



August 2025 NEWSLETTER



IN THIS ISSUE

You will find exciting updates from our Culture & Language team about On the Land activities. Discover Youth programs offering diverse activities for fun and learning, learn about increased funding for community projects and personal goals, and explore expanded education options that provide opportunities for ongoing learning and career growth.

Mission

We are all somebody's seventh generation. We are committed to work with our communities to create the necessary change to ensure children currently in care have the advocates they deserve and seven generations from now, the need for a child welfare system will no longer exist as our families will be whole and healthy.



Vision

Work collectively to exercise nte?k'epmx and syilx inherent rights as we empower children, young people and families.

tekm míns | tá k'wúl'əm - Our Call to Action

We are at a critical moment in time. A great deal of change is taking place within the current political climate in which we exist. Bold steps are required to actualize the changes necessary for the communities we represent. For the first time since colonization, our action will fundamentally alter the foundation upon which outside governments have imposed political interests of assimilation through the systemic removal of our children.

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.

Through the wisdom of our ancestors, we have been taught the ways to care for one another. We must work toward a future markedly different from the current state wherein there are more Indigenous children in care now than at the height of the residential school era. While the current system is derived of legislation and policy, not of the Indigenous origin at a community level or otherwise, we undertake the process of decolonization to bring traditional knowledge, guidance and practices of the nte?k'epmx and syilx people forward in collaboration and guidance of our communities.

It is our responsibility to create the necessary change to ensure children currently in care have the advocates they deserve; and seven generations from now, the need for a child welfare system will no longer exist as our families will be whole and healthy. nte?k'epmx and syilx ancestors have anticipated this change and passed on their wisdom as we respond to this call to action. This very legacy is now ours to nurture and protect as we build a new platform where today's children, young people, families and communities will remain together and rekindle their cultural ways of being.

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SCFSS STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

CULTURE OF CARING

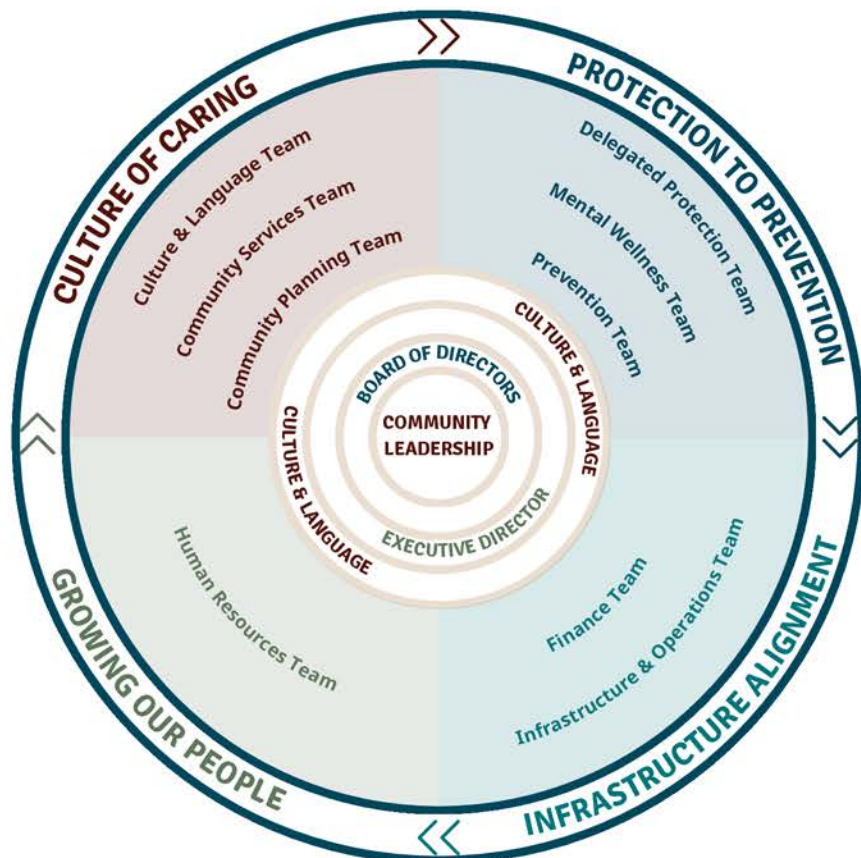
- Communicate with one voice
- Integrate language and traditional teachings into programs and services
- Grow caregiver networks in alignment with traditional and community values
- Incorporate learning from Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- Return rights and responsibilities to our people through the development and implementation of Governance and Laws

PROTECTION TO PREVENTION

- Bring and keep our children home
- Align programs and services with our vision
- Shift our focus from fear to love
- Build community engagement and capacity
- Build trusting relationships

GROWING OUR PEOPLE

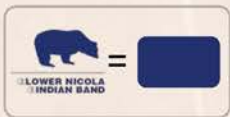
- Engage community expertise to support our vision
- Retain those committed to our vision
- Adopt, embrace, and implement cultural practice frameworks
- Acknowledge Post-traumatic Growth (PTG)
- Build professional capacity



INFRASTRUCTURE ALIGNMENT

- Realign budgets to shift from protection to prevention
- Improve Information Technology support in current and post COVID-19 environment
- Structure change management to achieve our collaborative vision
- Improve prompt management reporting
- Integrate programs and services to build community capacity

AUGUST 2025



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
27	28	29
3	4 <i>BC DAY</i> <i>SCFSS OFFICES CLOSED</i>	5 UNB - HUCKLEBERRY CAMP
10	11 SIB - SEWING DROP-IN	12 NIB - LANGUAGE & CULTURE CAMP CIB - SHARING CIRCLE DINNER
17 UNB - INDIGENOUS YOUTH HOCKEY CAMP	18 SCF - WOMEN'S GROUP	19
24/31	25	26 CIB - BAMBOO PANDA DINNER & MOVIE @ NVIT

- Legend:
- Event Name | Location | Day | Time
- Coldwater:
- Girls Power (9+) | Coldwater Health Building | Monday | 3:30-4:45pm
- Nooaitch:
- Youth Drop-in | SCHSS Satellite Office | Tuesday | 1-3pm
 - Drum Nights | Nooaitch Band Hall | Tuesday | 5-7pm
 - Youth Swim | Nicola Valley Aquatic Centre | Thursday | 3-5pm
- LNIB:
- Youth Recreation | Varies | Monday-Friday | 11-4:45pm

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



WEDNESDAY

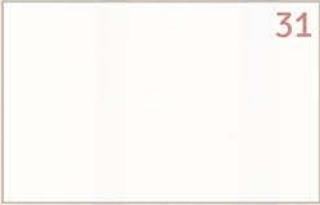
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- SIB - ELDER'S LUNCH 6
- UNB - HUCKLEBERRY CAMP
- LNIB - YOUTH SUMMER TIME FUN

THURSDAY

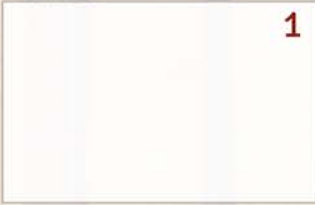
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- UNB - CAREER READY 7
- UNB - HUCKLEBERRY CAMP
- SCF - MEN'S GROUP ENGAGEMENT DINNER: NOOAITCH

FRIDAY

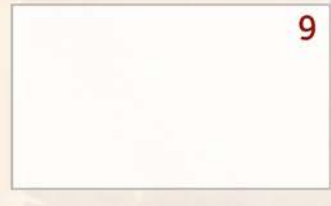
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- SIB - DROP-IN 8
- UNB - CAREER READY
- UNB - HUCKLEBERRY CAMP

SATURDAY

2



- 13
- NIB - LANGUAGE & CULTURE CAMP

- 14
- SCF - ON THE LAND
- SCF - MEN'S GROUP ENGAGEMENT DINNER: LNIB
- NIB - LANGUAGE & CULTURE CAMP

- 15
- UNB - INDIGENOUS YOUTH HOCKEY CAMP

- 16
- SCF - MEN'S GROUP CULTURAL WELLNESS DAY
- UNB - INDIGENOUS YOUTH HOCKEY CAMP

- 20
- CIB - BACK TO SCHOOL SHOPPING TRIP
- SIB - PLAYGROUP

- 21
- SIB - CULTURE CAMP
- LNIB - FIRST NATIONS CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES & JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE SETTLEMENT

- 22
- SIB - CULTURE CAMP



- 27
- SIB - STRESS & YOUR HEALTH

- 28
- UNB - YOUTH FUNDRAISER GOLF TOURNAMENT
- CIB - BACK TO SCHOOL DINNER & DANCE

- 29
- SIB - SEWING DROP-IN

- 30
- NIB - VANCOUVER PNE FAIR & PLAYLAND & BACK TO SCHOOL

Shackan:

- Youth Drop In (ages 6+) | SCHSS Satelite Office | Tuesday | 1-3pm
- Drum Nights | Nooaitch Band Hall | Tuesday | 5-7pm
- Youth Swim | Nicola Valley Aquatic Centre | Thursday | 1-3pm

UNB:

- Programs to return in the fall.

August Vocabulary

July is the perfect month for enjoying fishing, family gatherings, berry picking, and relaxing by the water. Below are some words and phrases you can practice with your family in nlekepmxcin.

Share Your Harvesting Story

We invite you to share your harvesting experiences with us to be featured in our upcoming newsletter. Feel free to include photos and any words you know in the language that relate to your story. Please email your submissions to communications@scwexmx.com.



I bought dried salmon.
ʔázm kn te scwén

“AH-zm kuhn teh ts'-WEHN”



huckleberries
cəlcále

“ts'-uhl-TS'AH-leh”



We are almost to our (rod/pole) fishing place.
he ʔuʔ xeʔe he skícx kt wəʔ he nkətnímkn kt

“heh ʔooʔ kheh-eh heh skee-ts kuht wuhʔ
heh ngk'uht-NEEM-kun kuht”



saskatoons
scaqʷm

“tsah-kʷum”



river
qʷúʔ

“kʷooʔ”



CULTURE & LANGUAGE TEAM UPDATES - JULY

ON THE LAND: ORIENTATION FOR NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Spending time on the land for staff orientation was a deeply meaningful experience, guided by the teachings of Culture Coordinators Barb Huston and Shannon Boyce, alongside our Resident Elders: Mary June Coutlee, Cathy Jameson, Dorothy Clarke, and Jimmy Isaac. New staff—Brian Kellett, Elizabeth Perdock Waboose, and Daniel Garcia—were welcomed into this journey of cultural learning and connection.

The orientation included sacred practices such as tobacco offerings, prayers, fir baths, and water cleanses. We learned about plant medicines like stinging nettle, thimbleberry, wild raspberry, and Saskatoon berry. These teachings were shared in the language, with respect for traditional protocols and introductions to the land.

Together, we explored the idea that land is medicine—a living force that helps us connect, heal, and return home to spirit, ancestors, and culture. Time on the land was not just about learning; it was about receiving sacred wisdom and carrying it into our everyday lives and the heart work we do. It reminded us to center culture and nature in all aspects of our work, and to act collectively as a team and organization to carry these teachings forward.

Traditional Counsellor Dan Jager shared a beautiful teaching about Saskatoon berries: they grow best slowly in the shade, not rushed by heat or rain. This mirrors life—slow and steady growth leads to deeper strength and resilience. Nature reflects our own journey of evolving, becoming, and living in right relation. Barb reminded us:

“**The water and the land are always here for you—to connect, to heal, and to understand. Culture is healing, and nature is medicine.**”

Mary June Coutlee emphasized the importance of learning from the heart:

“**Do it for yourself. Don't let others do it for you. True learning comes from empowerment, from your own will and identity.**”

Time with Elders and on the land is a gift—one that touches every aspect of our work and relationships. It cultivates healing, unity, understanding, and momentum. Ceremony and connection to nature empower us to adapt, expand, and preserve with care, respect, and accountability.

Land is living, and living is land.



Paula Moyes, Traditional Counsellor



CULTURE & LANGUAGE TEAM UPDATES - JULY

ON THE LAND: HARVESTING SOAP BERRIES AND SASKATOONS - JULY 2025

Throughout July, the SCFSS Culture Team led two meaningful outings to harvest traditional foods, reconnect with the land, and share cultural teachings with staff and community members.

On July 3rd, the team traveled to the Lac Le Jeune area to harvest soap berries. The following day, participants gathered to clean and preserve the berries through canning. These sessions were more than just food preparation—they were opportunities to learn about the abundance of natural resources available in our territories and the importance of harvesting in a respectful and sustainable way.

Barb Huston reminded everyone to leave an offering before harvesting and to avoid overharvesting, ensuring that the land continues to provide for future generations. The team emphasized safe canning techniques to protect families when enjoying these traditional foods later. Staff members dropped in to lend a hand, share laughter, and enjoy ice cream together, creating a warm and communal atmosphere.

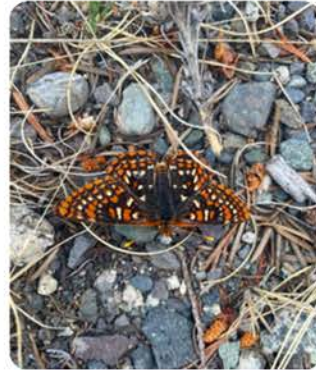
On July 11th, the team ventured to the Tulameen area to harvest both soap berries and Saskatoon berries. These outings are part of a broader effort to bring our relations to various harvesting sites, allowing them to experience the land and learn traditional practices firsthand.

Monica Tom shared a touching reflection:

“**Today feels like when I used to harvest with my mom. The lunch is like what she would make for us.**”

Participants included Culture Coordinators Barbara Huston and Shannon Boyce; Resident Elders Amelia Washington, Casey Holmes, and Jimmy Isaac; Traditional Counsellor Paula Moyes; Agency Prevention Team Assistant Elijah Kennedy; and community members Monica Tom, Cooper Collins, and Bill Douglas—representing a beautiful mix of staff and community members coming together in the spirit of learning and connection.

These experiences highlight the importance of harvesting not only for our own families, but also for Elders and others who may have limited access to traditional foods. Sharing these gifts honors our relationships and helps uphold cultural values.



Barbara Huston, Culture Coordinator

CULTURE & LANGUAGE TEAM UPDATES - JULY



CULTURE OF CARING



Barbara Huston, Culture Coordinator



CULTURE & LANGUAGE & COMMUNITY TEAM UPDATES - JULY

SCFSS AT LNIB FAMILY CULTURE CAMP JULY 19-21, 2025

Scw'exmx Child & Family Services Society (SCFSS) proudly supported the Lower Nicola Indian Band's first Family Culture Camp, held at Tunkwa Lake from July 19th to 21st. Community Prevention Worker Jalissa Weymouth was a pivotal member of the organization committee, and a dedicated team of 11 staff and five youth volunteers contributed to the success of the weekend, assisting with daily activities, camp take-down, and cultural workshops.

One of the highlights was the collaborative building of a Sweat Lodge, guided by Andrew Dexel. Youth volunteers also harvested fir boughs for the lodge, learning traditional protocols and how to introduce themselves to the land under the guidance of SCFSS Culture Coordinator Barb Huston. Another youth had the opportunity to join LNIB Culture Coordinator Joe Shuter on the water to gain hands-on fishing experience.

Throughout the weekend, approximately 100 people participated, with many staying overnight in cabins while others joined for daytime activities. The camp featured a wide range of cultural workshops, including Lahal stick making, medicine making, hoop and leather crafting, fishing and fish smoking, and fire making. Evening ceremonies showcased drumming, hoop dancing, and Bear Dancers, creating a powerful sense of community and cultural pride.

Barbara Huston led the Lahal stick making workshop, where participants learned to sharpen stick ends and decorate their sticks and bones. Adults supported youth to ensure safety, and it was heartwarming to see families working together to build their traditional kits. Over two days, six groups—including Elders, adults, and youth—completed their sets, with strong youth participation throughout.

Many attendees expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity to gather on the land, reconnect with culture, and unplug from daily distractions. Social media posts reflected the joy of watching children play freely and the beauty of the location.



Barbara Huston, Culture Coordinator



*Jalissa Weymouth,
Community Prevention Worker*



COMMUNITY TEAM UPDATES - JULY

NOOAITCH GIRL POWER IN ACTION: A JOURNEY OF GROWTH, CULTURE, AND CONNECTION

The seeds of the 15-week Girl Power pilot program were planted in January 2025 through a meaningful collaboration between Nooaitch Indian Band, Scw'exmx Child and Family Services Society, Scw'exmx Community Health Services Society, Nlaka'pamux Health Services Society, and Citxw Nlaka'pamux Assembly. Together, these organizations envisioned a space where young girls could explore their identities, build confidence, and connect deeply with their culture.

By February, that vision came to life. Weekly sessions began in the Nooaitch community, welcoming ten girls aged 8–13 into a safe, empowering environment. Over the months, they explored essential topics for adolescence: self-esteem, communication, body image, goal setting, boundaries, friendships, anger management, and drug and alcohol awareness. They also learned the importance of giving back to their community.

A highlight of the program was a retreat to the Cove Lakeside Resort in Kelowna, where the girls bonded through self-care activities, strengthened friendships, and created a custom logo to represent their group—a symbol of their shared journey and growth.

Cultural teachings were woven throughout the program. With guidance from Nooaitch Elders and knowledge keepers, the girls participated in traditional sweats and moon time protocols, practiced beading, and made their own ribbon skirts. These moments offered more than just skills—they were powerful connections to identity, culture, and community.

By June 2025, the program concluded with ten proud graduates who had grown into more confident, culturally grounded young leaders. The Girl Power program proved that when community, culture, and care come together, transformation happens.

Symbols of Strength and Reflections of Growth

One of the most memorable moments was the unveiling of custom-designed hoodies featuring the group's unique logo. A community member shared:

“*These designs were made to inspire confidence, connection, and community—and we are so proud to see them worn with pride.*”

The hoodies quickly became more than clothing; they became symbols of unity and empowerment.

As the program ended, reflections from the girls highlighted its lasting impact. One girl proudly recalled the acronym for consent:

“*F.R.I.E.S. - Freely given, Reversible, Informed, Enthusiastic, and Specific—a powerful tool she'll carry with her.*”

Another shared how much she appreciated the cultural activities, which helped her feel more connected to her roots and proud of her heritage. Each girl received a certificate upon completion, marking their growth and achievements.

Words of Respect from former Chief Marcel Shackelly

During the program's meet and greet, former Chief Marcel Shackelly offered heartfelt words that resonated deeply. He spoke about the powerful role women have played throughout his life—how it was always the women who led the way for the men, for the people, and for the community.

Looking around the circle, he acknowledged the work being done and said:

“*Just like all of you here—you are learning the way and showing these girls how to be strong.*”

With sincerity and gratitude, he raised his hands in respect, thanking the facilitators and organizers for dedicating their time and energy to support the girls and the community during a time of great need.

His words were a powerful reminder of the impact this program is having—not just on the girls, but on the entire community.



Willa Ermineskin,
Community Prevention Worker



Traci Lindstrom,
Child Wellness Navigator



COMMUNITY TEAM UPDATES - JULY

LNIB WOMEN'S GROUP TRAIL RIDE - JULY 2025

Community Prevention Worker Jalissa Weymouth teamed up with LNIB Addictions and Family Support Worker, Irene Howe, to organize July's Women's Group outing—a trail ride at *Inspire Horsemanship*. Nine women took part in the day-long event, each paired with a horse and given time to introduce themselves, care for their horse, and prepare for the ride.

For many, the experience was a meaningful challenge—an opportunity to step outside their comfort zones and try something new. As the day unfolded, the group formed deep connections with nature, the horses, and each other. Moments of courage, reflection, and shared joy filled the day, showcasing the healing and empowering impact of spending time outdoors in community.



*Jalissa Weymouth,
Community Prevention Worker*





JURISDICTION JOURNEYS



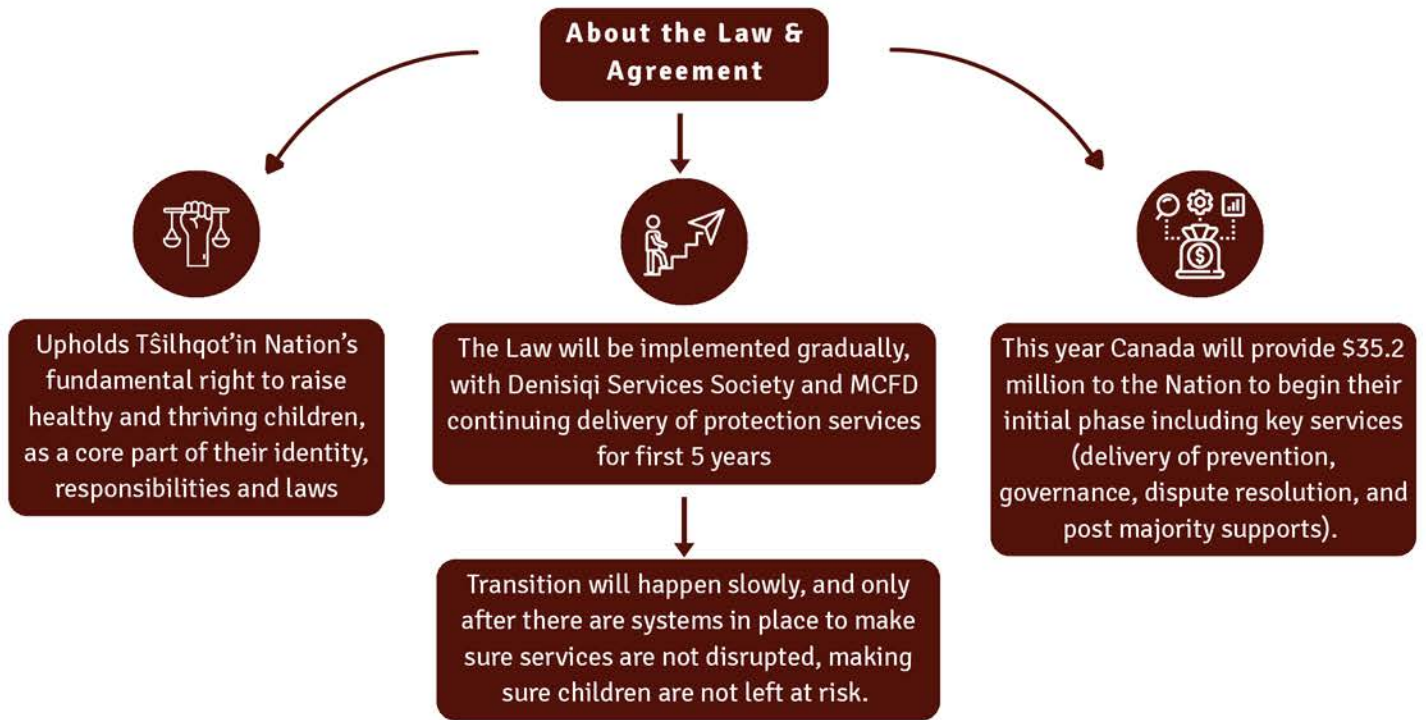
This newsletter section is focused on news of legislative changes regarding Indigenous Child and Family Services and showcases of Indigenous Legal Traditions/work on upholding Inherent Jurisdiction.

"Jurisdiction is not something that you sign, it is something that you do. You don't have to wait to sign something to exercise jurisdiction in some of the most important ways for children" - Cindy Blackstock

This month's spotlight:

T̓ilhqot̓'in ʔEsqax Sutsel Jeniyax

The T̓ilhqot̓'in Nation recently enacted their law titled *T̓ilhqot̓'in ʔEsqax Sutsel Jeniyax* (*T̓ilhqot̓'in children growing up in a good way*) as the foundation for exercising inherent jurisdiction and developing a new model of care. The law was affirmed with a coordination agreement between BC, Canada and the T̓ilhqot̓'in Nation (represented by the Nitsilʔin-Qi - Council of Chiefs) under the process outlined in "An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families" (*Bill C-92*).



DID YOU KNOW?

Seven Indigenous governing bodies in BC have now enacted legislation related to Child and Family Services:



T̂silhqot'in Jurisdiction Timeline



Image from: <https://tsilhqotin.ca/governance/we-are-tsilhqotin/#reclaiming-family>



We are making progress, as a Nation of six distinct communities working together in unity, to reclaim jurisdiction for our children and families. Organizational and legislative change doesn't happen overnight – but change must happen.

T̂silhqot'in problems require T̂silhqot'in solutions and with intensive input from, and collaboration with our people, we have stood up our own T̂silhqot'in law that puts our way of life, our values, and our children first. We are hopeful that the next chapter in the lives of the T̂silhqot'in people is one of safety, health and happiness with deep connections to our culture and teachings."

-Nits'il'in Otis Guichon, Tribal Chief, T̂silhqot'in National Government

Similar to **Scw'exmx Child and Family's nam ʔes zúminstm (Nlaka'pamux Framework of Practice)**, the T̂silhqot'in service delivery model is based on the metaphor of basket making. This model involves a central Nation service delivery model, with Nation-wide standards and protocols, ensuring communities determine their own services and structures to meet the Nation's standards (such as implementing their own prevention services according to their unique needs and ways of doing).

For more information on their service delivery model and legislation, visit <https://tsilhqotin.ca/governance/we-are-tsilhqotin/#our-service-model>



Research & Fact Compilation:
Stephanie Tourand, Community Planner





The Claims Period for the Removed Child Class and their eligible Caregiving Parents or Caregiving Grandparents opened on March 10, 2025. You may be eligible for compensation under this Settlement if: **[1]** You are a First Nations individual who was removed from your home on-reserve between April 1991 and March 2022, and placed into care funded by Canada or **[2]** you were the Parent/Grandparent that exercised parental responsibilities over the Removed Child.

How to Get Ready

Are You?



Former child-in-care removed from your home on reserve (Removed Child Class)

The Caregiving Parent of a child that was placed into care (Family Class)

A Representative filing on behalf of 1) a "Person Under Disability" or 2) Deceased Class Member

You will need:

- Valid government-issued identification
- Mailing address
- Bank account in your name for deposit

You will need:

- Valid government-issued identification
- Mailing address
- Bank account in your name for deposit
- Month/Year and Location of Child's Removal
- May Need Documentation proving relationship to child (Such as: Long-form Birth Certificate or Marriage Certificate)

You will need:

- For Person Under Disability, Documentation appointing "Personal Representative":
 - Signed Power of Attorney or protection mandate OR
 - government appointment order (including Public Guardian Trustee)
- For a deceased class member:
 - Grant of Authority document naming estate executor (will, grant of probate, etc.) or Heir as defined in the Settlement Agreement
- For deceased class members, will need **death certificate, burial certificate or funeral director's statement of death**

Ready to Apply? The claims process opened March 10th. Adults will have three (3) years (until March 2028) to apply. Minors in BC can submit a Claim Form starting at age 17 until their 22nd birthday. Compensation will not be issued until after claimant reaches the age of Majority. Applications, guides, and videos that explain how to go through the application step-by-step can be found at <https://fnchildclaims.ca/claims/forms/>

Need Free Support? Contact the administrator for any questions, legal advice, or to connect with *Claims Helpers* for free one-on-one help with the application over phone or online **call toll-free at 1-833-852-0755 (5am-5pm Mon-Fri)**, visit www.FNChildClaims.ca. Please reach out to SCFSS (250-378-2771) if you are a community member and have additional questions or need advocacy support.

Free mental health and wellness support is available at HopeForWellness.ca

Have more Questions?

check out the FAQs at <https://fnchildclaims.ca/help-resources/faq/>

SCAN FOR MORE INFO ON THE CLAIM & SUPPORTS



WOMEN'S GROUP UPDATES - JULY

WOMEN'S GROUP GATHERING - JULY 21, 2025

On July 21st, women from all six of our communities came together for a warm and joyful gathering. The event offered a wonderful opportunity to share a delicious meal, reconnect with familiar faces, and build new friendships.

A highlight of the day was a lively game of bingo, which brought plenty of laughter, friendly competition, and excitement. The atmosphere was filled with positivity, community spirit, and a strong sense of togetherness.

Participants shared their appreciation:

“Thank you—it’s been such a long time since I’ve had an evening to enjoy games just for myself, without the little ones around.”

“I really needed this.”

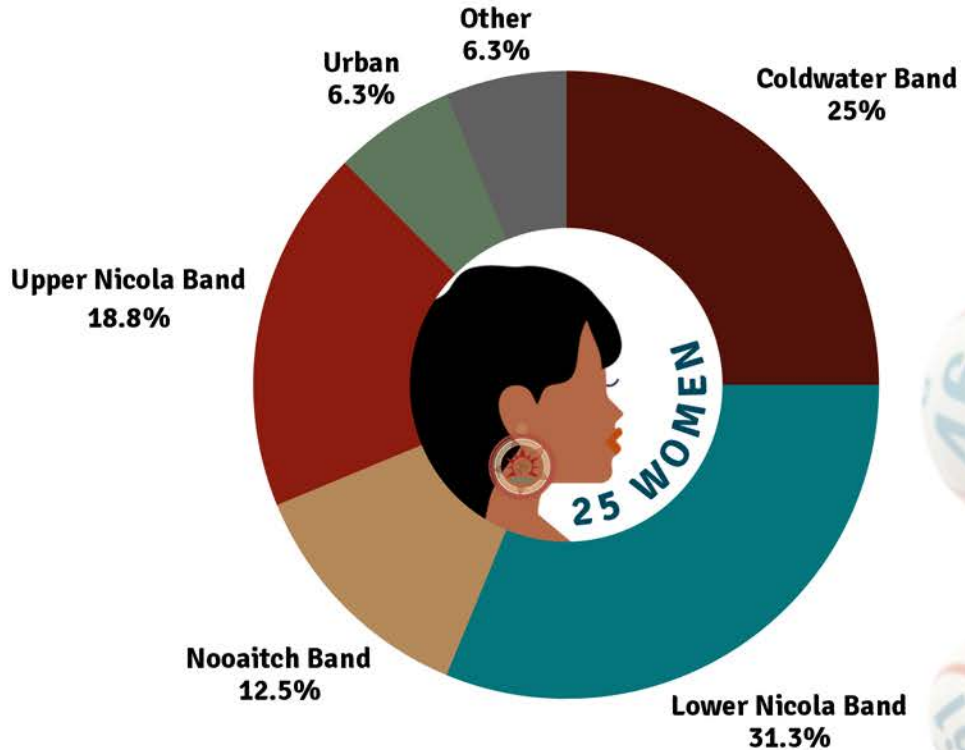


*Robin Peterson,
Communications Coordinator*

We are grateful to everyone who participated and helped make the day so special. Events like these continue to strengthen the bonds between our communities and celebrate the resilience and joy of the women we serve. A total of 25 women attended this event.

We kindly remind those registering for future gatherings to be mindful of others who wish to participate. Space is limited, and registration closes once we reach capacity. If something comes up and you’re no longer able to attend, please let us know so we can offer your spot to someone on the waitlist.

We truly appreciate everyone’s commitment to joining us—we always enjoy the visits and the time shared together.





MEN'S GROUP UPDATES - JULY



**NOOAITCH MEN'S GROUP
ENGAGEMENT DINNER**



**SHACKAN MEN'S GROUP
ENGAGEMENT DINNER**



**MEN'S GROUP GOLFING. SKILL
BASED PRIZE WON BY
NICHOLAS PETERSON.**



**WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU
OUT AT OUR UPCOMING
ENGAGEMENT DINNERS. IF YOU
CAN NOT MAKE IT BUT WOULD
LIKE TO GIVE YOUR
SUGGESTIONS PLEASE SCAN
THE QR CODE ABOVE TO
COMPLETE THE MEN'S GROUP
ENGAGEMENT POLL. (DINNER
PARTICIPANTS HAVE A CHANCE
TO WIN A 4' DIP NET)**



Men's Group



ENGAGEMENT DINNERS

The Coyote Brotherhood warmly invites you to participate in engagement dinners across our communities. These gatherings aim to foster meaningful discussions about what men's wellness entails and how the Men's Group can support the development of wellness activities.

Join us for dinner, where you'll have the chance to win an incredible door prize centered around cultural food harvesting practices, among other exciting offerings.

Date	Community	Location (tentative)	Time
Jul 10, 2025	Nooaitch	Nooaitch Band Hall	5-8 PM
Jul 24, 2025	Shackan	Shackan Band Hall	5-8 PM
Aug 7, 2025	Coldwater	Coldwater Health Centre	5-8 PM
Aug 14, 2025	Lower Nicola	Shulus Band Hall	5-8 PM
Sept 11, 2025	Upper Nicola	Glimpse Lake	5-8 PM
Sept 18, 2025	Urban	NVIT	5-8 PM

Questions? Call (250) 378-2771 Ask for Men's Group Coordinator





YOUTH TEAM UPDATES - JULY

YOUTH TEAM ACTIVITIES - JULY 2025

July was a vibrant and impactful month of growth, learning, and connection for the Youth Team. Here's a snapshot of what we accomplished:

Cultural Connection

Youth joined the Culture Team and Elders for berry picking on the land, deepening relationships and learning traditional teachings. These experiences helped strengthen their connection to culture and community.

Myra Canyon Youth Trip

Seventeen youth participated in a day of learning and team building at Myra Canyon. They worked together on the land, built positive relationships, and pushed beyond their comfort zones—discovering what they're truly capable of.

Active Living & Outreach

We purchased sports equipment to promote active, healthy lifestyles and foster positive relationships both in the community and on the land. This equipment will be used to support youth programming and outreach.

Workforce Preparation

Ten youth participated in Superhost training, gaining valuable credentials to boost their employability. This initiative focused on building strong, well-rounded opportunities rooted in culture, health, and skill development.

Digital Empowerment

With support from our IT team, we set up a computer lab for youth. This space provides access to technology and learning tools whenever needed. The lab is open to all youth we support—please contact the Youth Team at the office to book time.

We aim to encourage young people to discover their strengths and boundaries. Physical activities on the land and positive relationships with peers and SCFSS staff are key to this journey.

One of the most enriching experiences was spending time on the land learning cultural traditions from the Culture Team. Being with Elders was grounding and unforgettable. Their gentle teachings helped deepen our understanding of how vital culture is for our Relations and sparked ideas for incorporating cultural practices into youth support. A youth participant shared:

"Can we stay longer? This was so much fun!"

We also want to share a cherished quote from our late Elder Victor York:

"Each one of us can make a difference. Together, we can make a change for the future. By touching so many lives, we are able to change the spirit of our people."

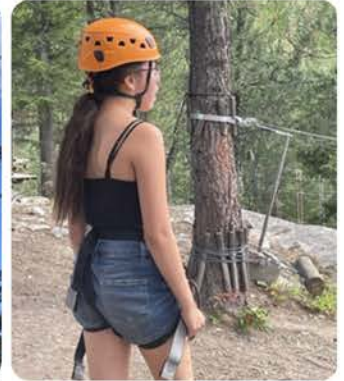
Looking ahead to August, we're excited for more fun and learning—including a trip to Bridal Falls Waterpark! Watch for the registration post on Facebook if your youth would like to participate.



Candice Dolman, Youth Transition Coordinator



YOUTH TEAM UPDATES - JULY



Candice Dolman,
Youth Transition Coordinator



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Scw'exmx Child and Family Services Society (SCFSS) is family-centered and guided by n̓eʔk̓épmx and syil̓x traditional knowledge and principles. SCFSS utilizes prevention and protection strategies with the collective goal to keep children with their families and communities. SCFSS recognizes historical challenges and is guided by traditional strength and wisdom to build family and community capacity in a monumental shift from protection to prevention.

As an Indigenous organization serving the n̓eʔk̓épmx and syil̓x communities, SCFSS prioritizes the hiring of n̓eʔk̓épmx and syil̓x community members. Following community member priority and pursuant to Section 41 of the BC Human Rights Code, preference may be given to qualified applicants of Indigenous ancestry.

Current Postings

- **No current listings**

*Check our website regularly, we will post there first!

APPLY NOW

See our full postings and apply on our website at

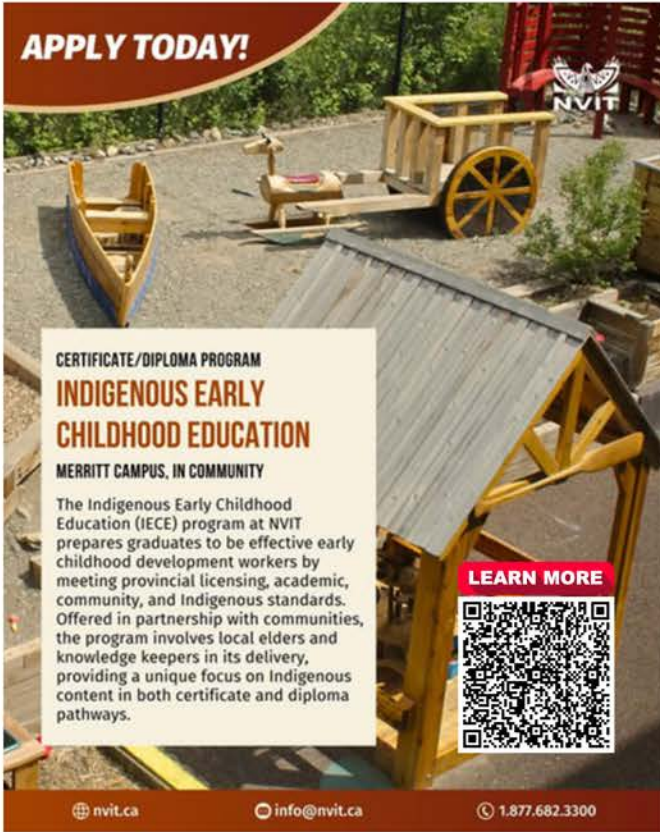
www.scwexmx.com

Submit your cover letter and resume to: jobs@scwexmx.com



LOCAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES


APPLY TODAY!



CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA PROGRAM
INDIGENOUS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
 MERRITT CAMPUS, IN COMMUNITY

The Indigenous Early Childhood Education (IECE) program at NVIT prepares graduates to be effective early childhood development workers by meeting provincial licensing, academic, community, and Indigenous standards. Offered in partnership with communities, the program involves local elders and knowledge keepers in its delivery, providing a unique focus on Indigenous content in both certificate and diploma pathways.

LEARN MORE



nvit.ca info@nvit.ca 1.877.682.3300

APPLY TODAY!



CERTIFICATE PROGRAM
TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION PATHWAY
 MERRITT CAMPUS

The Transformative Education Pathway Certificate is designed to prepare learners—particularly Indigenous learners—for entry into the Bachelor of Education program, offered through a collaborative partnership between UBC and NVIT. The certificate provides foundational and prerequisite coursework grounded in Indigenous perspectives, relational learning, and culturally responsive practice. It also aligns with provincial standards for teacher education, ensuring that learners are well-prepared to transition into a B.Ed. program.

LEARN MORE



nvit.ca info@nvit.ca 1.877.682.3300

Advanced First Aid
 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM | Merritt Campus
 October 27 - November 7, 2025

Registration Deadline
 October 14, 2025



LEARN MORE



LEARN MORE
nvit.ca/continuingstudies

CONTINUING STUDIES COURSES
 August - December 2025

Basic First Aid
 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM | Merritt Campus
 Friday, September 19, 2025
 Wednesday, October 15, 2025
 Friday, November 14, 2025
 Friday, December 12, 2025

FOODSAFE Level 1
 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM | Merritt Campus
 Tuesday, August 26, 2025
Registration Deadline:
 August 18, 2025

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT OUR WEBSITE
nvit.ca/continuingstudies

Download the registration form now!



ALL COURSES WILL BE DELIVERED IN-PERSON AT THE NVIT MERRITT CAMPUS.

NICOLA VALLEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
 Website: nvit.ca
 Email: info@nvit.ca
 Toll free: 1.877.682.3300

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA


LOCAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



FREE TRAINING | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

MEN + NONBINARY | AGES 15 - 35

Empower Protect + Connect

POWER SKILLS BUILDING + SELF-DEFENCE

2026

WEDNESDAYS | WEEKLY
JAN 7 - MARCH 25
 12 SESSIONS | 6:00PM - 8:00PM
 FREE | MERRITT CIVIC CENTRE

The Empower, Protect + Connect program develops essential safety and empowerment skills, builds strength and confidence, and provides a safe and supportive space where participants can build community.

- Learn practical self-defence techniques for physical safety
- Develop situational awareness in everyday and high-risk environments
- Strengthen assertiveness and boundary setting skills
- Rebuild personal confidence through trauma-informed practices
- Access emotional support and empowerment strategies
- Connect with local community resources and services
- Foster physical and emotional resilience in a supportive group setting

FORMAT
 This 12-week program offers weekly two-hour sessions that include:

- Self-Defence Training is taught by certified instructors, with a focus on real-life scenarios and practical safety techniques.
- Counselling & Empowerment Workshop is facilitated by a Registered Clinical Counsellor and local organizations, offering trauma-informed support, strategies for personal growth, and community connection.

ELIGIBILITY
 For men and nonbinary people (aged 15-35 years) affected by or at risk of gender-based violence. Starts: The program for men and nonbinary people will be from September 30 to December 17, 2025.

ACCESSIBILITY
 If you require any accessibility accommodations, please contact info@merritt.ca.

COST
 Free to attend. Registration is required as participants are expected to attend most, if not all, sessions.

Merritt
 FLOURISH UNDER THE SUN

► [MERRITT.CA/PROTECT](https://merritt.ca/protect)
 ► [MERRITT.CA/REGISTRATION](https://merritt.ca/registration)

* CIVIL FORTFEITURE GRANT | MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOLICITOR GENERAL

FREE TRAINING | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

WOMEN + NONBINARY | AGES 15 - 35

Empower Protect + Connect

POWER SKILLS BUILDING + SELF-DEFENCE

2025

WEDNESDAYS | WEEKLY
SEPT 10 - DEC 17
 12 SESSIONS | 6:00PM - 8:00PM
 FREE | MERRITT CIVIC CENTRE
 * No session on October 22 and November 27, 2025.

The Empower, Protect + Connect program develops essential safety and empowerment skills, builds strength and confidence, and provides a safe and supportive space where participants can build community.

- Learn practical self-defence techniques for physical safety
- Develop situational awareness in everyday and high-risk environments
- Strengthen assertiveness and boundary setting skills
- Rebuild personal confidence through trauma-informed practices
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FORMAT
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- Counselling & Empowerment Workshop is facilitated by a Registered Clinical Counsellor and local organizations, offering trauma-informed support, strategies for personal growth, and community connection.

ELIGIBILITY
 For women and nonbinary people (aged 15-35 years) affected by or at risk of gender-based violence. Starts: The program for men and nonbinary people will be from January 7 to March 25, 2026.

ACCESSIBILITY
 If you require any accessibility accommodations, please contact info@merritt.ca.

COST
 Free to attend. Registration is required as participants are expected to attend most, if not all, sessions.

Merritt
 FLOURISH UNDER THE SUN

► [MERRITT.CA/EMPOWER](https://merritt.ca/empower)
 ► [MERRITT.CA/REGISTRATION](https://merritt.ca/registration)

* CIVIL FORTFEITURE GRANT | MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOLICITOR GENERAL

WorkBC Centre

We can't assemble your furniture. But we can help you **assemble your resume.**

Contact us today

Canada

This program is funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SURVIVORS & DESCENDANTS' SCHOLARSHIP \$5,000

APPLY BY NOV 15, 2025

OPEN TO SURVIVORS & DESCENDANTS - USA & CANADA

SCAN TO LEARN MORE! >>>>

LOCAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



WorkBC
Employment Services

STARTING A NEW JOB?
WorkBC Centre Merritt has you covered.

- ✓ Up to \$500 for Essential Work Clothing
- ✓ Up to \$1,000 for Tools and Equipment
- ✓ Gas Cards for Commute

* Conditions apply, including a confirmed job offer.

Contact us today or Apply Online
250-378-5151 | info-merritt@workbc.ca

Canada | BRITISH COLUMBIA
The program is funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.



EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON FOR YOUTH AGES 12-18

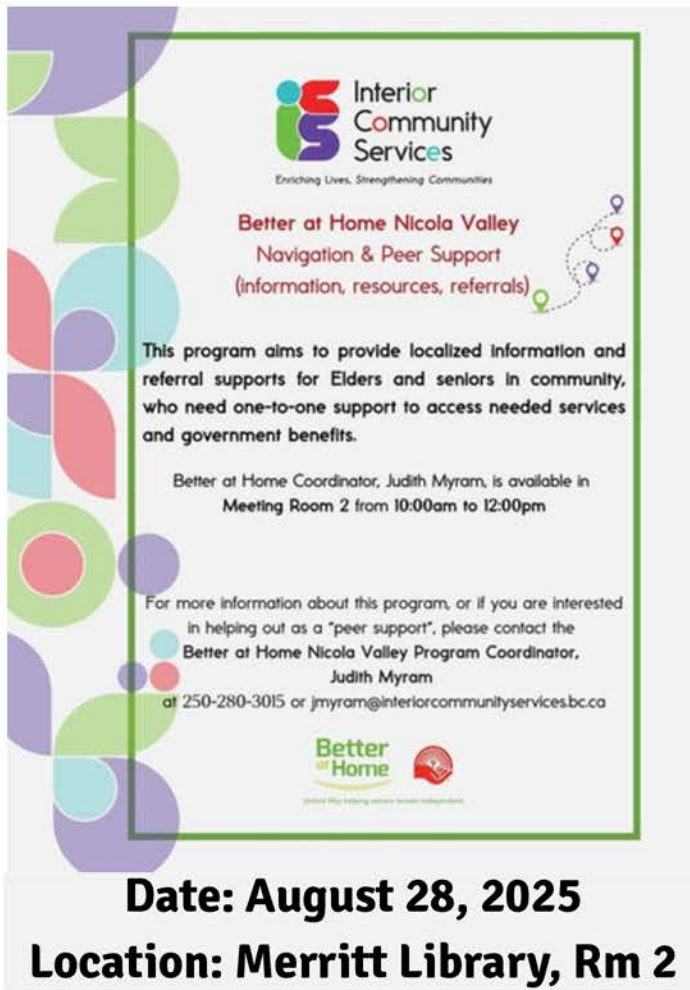
THIS MONTH AT IRON MOUNTAIN YOUTH LOUNGE

AUG 2025

FREE! DROP IN!

AUG 01	PING PONG TOURNAMENT
AUG 08	MOVIE NIGHT
AUG 15	PIZZA PARTY
AUG 22	BBQ
AUG 29	ART NIGHT

2040 GRANITE AVE | **FRIDAYS 3:30 - 6:30**



Interior Community Services
Enriching Lives, Strengthening Communities

Better at Home Nicola Valley
Navigation & Peer Support
(information, resources, referrals)

This program aims to provide localized information and referral supports for Elders and seniors in community, who need one-to-one support to access needed services and government benefits.

Better at Home Coordinator, Judith Myram, is available in Meeting Room 2 from 10:00am to 12:00pm

For more information about this program, or if you are interested in helping out as a "peer support", please contact the Better at Home Nicola Valley Program Coordinator, Judith Myram at 250-280-3015 or jmyram@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca

Better at Home

Date: August 28, 2025
Location: Merritt Library, Rm 2



Interior Community Services
Enriching Lives, Strengthening Communities

Better at Home Nicola Valley

Seniors' Tech Table

Volunteers available today
Meeting Room 2
10:15 am to 11:30am

Supporting with basic digital literacy - bring your device and questions.

One-to-one support can be scheduled - come and ask


Printed resources available

For more information about this program or about volunteering to help out, please contact the Better at Home Nicola Valley Program Coordinator, Judith Myram at 250-280-3015 or jmyram@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca

Better at Home

Date: August 21, 2025
Location: Merritt Library, Rm 2

LOCAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



Enriching Lives. Strengthening Communities


Better at Home Nicola Valley Navigation & Peer Support (information, resources, referrals)

This program aims to provide localized information and referral supports for Elders and seniors in community, who need one-to-one support to access needed services and government benefits.

Better at Home Coordinator, Judith Myram, will be available at the Merritt Library, in Meeting Room 2 from 10:00am to 12:00pm on Thursdays, September through December 11, 2025

(Please note: the LAST Thursday of the month is focused on basic Technology supports)

For more information about this program, or if you are interested in helping out as a "peer support", please contact the Better at Home Nicola Valley Program Coordinator, Judith Myram at 250-280-3015 or jmyram@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca




Enriching Lives. Strengthening Communities

Better at Home Nicola Valley Seniors' Tech Table

With the goal of supporting seniors to develop more comfort, understanding, and knowledge of basic digital literacy skills, the Seniors' Tech Table will be available twice a month through the Autumn of 2025. Bring your device and questions.

<u>Saturday Dates:</u> September 6; October 4; November 1; December 6 12:30p - 1:30p at ICS, 2040 Granite Avenue	<u>Thursday Dates:</u> September 25; October 30; November 27; December 11 10:30a - 11:30a at Merritt Library (meeting room #2)
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For more information about this program or about volunteering to help out, please contact the Better at Home Nicola Valley Program Coordinator, Judith Myram at 250-280-3015 or jmyram@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca



**FIRST 3 SATURDAYS
OF THE MONTH FROM
11:00AM TO 1:30PM
AT ICS, 2040
GRANITE AVENUE.**

Better at Home Nicola Valley is excited to partner with VALLEY GRAZE

Let's connect - at Valley Graze

Inviting Elders & seniors for a time of casual social connection in community
Taking place on the 4th Tuesday of the month, from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

Coffee, tea & light snacks will be provided.
Lots of delicious food available for purchase.

Come connect for conversation, work on the latest puzzle, play some cards, share some stories ... Come on out and let's connect!

For more information, please contact the Better at Home Nicola Valley Program Coordinator, Judith Myram at 250-280-3015 or jmyram@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca




SAFETY MESSAGE



Drug Advisory - All Regions

Increasing detection of carfentanil in Down

High risk of overdose and fatal overdose.

An increase in the detection of carfentanil in Down (opioid) samples in the Interior Health Region has been detected over the past month.

These samples frequently contain benzodiazepines and tranquilizers, in addition to carfentanil. The combination of opioids with these substances amplify the effects of the drugs and significantly heightens the risk of overdose and death.

Carfentanil is up to 100X more potent than fentanyl. Up to 4% concentration of carfentanil has been detected in Down. This is equivalent to a fentanyl concentration of up to 400%.



If you are going to use drugs, get them checked first. Find drug checking locations throughout the Interior at drugchecking.ca



No matter what or how you use (smoking, snorting, injecting) take steps to prevent overdose:

- Be aware of increased risk if mixing with other drugs, including alcohol
- Do not use alone - Use a buddy or OPS service ←
- Start with a small amount and space out your doses
- Carry naloxone and know how use it. Several doses may be required.
- Get the LifeGuard App - lifeguarddh.com
- Call 211 or visit bc211.ca to find services near you

Harm Reduction and Sexual Health | Population Health

**CARRY
NALOXONE
+
CHECK YOUR
DRUGS**



WORKING SAFELY WITH POWER TOOLS AT HOME

In our homes and on our lands—whether we’re fixing a fence, building a shed, or crafting something with care—using power tools is part of how we take care of our families and communities. But safety always comes first.



1. Respect the Tools, Respect Yourself

- Power tools are helpful, but they demand attention and respect.
- Before using any tool like a drill, saw, or grinder, read the instructions and make sure you know how it works.



2. Wear the Right Gear

- Safety glasses, gloves, and hearing protection can prevent serious injuries.
- If you’re working outside, wear sturdy shoes and dress for the weather; our valley winds and dust can be unpredictable.



3. Keep Your Space Clear

- A clean, dry workspace helps prevent slips, trips, and accidents.
- Keep cords out of the way and tools unplugged when not in use.



4. Don’t Rush the Work

- Take your time. Rushing can lead to mistakes or injuries.
- If you’re tired or distracted, it’s okay to step away and come back later.



5. Teach the Young Ones

- Keep tools out of reach of children unless you’re teaching them safely.
- Passing down skills is powerful—but safety is part of that teaching.



Heather Fairley,
Acting Operations Manager and OH&S
Specialist

SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY

As September approaches and our children return to school, it's time for all of us—drivers, caregivers, and community members—to come together to keep our school zones safe. Whether you're driving through Merritt or any of our surrounding communities, here are some important reminders rooted in care, respect, and responsibility:

Slow Down in School Zones

- School zone speed limits are usually 30 km/h from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on school days—always check posted signs.
- Slowing down shows respect for children, Elders, and families walking to and from school.

Talk to Your Children

- Teach them how to cross safely, use crosswalks, and be aware of traffic.
- Encourage them to wear bright clothing or reflective gear, especially on foggy or rainy mornings.

Watch for Children and Youth

- Kids may be excited or distracted; especially in the first weeks back.
- Be extra cautious near crosswalks, intersections, and school buses. Stop fully and make eye contact with pedestrians.

Avoid Distractions

- Put your phone away and stay focused. One moment of distraction can change lives.
- Be especially alert in congested areas like parking lots and near crosswalks.

Be Patient and Kind

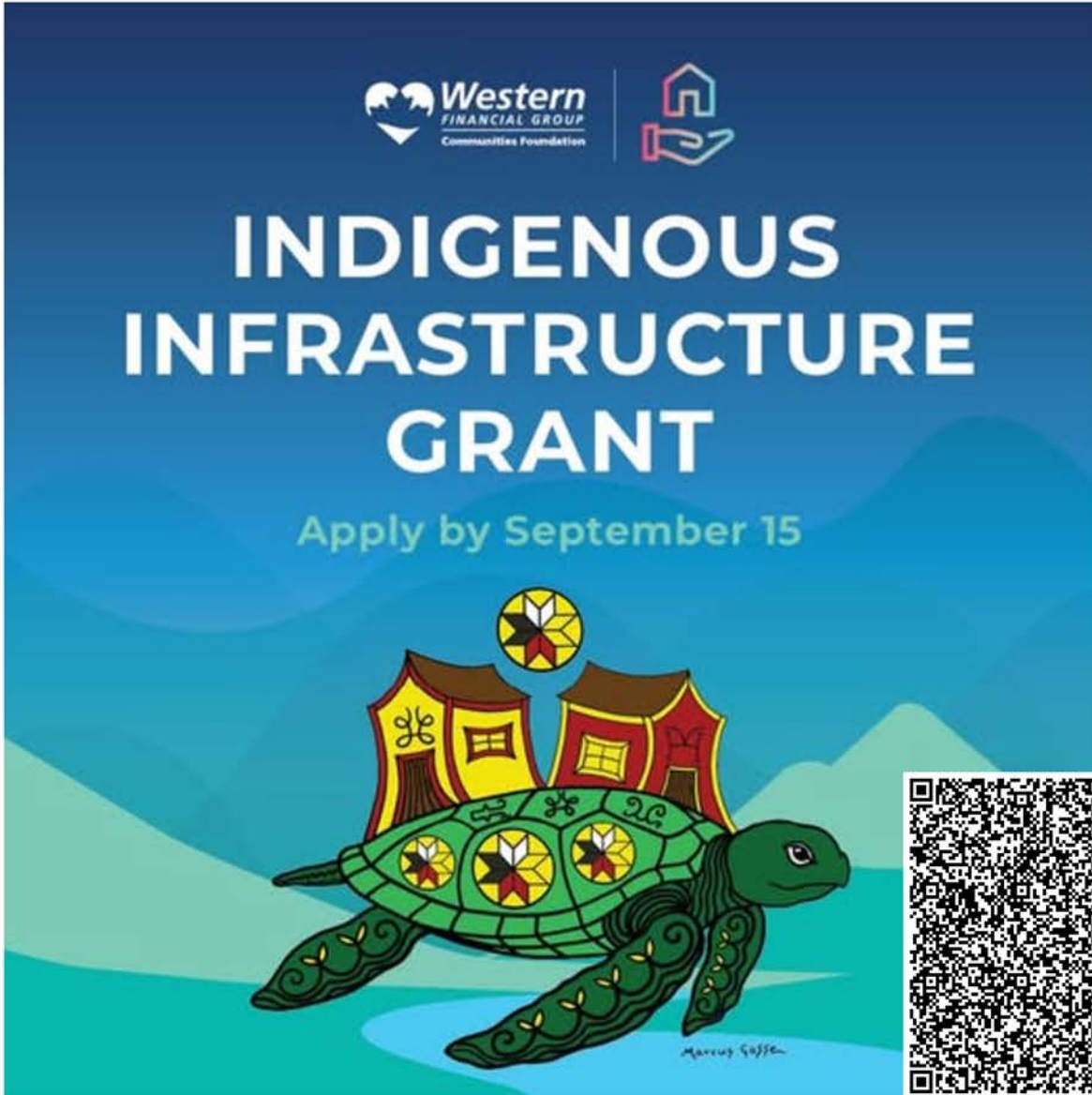
- Back-to-school traffic can be busy. Let's practice patience and kindness with each other—whether we're behind the wheel or walking with our kids.



Heather Fairley,
Occupational Health & Safety Specialist



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



We are excited to announce that the Western Financial Group Communities Foundation has officially opened applications for the 2025 Indigenous Infrastructure Grants! From now until September 15, Canadian charities and municipalities are invited to apply for funding to support Indigenous infrastructure projects that foster connection, cultural preservation, and community resilience.

Each year, the Communities Foundation awards up to five grants of \$5,000 to Indigenous-led initiatives that help build stronger, more vibrant communities. “This grant program is a key part of Western’s ongoing journey of reconciliation,” said Michelle Mak, Director of Western Communities Foundation. “Reconciliation is not a one-time act, it’s a continuous commitment to listening, learning, and supporting Indigenous voices. These grants are one way we can help build stronger, more vibrant communities together.”

This program is part of our broader commitment to creating Safe Places and supporting inclusive, sustainable infrastructure across Canada.





FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



Indigenous Tourism British Columbia (ITBC) is a non-profit, Stakeholder-based organization that is committed to growing and promoting a sustainable, culturally rich Indigenous tourism industry. Explore our comprehensive lists of municipal, regional, federal, and non-governmental financial resources, designed to support a sustainable and thriving Indigenous tourism economy.



The BC Alliance for Arts + Culture is a nonprofit provincial organization that works to advocate, inform, connect and serve BC's Creative Community. Our members include organizations, professional associations, not-for-profit groups, artists, and cultural workers throughout British Columbia. Since 1986, the BC Alliance has served the arts and cultural sector by actively monitoring and influencing public policy; providing support, services and professional development; and representing the interests of artists and cultural workers.



As our sector navigates challenging financial times – reduced revenues and public support, and higher competition for available funds – the need to find new funding sources has never been greater.

And while arts grant/funding information is now widely available online, finding and understanding these resources is often challenging – many artists and arts organizations lack the time, capacity, experience, and research skills to find the resources that could be of benefit to them. The need for this information is enormous – yet with few available online resources (with most being prohibitively expensive), the needs of most Canadian artists and organizations often go unmet.

With 20+ years as a consultant and grant writer, SmartGrant founder MaryAnn Anderson has provided strategic assessment and advice for hundreds of artists and arts organizations. She has written thousands of grants, developed a deep understanding of a wide range of funding programs, and built her own comprehensive Canadian arts & cultural grants database. That work evolved into the founding of SmartGrant.ca (2025), with a vision to create a unique resource for our sector – to simplify the grant research and planning process and make it widely accessible and affordable.

Welcome to SmartGrant – we look forward to helping make your creative possible.



Thriving Indigenous Systems Fund (TISF)

These grants were designed to support Indigenous-led initiatives focused on healing, land, rights & responsibilities, and culture. The TISF will support work that creates the conditions for systemic transformation by preserving, evolving, and transforming the social, political, economic and cultural systems of Indigenous communities in BC.

SCW'EXMX CHILD & FAMILY NEWSLETTER SIGN UP!



Would you like to receive newsletters and updates from Scw'exmx Child & Family? Scan or click the QR code below to sign up for our newsletter today!



www.scwexmx.com / facebook.com/scwexmxchildandfamily / Instagram.com/scwexmxchildandfamily

Scw'exmx Child & Family

Child Wellness Concern After Hours? Please Call:

1-800-663-9122

Children's Help Line for Children and Youth

Do you need help?

If you don't feel safe or you have a concern, you can call this number 24-hours a day for free from any phone.

310-1234

Scw'exmx Child & Family Services Society

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Downtown Address: 1988 Quilchena Ave., Merritt, BC V1K 1B8

Mailing Address: 1750 Lindley Creek Rd, Merritt, BC V1K 0A3

Prevention Hub Address: 2475 Merritt Ave, Merritt, BC V1K 1B8

Quilchena Address: Unit #2 - 3512 Highway 5A, Quilchena, BC V0E 2R0

Telephone: 250-378-2771

www.scwexmx.com

Facebook Page: facebook.com/scwexmxchildandfamily



Healthy Children



Healthy Communities



Healthy Families