>Masks: Mandatory</b></li> <li>- Maintain social distancing (6ft) when interacting with others</li> <li>- Continue to wear PPE if entering client home</li> </ul>

## Emergency Services

During the past year, SCFSS experienced numerous challenges during the following emergencies:

- Covid-19 and associated variants
- 215 Announcement
- BC Drug Overdose Crisis
- Forest Fires | Atmospheric River Event and the Floods

SCFSS team members navigated these crises to support our communities, through the development of an internal Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) as we specifically supported our children, young people, families, caregivers, and community members. SCFSS' EOC team developed structures and processes to activate and respond to any emergency.

Our communities, suffered ongoing complications of COVID-19, BC Drug Overdose Crisis, the re-traumatization of the 215 announcement and while the in recovery phase of the Wildfires, we were faced with another crisis: the Atmospheric River Event on November 15<sup>th</sup>. This event resulted in tactical evacuation orders for the City of Merritt, Nooaitch Band and Shackan Band. Some community members were stranded or land locked with the bridges and roads washed out along the Coldwater and Nicola River Watersheds. Our EOC team activated again. SCFSS employees, alongside those in affected areas evacuated to various locations across the province. Our EOC continued to ensure our Children in Care, Caregivers, Clients and Employees were safe and able to access basic needs as we navigated through yet another disaster.

As response to the numerous emergency events encountered over the past year, we created an Emergency Services team to assist SCFSS in the prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery of emergencies in coordination with our five (5) member Communities.

The following table represents the number of community members supported during the recent Flood event in November by way of food/groceries, hotels/accommodation, clothing/essential needs, Caregiver top-up payments, Family Circles, Critical Incident debrief sessions, food deliveries and transportation/fuel:

COMMUNITY	LNIB	CWIB	UNB	SIB	NIB	Urban	TOTAL
Supports Provided #	85	80	38	17	35	90	345

**Strategic Goal: *Integrate programs and services to build community capacity***

**Remove silos through collaboration | Locate employees in community | Explore space-sharing potential**

During the Atmospheric River Flood Event in mid-November, three (3) schools located in the City of Merritt suffered significant damage. To accommodate in class learning for students across the Nicola Valley, we vacated our Main office, (formally known as Coquihalla Middle School). We quickly developed a plan to relocate and identify alternate facility space. We will relocate to 1750 Lindley Creek Road, (old Tolko building) in March 2022. In the interim, our employees are located at 1988 Quilchena Avenue, 183 Nawishaskin Lane in Shulus, and in home/remote office spaces. Please stay tuned for future announcements regarding our office spaces and relocation.

**“We lift our hands to you and our community members for the resilience demonstrated during these trying and precarious times. It is imperative we draw together to remain connected and united as we continue this important work for our children, young people, families and communities.”**

**~Scw'exmx Child and Family Services Society**

Scw'exmx Child & Family Services Society  
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Healthy Children



Healthy Communities



Healthy Families