



2016

MI'KMAW FAMILY &
CHILDREN'S SERVICES
OF NOVA SCOTIA

ANNUAL REPORT



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Our Vision

First Nations communities where children are safe, proud of their First Nations culture, families are strong and communities are strengthened and supported



Our Mission

Leading with excellence and working in partnership to:

- Prevent situations that lead to child abuse and neglect by embracing, strengthening and supporting families, and communities; Protect children and youth from abuse, and neglect;
- Provide safe and nurturing care for children and youth in a manner that is culturally appropriate and reflecting the history and traditions of First Nations people;
- Advocate meeting the needs of children, youth, families, and communities.



Our Values

We believe in:

- Placing the needs of children and youth first;
- The seven sacred teachings – courage, humility, honesty, love, respect, truth and wisdom;
- First Nations peoples, as the original peoples of this country and as self-determining peoples, have Treaty, constitutional and human rights that must be recognized and respected;
- There must be a more equitable and inclusive society created by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between First Nations and non-First Nations Canadians;
- The perspectives and understandings of Aboriginal Elders as Traditional Knowledge Keepers of the ethics, concepts, and practices of developing healthy children, youth and families is vital to stronger families and communities;
- Supporting Aboriginal peoples' cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections into our programs and services are essential.
 - Affirming and valuing our staff, care providers, clients, and volunteers;
 - Demonstrating excellence, leadership, teamwork, and innovation.



YOUNG, Sheraine
Administration Support Staff
DENNY, Rhonda
Resource Family Team
KEAGAN, Janine (Maternity Leave)
CAMPBELL, Jacqueline
GOULD, John James
BERNARD, Lindsay
GINNISH, Sheila
Kinship Assessment/Recruitment
STEVENS, Lydia (Maternity Leave)

FRANCIS, Dorothy
Pride Core/Pre-Service GOOGOO, Carol

FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALING

Supervisor/Coordinator - CHRISTMAS, Diana
Administrative Assistant
PETERS-COPELAND, Sandy
Family & Community Healing
SIMON, Wilma
SYLLIBOY, Norman

WEKOKMAQ FAMILY & HEALING CENTRE **PO Box 310, Wekokmaq, NS, B0E 3M0**

MANAGER OF FAMILY HEALING CENTRE

MACLEAN, Jean
Program Supervisor
POIRIER, Bernadette
Administrative Assistant
WALKER, Jean
Night Support Worker
MILLER, Krista (Maternity Leave)
GOOGOO, Cammeilia
Womens Outreach Worker
GLOADE, Sandra
Mens Intervention Worker
GOOGOO, Doreen

Womans Support Worker
WILCOX, Olive
MACEACHERN, Carol

Assistant Support Worker
GOOGOO, Claudine

Child & Youth Outreach Worker
GILLIS, Justine

Casuals
BRIGHT, Jessica
GOULD, Faith
STEVENS, Elizabeth
GOUTHRO, Sandra

INDIAN BROOK OFFICE, PO Box 179, Indian Brook, NS, B0N 2H0

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Finance Manager -VACANT
Supervisor - MALONEY, Tanya
Pay & Benefits Clerk- MARR, Jo-Anne
Accounts Payable Clerks-
PAUL, Lisa
GEHUE, Hilary (Ellie Sack)
Michael, Julie

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Assistant Executive Director
CLARKE-JOHNSON, Monica
Executive Assistant/Supervisor/Office Manager
PAUL, Anna
Receptionist(s) - GOOGOO, Bonnie
Filing Clerk - MARR, Megan
Janitorial/Maintenance - PAUL, Clayton

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

INTAKE & INVESTIGATION

Intake Supervisor
MEECH, Keira
Administration Support Staff
MARR, Eileen
Intake & Investigation Team
MCKELVIE, Jennifer
INGLIS-ASSAFF, Pauline
FAULKNER, Katie
NUTTER, Jennifer

LONG-TERM CHILD PROTECTION

Long Term Supervisor
FRASER, Nina
Administration Support Staff
KNOCKWOOD, Annie

Long-Term Child Protection Team
RAFUSE-POOLE, Deanna
GALLANT-WHITE, Michelle
MACEACHREN, Mary
HUNTER, Karen

TEMPORARY CARE & CUSTODY/LONG TERM

TCC & Long Term Supervisor
HIGGINS, Leeann
Long Term Team
FLEMING, Jessica
MACPHERSON, Anneliese (Maternity Leave)
GARIEPY, Kim
Temporary Care & Custody
BALDWIN, Nicole

FAMILY SUPPORT

Family Support/Case Aide A/Supervisor
KOOPMAN, Matilda
Family Support Team
BERNARD, Bobbi Jo
MAYICH, Earla
TOMER, Catherine
Case Aide/Access Coordinator/Drivers Program
FORD, Kelly
MARR, Juanita

CHILDREN IN PERMANENT CARE & CUSTODY SERVICES

Casework Supervisor
MARACLE, Denise
Administration Support Staff

PAUL, Virginia
Permanent Care & Custody Team
SMITH, Louise
CROWE, Emily
WELLS, Carolyn
YOUNIS, Corrine

RESOURCE FAMILY SERVICES

Supervisor of Adoptions
MCKEE, Lesley
Administration Support Staff
MARTIN, Sylvie
Adoption Assessment/Placement & Subsidy Team
RAFUSE, Ruby
WHITE, Julie
MCDERMOTT, Sean
Supervisor for Resource Family
PHILLIPS, Jodi
Administration Support Staff
MARTIN, Sylvia
Resource Family Team
HANCOCK, Norine
Kinship Assessment
MARTIN, Theresa (Kim Collins)
Pride/Pre-Service Training
SAULNIER, Annette
Recruitment
KNOCKWOOD, Ella

FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALING

Prevention Coordinator for Mainland
COPELAND, Darlene

MILLBROOK FAMILY & HEALING CENTRE **PO Box 665, Truro, NS, B2N 5E5**

MANAGER OF FAMILY HEALING CENTRE

MACLEAN, Jean
Program Supervisor - WALKER, Beverly
Administrative Assistant
BROOKES, Suzanne
Night Support Worker
GLOADE, Dora
NASSON, Theresa
Womens Outreach Worker
PAUL, Jacklyn
Mens Outreach Worker - WALSH, J. Dan

Assistant Support Worker - SACK, Gloria
Womens Support Worker - FOLEY, Shantel
MARTIN, Michelle (Nicole Netterfield-Farquar)
Child & Youth Outreach Worker
WINTERS, Laura
Casuals
MACNEIL, Betty
GOULD, Lorraine
MARTIN, Mary Ann
DREW, Marie
PAUL, Krista

President's Remarks

Chief Deborah Robinson



It is my pleasure to welcome each of you to our Annual General Meeting. It is an honour to be President of Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services. Welcome to the Chiefs and Cheryl who make up the Board of Directors and to Grand Chief Ben Sylliboy our honorary Board Member. Welcome to delegates, elders, staff and guests. Children, youth and families have always been a very important part of our culture and traditions.

Our vision, mission and work is all about improving life's chances and outcomes for children and youth. MFCS of NS works with many children, youth and families throughout the year and we rarely hear about the excellent work done each and every day by staff, in one of the two child welfare offices or in the Family Healing Centres. It is easy to be critical.

However I believe we will be most successful if we look for the strengths and build on them. So at the outset this year, I want to say thank you to the staff of this Agency on behalf of the other Chiefs and Cheryl who make up the Board of Directors. I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of our new staff including Paul Morris, our first in-house legal counsel, Kendra Arseneau, Manager of Finance who filled Brenda's position when took a well-earned retirement.

We are in the midst of considerable change. Today there is work underway on a number of initiatives that have the potential to profoundly impact the work of this Agency in a positive way. They are the continued work to implement the Cooney Report Recommendations, our Strategic Plan , changes to the Children and Family Services Act to better reflect our culture and traditions , the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, the Canadian Human Rights Decision and the collaborative work with the federal government on major social issues that have been pushed aside for years. I will not mention all of them but they include housing, mental health, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and youth engagement. Child welfare cannot solve all of the issues we are dealing with alone, however if the issues such as poor housing, mental health, etc. can be addressed our children, youth and communities will be much healthier and stronger.

There are copies of the Agency's Strategic Plan available here today and that Plan includes our new Vision, which is First Nations communities where children are safe, proud of their First Nations culture, families are strong and communities are strengthened and supported. The Plan has our Mission, Values, four Strategic Goals with performance measures for each and a Report Card on the Cooney Report. As you will see, most of the recommendations that were accepted in the Cooney Report have been implemented.

I mentioned a number of initiatives that are the subject of dialogue with the federal government. We know that despite the release of various government reports and rulings, we still must advocate that the findings or rulings be implemented. In the interest of time I will quickly mention one that has a significant impact on this Agency over the years and that is the under-funding by the federal government for First Nations child welfare. I should say that we have an excellent working relationship with the officials from INAC and we believe they understand our issues and the work we are required to deliver under the Province's Children and Family Services Act. However the reality is that they can only allocate the dollars they are given.

Our Agency continues to be underfunded which is not unique in terms of funding for First Nations child welfare in Canada. "Over a nine year period, the Assembly of First Nations and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, led by First Nations advocate Cindy Blackstock, fought the government on the underfunding of child welfare services on reserve. In January, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal delivered a landmark ruling, saying the federal government discriminated against native children in its funding of welfare services. Despite this ruling, the federal government continues to racially discriminate against aboriginal children in its delivery of ongoing reserve services, Cindy Blackstock told a Commons committee two weeks ago. In its first budget, the Liberal government committed \$71 million this year to the delivery of those services. The amount needed to close this gap is actually somewhere around \$200 million, Blackstock said" (Chronicle Herald, June 14, 2016, p. A8)

In May we met with senior officials from INAC and it was very open and frank discussion. INAC officials were very supportive of our presentation and we are hopeful that Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services will be allocated the funds it requires to deliver mandated services. In closing I want to thank my colleagues on the Board of Directors. Each of you have so many demands on your time, yet you always find the time and willingly share your knowledge and expertise. The result is more effective governance and policies.

Thank you to Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, that provides the bulk of our funding, Natalie, Wendy, Janet and their staff from the Department of Community Services who also provides funding, support and expertise, the foster parents, kinship care families, elders, service providers, other agencies, George, Dennis and Carol for their ongoing advice and support.

No organization can be successful without a dedicated and hardworking senior management team. Arlene, Lenora and Monica Clarke Johnson make up that team. They are passionate about protecting and supporting children, youth and families and enabling staff to do their best possible work. They work many long hours on behalf of the Agency. A special thanks to Arlene, Lenora and Monica. If I have omitted to thank someone my apologies.

Once again thank you for joining us today at our AGM. It is because of your collective efforts, that we are stronger as an Agency for our children, youth and families.

Thank You,

Chief Deborah Robinson,

President, Board of Directors
Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services,
Chief of Acadia First Nation

Executive & Assistant Executive Director's Report



**Executive Director
Arlene Johnson**



**Assistant Executive Director
Lenora Paul**



**Assistant Executive Director
Monica Clarke-Johnson**

During the course of the year the agency has made many changes that are highlighted in Chief Robinson's Report. We will continue to work on building the Agency's over all missions, and improving our community relations on various levels.

As part of our position, it is our responsibility to ensure that either steps are being taken and/or the Strategic Plan is being implemented. We are committed to build and strengthen our relationships with the leadership and other organizations/service providers within the thirteen communities. As one part of the Agency's strategic plan, the Agency has followed through with making presentations to Chief and Councils and has set future dates to meet this commitment. The presentation include brief overviews of each of the programs and services that Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services provide to community members throughout the province.

Also, as part of the strategic plan, we are moving forward with expanding the Family Group Conference Program and making new changes such as developing the Custom Adoption Program. In addition to this the Assistant Executive Directors have attended meetings and are members of many committees that include Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey and the Mi'kma'ki Provincial Network, Police, Legal Services, Executive Directors from other organizations and NADACA.

We are extremely fortunate to work with committed individuals and groups to improve the delivery of Mi'kmaq Child Welfare. We would like to take this opportunity to recognize the important work and contributions of Chief Deborah Robinson. The Executive Board of Directors, and Full Board of Directors for their dedication to the Agency in numerous capacities.

We also would like to acknowledge the work of Chief Paul James Prosper, Angelina Amaral, Cheryl Maloney, Paul Morris, KMKNO Staff namely Janice Maloney and Twila Gaudet for their valuable contributions to (Bill 1-12) on the proposed legislated changes to the Children's FSA. We would also like to thank Chief Sidney Peters for his expertise and contribution on the Agency's finance Committee.

We would also like to thank the DCS for their commitment to hiring the first Mi'kmaq Child welfare specialist. This position is extremely valuable to the MFCS, and ensures that the needs of the Agency are extremely well represented.

We are very thankful for the expertise and contributions of Natalie Doucette as our Child Welfare Specialist, as well as the DCS for their ongoing support and commitment to improve service delivery & Legislation for our Mi'kmaw families and communities.

We are committed to improving community based services, and currently our staff sit on a number of community committees with community stakeholders and representatives to look at services at the community level in order to help improve outcomes for community, children and families.

It has also been an exciting year with Historic Decisions and recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the Child Welfare tribunal's decision in terms of the under funding and discrimination against Aboriginal Children in the delivery of Child Welfare Services. Today we are extremely fortunate that we are joined by Dr. Cindy Blackstock who will highlight her mission on the under funding & Discrimination of aboriginal Children.

First we would also like to acknowledge and thank our agency lead lawyer, Paul Morris, for his time & dedication to Child Welfare but namely to Mi'kmaw Child Welfare. Paul brings many years of expertise to the Agency. His contribution on the ongoing legal services and to the CFSA Amendments.

We would also like to acknowledge the work of George Savoury Consulting Limited for his valuable contribution and delivery to the agency in his role as a consultant.

MFCS is very fortunate to have the support and dedication of so many wonderful individuals who bring with them their expertise and time to help improve the lives and outcomes for Mi'kmaw Children.

We are committed to improving services to children, family and community, and moving forward with our commitments on all levels.

We continue to work closely with INAC and participate in the tripartite committee meetings to advocate for the Agency as a whole to ensure that funding is secure and so that sufficient and appropriate services can be provided to the people we work with in our communities. In relation to this, the assistant executive directors have been collaborating with the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services and the Assembly of Chiefs to address the proposed legislative changes to the Family and Children's Services Act.

We hope that you enjoy this year's Annual Assembly. We thank each and every one for you attending our assembly.

Respectfully,

Arlene M Johnson, BSW, RSW
Executive Director

Lenora E Paul, MSW, RSW
Assistant Executive Director – Eskasoni

Monica M Clarke-Johnson, BSW, RSW
Assistant Executive Director – Indianbrook

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
Annual Assembly
June 17, 2015

A meeting of the 30th Annual Assembly of Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia was held June 17, 2015 at the Bear River Community Hall.

PRESENT

Board:

- Chief Deborah Robinson, President, Acadia
- Joan Denny, proxy for Chief Terrance Paul, Membertou
- Chief PJ Prosper, Paq=tnkek
- Chief Roderick Googoo, We=koqma=q
- Chief Carol Thompson, Bear River
- Chief Janette Peterson, Annapolis Valley
- Dion Denny, proxy for Chief Leroy Denny, Eskasoni
- Chief Andrea Paul, Pictou Landing
- Chief Rufus Copage, Indian Brook
- Chief Sidney Peters, Glooscap
- Chief Norman Bernard, Wagmatcook
- James Marshall, proxy for Chief Wilbert Marshall, Chapel Island
- Grand Chief Ben Sylliboy, Honourary Board Member

Regrets:

- Chief Bobby Gloade, Millbrook
- Cheryl Maloney, N.S. Native Women's Association

Staff & Guests:

- Carol MacLellan, DCS Eastern Region
- Mairi MacLean-O'Handley Child Welfare Specialist, Sydney
- Carol Barr, Raymond Yuill, Chartered Accountants
- Angelina Amaral, Assembly of First Nations
- George Savoury, Savoury Consultants
- Agnes Potter, Elder from Bear River First Nation
- Robyn Crow, Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs
- Philipa Pictou, Health Director

The meeting convened at 10:35 am with Chief Deborah Robinson, President presiding. The opening prayer was said by Agnes Potter. Lenora Paul presented Agnes Potter with a gift.

Opening Remarks from the Host Chief: Chief Carol Thompson welcomed everyone to her community of Bear River First Nations, especially Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services. It touches each & every one of us in different ways and it has touched my heart just to see the staff and the people that are caring for our Mi'kmaw families, our First Nations across Nova Scotia. On behalf of the council also, welcome.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The agenda was presented.

MOTION #1: It was moved by Chief Janette Peters and seconded by Chief Norman Bernard to accept the agenda as presented. Carried.

Philipa Pictou Health Director: Philipa said that she was asked to speak to CBC News about the link between Residential schools and the over representation of First Nation children in care. She said that CBC put in print about the statistic that 1 in 4 children in Indian Brook are in care. I would like to acknowledge the hurt and pain that this whole process cause to Indian Brook and I did not speak about Indian Brook at all in the interview. I apologize for any pain that this has caused for anyone.

Chief Deborah Robinson said that on behalf of the Board of Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services we accept the apology from Philipa Pictou.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The motions of June 17, 2014 were read by Chief Deborah Robinson, President.

MOTION #2: It was moved by Chief Leroy Denny and seconded by Chief Norman Bernard to accept the minutes of June 17, 2014 as presented. Carried.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS:

Chief Deborah Robinson said that this is her 4th term as President for Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services as well as the existing Executive members who are:

President - Chief Deborah Robinson
1st Vice President - Chief Rufus Copage
2nd Vice President - Chief Leroy Denny
3rd Vice President - Chief Andrea Paul
Secretary - Chief Roderick Googoo
Treasurer - Chief Sidney Peters

Chief Deborah Robinson welcomed everyone here specially the elders, the Grand Chief, the District Chiefs and the Chiefs who make up our Board of Directors, the staff and the guests. A very special thank you to Chief Carol Thompson for hosting this year's annual assembly.

In the recent days, everyone has heard about the release of the Truth & Reconciliation report as was stated, the residential school experienced a dark chapter in Canada's history one that had serious impact on successive generation on First Nation Families. The report makes a number of very important recommendations related to child welfare and other systems that impact child welfare such as health and education. Our Board of Directors will discuss these recommendations and we hope that the recommendations by Chief Justice Murray Sinclair lead to the actions recommended. The amendments to the children and family services act provides an excellent opportunity for the province to address some of these concerns.

I believe that First Nations in Nova Scotia are very fortunate to have Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services. Here we have one Agency that serves the entire Province of Nova Scotia and overseen by the Board of Directors as made up of the Chiefs of Nova Scotia. It is very difficult to find a similar model in Canada where the Chiefs who are extremely busy give many hours of their personal time to

provide their leadership, wisdom and knowledge of First Nations communities to a large child welfare agency.

We have implemented operational plans & new by-laws and the human resource manual, the board governance manual and are in the process of dealing with the legislated work to improve the children's & family services act. These policies can be changed at any given time as needed. We are much clearer on the roles and the roles of the management and staff in the Agency. We know the work that we have to do and the work that needs to be done.

You can read the President's full report in the Annual Report 2014-2015.

Treasurer's Report

Chief Sidney Peters said that the Board has been busy over this past year. The Agency has been struggling with funding. Also the agency has been hiring addition staff and to make sure that we have adequate finances to do that has been quite difficult at times. As treasurer on behalf of the board, I've taken the lead role and try to look at and fight for sustainable funding for the agency.

We have a good dialogue with the federal government as well as the Department of Community Services. We have a Tripartite working group where we are not meeting every 3-4 months, but are trying to meet more often. We need to ensure that we have the funds to run this organization. It's not only just the funds we are looking at, we have to ensure that we have adequate staff to do what we need to do. In order to meet the requirements under the act itself and the compliance of the agency and the agreement that we signed, it takes good people. As far as this year, we are ok. Hopefully, next year we can say we're doing much better.

Chief Sidney Peters introduced Carol Barr, Agency's Auditor. Carol will be reviewing the financial statements. Carol read the "Opinion" section of the auditor's report which stated; "In our opinion the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia as at March 31, 2015 and the results of its' operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit-organizations." Carol said that this means the Agency has a clean audit opinion. These statements were approved by the Board at yesterday's board meeting.

Carol gave a brief outline of the Audit Report, pages 2 - 20.

Carol thanked Brenda the Comptroller and her staff for doing a wonderful job. It's a well, run agency.

MOTION #3: It was moved by Chief Leroy Denny and seconded by Chief Andrea Paul to reappoint the firm, BDO Canada LLP as the Agency's Auditors for the year 2015-2106. Carried.

Executive Director's & Assistant Executive Director's Report

Arlene Johnson welcomed all our guest, our Chiefs and our staff and a special thank you to Chief Carol Thompson for welcoming us into her community of Bear River First Nations. When we first started in 1985, we as an Agency had our vision of hopes and dreams for Mi'kmaw Family &

Children's Services and today we would like to share these visions and dreams that are incorporated in the work we do. Arlene read her report.

You can read her full report and the Child Protection Statistics 2014-2015 Fiscal Year in the Annual Report 2014-2015.

Presentation of the Overview and Statistics Update on the Proposed Legislated Changes to the Children's & Family Services Act.

Chief PJ Prosper said that he is responsible for the justice portfolio on behalf of the Assembly of First Nations. The subject of the proposed amendments to the Children's & Family Services Act. Chief Deborah Robinson, Chief Norman Bernard and Cheryl Maloney sit on a committee with Chief Prosper and Agency representatives.

Chief PJ Prosper said that the 25 year old Children's & Family Services Act is now subject to legislation review. Bill 1-12 was introduced in to the provincial legislator and it went through the first reading and the second reading will take place in the fall of this year.

Chief PJ Prosper introduced Angela Amaral, Assembly of First Nations. Angela is the person who can help bring forward some solid recommendations to the proposed amendments to the Children's & Services Act

Robyn Crow, Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs who will be discussing about the Child Welfare Symposium. The Tripartite forum is mandated to explore policy programming and work collaterally to bridge gaps with First Nation communities in Nova Scotia.

Chief Roderick Googoo said that on behalf of the Board, he would like to thank Chief Carol Thompson and he also thanked Chief Deborah Robinson for her being elected as President for the Agency.
Closing Prayer: Grand Chief Ben Sylliboy and Agnes Potter said the closing prayer.

MOTION # 4: It was moved by Chief Leroy Denny and seconded by Vance Denny to adjourn.
Carried.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm.

Chief Deborah Robinson, President

Chief Roderick Googoo, Secretary

Keynote Speaker

Cindy Blackstock

We are extremely honored to have Cindy Blackstock as our Keynote Speaker for this year's MFCSNS Annual General Assembly. For more than two decades she has been one of the country's most committed activists for First Nations children. She was instrumental in advocating and moving forward's Jordan Principle and spearheaded a landmark decision in which the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal has ruled that the federal government's underfunding of child and family services on First Nations reserves was discriminatory.

Cindy Blackstock is a member of the Gitksan Nation who has worked in the field of child and family services for over twenty years. She began on the front lines as a social worker for provincial and First Nations family service agencies in British Columbia and is currently serving as executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada. This national organization supports First Nations child and family service agencies and regional organizations by providing research, professional development, and networking services.

Advocacy and policy analysis are essential components of Cindy's commitment to improving the child welfare system. She actively participated in two national child welfare policy reviews overseen by the Assembly of First Nations and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and currently serves as co-convener of the United Nations Sub-group on Indigenous Children and Young People and as a member of the board of directors for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada and the Canadian Education Association.

In 2006, Cindy was the recipient of the Canadian Paediatric Society's Victor Marchessault advocacy Award. She is one of the authors of a pioneering report on transforming child and family services—Reconciliation in Child Welfare: Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous Children, Youth, and Families—published in 2006.

Cindy called her contribution to this collection Reconciliation Means Not Saying Sorry Twice: Lessons from Child Welfare in Canada. It is a hard-hitting condemnation of structural problems in child welfare, the roots of which reach back into residential schools and the large-scale removal of Aboriginal children into care during the 1960s and 1970s. The consequences of inadequate funding, poorly defined policies, and jurisdictional disputes are elucidated in the story of a young child, Jordan, born with a complex medical disorder, who spent his short life in hospital while governments argued over who should pay for his at-home care. This tragic situation inspired Jordan's Principle, which calls on governments to meet the needs of the child first and then resolve the jurisdictional disputes later.

Cindy is passionate about seeing this principle implemented throughout the country. She is encouraged that the House of Commons unanimously passed a private member's motion in support of Jordan's Principle in December 2007 and British Columbia became the first province to endorse Jordan's Principle in 2008.

Dr. Blackstock's research interests are indigenous theory and the identification & remediation of structural inequalities affecting First Nations children, youth & families. An author of over 60 publications & a widely sought after public speaker, Dr. Blackstock has collaborated with other Indigenous leaders to assist the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in the development and adoption of a General Comment on the Rights of Indigenous children.





Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program

Annual Report 2015-2016

The Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program (MFHP) Operating under the umbrella of Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of N.S., the **Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program** oversees the operation of the Mi'kmaw Family Healing Centres (Transition Houses) located in Millbrook First Nation and the Waycobah First Nation. The main purpose of the Centres are to provide a place of safety for women and children and deliver culturally relevant programs to men, women and children who experience violence in all of its forms. Each Centre has four units, which can accommodate up to 16 beds for abused women and their children. The Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program services include: short/long term shelter for abused women and their children, 24 hour support services, individual and group counselling for women, life skills training and access to community resources, advocacy, outreach programs, information, prevention education (individual, group and community based) and referrals. In addition, we provide 24 hour crisis intervention on an in-person and via telephone basis.

The manager, program supervisors and counsellors are qualified to assist with high-risk case coordination assessments and Emergency Protection Order applications. Follow up services through the outreach program are offered to all clients. The Family Healing Program works in concert with our Agency's Child Welfare, Family Support, Family and Community Healing Programs to provide holistic and comprehensive support to families, in terms of parenting, life skills, safety planning, intervention and follow up services. We utilize traditional methods of support to all family members with the goal of encouraging families to break the "Circle of Violence" and support them in maintaining a peaceful and healthy lifestyle. In essence, the program is to help families in our First Nation communities to face challenges in today's society. With domestic violence being the cause for many children coming into care of the agency, it is vital that the programming meet the needs

Family violence is more prevalent in rural and remote areas than urban centres for a number of reasons including the availability of firearms, an unwillingness among residents to identify family violence as a problem, a lack of mental health and social services, isolation, entrenched perceptions of gender inequality, a lack of access to employment opportunities, and the quality of education among others.

Excerpt taken from the "Social Determinants of Health" report by the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health.

of our families. With the current funding process, the MFHP can only deliver programs within the fiscal restraints.

Family Healing Centres: The Waycobah Healing Centre has been open for 23 years and the Millbrook Healing Centre for 22 years. There had been **1,489** women and **1,602** children pass through our doors for help since. The Centres are still seen as safe places and have been used for 148 **access visits** in the past year.

The Centres faced enormous challenges in the past year with funding, programming, shelter infrastructure, and human resources. The funding has always been inadequate to deliver the program at its full potential. With lack of both *fiscal and human resources*, our program has not met all the demands nor delivered an effective on-going program in our communities. Hopefully, in the upcoming years the federal government will be able to provide adequate funding to the shelters and the family violence prevention initiatives.

The Waycobah Healing Centre was not able to accept residents due to the flooding issues in August. This created an unsafe environment for both the clients and our staff. Due to the problems that a flood would create, like poor air quality and limited space to work in, the Centre was only operating during the day shifts. We were unable to start accepting residents until mid-February when the restoration work was all completed.

Family Violence Prevention Program: The project titled "*Mawikwa'timk teli-sku'tasik ta'n tli-maliaptasitew teli-emeko'tasi'tij kikmanaq*" which means "Working together in unity and solidarity to address Family Violence". The Family Violence Prevention Program aims to provide the opportunity for communities to engage its members in understanding the issues of violence and abuse against Aboriginal women and to support them in recognizing tools and resources to address the problem using holistic strategies embedded in cultural knowledge and the Indigenous process. We recognize that community members hold the potential to restore balance and promote healing. Programs are holistic in nature in which healing is about creating,

Victims of family violence

are most often women; women living in isolated areas are particularly vulnerable to family violence. Often, they face such hardships that they feel they cannot endure them alone, forcing them to conclude, "his abuse is preferable to his absence." Victims of family violence often remain in dangerous settings because of low self-esteem and limited financial resources, geographic isolation, and a lack of privacy which prevent them from seeking help and accessing services.

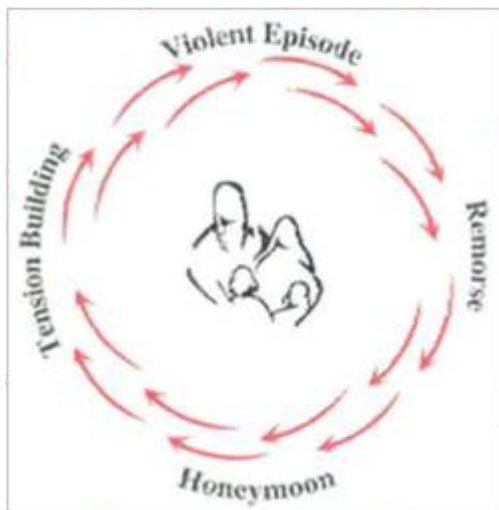
Excerpt taken from the "Social Determinants of Health" report by the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health.

maintaining and/or restoring balance in all aspects of a person's well-being (physical, emotional, mental and spiritual).

The primary goal of the project is to address family violence and its related issues which impact Mi'kmaq men, women and children through community based family violence initiatives (information, education /awareness and intervention sessions), counselling services through outreach programs and early intervention programming to identify "at risk families" in need of support services early in the family violence cycle.

The effects of domestic violence on Mi'kmaq people are destructive and extensive. Education is critical to raising awareness and healing from domestic violence. Family violence remains to be the primary reason why aboriginal children come to the attention of child welfare agencies in this country. Last year we received \$200,000.00 from AANDC's Family Violence Prevention Fund to implement our objectives for prevention and public education. This funding was secured as a result of goals and objectives satisfied in previous projects aimed at reducing family violence. The Family and Community Healing Program has a proven track record. We continue to be proactive in Mi'kmaw Communities in terms of identifying, synthesizing and developing best practices on culturally relevant parenting, support and intervention programs. In addition to prevention, our efforts were directed in providing support and intervention to people early in the abuse cycle so that the entire family can work together toward healing.

Circle of Violence



This past year, the Healing Centre staff was able to deliver 197 workshops with 2,436 participants. They also organized/involved in 71 community events in our communities. With the challenges with the staff shortages we have experienced in the past year, we were able to do what was necessary. Our team demonstrated dedication and commitment in achieving our goals to promote healing with our families and communities and their hard work is greatly appreciated.

Men's Outreach Program and the "Journey of the Two Wolves:

The Men's Outreach program consists of a 5 session information workshop that focuses on the holistic healing and if groups are interested to go into a more in-depth 17 session (12

session and 5 session) program, it can be offered in their communities. The outreach services also include one-to-one counselling, support and education groups.

The Men's Outreach Worker, Doreen Googoo works out of the Waycobah Centre and Dan Walsh works out of the Millbrook Centre. In all there were 62 new clients and 62 on-going clients with 550 sessions completed. There were at least four groups that have been completed. The Men's Outreach Worker for the Waycobah Centre was also doing the Women's Outreach program which placed limitations on her program delivery.

Women's Outreach Program: The Women's Outreach Program is instrumental in the delivery of the Mi'kmaw Men's Intervention Program by a joint program that delivers the women's component of the program. The program also has an Awareness and Education module to be delivered regularly to the communities in addition to the group and counselling sessions. Jacklyn Paul of the Millbrook Centre and Sandra Gloade of the Waycobah Centre both have been recently hired as the Women's Outreach Workers. In the past year, there were 19 new clients and 16 on-going clients with 127 sessions completed. Majority of the work was done by Brooke Copeland, the former Women's Outreach Worker for Millbrook Centre.

Child/Youth Outreach Program: The Child/Youth Workers, Laura Patriquin who works out of the Millbrook Centre and Justine Gillis who was recently hired is working out of the Waycobah Centre will be delivering the program to the communities. There is a joint program to work in unison with the In-house programs at the Centres. The Child/Youth Outreach Worker works with shelter staff to ensure the children and youth who reside at the shelter also receive similar programming to address the issues of domestic violence. There were 56 workshops with 1,116 participants last year. There are 6 new and 14 on-going clients with 103 sessions completed for this program. This was mainly Millbrook Centre doing the program.

In-House Programs: The In-House programs are facilitated by the Women Support Workers Shantel Foley and Michelle Martin/Nicole Farquhar (Millbrook Centre) and Olive Cox and Carol MacEachern of the Waycobah Centre. Some of the programs offered are; Intimate Partner Violence, Healthy/Unhealthy relationships, Simple Gifts, Nobody's Perfect, Little Eyes Little Ears, Sacred Children, Healing Journey, Beyond Trauma & Violence, etc. They work with the clients in the residence by providing support, counselling, advocacy, safety planning, transportation, referrals, parenting, budgeting, meal planning and family violence awareness. The Family Violence Modules are also

delivered to the individuals while at the Centre which deal with self-esteem, stress/anger management, self-care, etc.

The Women's Wellness Program offer programs such as: domestic violence education/awareness, self-esteem, anger/stress management, basic shelf, financial management, grief & bereavement, addiction relapse, Sacred Child, life skills, safety and self-care, and much more. The needs of the victims of domestic violence are constantly changing as well as our First Nation communities. With the on-going concerns surrounding the prescription drug abuse, mental health issues and other addictions, the current programs have not adequately met all the needs of the residence/clientele. The Program staff will be requiring more training in these areas of concern.



The Waycobah Healing Centre staff organized the Orange Shirt Day held on September 30, 2015 at the Waycobah First Nation. It is a day for all to Honor Residential School Survivors and to remember those who did not make it.





The National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence (NACAFV)

is an organization that represents the First Nation shelters across Canada and has been providing training at no extra cost to the Agency. Jean MacLean, Manager of the Family Healing Centres has been actively sitting on the board since February 2014. Each year NACAFV is funded for training of front-line workers in the shelters and also the training of manager/directors.

On December 1-3, 2015 the staff (Olive Cox, Michelle Martin and Jean MacLean) attended a training forum titled "Burnout Prevention: Beyond Pedicures & Kale" in Montreal, Quebec. A 2-day training session was presented by the Organizational Development Services team of Kahnawake Shakotia'takehnhas Community Services. The workshop provided information to participants on how to identify the causes and indicators of burnout. It also provided opportunities to learn and share strategies to deal with stress and burnout.

On February 23-25, 2016 a Shelter Director's Assembly was held in Laval, Quebec. This was attended by Bernadette Poirier, Beverly Walker and Jean MacLean. First day presentation was titled "Yes You Can! Surviving a Personal Attack," presented by Jan Lipscomb of the *Okanagan Transition House*. The 2-day training session was called "Lateral Violence and Conflict Resolution" presented by Diane Carrier & Trina Maher. Training workshops provided participants with information about lateral violence in the workplace and how to prevent it. It also provided information on how to address it in our workplaces.

The Native Women's Association of Canada's (NWAC) The Sisters in Spirit initiative is a multi-year research, education and policy initiative funded by Status of Women Canada. The initiative is designed to address the disturbing numbers of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada. Through the Sisters in Spirit initiative, the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) aims to better understand racialized, sexualized violence against Aboriginal women and girls. This knowledge assists NWAC and other stakeholders to understand the root causes of this violence and identify measures to increase the safety of Aboriginal women and girls. Through the Sisters in Spirit initiative, NWAC works to honour the women and girls who have been lost to violence and remember those still missing. The Centres and the Family and Community Healing program organize the "Sisters in Spirit Walks" in various communities.



Bern Poirier preparing for the "Sisters in Spirit Walk" on November 6th, 2015 at the Waycobah First Nation.



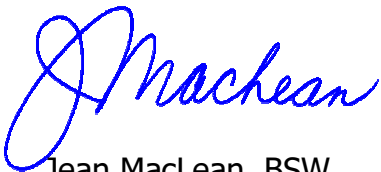
Staff Development day for the Healing Centre was held on September 10, 2015 at Millbrook. The afternoon activity was the First Horseshoe Tournament. (L – R) 2nd place - Carol MacEachern & Jean Walker, 1st place - Darlene Copeland, Dora Gloade, 3rd place - Suzanne Brooks and Dan Walsh.

The Family Healing Centre and Program staff has been busy regardless of the challenges and obstacles faced throughout the year. I would like to take this opportunity to commend and thank the staff, without their hard work and dedication the program would not be what it is today.

On behalf of the staff, we would like to thank the communities for their continued support. I also would like to thank the leaders and the elders for their help in our programs. We are looking forward to the new challenges and working with our communities in the upcoming year.

Wela'liek

Respectfully Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J MacLean". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "M".

Jean MacLean, BSW
Manager of the Family Healing Centres

Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Family Healing Centres

The Waycobah Centre had 10 admissions from April 1st, 2015 - March 31st, 2016. A total of 4 children have stayed at the Centre during this period. Total bedstays of 131. The Millbrook Centre had 21 admissions in the same time frame. There was a total of 15 children that stayed at the Centre during this period. Total bedstays of 1356.

Waycobah Millbrook

REASON FOR ENTRY:

Already at Centre	0	2
Physical abuse	2	0
Verbal/Emotional/Psychological abuse	3	5
Threats to women and/or children	0	0
Other abuse (e.g., abuse by other family members)	0	0
Housing problem (non-abuse)	2	6
Other (non-abuse)	3	10

REFERRED BY:

Self-referral	5	11
Multi-service agency	1	1
Social service agency	2	1
Medical /health agency/doctor	0	1
Other shelter	0	1
Relative/Friend	2	0
Other: NADACA	0	1
MFCs	0	5
Police	0	0
Community Alcohol & Drug Worker	0	0
Native Council of Nova Scotia	0	0

EMPLOYMENT SITUATION BEFORE ENTERING THE CENTRE:

Not employed/not looking for work/social assistance	5	15
Unemployed/EI	3	0
Occasional employment	0	1
Employed full-time/part-time	0	3
Self employed	0	0
Attending School	2	2

PHYSICAL DISABILITIES:

Yes	0	1
No	10	21
Not known	0	0

LEFT ABUSE SITUATION BEFORE:

Yes	6	13
No	2	6
Not Known	2	2

USED SHELTER BEFORE:

Yes	3	12
No	6	9
Not Known	1	0

REASON FOR LEAVING CENTRE:

Returned home	2	7
Found alternative housing	1	6
Asked to leave	1	0
Didn't like shelter	0	0
No known reason	0	1
Other	5	1
Access Visit over	0	2
Going to Rehab	0	2
Still at MFHP Centre	1	4

DESTINATION/SITUATION:

Returned home to unchanged situation	0	4
Returned home to changed situation	2	2
Relatives/Friends/neighbors	2	4
Own new place/private housing	0	3
Own new place/assistance housing	0	1
Other shelter	3	1
Second stage housing	0	1
Other	1	1
Not Known	1	0
Alcohol & Drug Rehab. Centre	0	2
Still at MFHP Centre	1	4

TOTAL BED STAYS:

Total Bed Stays for Women and Children	131	1356
Total Access Visits (Not Overnight)	10	122
Total Access Visits (Overnight)	0	59
Crisis Calls	150	41

Women's Age Groups

16-29	5	10
30-54	5	8
55+	0	1

Natalie Doucette, Province's First Mi'kmaw Child Welfare Specialist

Natalie Doucette is often on the road offering support to families in transition as the province's first Mi'kmaw child welfare specialist.

"I bring a different perspective that is grounded in our culture. I believe this will open the doors overall for better communication and understanding."

Natalie's priority is to connect with First Nations communities across Nova Scotia as she gets underway in this newly created position.

"This unique role will provide me with the opportunity to explore and develop culturally relevant practices in the delivery of Mi'kmaq child welfare."

At times this will involve a regular commute between offices in Sydney and Eskasoni. And other days, she will be reaching out to 13 First Nation communities as far afield as Pictou Landing, Millbrook, Bear River and Acadia.

Natalie will be working closely with Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services. This close relationship is based on the experience she gained by working with the agency for 24 years.

"To be honest, when I was thinking about taking this new position I got a lot of encouragement - so much that you could almost call it peer pressure," she laughs.

As she embraces this responsibility, her attitude is committed and realistic. Her approach weaves together lessons from her personal life, wisdom from her community, and knowledge from her practice and studies.

Natalie spent her childhood in Potlotek First Nation, also known as Chapel Island, on the Bras D'or Lake in Cape Breton. Her parents encouraged education and community service in all their children. Thanks to their influence, the family is involved with children and youth, recreation, education, nursing, counselling and social work.

"You could say this was in my blood from a young age. With my father being the chief, we always had people come to our family home who were on the forefront of the social and economic issues facing our Mi'kmaw communities," she says. "This provided me with a good sense of the issues affecting our communities which directed my desire to become a Mi'kmaw social worker."



Natalie Doucette humbled with her new position.

She continues to be inspired by her late father Chief Noel Doucette who helped found Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services.

Natalie took her mother's belief in education to heart by first earning a degree in community studies and sociology from the University College of Cape Breton and then following up with another degree in social work from Dalhousie University.

In the community, it's well known that you can call on 'Curly' to roll up her sleeves and get things done. The Chapel Island Community Club keeps her busy volunteering and organizing a wide variety of gatherings. She's happiest in the middle of community events involving extended family, new and old friends, and other volunteers.

Recently, she was busy with Wi'kapaltimk Aqtapuk, a feast marking the start and end of the ceremonial year.

"I was right there in the kitchen, getting ready to feed people."

And after all the preparations are done, her favorite time comes. She loves to serve the food and chat with everyone passing by.

No matter the time of the year, she will be leading volunteers in her community to come together during crises and celebrations alike.

"I'm dedicated and this work is very dear to me," she says.

Family & Community Resource Program

The Family & Community Resource Program is designed to work directly with First Nation communities and Community Partners to identify, develop and provide Services or Resources that will assist them in identifying gaps in service, program delivery, staff & community support and training. The Family & Community Resource staff, Wilma Simon (Prevention Coordinator-Unamaki & Paqtnekek) and Darlene Copeland (Prevention Coordinator Mainland & Valley) have worked tirelessly over the past year delivering Youth, Elder, Parent, Men, Women and Community programs within their respective communities. Many of these programs are coordinated in cooperation with Community Supports, such as NADACA, Police, Health and Education Staff. Programs are delivered and presented by Prevention coordinators in cooperation with MFCS Healing Centre and support staff.

Many of the Programs delivered are based on Traditional Teachings, especially in Unamaki and Paqtnekek. A few Valley First Nations are actively learning and practicing traditional knowledge and teachings, such as, learning the Mikmaw language, Praying in Mikmaw, drum making, dancing, smudging and now, making their own Regalia.

Wilma Simon has taken the lead in educating, teaching and providing the practices of Traditional Mikmaw knowledge and customs. She has been invited to present at many schools and community functions. Her expertise in Traditional knowledge, ceremony and Mikmaw Customs has helped bridge gaps in service, especially, in her ability to educate outside agencies, school boards and Health Authorities regarding Mikmaw Customs and Practices. Other large groups targeted were community based programs, such as the Mawiomis at Acadia University, OUR Eskasoni, Summer Games Fun Day, St Anne's Mission Family Gathering, Treaty Day Celebration, Eskasoni Powwow Grand Entrance Parade, Sisters in Spirit Walks at Mount Allison & Acadia Universities and Community Christmas Dinners in both Potlotek and Eskasoni. With the help of community volunteers and MFCS staff, these events were well received, with over 2000 participants attending these different functions and events.

Many of the Parenting Programs and Support groups involved men, women and co-ed programs for both gender groups. In total, six Parenting Programs, two men programs, seven women programs, seven support co-ed programs and nine Basic Shelf co-ed programs were delivered throughout First Nations communities in Nova Scotia. The Men and Women appreciation Days were well attended with workshops on Self care, traditional teachings and educational community based programs sponsored by MFCS. Approximately, 300 men, women and elders attended these community sessions.

The Elder and Youth Programs were well attended and much appreciated by all participants. Both the Elder Christmas Dinner and Mid-winter Feast in Glooscap and Annapolis Valley was well attended with about 140 community members and Elders attending. At the Mid winter feast, Gerald Gloade from CMM gave a presentation on the significance of the Mid winter feast, especially, for the Mikmaw, as it coincides with the Winter Solstice.

Many of the youth programs were delivered in the Schools, Youth Centres and at Community Youth events. Some of the programs delivered to children and youth were, Youth Drug Symposium in Waycobah, Youth Forum in Membertou, Traditional Teachings, Girl Power in Millbrook and Potlotek, 2BBOYS in Millbrook, Powwows, Self care programs, Valley Youth Gathering Annapolis Valley, Sisters in Spirit Fashion show in Potlotek and Summer Games Fun Day Millbrook. Approximately, 2300 children, youth and community members participated in these events. Darlene Copeland is a Trainer through the Red Cross and has been successful in delivering the Girl Power and 2BBoys to Millbrook and Potlotek. Darlene will be acting in a Train the Trainer capacity, while co-facilitating these

programs in Pictou Landing, Paqtnkek, Glooscap and Wagmatcook with Wilma Simon and Norman Sylliboy. Other communities have expressed an interest in having these programs delivered to their youth. Having two additional staff trained will assist in its delivery to all First Nations throughout Mikmaki.

The Prevention coordinators spearheaded seven Sister in Spirit Walks and two MADD Walks in a number of First Nation communities, with two separate Sister in Spirit Walks and presentations at both Acadia University and Mount St. Vincent University in Sackville, NB. The Sister in Spirit walks were coordinated in Pictou Landing, Paqtnkek, Wagmatcook, Potlotek and Glooscap First Nations. Approximately 500 people attended these Walks. These Walks are supported in memory of the Missing and Murdered Aboriginal women in our First Nations communities. Cultural Safety and Sensitivity Training was delivered to 29 MFCS staff and at two separate Support Groups at NADACA. The "Walking the Prevention Circle" Training was delivered to seven Acadia First Nation Band Staff and 12 Glooscap First Nation Interagency committee members, with "Ten Steps to a Safer Community" being delivered to 18 program support staff in Paqtnkek First Nation.

The Goal of the Family & Community Resource Program is to continue to work with our community partners in the deliverance and promotion of educational, practical and solution based programs.

Good News:

Mikmaq Family & Children Services in Partnership with Red Cross have received a 30,500 grant from the Nova Scotia Domestic Violence Strategy. The Healthy Teen Relationships project is an educational program for middle and High schools that will help teens gain the knowledge and skills to develop healthy relationships and prevent dating violence. Educating teens on healthy peer and intimate relationships is an essential part of a school wide approach for building and promoting safety.

Mainland Health Directors, CMM Health Analyst & MFCS of NS Partnership

Mikmaq Family and Children Services in partnership with Mainland Health Directors and CMM Health Analyst have been meeting over the past three years to enhance Communication and to optimize service delivery and resources in respective First Nation communities. This Community based Professional Partnership have helped to improve communication and education between partners, but more importantly has enhance Program delivery and Resource sharing with and among partners. Through this shared initiative we were able to improve program delivery, discuss and find solutions to challenging issues our communities are faced with, attend Trauma Informed Practice workshop, apply for additional funding through the Domestic Violence Strategy, where five First Nations communities and Mikmaq Family & Children Services were successful in receiving funding for different initiatives.

As part of this renewed Partnership and through the collaboration and lead from the NS Tripartite Social Committee and financial assistance from NS Tripartite Forum Funding, a two day Child Welfare Symposium was held in Membertou on June 22-23rd, 2015. The goal of the Symposium was to bring Community Partners, Grandmothers, MFCS, Chiefs, Departments of Community Services & Justice and the Tripartite Social Committee together to discuss the Challenges, Gaps and proactive Solutions to Aboriginal Child Welfare in Nova Scotia. The Symposium brought together approximately 125 people over two days. The first day looked at Child Welfare "Best Practices" with a number of presentations and group discussions. The second day focused on Child Welfare challenges, gaps in services and how community partners could collectively collaborate in improving services to communities and the people we service. As part of this framework and in cooperation with MFCS and the NS Tripartite Social committee, the next steps will be to provide a four day Train the Trainer program in Child Welfare Reconciliation to approximately 30 Community partners, MFCS staff, and Tripartite Social committee members.

This Program was developed by Cindy Blackstock and her Team of Child Welfare Specialist. However, this is contingent on future funding through the NS Tripartite Funding. A proposal will be developed and submitted to the NS Tripartite Fund for potential funding to deliver this Training. The target date for this training will be in October, 2016.

The Health Director/MFCS working committee have met six times this year with three larger quarterly meetings with the Mikmaw Provincial Committee. The quarterly committee meeting bring together NS Health Directors, Family court Justices, Legal aid representatives, MK, NADACA, DCS, Chiefs and MFCS Staff. The goal of these meeting is to collectively enhance, collaborate and communicate shared program delivery, discuss gaps in services and resources and to coordinate same, communicate potential community and staff training and cost sharing program delivery initiatives.

The goal for next year is to recruit membership to the Working Group committee from community and provincial organizations such as, NADACA, MLSN, MK, Justice and others who may be interested in sitting on the working committee. Potential committee name change is Mikmaki Provincial Network.

Mikmaw Maliseet BSW Program

The MMBSW Program has been graduating Aboriginal Social Workers from the Atlantic Region since 2005. Approximately, 53 Aboriginal Social Workers have graduated from this program. The fourth cohort had commenced in September, 2014 at St. Thomas University with 30 students. However, for different reasons two individuals have left the program. Mikmaw Family & Children Services currently have six staff enrolled in the MMBSW program. Student Field Placements will commence in January, 2017, with all MFCS staff/students requesting to do Field Placements within the Agency. There are two other students enrolled in the BSW program who have expressed interest in completing their Field Placements with MFCS. As the coordinator of Student Field Placements, I will be meeting with St. Thomas University Field Placement Faculty Staff to discuss potential placements. Coordination with MFCS Supervisors and the Executive Director is essential to ensure a smooth transition for students and staff.

The Goal of Mikmaw Family & Children Services is to Attain, Recruit, Train and Hire Aboriginal Social Workers, support staff, administrative staff and other personal, when possible, who share the same Vision of Mikmaw Family & Children Services.

Mikmaw Independent Living Program

There is not much to report as the Independent Living Program did not happen in 2015. As previously reported, last year, there were not enough older Youth in Care who fell within this criteria. However, with that one year break, we have 16 youth enrolled in the 2016 program, which commenced in February, 2016. A full report will be available next year.

Mikmaw Cultural Day Camp: Unamaki & Mainland Youth

Due to the Independent Living Program being postponed for a year, It was decided at the Advisory committee level that we would pilot a two day Cultural Day Camp for youth between 13-15 years of age. To ensure youth received daily transportation to and from Cultural Events we had two camps set up, one in Unamaki and the other in the mainland.

In Unamaki , the camps were from July 7-8. Ten youth were registered, and on the first day we visited Waycobah First Nation with a workshop on the Seven Sacred Teachings by Wilma Simon. After lunch, the group headed to Pleasant Bay where we boarded a boat for a two hour Whale Watch. Many of the youth had never went on a whale watch and they enjoyed it immensely. The guide was

very informative and the Captain allowed the youth to sit on his Captain's seat and steer the boat. Many pictures were taken on the boat and a group picture was taken with the staff, youth and the Captain & Guide.

Day two, the youth visited Membertou Heritage Centre and received an informative tour by two guides at the Centre. After the tour, the youth made medicine pouches and dream catchers. Upon completion of lunch the group headed to Louisbourg. A Guide met us at the Entrance and we traveled to the Fortress. The guide and history of the Fortress was very educational and the youth asked many questions. That day, there were no Mikmaw scouts present but a brief history of the Mikmaw as French Allies was discussed. The youth had a wonderful time and expressed a desire to have these types of Educational tours be available to them on a regular ongoing basis.

In the mainland, the two day cultural camp was on July 21-22. There was ten youth registered for the camp, but only seven attended. On the first day, youth gathered at the office of MFCS in Sipekne'katik, where Grandmother, Doreen Bernard, delivered a workshop on Traditional medicines and the youth made medicine pouches. Chenise Hache, a student with the Halifax Circus, came to teach Hoop Dancing. The exercise was very enjoyable but what was more intriguing was her genuineness and teachings of Self. After lunch, we headed to the Debert Interactive Centre. Unfortunately, our guide did not arrive, so we did completed a 3km unguided tour ourselves.

Day two we arrived at the Millbrook Heritage centre. The group was given a guided tour and then had an opportunity to participate in a scavenger hunt. The group that finished first received a 25 dollar gift card from the gift shop. After our morning break, we were visited by Elder and Author, Isabel Knockwood. She spoke eloquently about her life, her involvement and work with the homeless people in Boston and her book, "Out of the Depths". Her most important teaching for that day was on Mikmaw History, our Beliefs, Traditions and our Culture. The youth sat quietly through her Teachings, asking questions and taking in her Wisdom.

After lunch we made Talking Sticks, it was fun and the youth enjoyed helping each other out. That afternoon we were scheduled to have a guided tour by an Elder to visit Merigomish Island. Merigomish is known by many Mikmaw, as a gathering place to celebrate St. Anne's Mission. Unfortunately, we were informed by Chief Andrea two days prior our visit, that there was a death in the community and a Funeral and Salite will be happening on the day of our visit.

Overall, the youth and MFCS staff enjoyed the two day cultural day camps. Discussions will be held to determine whether these camps will continue this summer. Alternative Day camps may happen in the Fall and Winter.

Family & Community Resource Program:

Community Workshops/ Training / Programs

Statistics 2015-2016

Workshop/training	Community	Target Group	# of participants
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April, 2015

Elders Drum support	Wagmatcook	Elders/health staff	45
Domestic Violence	Waycobah	Women support group	16
Traditional Teachings	Membertou	Women support group	20
Drumming Ceremony	Waycobah	youth/parents/community	125
Traditional Teachings	Potlotek	Residential School Survivors	17
Teen Violence workshop	Membertou	Female Teens	18
Parenting Program	Millbrook	Daycare staff	14
MADD walk	Annapolis Valley	community	60
Parenting Program	Sipekne'katik	women support	7
WTPC training	Glooscap	Interagency committee	12
Crisis Team support	Glooscap	Community	60
Youth Forum	Membertou	Youth	90
Interagency	Annapolis Valley	Committee members	8
Interagency	Glooscap	Committee members	15
Youth independent Living	Antigonish	committee members	8
Valley Youth Gathering	Annapolis Valley	committee members	10
Sisters in Spirit	Acadia University	committee members	15
			Total: 540

May, 2015

Basic Shelf training	Waycobah	Men/Women co-ed	12
Stiletos to moccasins	Wagmatcook	men/women co-ed	6
Women's Day celebration	Waycobah	community women	24
Traditional Teaching	Wagmatcook	Health/education staff	20
Basic shelf training	Waycobah	Men/Women co-ed	15
Program Development	Potlotek	Health/education staff	8
Cultural Training	Eskasoni	Men/Women/NADACA	14
AGA Foster Federation	Truro	Foster Parents/staff	65
Parenting Program	Millbrook	Daycare staff (3 sessions)	45
Mental Health Access	Eskasoni	Community Partnerships	40
MFCS/HD	Paqtnkek	Working group	8
Youth Independent Living	Antigonish	committee members	8
Tripartite Forum	Sipekne'katik	Social committee	12
Provincial MFCS/HD	Millbrook	committee members	35
AGA Tripartite Forum	Membertou	committee members	75
Supervisor's meeting	Dartmouth	MFCS Supervisors	28
Interagency	Glooscap	Committee members	13
Interagency	Annapolis Valley	committee members	7
MVYG	Annapolis Valley	Committee members	8
			Total: 443

June, 2015

Traditional Crafts	Waycobah	Men/Women	12
Job Career Day	Eskasoni	Students/teachers	600
Self Care Workshop	Potlotek	High School students	24
Drug symposium	Waycobah	students/community	145
Sexual Violence response	Paqtnkek	community	17
Basic shelf training	Waycobah	women/men	22
Grand Council Education	Paqtnkek	community/elders	22
Waltes Teachings	Potlotek	Students/teachers	8
Women's Appreciation	Potlotek	Community women	45
Traditional teachings	New Glasgow	Addiction staff	9
Elders Support meet	Glooscap	Community elders	10
Tim Horton's Camp	Truro	General public	
Elder's clean up	Glooscap	community	20
Interagency	Glooscap	committee members	15
Interagency	Membertou	committee members	13
MVYG	Annapolis Valley	Committee members	10
Caring Dads Training	Amherst	Facilitators	20
Presentation	Dartmouth	HD'S/Nurses	40
MMBSW	Sackville, NB	steering committee	10
Youth Independent Living	Antigonish	Advisory Committee	8
Child Welfare Symposium	Membertou	Provincial/Unamaki	130
Annual General Assembly	Bear River	MFCS staff/guests	150
			Total: 1330

July, 2015

Powwow grand Entrance	Eskasoni	community/youth/elders	240
Seven Sacred Teachings	Waycobah	CC Cultural day camp	15
Whale Watching	Margaree	CC Cultural day camp	15
Medicine wheel teaching	Membertou	CC Cultural camp	15
Tour of Louisbourg	Louisbourg	CC Cultural day camp	15
Community Garden	Eskasoni	Youth	4
Field Trip	Debert	CC Cultural day camp	12
Traditional Medicine	Sipeken'katik	CC Cultural day camp	12
Residential school Teaching	Millbrook	CC Cultural day camp	12
Mikmaw History	Millbrook	CC Cultural day camp	12
Making Talking sticks	Millbrook	CC Cultural day camp	12
Valley Youth Gathering	Annapolis Valley	youth/community	150
Waltes Teachings	Pictou Landing	Community Elders	14
St Anne Mission Gathering	Potlotek	community/youth/elders	330
			Total: 858

August, 2015

Summer Games Fun Day	Millbrook	community children/youth/parents	1000
Sisters in Spirit	Acadia Univ.	Advisory committee	10
Community Programs	Wagmatcook	Chief/Health staff	8
			Total: 1018

September, 2015

Treaty Day celebration	Wagmatcook	students/elders/teachers	125
Traditional Teachings	Membertou	women support group	13
Mikmaw Dancing	Waycobah	students/community	85
Service Provider training	Eskasoni	access drivers/support staff	27
Tim Horton's Camp Graduation		youth	50
SIS Walk	Wolfville	advisory committee	10
Support Group	Pictou Landing	women/men co-ed	20
Parenting Program	Gold River	community	10
Mawiomi/SIS Walk	Acadia Univ.	students/Faculty/Elders	100
Parenting Program	Pictou Landing	women/men co-ed	20
MMBSW	Sackville,NB	steering committee	8
Youth Independent Living	Antigonish	advisory committee	8
Tripartite Forum	Membertou	social committee	12
MFCS/HD	Paqtnkek	working committee	7
Provincial MFCS/HD	Millbrook	provincial/mikmaki	40
Interagency	Glooscap	committee members	12
Interagency	Annapolis Valley	committee members	8
Supervisor's meeting	Dartmouth	supervisors/ed	29
Interagency	Membertou	committee members	12
			Total: 596

October, 2015

SIS Walk	Pictou Landing	community	45
Parent Support	Pictou Landing	men/women co-ed	7
Parent Support	Sipekne'katik	women	6
WTPC Training	Acadia	staff	7
Brother's in Spirit	Millbrook	men/youth	20
Girl Power	Millbrook	female youth	12
Parent Support	Pictou Landing	men/women co-ed	10
Girl Power	Millbrook	female youth	13
Safer community	Paqtnkek	community support staff	18
SIS Walk	Paqtnkek	family/community	85
Traditional Teachings	Potlotek	health Staff	6
Walk to Remember	Membertou	parents/community	75
Simple Gift	Wagmatcook	parents	14
Powwow	Waycobah	students/teachers	75
Remembering our Babies	Waycobah	family/community	140
Conflict Resolution	Eskasoni	staff/community	65

Crisis Intervention	Wagmatcook	chief/School staff	10
Self esteem/care	Waycobah	support staff	24
Healing Circle	Paqtnekek	community/health staff	25
Harm Reduction	Glooscap	community	25
Traditional Teaching	Cambridge	students/teachers	15
Youth Gathering	Waycobah	students/teachers	100
Cultural Sensitivity	Antigonish	mfcs staff	29
Interagency	Glooscap	committee members	12
Interagency	Membertou	committee members	14
			Total: 852

November, 2015

Girl Power	Millbrook	female Youth	13
FASD Training	Sydney	Social Workers	45
SIS/WTPC	Mount Allison Univ	students/Faculty	75
Youth Independent Living	Antigonish	advisory committee	8
Tripartite Forum	Millbrook	health/mfsc/NADACA	60
Health conference	Moncton	health professionals	100
MFCS/HD	Paqtnekek	working committee	7
Interagency	Glooscap	committee members	12
Domestic Violence	Wagmatcook	community	10
MMIW	Wagmatcook	health/community	18
Traditional Teachings	Acadia	community	30
SIS Walk	Wagmatcook	community	75
Community Healing Garden	Wagmatcook	community	20
Healthy Attachment	Wagmatcook	parents	14
SIS Walk	Potlotek	community	35
SIS Fashion show	Potlotek	Students/Teachers	45
			Total: 567

December, 2015

Justice conference	Truro	justice/social staff	100
Elders Dinner	Annapolis Valley/Glooscap	community Elders	80
Basic Shelf	Sheet Harbour	men/women	12
Basic Shelf	Glooscap	men/women	12
Basic Shelf	Pictou Landing	men/women	12
Basic Shelf	Sipekne'katik	men/women	15
Tripartite Forum	Sipekne'katik	social committee	15
Clinical Supervision	Eskasoni	mfcs supervisors	18
Youth Independent Living	Antigonish	advisory committee	8
NSASW	Dalhousie Univ.	advisory committee	10
Annual Staff Meeting	Dartmouth	mfcs/guest speaker	100
First Aid Training	Membertou	health/mfcs	24
Crisis Team Workshop	Wagmatcook	health/rcmp/addictions	12
Traditional Teachings	Wagmatcook	students/teachers/elders	65
Christmas Dinner	Potlotek	community	110
Healing Christmas Dinner	Eskasoni	community	350
			Total: 943

January, 2016

2BBoys	Millbrook	male youth	14
Girl Power	Potlotek	female youth	12
Parenting Program	Sipekne'katik	women/men	8
2BBoys	Millbrook	male youth	14
Healing Circle	Paqtnkek	community	24
Interagency	Membertou	committee	14
Youth Dance	Waycobah	students/social support	64
Program Development	Wagmatcook	students/teachers	35
Grand Council Teachings	Wagmatcook	elders/students	25
Waltes Teachings	Waycobah	community/elders	24
Hands are not for Hitting	Wagmatcook	students	35
MMBSW	Sackville,NB	advisory committee	8
Sex Workers Info session	Sydney	community partners	50
Youth Independent Living	Antigonish	advisory committee	8
MFCS/HD	Paqtnkek	working committee	7
Sexual Violence Strategy	Millbrook	planning committee	6
HC/F&C Resource	Antigonish	strategy meeting	6
Supervisor's meeting	Dartmouth	mfcs supervisors/ED	30
Interagency	Glooscap	committee	12

Total: 396

February, 2016

2BBoys	Millbrook	male youth	14
Girl Power	Potlotek	female youth	12
Trauma Informed Practice	Moncton	community partners	100
Girl Power	Potlotek	female youth	12
Interagency	Glooscap	committee	14
Mid-Winter Feast	Valley Bands	community	82
Girl Power	Potlotek	female youth	12
Provincial HD/MFCS	Millbrook	provincial/aboriginal	40
Parenting Program	Sipekne'katik	men/women	8
Healing Circle	Paqtnkek	community	26
Honoring Marshall	Membertou	community	56
Valentine Day Gathering	Waycobah	men/women	18
OUR ESKASONI	Eskasoni	community	1000
Elders Retreat	Millbrook	planning committee	5
Youth Independent Living	Antigonish	advisory committee	9
Media Training	Dartmouth	executive/ed/supervisor	12
Interagency	Membertou	committee	13
Tripartite Forum	Millbrook	social committee	12
Supervisor's Meeting	Dartmouth	mfcs supervisors	27
Youth Retreat	Baddeck	youth in care/mfcs staff	30

Total: 1502

March, 2016

Girl Power	Potlotek	female youth	12
MVYG	Annapolis Valley	planning committee	7
AGA Tripartite Forum	Wagmatcook	tripartite committees	75
Youth Independent Living	Antigonish	advisory committee	10
Self care	Potlotek	students/community	43
Waltes Teachings	Waycobah	youth/community	26
Women Appreciation Day	Potlotek	community women	35
Healing Circle	Paqtnkek	community	25
Community Feast	Potlotek	community	65
Community Gathering	Waycobah	community	22
March Break Swim	Port Hawkesbury	waycobah families	28
Self Care	Membertou	women	14
Basic Shelf	Waycobah	women/men	20
Traditional Teachings	Wagmatcook	community	30
Women's Appreciation Day	Eskasoni	community women	90

Total: 502

Family Support and Case Aid Program Annual Report

Respectfully Submitted by Program Supervisor Deborah Boyd (B.A. Hon.(Psyc.) and
Acting Program Supervisor Matilda Koopmann

Family support programs deliver a range of services guided by principles that focus on building supportive relationships, facilitating growth, respecting diversity and furthering community development. Our programs focus on parental daily life skills in multiple areas of family functioning based on the adult education learning model in which information is presented, discussed and modelled in the caregiver's personal life experience. Family Support is an essential component of the case management team.

The role of Family Support Program staff is to provide families with the parenting skills , life skills and access to community resources that will help them provide a better life for themselves and for their children. Services are provided to men, women and children in all First Nation communities in Nova Scotia through home visitation and working collaboratively with Agency and Community resources.

Family Support utilizes a family centered "whole family" approach in providing families with opportunities to strengthen family functioning, enhance new competencies, and work in ways, which are culturally sensitive and socially relevant. The path to personal growth with families focuses on developing self sufficiency through Self Care and Life Skills which provides the foundation for healthy parenting. The Family Support Program combines traditional parenting skills with positive contemporary parenting skills in a holistic manner, encouraging balance with one's spiritual, emotional, mental and physical well being.

In Family Support, we consider ourselves "encouragers, " assisting parents in creating awareness for behaviour change and increase their traditional knowledge. Life skills programs are delivered in the context of the Seven Sacred Teachings and involve the following: Decision making, Problem solving, Effective Communication, Interpersonal relationships, Self awareness/ Mindfulness, Assertiveness, Empathy, Coping with Stress, Trauma, Loss and Resilience. Information provided to parents are reflective of the Key Determinants of Health, Income and Social Status, Social Support

Networks, Education and Literacy, Employment/Working Conditions, Social Environments, Physical Environments, Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills, Healthy Child Development, Biology , Health Services, Gender and Culture.

Indigenous parenting is ensuring that our language and culture survive for future generations. These are the essential building blocks of nationhood. We have a large compliment of our staff who are fluent Mi'kmaw speakers and are grounded in traditional knowledge.

Essential guidelines of the Family Support Program:

- *Start where the person is: Understand their learning style, their strengths and their abilities.
- *Begin with what is important to the person: program material must be related to the person's life experience, their goals and their hope for the future in terms of their desired changes.
- *Build on Family members strengths: Use what they know and acknowledge and build on strengths and personal gifts of character (virtues).
- *Connect what family members are learning to their goals: Explain how learning new skills will contribute to family wellness.
- *Positive outcomes are promoted through the attention to the learning process, and strengths/ goals of the family; helping parents and caregivers in solving problems, meeting needs and improving relationships.

We are extremely proud of the hard work and dedication of our family support team. We have recorded high closure rates for families open to this service in which active participation of families utilizing these services have completed programs with positive outcomes. Both offices uphold quality assurance of family support and case aid programs through regular supervisor consultation, monthly team meetings with staff, unit meetings and training to review the practices of standards and procedures. The Indian Brook Office had one student placement through NSCC which assisted in child care activities with family support and the Independent Living Retreat.

Year	Total Number of Families (Both Offices)
2006-2007	86
2008-2009	87
2009-2010	96
2010-2011	113
2011-2012	113
2012-2013	71
2014-2015	126
2015-2016	145

Family Support Yearly Comparative Analysis: 2006 - 2015

Eskasoni Office 87 (4 PCC)
Indian Brook Office 47 (7PCC)

Training/Professional Development/Special Projects

Deborah Boyd was recently confirmed as a Maritime Director for the National Board of the Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs (FRP Canada). This position will enable the mutual sharing of resources and program capacity building which will nourish the direction of our work. Family Support staff have completed First Aid training and received certified training in the Caring Dad's Program and Traditional Parenting Program. Staff also had the opportunity to actively participate and contribute to the Child Welfare Symposium held in Membertou on June 22 and 23, 2016. Our participation in this process of moving forward as an Agency in meeting the evolving needs of our families was critical in our growth process. Staff have completed mandatory Cultural Sensitivity Training, Conflict Resolution, and Human Resources Policy orientation .

Unamaki staff participated in a Traditional Healing Water Ceremony & Grandmother Teachings Gathering at the Eskasoni Fisheries Building, October 25th, 2015 with elder Josephine Mandamin, a Traditional Water Walker and Grandmother Teacher of the Grandmother's Lodge, Thunder Bay. This Ceremony was extremely beneficial to our Traditional Learning. Family Support presented at AGM for N.S. Native Women Assoc. on financial literacy.

The Family Support staff continue active participation in family group conferencing in which Debbie Boyd sits on the Family Group Conferencing Protocol Committee.

We have forged new partnerships with Nadaca, Nova Scotia Health Authority Neonatal Program (Guidelines for Access Facilitation) and professional training with staff of Opiate Recovery Program and the Family Law Information Centre (Parent Information Program).

Family Support has also been active in assisting as a resource with Family and Community Healing in delivering community based initiatives to promote healing and cultural identity. Staff have delivered presentations with health, education groups, R.C.M.P. as well as assisted in Elder appreciation, Mother's Day Events and other community events celebrating healing and wellness. Staff from both offices contribute to the delivery of programs in the Independent Living Program in which staff work with our youth in care through retreats and also through the Family Support Program, one on one.

Enriching our resources and making vital linkages to formal and informal community resources has been an ongoing process in which supporting families in creating and maintaining stability and recovery are major themes of our involvement. All of these resources are consistent with the Agency's vision of supporting families through culturally relevant practices. The book, "Our Grandmother's Words: Traditional Stories of Nurturing by Murdena Marshall et al. is provided to every family with young children who receive services from our program in Unamaki. A proposal for funding to obtain additional books for both offices has been submitted to the Family Literacy Initiative Endowment Fund (Department of Labour and Advanced Education). This resource is a valuable tool in promoting attachment, early learning and cultural identity.

Our department had the opportunity to participate in a knowledge and vision sharing session coordinated by N.S. Native Women and the NS Advisory Council on the Status of Women to address violence against aboriginal women and girls on November 6, 2015. "Our Grandmother's Words ...book was presented to Community Services Minister Joanne Bernard who also provided positive feedback on the positive work being done by this Agency.

Case Aide Program

Case Aides are an essential part of the Case Management Team: The Case-Aide provides a variety of services to families, children and adults. Setting up and coordinating drivers, schedules for access and maintain reports for child abuse and police checks. Transports children and adults to and from their homes, foster homes, institutions and various medical, dental, psychological, education, counseling, appointment and cultural or recreational activities. Escorts children to sibling and parental access visits and may also be the Access Facilitator. Case Aides work closely with the case management team to ensure referrals are processed and service providers are trained in a timely and efficient manner.

The case aide program had an influx of new service providers this year, although recruitment is an ongoing process. The Professional Guidelines for Service Providers Manual was completed and service providers received formal training. The Agency also sponsored First Aide training for all service providers employed by this Agency. Training is ongoing and is dedicated to reviewing best practices as well as cultural sensitivity.

This year there was considerable dialogue internally and externally regarding reimbursable guidelines with Health Canada and local health services. Policy 75 Agreements are improving, in which caseworkers are completing these agreements and providing them to the Case Aide office in a timely manner.

Accurate statistical recording has been an issue in the Eskasoni office and this has improved in the last several months due to streamlining methods of recording from the Indian Brook Office.

Statistics	Drives	Access/Drives	Infant Support	Youth Mentor
Eskasoni Office	1598	1944	(combined with access)	Not avail.
Indian brook Office	1495	1482	392	2650

2016 Annual Report for Permanent Care & Custody

Respectfully Submitted by Denise Maracle, BSW, RSW and Pius Trainor, BSW, RSW

The Children in Care department is designed to care for the children/youth in the permanent care and custody of the agency. Many of the children/youth no longer reside with their biological parent(s). We work closely with the foster/kinship/youth and the biological families to ensure that the child will be successful in their placement. The goal for case workers is to guide and assist their children/youth through life acting as "wise and conscientious parents". Children in Care have been accessing the Family Group Conferencing process in the attempt to include appropriate family and significant others for the youth to help work out issues.

Our youth continue to be nominated and awarded the Outstanding Youth Awards. This award recognizes Nova Scotian youth between the ages of 13 - 18 years old who have demonstrated at least one of the following: educational achievement; leadership; outstanding achievement in sport/cultural/hobby; shown tenacity in overcoming personal obstacles; have a plan for the future.

Our youth also continue to participate in the agency's Independent Living Program. This program is designed to assist them in gaining skills required to successfully live independently. The Children in Care team work closely with the Family Support department to provide appropriate workshops and programs to our youth. Workshops that have been provided in the past have been: Healthy Relationships, Budgeting, Conflict Resolution and many more life skill based information. Each office also offered a two day cultural camp for youth who were between the ages of 13 and 15. The youth from Eskasoni enjoyed whale watching and going to Fortress Louisburg while the Indian Brook office youth went to the Millbrook Heritage Center and did the Mi'Kwawey Debert Hiking Trail. This was a wonderful success and the youth involved were very engaged and positive.

The main services that majority of our youth receive is youth support, access and therapy. These services are positive not only for the youth but is also an extra support for the foster placement. We have been attempting to access more of the specialized programs for our youth who have intellectual and mental health disabilities, we currently have 5 youth engaged in the Disability Support Program.

All of our staff have completed the mandatory training required to satisfy the NSASW requirements. Many of the workers have attended the Human Trafficking information session as well as Working with Youth that experience Trauma. All of this training have assisted in our workers being able to work better with our youth.

There are currently 54 children in care on the Mainland that are in permanent care. 20 have provincial settlement and 34 have federal settlement. We are supervising 3 youth from three different provinces. 19 youth have exited care over the last year through aging out, adoption or returning to birth family.

In Eskasoni there are 90 children in permanent care. Three have provincial settlement and the remaining are federal settlement status.

Adoption & Resource - Eskasoni

Respectfully submitted by Karlena Johnson, BSW, MEdC, RSW
Casework Supervisor – Adoption & Resource

The Eskasoni Adoption & Resource department supports the Vision, Mission & Values of the Agency, the Business, Strategic & Operational Plan and the "Calls to Action" of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission. Our department has the privilege of working with the caring families who become the Kinship/Foster Parents and Adoptive parents for children in the care of the Agency. The Adoption & Resource department provides assessment of Respite, Kinship & General Foster Homes and Adoptive families to ensure that Mi'kmaw children in the care of the Agency are placed in culturally appropriate Mi'kmaw homes. The Adoption & Resource department provides Traditions of Caring training to our Kinship Foster & Kinship Adoptive Families as well as referrals to PRIDE Pre-Service & PRIDE CORE for additional training. Ongoing support is provided to families who are in the process of adopting children in care or who have adopted and receive an Adoption Subsidy; support may also include facilitating Openness Agreements for Access between children who are adopted and their birth families or connecting adoptive families to needed community & specialized resources.

Our goal is to ensure the recruitment, assessment & training of extended family and community members who come forward to care for children in care. This puts into action the part of the Agency Mission "Leading with excellence and working in partnership to Provide safe and nurturing care for children and youth in a manner that is culturally appropriate and reflecting the history and traditions of First Nations people." As per the Agency Business, Strategic & Operational Plan, we are also tracking school performance, out of home placement, moves in care, permanency status 36 months after coming into care, family moves, and aboriginal placement matching. Quarterly Reports are prepared for the Agency & DCS for Kinship & General foster homes receiving Full Approval and Children in Care who receive permanency through Adoption. We feel privileged to work with the caring families who become our Kinship/Foster & Adoptive parents and the children who receive permanency through adoption.

The Kinship & General Foster Care Assessors/Traditions of Caring Workers were very busy this year. During the fiscal year, 57 Kinship assessments were worked on by the three workers: 10 Kinship assessments were carried over from the previous year, 47 new referrals for Respite/Kinship assessments were received, 18 Kinship applicants withdrew at Intake or during assessment, 30 Kinship foster homes were approved and 9 were carried over into the new fiscal year. Meetings occur with Kinship & General foster parents for a survey when they close their foster homes; 19 open Kinship & General foster homes were closed. There were 19 Kinship foster homes (30 adults) who finished Traditions of Care training programs held in Potlotek, Wagmatcook, Eskasoni and Membertou. Of those who completed TOC, 16 Kinship foster homes are on the wait list for a Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) assessment. On Jan 13, 2016 we completed our first Fully Approved Kinship Foster Home which includes Conditional Approval, Traditions of Caring (TOC) training program and a SAFE assessment.

Our Unit worked collaboratively on recruiting Respite, Kinship, General Foster Care & Adoptive families with recruitment activities conducted in four Unamaki communities and Millbrook. Event dates were: May 2015 Wagmatcook, July 5, 2015 Eskasoni Powwow, August 2015 Summer games Millbrook, September 2015 Membertou Powwow, February 17, 2016 Waycobah, February 20, 2016 Heritage Days in Membertou. Only one General Foster Care referral was received from the Federation of Foster Families 1-800 number. Towards the end of the fiscal year, 16 Kinship foster parents asked to be signed up for training and assessment so they can become General foster parents. The majority of the Kinship homes opened were in Eskasoni followed by Membertou & Sydney area in the 2015-

2016 fiscal year. We are always seeking additional Adoption, Kinship & General Foster Home applicants and we welcome self-referrals.

During the fiscal year, there were 19 Adoption referrals received for the potential adoptions of 30 children in care. The children are referred to the Adoption Children in Care Worker who assists the CIC Workers in the collaborative work towards permanency through adoption for the children in care. The adoptive applicants are referred to the Adoption Pre-Assessment Worker and then to the Adoption Assessment Worker. The Adoption Pre-Assessment Worker worked on 16 of the referrals, one was assigned to a Kinship Assessor, one referral was sent to the Indian Brook office and one referral was sent to DCS. Eight adoption applicants who completed both the pre-assessment and the assessment processes had their adoption SAFE assessments completed within 2 to 4 months. Seven of these were approved to adopt and one was still pending a decision. Three additional applicants had been referred in 2014 for the pre-assessment & training completion which took longer than usual; once the 3 SAFE assessments were begun in 2015, they were completed in 6 to 8 months. The 11 adoption SAFE assessments completed during the year involve the potential adoption of 25 children. The Adoption Assessor also completed 3 SAFE assessments for Foster Care.

At the end of the fiscal year, there were 41 children receiving an Adoption Subsidy, including the 4 Mi'kmaw children in adoption probation. All Mi'kmaq children were placed in Mi'kmaq families. There were 15 children for whom a Notice of Proposed Adoption (NPA) was filed indicating the approved adoptive applicant(s)' intention to legally adopt the child(ren) whom the Agency has placed with them. Ten of these children had their NPA's filed and Adoptions Granted in the same fiscal year. In total, there were 17 adoptions granted during the year. One of the goals of the Agency is improving the Outcomes for children and youth which includes tracking the Permanency Status of children 36 months after coming into care. The children who were adopted were in care for an average period of 4 years and 10.5 months; and a median period of 4 years. The shortest time between entering care and adoption finalization was 3 years and the longest was 11 years and 6 months. Additional Goals include tracking school performance and moves in care. Three of the children were one grade below their same-age peers and there were no placement changes in the last fiscal year for these 17 children whose adoptions were finalized.

The Adoption & Resource staff have participated in various professional development opportunities this past year. These include seminars, webinars, training sessions, workshops and presentations from various sources. Participation in committees included the FGC Protocol, We'koqma'q Inter Agency and the Foster Family Federation & MFCS Joint committee.

The Adoption & Resource department goals for the upcoming year include:

- Help additional children in care, whether they need a short-term Kinship or General foster home, Contracted Care foster home or permanency through Adoption
- Encourage greater collaboration between departments to ensure a smoother transition for children in care and their Kinship/General foster & Adoptive families
- Complete 40+ kinship assessments
- Deliver the Traditions of Care training program twice in Membertou in April 2016
- Deliver the Traditions of Care training program in We'koqma'q in Spring 2016
- Deliver the Traditions of Care training program in the Fall of 2016 in Potlotek
- Encourage foster care, kinship and adoptive families to take Sensitivity and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training in the spring/summer of 2016
- Assess the Kinship foster homes who have requested training and assessment to become General foster parents
- Seek approval from DCS to develop specific Contracted Care foster homes

- Complete one SAFE assessment per worker, except the Adoption Worker to complete 10
- Promote recruitment using flyers and information packages on a monthly basis
- Move potential foster & adoptive families through the Pre-Assessment and Assessment process on a timely basis

Respectfully submitted for the 2015-2016 MFCS Annual Report.

Resource Family – Foster Care

Respectfully Submitted by Jodi Phillips, BSW, RSW - Casework Supervisor – Indian Brook Office
Sheraine Young, BSW, RSW - Casework Supervisor – Eskasoni Office

Brief description of the Role of the Department and Goals

The role of the Foster Care department is to provide children and youth who have come into the care of Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services with an alternate family environment, to ensure that the children in care of the Agency are in a Mi'kmaw Foster Home or Kinship Foster Home. The Foster Care department also provides to foster families' on-going training, assessing needs and providing services foster families which support the children in care.

When seeking Foster Care placements for children our goal is to seek placements based on the current situation and needs of the child. The department will also determine if a Foster Home is considered an appropriate match for the child, i.e. cultural, language, behaviors, location are some areas that would be considered which seeking a Foster Home for a child.

The following are a list of Foster Care placement options:

Kinship Care: "is a full time care of children who are in the Minister's care and custody, by relatives or other adults with whom the children have had a pre-existing relationship."

Foster Care-"are approved to provide care for children who are not related to them; this approval is not restricted to particular children."

Emergency Care- is a short term placement for a child requiring a foster home during afterhours.

Respite Services-"is defined by a child or youth requiring overnight care for a specific purpose of providing relief for the primary foster family."

IE Nova Scotia Foster Care Manual

Our Foster Families are a vital member of a professional team whose daily responsibility is (but not limited) to care for children and youth within the Province of Nova Scotia. Foster Parent's roles are to support the child's transition in returning home, placement with a family member/ community members or transition to adoption.

Our main goal for the department is to remain focused on recruitment for the purpose of potential applicants for the Foster Care program. The department also wants to ensure that our children coming into care remain within their respective communities, family or within a Mi'kmaw home.

Other goals for our Foster Care department are as follows:

1. Retention of current Foster Homes
2. Maintaining Support to our Foster Families
3. Using a team approach when working with the other departments in an effort to our Foster Parents and children.
4. Provide information and education to the 13 Mi'kmaw communities (including Health Centre) and members regarding the process of becoming a Foster Parent as well as conveying the need for the Foster Homes.
5. Seeking for Mi'kmaw Specialized homes

Achievements, Special Projects and Events

Our Mi'kmaw communities have shown their support in the Agency's recruitment efforts by asking questions, gathering information and expressing interest by contacting the agency and beginning the process of their home assessment.

In October Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services annually hosts a Foster Family Appreciation Banquet. Our Foster Families are invited for a large feast, activities for the families, door prizes, and Foster family gifts are presented. Foster Parents are recognized by the Department of Community Services (D.C.S) for their 5, 10, 15 or more years of service certificates which are presented to our foster parents who have reached this milestone. The Foster Family Appreciation Banquet is also an opportunity for foster families to connect with one another and the staff to show their appreciation.

A special project that was hosted by the community of Sipkene'katik was hosting exchange students from Kugaaruk, Nunavut. The Agency was able to donate school bags and supplies to each student.

Trends

Our Foster Care department has the ongoing issue with placements, we are in need of more Foster Homes and preferably Regular Foster Homes and Specialized Homes.

Although we have had struggles with recruitment of Regular and Specialized Foster Homes, there appears to be an increase in Kinship Foster Home referrals and approved applicants. This is in keeping with the Agency's philosophy of Mi'kmaw children remaining with family. This continues to be the result of continued work with the Agency and the communities identifying family members from the onset of when children are entering into care.

Another noted trend in the Foster Care Department has been Kinship Foster Homes expressing an interest in becoming a Regular Foster Home. This means that these homes are interested in training and the completion of their S.A.F.E. (Structured Analysis Family Evaluation) assessment to provide care to children whom they might not be related to or have a family connection with.

This year we have seen a trend of our long term Foster Homes closing either due to children aging out of care or being adopted.

We have closed more Kinship Foster Homes due to:

1. Children returning home or to other family members.
2. Some Seasoned Foster Homes have decided to close their home (family decision).
3. Foster Parent has relocated
4. the children have required alternate placement

There has also been an increase to generational Foster Families. We have families where there are third and four generations applying to become Foster Parents. Since this is a trend is newly discovered, we are excited to see how this trend develops over the upcoming year. It seems to be growing!

Challenges and Solutions

We have a limited amount of Foster Homes and therefore we struggle in finding placements for children, therefore there is a significant need within our Mi'kmaw communities for Foster Parents and Specialized Homes.

We have Kinship Homes who are willing to remain open and also to take the required training and complete the Home assessment. The kinship home has the potential to change from Kinship Home to Regular Foster home therefore remaining open to provide care for other children other than family.

A continued focus of the social work profession is that of self-care. The foster care team in monthly meetings has incorporated the virtues in an effort to implement them into our social work practice.

Training

P.R.I.D.E Pre-Service Training

The P.R.I.D.E (Parent Resources for Information, Development, and Education) Pre-Service Training Program is a training program for prospective Foster/Adoptive Parents and is a model for the development and support of resource families. It is designed to strengthen the quality of family foster care and adoption services by providing a standardized, structured framework for recruiting, preparing, and selecting Foster Parents and Adoptive Parents. It also provides Foster Parent in-service training and ongoing professional development.

All prospective Foster Parents are required to complete the P.R.I.D.E Pre-Service Program in order to become approved as a Foster Home and in order to attend other Foster Family training.

Pre-Service training was offered for families in the fall of the 2015, in both the Eskasoni and Indian Brook offices. In total there were eleven participants that completed training through the Eskasoni office and six participants that completed training in the Indian Brook office.

P.R.I.D.E. Training

Over the course of the last year, the foster families that are representative of the communities on the mainland have been provided with many informative training opportunities through the P.R.I.D.E. program. Children require families that are properly trained to aid them in their journey while they are in care. The following is a reflection of the modules and concepts presented to families in

attempts of ensuring they have the skill set they need to properly care for the children placed in their homes. P.R.I.D.E. Training is also attended by Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services staff.

This year the following training was offered and provided to Foster Parents and Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services staff:

This year has marked exciting additions to training opportunities for Foster Parents as well as staff. Provincial Foster Care Services has provided both of the Agency's P.R.I.D.E. Trainor's an opportunity to offer FAS-D Training as well as Understanding Trauma to be presented for the upcoming 2016-2017 fiscal year.

Kinship Foster Homes/A Tradition of Caring Training

"Our Kinship Foster Homes are homes that are relatives, extended family and/or members of the community who have pre-existing relationship with the children prior to coming into care of the Agency". (Nova Scotia Foster Care Manual)

The process to become a Kinship Foster Home:

1. Child's worker will complete a Referral for Assessment for Conditional Approval.
2. This Referral is then provided to the Foster Care department
3. Kinship Assessor will complete the paperwork with the applicants
4. An approved Kinship Foster Parents will have to complete " Tradition of Caring Training"
5. A S.A.F.E. (Structured Analysis Family Evaluation) Assessment will be completed with the family.

Student Placement

We have had a few Mi'kmaw & Maliseet Social Work Program students who have completed their social work placement within the Agency. We are pleased to have hired graduates upon completion of their Social Work Degree with the Agency.

Recruitment

The Recruitment Social Worker for the Indian Brook office has completed a significant amount of recruitment this year. These efforts have included (but not limited to):

Back to School Kick Off – Paqtnkek First Nations
Mi'kmaq Summer Games & Legends Gaming Millbrook First Nations
Sipekne'katik Annual General Meeting - Sipekne'katik First Nations
Sipekne'katik Mawiomi - Sipekne'katik First Nations
Glooscap Health Center Lunch and Talk – Glooscap First Nations
Acadia Gaming – Acadia First Nations
Eskasoni Mawiomi – Eskasoni First Nations
Pictou Landing Mawiomi – Pictou Landing First Nations
Nova Scotia Community College (Truro, Nova Scotia) Mawiomi
Native Council of NS AGM – Liverpool, Nova Scotia

Millbrook Health Fair – Millbrook First Nations

As a result of these recruitment efforts, we have noted an increase of referrals to foster care program.

Timely Completion of Quality/Compliance Reviews

Although the Foster Care department has not participated in a compliance review this year the department is currently ensuring Provincial Standards and Guidelines are met.

Effective Planning and Development of Programs, Regulations and Standards

As the Agency follows the provincial guidelines for the Child Welfare Act, as set out by the Province of Nova Scotia. Our effective planning continues to focus on our recruitment and go beyond our recruitment standards and increase our recruitment efforts. This recruitment effort is a conjoined with health care professionals, community members. We would also like to thank the Chief's for their continued support in our recruitment effort in the communities.

In an effort to better support our Foster Families the department has an Intake/Placement schedule to ensure that there is a Foster Care Social Worker available in the office during working hours.

Eskasoni office has implemented a Placement tracking method to better follow the process and trends for both respite care and placement needs. As a result, the Indian Brook office has implemented the same method in the new fiscal year.

Goals for the Upcoming Year

To provide training and also assess Kinship Foster Homes who have the potential to become Regular Foster Homes.

To seek have more Specialized Homes

To provide ongoing support to our foster homes in an effort to retain more homes for placement.

To continue with the Recruitment efforts and strategies of our two Recruitment Social Workers.

To continue to collaborate with other departments within the agency which will benefit both our Foster Families and children in care.

We recognize that our Foster Parents are an integral part in the lives of our children and youth therefore we maintain support in an effort to retain our existing foster homes.

Mi'kmaw Family First Lawyer

By George Paul - Special to MFCS Annual Report



Legal Counsel, Paul Morris happy to be part of the family.

When the Cooney report was released in 2013 there were numerous recommendations in the report and how Mi'kmaw Family and Children Services of Nova Scotia (MFCSNS) was underfunded and how money was directed.

In the Cooney report one of the most notable concerns was the amount of money the agency spent on legal services. Over 2 million dollars a year was spent taking families to court. And another 1.3 million on drug testing ordered by the court. The report recommended “alternative case practices be explored to enable work with children and families.”

In light of the report's recommendations the most obvious budgetary saving decision was to hire an in-house lawyer for MFCSNS. The recruitment of an in-house lawyer was a priority and the goal was to hire, train and develop lawyers with Mi'kmaw/First Nations background to provide culturally appropriate service where possible and have legal consultation available on-site.

In late January of 2016, MFCSNS hire Paul Morris as the first lawyer for MFCSNS. Morris may not have Mi'kmaq or First Nation background but his 15 years of working closely with the agency and Mi'kmaq families gave him all the credentials to be the lawyer who will create the in-house legal team.

“As Lead Counsel my role will be to develop and grow the legal department for the Agency over the next few years. The primary goals are to continue to provide high quality legal services and provide a leadership/supervisory role in the recruitment of two additional lawyers to complete the protection litigation

work for the Agency,” said Morris.

It wasn't an easy decision for Morris. For 18 years he worked for Patterson Law in Truro. He enjoy working there but one of the key factors for his decision to apply was that he liked working with Mi'kmaw family.

“My passion what I had in law was child protection. They were going to hire somebody, either me or somebody else. I didn't want to lose this work. I enjoyed working with the social worker and I enjoyed working with families. I knew I would be happy here.”

There will still be the need for private counsel to be retained on a limited basis. This new team of lawyers will develop further expertise and knowledge of First Nations customs, practices and traditions

while providing the same expertise and quality legal service.

Morris hopes within 5 years all the pieces will be in place. He hopes to hire a Mi'kmaq lawyer and get a paralegal to help. He will pass on his experience to that new lawyer and bring more diversity in how legal service is provided to First Nations in Nova Scotia.

The development of an in-house team will also help to ensure that the focus is on resolving issues and providing supports to families without the focus necessarily being court intervention. The Agency already provides a range of family support services in order to achieve this goal and the development of an in-house legal department will assist the Agency and furthering this goal and help ensure that a consistent approach is taken to legal service practices across the province for the Agency.

The newly amended Children Family and Services Act has demonstrated a specific focus on First Nation's issues and it will be important for the Agency to take a leadership role in this regard. The new Act includes provisions for family group conferencing, diversion out-of-court to conferencing, customary care arrangements and the recognition of custom adoptions. A significant role of in-house counsel through this time will be assisting with the education and implementation of this new regime under the amended Act.

“I am looking forward to the challenges and excitement of being part of this new direction for the Agency,” said Morris.

Annual Report 2015-2016

Family Group Conference: Mi'kmaq Perspective

Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia offers a wide range of services to the children and their families that promote an environment conducive to their well-being. The agency continues seeking to apply more culturally appropriate interventions and to strengthen families and communities. One of the services that the Agency is offering is Family Group Conferencing.

What exactly is a family group conference? In a nut shell the Mikmaq definition of Family Group Conference and the core concept is Maw-Lukutinej. Family Group Conference is definitely not a new approach nor is it unique to just child welfare. It is a very old idea that is titled with fancy wording.

Family Group Conference is a way of giving families the opportunity to get together to try and make the best plan possible for the children. Family Group Conference approach restores the central role and responsibility of the family, as well as the community, in dealing with issues that arise within the family. It shifts the power to decide back to the families and empowers families to take responsibility for their children and their family. But at the same time, MFCS retains the responsibility to ensure that the plans that are developed result in a safe environment and ensure the best interest for the children, respecting the culture and values of the family.

The Family Group Conference process fosters cooperation, collaboration and importantly communication between professionals and families. It should uphold the integrity and dignity of the family group by helping them take the initiative in planning how to resolve issues within their family.

The Family Group Conference very much resembles the Healing circle and Talking Circle of our culture. For many Mikmaq and other Aboriginals the circle is a powerful symbol of connectivity and completeness.

The Healing circle/Talking Circle has long been a place where everyone is equal, where all can have a say. It is a healing circle where the heart can be unburdened, and words of consolation can be freely spoken. Everyone in the circle has a piece of truth and everyone's contribution is needed to make it whole.

Cultural components reflected in FGC is in who is present, ceremonies (opening prayers, smudging), talking circles and its rules, having a feast, ensuring that children and other family members at home are cared for. More fundamentally, the FGC approach is consistent with long established traditions of the Mikmaq people for resolving issues of concerns, as reflected in our ceremonies and language.

Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services has recognized the need and value in offering the Family Group Conference Program to the families we serve. The family group conference program is currently working on putting together a Program Manual to focus on case management and protocols. Several staff members have graciously volunteered to be part of a working group committee which meet once a month to tackle this important task.

The FGC Protocol I'm very excited to be working on the Program manual and clearly define protocol in Family Group Conference as we are the leaders in the province in this area. The manual will be first of its kind in the province.

Family Group Conference is a journey we take alongside the families we work with and make every effort to provide opportunities so they may be empowered to plan for their family and children. Each family is very unique and each have their own special ways of doing things. Therefore it is to be expected that each family group conference would be different as it upholds and respects the dignity of each family. Both family group conference coordinators strongly believe in Family Group Conferencing and work very hard to ensure the program's success.

The Family Group Conference program at present consists of two full time Coordinators to cover all 13 First Nation communities in Nova Scotia. Kristen Basque works with the communities in Cape Breton and Paqtnkek First Nation and Cassandra Hillier works with the mainland communities from Pictou Landing right down to Acadia First Nation. The referrals to the family group conference program have been steady throughout the year.

Referrals are primarily from the protection department however there are a few from the other departments. There has been an

	Cape Breton Area including Paqtnkek	Mainland Area
Total Number of Referrals made to Family Group Conference	52	34
Total Number of FGC held from April 1, 2015 – April 1, 2016	68	73
Total Number of Referrals open as of April 1, 2016	18	19

increase of referrals coming from the Intake department in the Eskasoni office. These referrals are made after their investigations are completed or families that are open for the Early Intervention Agreements with the agency. We have also seen an increase in the number of self-referrals, where families will request a family group conference as a planning tool for their case. This is very exciting as it confirms that the communities see this as a good opportunity for their families.

Both Family Group Conference coordinators had the wonderful opportunity to attend a Family Group Conference training at Blue Quills First Nation University in Alberta. This experience provided us with opportunity to network with other FGC Coordinators and see how other provinces and agencies run their programs. This experience reaffirmed to us that we are on the right track and in fact many of the agencies that were at the training have expressed a great interest in how we conduct our family group conferences and requested more information about.

For the upcoming year it is hoped that once we have the final draft of the Family Group Conference Manual and have the clearly defined protocols that we may possibly put on information sessions to legal aid lawyers and judges so that they may have a greater understanding of what Family Group Conference is and its purpose. I also would like to do information/training sessions for all staff so they may also have a clearer understanding of the program and its purpose. I also believe that service providers, community members and health centers have an information/training session so they too have a greater understanding of the Family Group Conference purpose and intent.

Our future goal continues to be able to see Family Group Conference Program flourish and be successful in providing opportunities for safe planning of children and families. The growth of the Family Group Conference program would allow for more opportunity to endorse the Program to each department in the agency and increase referrals from other departments. I would love for each family that has become involved with the agency to have the option and opportunity to access to a family group conference. That is not to say every single family will have a family group conference however they will have the information provided and the option explored. Family Group Conference allows for a least intrusive approach to families to deal with child protection concerns. The family Group Conference can be used as an alternative to the court process in some cases, however if it is necessary to proceed with court action the FGC can be used to work with families to develop case planning.

I would like for our agency to have the opportunity to use Family Group Conference Program in the early stages of protection involvement. It would be beneficial to all parties involved to have the same understanding in the early stages. Once the child protection investigation is complete and deemed that the family requires services it would be valuable to have a Family Group Conference at this point.

Both family group conference coordinators strongly believe in Family Group Conferencing and work very hard to ensure the program's success.

Long Term Protection

Department Goals:

Long Term Protection offers services and supports for families to help alleviate potential or inflicted risks to children and parents. The primary objective of Long Term Protection is to ensure the safety of children while making all efforts at preserving the family. The type of services and supports offered to parents depends on the type of issue/issues identified. Some of the most common issues families face today are domestic violence, parent substance abuse and neglect. However, we have had few cases of reported physical abuse.

The type of services that may be offered to parents depends on the issues identified but range from counselling for the families, family support programming (which includes a wide variety of programs such as parenting, budgeting, anger management, etc), Family Group Conferencing, Two Wolves Program as well as other programs from the Healing centers, referrals for Addictions Assessments, and referrals to other programming within the communities as well as outside the communities.

The families we work with also have the opportunity to engage in traditional healing such as sweats, smudging, ceremonies as well as other traditional healings identified by the families. A child may be placed in temporary care and custody where there are reasonable, probable grounds to believe that the child is in need of protective services and their health and safety cannot be protected other than by taking them into care

The Social Workers for the Temporary Care and Custody Department (TCC) are responsible for the following areas: planning for children in care, maintaining the case file, respecting the child's religion, language, race, and culture, supervising the child's placement, as well as overseeing services and providing direct casework services to children, and also responding to special circumstances. (Children in Care Manual-section 2).

As well as maintaining the child's file, TCC works with all departments on different levels. TCC workers are involved in intake, team decisions in risks, they work with long term protection in making plans for families, they consult with Foster care in placing children in foster homes or requesting additional services for foster families, working with the family group conference coordinator and in the event the children enter Permanent care and custody the workers progress the file to the PCC department and or make recommendations for adoption.

Workers within the different communities make all efforts to work with other professionals within the communities to help families access the best possible services. Workers also make great efforts to work with families through Early Intervention to avoid the court process for families however this aspect depends on the willingness of the family to work with the Agency.

Achievements and Special Projects and Events:

The largest achievement within this last year has been the implementation of the Family Group Conferencing program. The addition of this cultural component has added a unique element to case planning and has provided families with a voice and the ability to be more proactive in addressing issues within their family. Continued effort is being made to incorporate Family Groups as early into case planning as possible with the view of producing more favorable outcomes for families and children.

The long term teams have established an excellent relationship with the family group coordinators in both Mainland & Cape Breton. Throughout this last year families and service providers have provided positive feedback about their experiences with the Family Group Process. All parties have reported that this process helps to establish trust between the agency and clients. It has also resulted in a breakdown of barriers between support service providers and the agency.

It has been noted that there are fewer cases involved in the court process thus resulting in fewer supervision orders. The agency is making efforts at working with families in more of a voluntary manner.

Prior to the Implementation of Family Group Conferencing the agency utilized legal case conferencing as an avenue for mediation and settlement. Over the last year less emphasis has been put on the legal case conferences reducing the stress for families and children. Openness and accountability continue to be an integral part of the Family Case Conferencing process. In many cases the parents have reported that they have felt supported by all parties involved including Mikmaw Family.

A number of service providers have reported that this program is groundbreaking and should be utilized within mainstream child protection. A number of families are reporting that they have benefitted from the process and now have a clearer understanding of the agency roles and the court process.

It is our belief that as this program evolves it will prove beneficial in preserving families and reducing time in foster care for children.

Most recently the Mainland agency ended involvement with a client that had an extensive child protection history. This client was the subject of dozens of investigations resulting in multiple openings to long term and the loss of her children on at least 1 occasion. Family Group Conferencing was implemented in the spring of 2014 with follow ups every 3 months.

Throughout this process it became evident that the client began to establish trust and the communication between her support network which included family, therapists and members of the community improved.

This client reported at the end of this process that she had greatly benefited from this support and felt that her motivation to succeed greatly improved along with her level of confidence in herself. The success of this client is not an isolated incident. Multiple family members have voiced their pleasure at having the opportunity to meet supervisors and to work proactively for the children involved.

Significant Aspect of Supports & Services Offered:

This past year we have had a decrease in the number of children coming into the care of the agency. We have been able to work collaboratively with our families through Supervision Orders, Third Party Supervision Orders and Early Intervention Agreements. Many of the families we are working with are able to access culturally appropriate services within their own communities and work with the agency on a voluntary basis for support. We have also been able to involve extended family members in the case plan to supervise access in order to move forward in a least intrusive manner.

These positive trends can be attributed to lower caseloads and full staffing which allows our social workers to do better social work. More time can be spent working collaboratively with our families in case planning. This process can be formalized through regular family group conferences which allow the family to take an active role in defining how they are going to meet their goals and who is going to support them on their journey to healing.

The overall feedback from our families over the past year is positive. Our families like the increase in family group conferences. They like knowing the supervisor, caseworker and service providers better and are less intimidated by the agency's involvement. This way of case planning is working. It is breaking down the barriers and paving inroads in the communities as well.

The family groups are also used to discuss placement and adoption planning. The more we involve our families in the process the better it is for the child and everyone involved. The number of children in temporary care has decreased and adoption is increasing. More children are being transferred from child protection directly to adoption. There are still some files that are transferred to

Children in Care but these numbers are decreasing.

How Any Challenges Were Remedied :

One ongoing challenge for child welfare is that of staff retention. One of the means of meeting this challenge is to provide enough staffing for a manageable caseload and to continue with better communications within the Agency.

Long Term Protection still faces the challenge of financially supporting Third Party Supervision Order Placements. While the goal is to have families caring for the children, it has been a challenge for families to be able to maintain children's placements on a long term basis due to financial restraints.

Staffing:

The breakdown of staffing for Long Term and Temporary Care & Custody is as follows:

Indian Brook Office

- 8 Long Term Social Workers
- 1 Temporary Care & Custody Social Worker
- 1 Administrative Assistant for Long Term & Temporary Care
- 2 Long Term Supervisors

Eskasoni Office

- 8 Long Term Social Workers
- 4 Temporary Care & Custody Social Workers
- 1 Administrative Assistant for Long Term
- 1 Administrative Assistant for Temporary Care & Custody
- 2 Long Term Supervisors
- 1 Temporary Care & Custody Supervisor

Training:

Trainings or Presentations which have been attended to over the last year among the various Long Term and Temporary Care and Custody staff include:

- Intimate Partner Violence training
- CORE1 & CORE 2
- Sexual Abuse Interviewing Level 1
- PRIDE Module 4 & 6 and PRIDE AS-2
- Department of Community Services training- Amendments to the Child Family Services Act
- In- house training for Intake and ICM.
- Addictions training regarding Opiates
- Bayshore presentation – Random Drug Testing
- Early Intervention presentation
- Welquan Centre Presentation
- Presentation by Dr. Nassar from Capital Health
- Trauma
- Supporting the Mental Wellness of Vulnerable Child and Families across Systems
- Natasha Jamieson Presentation- Sex Trade
- Traditional Water Ceremony Healer
- FASD training
- First Aid Training
- Traditions of Caring
- Human Trafficking

- Ethical Training (Supervisor training)
- Conflict Resolution (Supervisor training)
- Clinical Supervision (Supervisor training)
- Respectful Workplace (Supervisor training)
- And a number of staff have completed their training to begin Emergency Duty

Student Placements:

This past year both offices were open to having student placements. This is a great opportunity for BSW students to experience the various roles of Child Protection under the direction of a registered social worker in the department. This also provides the department with fresh ideas and perspectives offered by the students.

Although neither office had a student placement this past year we continue to encourage BSW students to complete their placement with us.

Maximization of Resources:

Long Term Protection workers are each assigned a different community however within Cape Breton. Temporary Care workers have a case load consisting of children from various communities. Workers make all efforts to encourage families to engage in services within their own communities. This helps maximize resources within the Agency and it allows the Agency to be able to work collaboratively with professionals within the communities such as Mental Health workers, Addiction workers, Health center workers, School Guidance counsellors and Band office staff. Communication with the schools, health centers, Chief and Council and Band Office staff have also been improving with positive outcomes.

In addition to the decrease in the number of children that have been coming into care, both Eskasoni and Indian Brook offices have decreased the number of court involvements with families. The number of children returning home to parents has also increased with parents successfully completing all services and programs recommended.

Timely Completion of Quality Reviews/Compliance reviews:

Long Term Protection and Temporary Care department continue to strive in meeting the Standards of Child Protection and Temporary Care at all times. Case Audits have been completed by Supervisors, regular Supervision is completed by Supervisors, case plans and case plan reviews have also been completed for each case.

Goals for the Upcoming Year:

The current stats for the Indian Brook Office are:

Children in Temporary Care – 5

Long Term Files - 34 open files (3 intakes, 9 Supervision orders, 4 families open due to child in temporary care, 16 families open under Early Intervention, and 2 families open for services under pregnancy)

At present there are 24 children with Temporary care and custody status and 36 children with Permanent care status in the TCC department awaiting transfer to adoption or permanent care department.

Over the last year there have been 34 children taken into care (either thru TCC or voluntary care) and 20 children were returned home (either thru Supervision order, to the care of parent or care of another (MCA)). Twenty four children entered permanent care and custody in the last year. At least thirty two children were transferred to the Permanent Care or Adoption Department in the last year.

2015-2016 Annual Report:

Child Protection Intake and Investigations Team Eskasoni and Indian Brook Offices

Brief description of the role of the department and goals:

The intake team's primary role is to assess risk to and ensure safety and well-being of children in a home under the age of 16. This is always carried out with the best interest of the child in mind and using the least intrusive measures when possible. As per the Agency's mandate, the team's focus is also to maintain the integrity of the family and to always take into consideration cultural values and beliefs when working with families and communities. As with the entire Agency, the intake team works towards the common goal of families being able to parent children safely, without agency intervention.

Achievements, Special Projects and Events: How services created positive outcomes for children and families:

The intake team has been using Early Intervention Agreements to work with families voluntarily to ensure connections and supports are in place that will help to address the risks identified. By working voluntarily with families, we can also make use of and partner with the appropriate community supports and resources. When involvement starts early and is proactive rather than reactive, there are better outcomes for children and families. There have been many gains this past year involving voluntary Agency involvement with families where families have felt the Agency has helped them in their parenting journey.

The most significant aspect for the Supports and services offered through your department (include statistics). Trends over the last year, etc.:

April 2015 to March 2016 (inclusive) saw the Eskasoni office process 474 Intakes/Referrals regarding protection of children under the age of sixteen. Of the 474 referrals received, the Agency made the decision to Investigate 388 referrals received and the decision to Not Investigate 86 referrals received. Indian Brook received 349 referral and investigated 260. The Major Presenting Problems most faced by workers in both offices were parent substance abuse, domestic violence and substantial risk of physical harm.

How any challenges were remedied:

It is important for us to be able to reach out to family and other identified supports to the children to assist in planning and providing supports to the family during agency involvement. Partnering with community resources to enhance case plans with families is another integral way to remedy any challenges we may face.

Training:

Intake workers have been able to access the following training the year: Sex Trade Workers, CORE II, IACSA , PRIDE 6, FASD and the Developing Brain, Cultural Safety and Sensitivity, Child Welfare Symposium, STI Training, Power of Positive Change, Clinical Supervision, Pride module AS-3, CFSA proposed amendments, Pride module As-2, Trauma informed core ed. Session, Supporting mental wellness of vulnerable children and families, The Youth Project Presentation: Working with LBGQTQ Youth, Bay shore Home Health: Presentation on Random Drug Testing and Hair Follicle Testing,

MANDT (Crises Intervention).

Student Placements:

There were no student placements this year in either Eskasoni or Indian Brook offices.

Maximization of front-line resources through efficient processes, including flexibility when allocating human resources (staffing) and special projects

Intakes are allocated by numbers and communities when able so that caseloads remain fair and balanced. The team is consistent in working together to ensure timelines are being met so that we are in compliance with Provincial guidelines and standards. More effective time management has resulted in overtime being minimized and the team has consistently tried to carpool to meetings and communities events when able. The Intake Unit, including both Eskasoni and Indian Brook teams, has been meeting quarterly and the supervisors every other month in an effort to stay consistent across the Agency with respect to service delivery to families and policies and procedures being followed. It has been productive for the team to learn from each other and gain different perspectives within the framework of our jobs.

Timely implementation of programs, regulations standards and policies:

The referral process follows specific guidelines we are required to meet. Having these guidelines in place ensures everyone from children and families to social workers are protected by the process. The Intake Unit has improved significantly in meeting the timeline for investigation and has also improved significantly in documentation, in general.

Goals for the upcoming year:

The Intake Team's goals for the upcoming year are to continue to work with families and communities in a positive, respectful and meaningful way; to continue to grow relationships with the supports and services in the communities we serve; to be thorough and comprehensive in gathering information to strengthen the families we are working with, and to ensure the safety and well-being of children. As always when carrying out the work we are doing, the team is keeping in mind the least intrusive approach when warranted.

Report of the Temporary Care and Custody Department: (March 2016)

Supervisor: Yvonne Doucette Administration: Nikhea Bernard

TCC Workers: Thea Clarke, Cynthia Kabatay, Jill Roach, Jane Francis

Number of children in TCC Dept. as of Mar 31/16: 60* (please note the 62 listed will be 60 following the closure of two files- closing note to be inputted before file can be closed)

Case Manager	Active Case Count	Overdue Activity Items		
		High	Medium	Low
Clarke, Thea (71339)	14	17	5	2
Francis, Jane (70486)	13	22	4	4
Kabatay, Cynthia (70465)	21	71	16	6
Roach, Jill (70452)	14	25	4	1

60*

135 29 13
Total Activities: 179 (under 200 again!)

Positives & Negatives/Ongoing:

Three children entered care this month. Two children returned to the care of their mother after a period of Supervision. They have successfully exited care. (These two files have to be closed off). One child successfully transferred to the Adoption department this month. His PCC was granted in Dec 2015. One child continues in a Place of Safety (POS). One child is presently in an unapproved placements (however this is a placement following an FGC).

There are at least 14 children awaiting transfer to the PCC dept. An email has been sent to PCC Supervisor with a request for transfer meetings; TCC has not received word back from PCC in regards to this request. Supervisor to follow up with Supervisor L. Paul.

There have been a number of social histories completed in the last month. There are now another 13 social histories nearly completed as a deadline of Mar 31/16 was provided by the First Nations Child Welfare Specialist for all outstanding social histories.

The new tool developed by the First Nations CWS is completed and attached with this email. Please also see CIC tracking tool for breakdown regarding placement. (Note: there is still an error to be worked out as there are 62 children listed on the tool however on the tracking page there are only 60).

Update:

There are files still requiring birth certificates and band numbers.

3 CORE Assignments have been completed and forwarded to Jennifer Moore.

The file audits are being reviewed with staff during supervision. Many service agreements needed updating and workers have been advised to have them updated as supervision is completed.

Supervision is to be completed for one more worker- scheduling has been an issue due to other deadlines (ie CORE assignment and social history).

Staff member Thea Clarke is attending the We Care meetings with the RCMP.

Staffing: no changes

Training: Inter Provincial Protocol (Supervisor training)

Of these 60 children:

36 have Permanent care status

24 have temporary care status

Respectfully Submitted by: Yvonne Doucette, Supervisor for TCC.

Human Resources Annual Summary Report March 31, 2016

Respectfully submitted by Karen Denny

Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services employees 140 full time staff members. Indian Brook office has 53 permanent employees and 2 term employees. Eskasoni office has 66 permanent employees and 5 term employees. There is a total of 21 employees working out of the Mi'kmaw Family Healing Centres located in Millbrook and We'kokmaq.

There is an Occupational Health and Safety Committee now in place for the Agency which is represented by 8 staff from each office and healing centers. The first meeting was initiated and chaired by George Savoury which took place at the Multi-Purpose Room in Wekokmaq. The committee will be receiving Health and Safety Training in the next couple of weeks. Members from the Mainland and Cape Breton offices have been meeting on a regular basis and will continue to do so.

Conflict Resolution Training took place in Eskasoni on Thursday, October 15, 2015 which was implemented by George Savoury.

Power of Positive Discipline and Conducting Effective Meetings Training for Supervisors took place in Indian Brook on November 17, 2015 and in Eskasoni on November 19, 2015. This training was mandatory for all supervisors.

Cultural Sensitivity Training took place at the Ramada on December 4, 2015.

Clinical Supervision for Child Welfare Training took place in Indian Brook December 9, 2015 and in Eskasoni on December 10, 2015. These sessions were also mandatory.

I attended the HR Conference in Halifax on December 14 & 15, 2015. This was a two day conference and I received a certificate.

Respectful Workplace Training took place in Eskasoni on Thursday, January 14, 2016 and was conducted by George Savoury.

A Truth and Reconciliation Workshop was held in Halifax for all Supervisors on Thursday, February 18, 2016.

Job Postings in Eskasoni:

- May 1, 2015 – Permanent Position in Permanent Care & Custody
- May 1, 2015 – Permanent Position in Long Term Protection
- May 1, 2015 – Permanent Position in Foster Care
- June 11, 2015 – Permanent Position in Intake & Investigation
- June 11, 2015 – Term Position in Foster Care
- June 11, 2015 – Permanent Position in Temporary Care & Custody
- August 28, 2015 – Permanent Position in Intake & Investigation
- October 7, 2015 – Term Position in Foster Care & Kinship
- October 21, 2015 – Permanent Position Case Aide
- October 28, 2015 – Term Position Long Term Protection

- January 22, 2016 – Term Position Long Term Protection

Job Postings in Waycobah:

- July 22, 2015 – Permanent Position in Night Support
- January 25, 2016 – Permanent Position Assistant Support Worker
- January 25, 2016 – Permanent Position Night Support Worker
- January 25, 2016 – Women’s Outreach Worker
- March 22, 2016 – Permanent Position Child and Youth Outreach Worker

Job Postings in Indian Brook:

- July 15, 2015 – Permanent Position in Accounts Payable
- November 6, 2015 – Permanent Position Assistant Executive Director
- December 21, 2015 – Permanent Position in Long Term Protection
- January 1, 2016 – Permanent Position Agency Lawyer

Job Postings in Millbrook:

- June 19, 2015 – Permanent Position in Administrative Support
- January 19, 2016 – Permanent Position Women’s Outreach Worker
- January 19, 2016 – Term Position Assistant Support Worker

We had six employees resign from their positions from April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016. This is between all four offices.

The last item is the new HR attendance system. We are still waiting for the final approval of the installation from the Province. Anna McNally is working on getting the approval from them and we are hoping it will be up and running by June 2016. All staff will receive training once the software is installed.

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S
SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016**

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016**

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Tel: (902) 543-7373
Fax: (902) 543-9941
www.bdo.ca

BDO Canada LLP
215 Dominion Street
Suite 102
Bridgewater, NS
B4V 2K7

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of
Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2016, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information and schedules.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia as at March 31, 2016, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Bridgewater, Nova Scotia
June 20, 2016

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT MARCH 31, 2016

	2016	2015
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Bank	2,136,572	1,494,667
Restricted cash (Note 2)	2,036,498	2,161,870
Accounts receivable	62,076	63,519
Due from the Province of Nova Scotia	405,101	439,560
HST Receivable	142,065	133,580
Prepaid expenses	28,662	7,685
	4,810,974	4,300,881
TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 3)	1,675,122	1,763,563
	6,486,096	6,064,444
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (Note 4)	1,381,123	1,366,900
Payroll remittances payable	91,605	58,979
Trust Liability	39,740	36,644
	1,512,468	1,462,523
NET ASSETS	4,973,628	4,601,921
	6,486,096	6,064,444

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:

 President

 Treasurer

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
SUMMARY STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

		2016	2016	2015
	Budget (Unaudited)	\$	\$	\$
REVENUE				
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada		18,903,338	18,946,530	18,701,367
Province of Nova Scotia		2,285,320	2,407,177	2,432,920
Government of Canada		915,000	1,024,729	991,293
Miscellaneous		256,500	304,122	271,983
		<u>22,360,158</u>	<u>22,682,558</u>	<u>22,397,563</u>
EXPENSES				
Operating	Pg 6	11,438,001	10,322,712	10,381,107
Family Healing Centres	Pg 7	960,669	972,555	846,465
Family and Community Healing	Pg 8	338,000	392,057	234,561
Family Violence and Prevention	Pg 9	407,709	305,364	257,807
Prevention	Pg 10	1,286,800	1,451,484	1,149,666
Maintenance	Pg 11	6,360,000	6,670,236	6,632,202
Provincial Settlement	Pg 12	2,005,320	2,196,443	2,101,846
		<u>22,796,499</u>	<u>22,310,851</u>	<u>21,603,654</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES		(436,341)	371,707	793,909
ALLOCATION:				
Operating			(1,409,749)	(1,760,966)
Family Healing Centres			(162,396)	(44,182)
Family and Community Healing			(391,255)	(232,561)
Family Violence and Prevention			(105,364)	(7,807)
Prevention			1,678,516	980,334
Maintenance			761,955	1,859,091
			<u>371,707</u>	<u>793,909</u>

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

	Unrestricted Net Assets	Replacement Reserve	Invested in Capital Assets	Special Allowance Projects	Special Allowance Restricted	2016	2015
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
NET ASSETS - beginning of year	633,730	200,000	1,763,563	1,090,879	913,749	4,601,921	3,808,012
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	493,004	-	(121,297)	-	-	371,707	793,909
Interfund Transfers	2,004,628	-	-	(1,090,879)	(913,749)	-	-
Capital asset additions	(32,855)	-	32,855	-	-	-	-
NET ASSETS - end of year	3,098,507	200,000	1,675,121	-	-	4,973,628	4,601,921

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

	2016	2015
	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM:		
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Excess of revenue over expenditures for the year	371,707	793,909
Items not involving cash:		
Amortization	121,296	145,180
	<u>493,003</u>	939,089
Changes in non-cash working capital items:		
Accounts receivable	1,443	(10,877)
Due from Province of Nova Scotia	34,459	669,006
HST Receivable	(8,485)	18,130
Prepaid expenses	(20,977)	20,458
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	14,223	(344,035)
Payroll remittances payable	32,626	(10,190)
Trust liability	3,096	(103,900)
	<u>549,388</u>	1,177,681
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of capital assets	(32,855)	(4,879)
INCREASE IN CASH DURING THE YEAR	516,533	1,172,802
CASH - beginning of year	3,656,537	2,483,735
CASH - end of year	4,173,070	3,656,537
CASH CONSISTS OF:		
Cash	2,136,572	1,494,667
Restricted Cash	2,036,498	2,161,870
	<u>4,173,070</u>	3,656,537

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
OPERATING ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

	2016	2016	2015
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
INAC	8,250,000	8,310,193	8,023,050
Province of Nova Scotia	280,000	303,272	331,074
Miscellaneous	250,000	299,498	266,017
	<u>8,780,000</u>	<u>8,912,963</u>	<u>8,620,141</u>
EXPENSES			
Advertising and promotion	2,000	4,771	14
Amortization	150,000	119,824	144,721
Conferences	75,000	269,116	130,132
Electricity	32,640	38,227	41,457
Employee assistance program	9,750	12,413	10,558
Equipment leases	17,000	6,541	12,289
Foster Family Support	30,000	13,868	10,091
General	2,000	2,999	50
Insurance	45,000	40,560	39,244
Interest and bank charges	11,200	9,857	10,663
Library and resources materials	-	31	500
Membership dues and subscriptions	8,010	18,619	1,948
Office supplies and stationery	51,000	54,257	36,638
Postage and delivery	8,500	11,663	11,062
Professional fees	683,000	630,048	1,491,402
Rentals - offices	50,000	19,690	21,275
Repairs and maintenance	110,000	41,950	40,810
Salaries and benefits (Note 9)	9,007,901	8,112,032	7,494,661
Telephone and communication	77,000	57,713	60,122
Training	218,000	92,820	65,090
Travel	750,000	639,346	612,212
Travel and honorarium - board	100,000	126,367	146,168
	<u>11,438,001</u>	<u>10,322,712</u>	<u>10,381,107</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES			
(DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	<u>(2,658,001)</u>	<u>(1,409,749)</u>	<u>(1,760,966)</u>

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FAMILY HEALING CENTRES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

	2016	2016	2015
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
INAC			
Project Haven	757,452	754,893	750,567
Pension	40,886	51,444	47,750
Miscellaneous	6,500	3,822	3,966
	804,838	810,159	802,283
EXPENSES			
Advertising and promotion	1,000	752	1,224
Amortization	240	1,473	459
Employee assistance program	1,000	828	707
Equipment leases	5,000	-	8,050
Household supplies	25,000	18,874	19,784
Insurance	45,000	40,056	39,240
Interest and bank charges	600	505	-
Library and resource materials	100	-	60
Membership dues and subscriptions	500	400	200
Office supplies and stationery	7,000	6,749	5,350
Professional fees	4,300	12,155	12,419
Repairs and maintenance	12,000	55,448	16,089
Salaries and benefits (Note 9)	711,929	742,276	665,070
Telephone and communications	84,000	7,740	8,172
Training	20,000	11,257	5,047
Travel and conferences	25,000	58,609	48,176
Utilities	18,000	15,433	16,418
TOTAL EXPENSES	960,669	972,555	846,465
(DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(155,831)	(162,396)	(44,182)

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY HEALING
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016**

	2016	2016	2015
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Other	-	802	2,000
EXPENSES			
Advertising and promotion	2,000	532	1,476
Community support	15,000	10,580	9,439
Community workshops	50,000	79,396	68,783
Conferences	5,000	1,949	1,759
Salaries and benefits (Note 9)	241,000	255,662	124,616
Telephone	-	2,010	-
Training	5,000	627	796
Travel	20,000	41,301	27,692
TOTAL EXPENSES	338,000	392,057	234,561
(DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(338,000)	(391,255)	(232,561)

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FAMILY VIOLENCE AND PREVENTION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016**

	2016	2016	2015
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
INAC	225,000	200,000	250,000
EXPENSES			
Administration costs	37,500	30,133	12,343
Advertising	1,000	-	-
Conference and meetings	-	367	896
Public education and workshops	20,000	28,129	14,337
Salaries and benefits (Note 9)	333,209	219,812	215,729
Training	-	2,949	738
Travel	16,000	23,974	13,764
TOTAL EXPENSES	407,709	305,364	257,807
(DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(182,709)	(105,364)	(7,807)

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
PREVENTION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

	Court-ordered Supervision	Early Intervention	2016	2016	2015
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
REVENUE					
INAC	2,086,667	1,043,333	3,130,000	3,130,000	2,130,000
EXPENSES					
Cultural development	37	2,996	8,000	3,033	5,814
Daycare	16,857	2,406	31,200	19,263	22,882
Educational supports	74	-	2,000	74	1,039
Family conferencing	13,128	8,310	7,000	21,438	6,388
General and miscellaneous	1,054	5	2,000	1,059	1,861
Medical	236,188	44,977	350,000	281,165	329,448
Mentorship	250,991	150,092	511,000	401,083	427,489
Personal development	2,560	1,102	4,000	3,662	1,591
Professional fees	600,836	114,790	359,000	715,626	338,806
Recreation	348	-	1,600	348	1,599
Registration - births	1,516	-	5,000	1,516	3,913
Respite	3,053	164	6,000	3,217	8,836
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,126,642	324,842	1,286,800	1,451,484	1,149,666
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	960,025	718,491	1,843,200	1,678,516	980,334

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
MAINTENANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

	2016	2016	2015
	Budget (Unaudited)		
	\$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
INAC	6,500,000	6,500,000	7,500,000
Government of Canada	915,000	932,191	991,293
	<u>7,415,000</u>	<u>7,432,191</u>	<u>8,491,293</u>
EXPENSES			
Permanent Care and Custody (Page 18)	4,744,000	4,713,076	4,889,723
Subsidized Adoptions (Page 18)	511,000	898,814	585,909
Voluntary Care (Page 18)	-	8,048	-
Taking Into Temporary Care (Page 18)	1,105,000	1,050,298	1,156,570
	<u>6,360,000</u>	<u>6,670,236</u>	<u>6,632,202</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	<u>1,055,000</u>	<u>761,955</u>	<u>1,859,091</u>

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
PROVINCIAL SETTLEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

	2016	2016	2015
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Province of Nova Scotia	2,005,320	2,103,905	2,101,846
Government of Canada	-	92,538	-
	2,005,320	2,196,443	2,101,846
EXPENSES			
Access	195,000	106,241	194,877
Baby needs	6,000	1,800	6,048
Board	295,820	264,144	289,582
Board - competency payments	-	4,988	-
Board - special rates	84,000	82,290	83,259
Clothing	33,000	32,512	33,218
Congregate care	500,000	1,039,087	764,559
Cultural development	1,500	2,755	1,427
Daycare	21,000	16,098	20,863
Drug testing and other medical	60,000	37,198	82,452
Education supplies and other costs	20,000	25,887	20,867
Facility - other	250,000	83,629	-
Family conferencing	1,000	3,691	1,071
Independent living	45,000	19,546	42,070
Legal fees	100,000	137,549	115,845
Mentorship	200,000	159,922	205,645
Miscellaneous	2,500	4,038	2,311
Other - inventory	3,000	2,586	2,934
Personal development	25,000	13,320	25,190
Professional fees	115,000	100,745	165,719
Recreation	11,000	16,489	13,911
Registration - births	500	338	203
Respite	30,000	17,990	25,787
Spending	5,000	22,668	3,889
Training	1,000	932	119
	2,005,320	2,196,443	2,101,846
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	-	-	-

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Status and Nature of Activities

The Mi'kmaq Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia is a Society incorporated under Section 89 of the Children's Services Act of Nova Scotia. The Agency is also a Registered Charity. The Agency provides child protection services to Native children in Nova Scotia.

The Agency is a registered charity and, as such, is exempt from income tax and may issue income tax receipts to donors.

Basics of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared using Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Contributions Receivable

Contributions receivable are recognized as an asset when the amounts to be received can be reasonably estimated and ultimate collection is reasonably assured.

Capital Asset

Purchased capital assets are stated at cost less accumulated amortization. Contributed capital assets are recorded at fair market value at the date of contribution. Amortization is provided on a straight-line basis over the assets estimated useful lives at the following annual rate:

Buildings	4%
Furniture and fixtures	10%
Computer	20%
Leaseholds improvements	10%
Household materials - not amortized however replenishment is expensed.	

Revenue Recognition

Restricted contributions related to general operations are recognized as revenue of the operating fund in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. All other restricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate restricted fund.

Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the operating fund in the year received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations require management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets, liabilities and disclosure of contingent liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from management's best estimates as additional information becomes available in the future.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Financial Instruments

Financial instruments are recorded at fair value when acquired or issued. In subsequent periods, financial instruments are reported at cost or amortized cost less impairment, if applicable. Financial assets are tested for impairment when changes in circumstances indicate the asset could be impaired. Transaction costs on the acquisition, sale or issue of financial instruments are expensed for those items remeasured at fair value at each statement of financial position date and charged to the financial instrument for those measured at cost.

Fund Accounting

The Agency follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions.

Operating - Relates to general administration of the Agency with preventative services to communities.

Family Healing Centres - Relates to the operation of Centres providing preventative and residential services for women and children and outreach to men with a structured community educational component.

Family and Community Healing - Relates to a program to offer all caregivers culturally relevant guidance and information on parenting skills, life skills and access to community resources that will help them provide a better life for themselves and for their children.

Family Violence and Prevention - Relates to a program to provide the opportunity for communities to engage its members in understanding the issues of violence.

Maintenance - Relates to costs for children in Care and Custody.

Special Allowance - Provides spending money for children in Care and Custody.

Capital Fund - Relates to investment in capital assets.

2. RESTRICTED CASH

Operating Account

This amount represents funds held in trust for the children in the care of the Agency.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

3. TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

	Cost \$	Accumulated Amortization \$	2016 Net \$	2015 Net \$
Buildings	2,477,869	912,189	1,565,680	1,664,795
Furniture and fixtures	182,784	94,624	88,160	78,724
Computer	28,558	19,113	9,445	8,207
Household materials - F/T	11,837	-	11,837	11,837
	<u>2,701,048</u>	<u>1,025,926</u>	<u>1,675,122</u>	<u>1,763,563</u>

4. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Accounts payable consists of the following:

	2016 \$	2015 \$
Operating	30,638	61,921
Maintenance	593,063	663,557
Accrued liabilities - Operating	486,313	453,890
Accrued liabilities - Maintenance	271,109	187,532
	<u>1,381,123</u>	<u>1,366,900</u>

5. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

The Mi'kmaq Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia receives a major portion of its revenues pursuant to funding arrangements with Indigenous and Northern Development Canada (INAC) and the Province of Nova Scotia. The services to children and families are legislated by provincial law.

6. DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLAN

The Agency has a defined contribution pension plan for employees which consists of matching RRSP contributions made by the employees. The Agency's matching contribution is charged to operations as part of salaries and benefits.

Total pension expense for the year was \$417,349 (2015 - \$374,915).

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

7. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Agency is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments, without being exposed to concentrations of risk. The following analysis provides a measure of the Agency's risk exposure at the statement of financial position date, March 31, 2016.

Credit Risk

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a financial instrument will cause a financial loss for the other party by failing to discharge an obligation. The Agency's financial instruments that are exposed to concentrations of credit risk relate primarily to its accounts receivable. The Agency mitigates credit risk on its receivables by signing contracts for most of their receivables and they have not had a credit problem in the past with the parties. There have not been any changes in the risk from the prior year.

Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Agency will encounter difficulty in meeting its obligations associated with financial liabilities. Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of operational liquidity requirements, the Agency will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction on the due date. The Agency is exposed to this risk mainly in respect of its accounts payable and amounts due to Special Allowance. Due to the working capital deficiency, this is considered a high risk. There have not been any changes in the risk from the prior year.

Market Risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk comprises three types of risk: currency risk, interest rate risk and other price risk. The Agency is mainly exposed to interest rate risk. The Agency's risk management strategies are described below:

Interest Rate Risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The Agency is exposed to interest rate risk on its fixed and floating interest rate financial instruments. Fixed-interest instruments subject the Agency to a fair value risk while the floating rate instruments subject it to a cash flow risk. The Agency is exposed to changes in interest rates related to its investments on GIC's it occasionally holds, however, there were no GIC's held at March 31, 2016. There have not been any changes in the risk from the prior year.

8. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Certain accounts in the prior year financial statements have been reclassified for comparative purposes to conform with the presentation in the current year's financial statements.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016

9. SALARIES AND BENEFITS

	Operating	Family Healing Centres	Family and Community Healing	Family Violence and Prevention	2016	2015
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Salaries - social workers and supervision	4,750,845	147,645	-	-	4,898,490	4,726,237
Salaries - Family Support	680,004	-	7,623	184,671	872,298	725,167
Salaries - program counsellors	-	265,702	-	-	265,702	183,715
Salaries - standby and callback	77,929	-	-	-	77,929	78,286
Salaries - Outreach	-	58,757	-	-	58,757	28,416
Salaries - management and clerical	1,358,879	250,197	211,702	-	1,820,778	1,501,929
Salaries - other	78,655	-	-	-	78,655	72,533
Salaries - contra	-	(70,073)	-	-	(70,073)	490
	6,946,312	652,228	219,325	184,671	8,002,536	7,316,773
Employment Insurance	129,874	14,839	3,580	-	148,293	135,561
Canada Pension	270,573	26,807	7,923	-	305,303	281,201
Group pension	379,450	24,377	13,522	-	417,349	374,915
Group benefits	315,000	26,477	11,312	-	352,789	316,326
Workers Compensation	80,366	10,931	-	-	91,297	75,300
Benefits - contra	(9,543)	(13,383)	-	35,141	12,215	-
	1,165,720	90,048	36,337	35,141	1,327,246	1,183,303
	8,112,032	742,276	255,662	219,812	9,329,782	8,500,076

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
SCHEDULE OF MAINTENANCE EXPENDITURES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2016**

	Voluntary Care	Permanent Care and Custody	Subsidized Adoption	Taking into Temporary Care	2016	2015
		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
EXPENDITURES						
Access	1,587	281,239	-	214,610	497,436	432,908
Baby Needs	-	13,541	-	31,179	44,720	30,202
Board	3,021	1,225,043	469,668	215,545	1,913,277	1,820,733
Board - special rates	-	169,710	188,421	10,408	368,539	367,725
Clothing	-	146,434	52,982	27,719	227,135	223,971
Congregate care	1,003	1,542,240	-	66,311	1,609,554	1,178,590
Cultural development	38	13,166	-	1,583	14,787	13,598
Daycare	-	164,729	75,978	57,772	298,479	477,919
Drug testing and other medical	320	93,044	8,590	226,434	328,388	325,808
Education supplies and other costs	198	22,545	-	1,163	23,906	51,801
Family conferencing and circles	-	2,510	-	2,431	4,941	3,705
Independent living	-	48,907	-	-	48,907	113,654
Inventory/Other	-	36,145	-	13,173	49,318	50,282
Mentorship	530	274,933	-	275	275,738	316,882
Miscellaneous	-	11,770	13,258	2,164	27,192	44,734
Personal development	15	52,656	18,862	7,928	79,461	91,568
Professional fees	398	128,731	61,431	95,326	285,886	379,439
Recreation	-	133,847	9,624	10,688	154,159	146,240
Registration - births	-	3,488	-	701	4,189	3,672
Respite	520	203,014	-	41,924	245,458	372,145
Spending	418	138,907	-	21,716	161,041	185,772
Training	-	6,477	-	1,248	7,725	854
	8,048	4,713,076	898,814	1,050,298	6,670,236	6,632,202

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

GIRL POWER

Dear Darlene, and Marilyn, We would all like to thank you for giving us this privilege to come to girl power, every week we all look forward to coming, eating the wonderful food, having a good laugh, playing games, and even learning a little bit of stuff. We will all be very sad when this is over because we have formed a huge family, even if we won't be attending these classes every week it doesn't mean we won't still be a huge family, so once again, THANK YOU.

Love: EMMA, SHAY, Jaiyah, Camryn, and alyssa

