



2019 Annual Report

Mi'kmaw

Family & Children's Services
of Nova Scotia

Prevention by Expanding our Services

Emma Stevens - Blackbird by The Beatles sung in Mi'kmaq
910,012 views

14K 134 SHARE SAVE

Mi'kmaq Blackbird singer gets huge shoutout from Paul McCartney

A dream has come true for Cape Breton teen Emma Stevens and her music teacher

Jennifer Van Eers - CBC Radio - Posted Jun 03, 2019 12:49 PM ET | Last Updated: June 3

Justin Trudeau @JustinTrudeau

Emma Stevens from @EskasoniSchools got a shout-out from @PaulMcCartney for her rendition of Blackbird... You probably know the original, but have you heard it in Mi'kmaq? Check it out:

YouTube

Tweet your reply

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Mi'kmaw
Family & Children's Services
of Nova Scotia



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.



MFCSNS Staff

ESKASONI OFFICE

PO Box 7142

Eskasoni, NS

B1W 1A2

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Executive Director - JOHNSON, Arlene
Assistant Executive Director - PAUL, Lenora
Executive Assistant - DENNY, Vance
Office Manager - GOOGOO, Carleen
Receptionist - SYLLIBOY, Jaylene, DENNY, Kirsten
Janitorial/Maintenance - STEVENS, Eric,
MCGUIGAN, Louise, STEVENS, Vincent

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Human Resource Manager - MACDONLD, Holly
Occupational Health & Safety Coordinator -
TRAINOR, Pius
Human Resource Assistant - SIMON, Karen
Human Resource Administrative Assistant -
PAUL, Ruby

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Supervisor - MORRIS, Paul E.
Legal Counsel - DENNY, Jessie, MACDONALD,
Jennifer
Paralegal - MARINER-WEBB, Jennifer

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications Officer - PAUL, George

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Finance Manager - ARSENEAU, Kendra
Supervisor - MALONEY, Tanya
Finance Clerks - GOULD, Alaina, GOULD, Tiffany

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

INTAKE & INVESTIGATION

Supervisors- HISCOCK, Lucinda,
- JEFFERY, Madeline
Administration Assistant - PAUL, Serena
Intake & Investigation Team
BOYCE, Lynn, FULLER, Shannon, COOLE, Eileen,
FRASER, Carol Ann, MCCARTHY, Christina,

MACDONALD, Danielle

LONG-TERM CHILD PROTECTION

Supervisors - DENNY-SYLLIBOY, Angeline
- CORMER, Daryl
Administration Assistant - POULETTE, Nora
Long-Term Child Protection Team -
YOUNG, Katie, LEBLANC, Amy, HILL, Natasha,
GOULD, Connie, SMITH, Melanie, TREMBLETT,
Sarah, LEBLANC, Amy, CARABIN, Sara, JOHNSON,
Sarita (Student), MARSHALL, Nila (Social Work
Assistant)

TEMPORARY CARE & CUSTODY

Supervisor - DOUCETTE, Yvonne
Administration Assistant - SYLLIBOY, Kerrie
Temporary Care & Custody - DOUCETTE, Edna,
LAFFORD, Erica, DENNY, Nadia

FAMILY SUPPORT & CASE AIDE

Supervisor - BOYD-CROWTHER, Deborah
Administration Assistant - CHIN, Mishka
Family Support Team - SYLLIBOY, Charis
DUBREUIL, Debra, SYLLIBOY, Vera, ISAAC, Abby,
MENGE, Bree, DOUCETTE, Jermaine, JOHN,
Sandra (term)
Case Aide Team - STEVENS, Justin, MARSHALL,
Margaret, JOHNSON, Chase, STEVENS, Shelley,
BASQUE, Jackie

CHILDREN IN PERMANENT CARE & CUSTODY SERVICES

Supervisor - WILLIAMS, Sheena
Administration Assistant - GOOGOO, Mary V.
Permanent Care & Custody Team -
BERNARD, Veronica, BERNARD, GALE Mickella
(Mat), GOULD, Gloria, GOULD, Annie, JEDDORE,
Conchetta, GOUTHRO, David, ABOUD, Wendy,
JOHNSON, Karlana (LTD)

RESOURCE FAMILY SERVICES

Supervisor - YOUNG, Sheraine
Administration Assistant - DENNY, Rhonda
Resource Family Team - MACDONALD, Jacquelin,
DENNY, Nerissa (PRIDE TRAINER), CAMPBELL,
Malcolm, BRAIN, Jennifer, TOURNIDIS, Jocelyn,
SIMON, Rhonda.

ADOPTION AND RESOURCE

Supervisor - DOYLE, Helen
Administrative Assistant - LAFFORD, Marcia
Adoption and Resource Team-
O'QUINN, Sherri, SMITH, Susan (Mat), FRANCIS,
Dorothy, YOUNG, Charmaine, GINNISH, Sheila,
KABATAY, Cynthia

FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALING

Supervisor - CHRISTMAS, Diana
Administrative Assistant - GOOGOO, Jeannie
Family and Community Healing Team -
GALE, Julia, SYLLIBOY, Norman

WIKMANEJ KIKMANAQ

Supervisor - BASQUE, Kristen
Administrative Assistant - BERNARD, Nikhea
Wikmanej Kikmanaq Eskasoni Team -
YOUNG, Sophie, STEVENS, Lydia, SYLLIBOY, John
Denny, YOUNG, Melissa

INDIAN BROOK OFFICE

PO Box 179

Indian Brook, NS

B0N 2H0

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

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

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Supervisor - MORRIS, PAUL
Legal Counsel - LEVANIE, Ann
Paralegal - MCCONNELL, Christena

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Finance Manager - ARSENEAU, Kendra
Supervisor - MALONEY, Tanya
Pay & Benefits Clerk - PAUL, Jo-Anne



MFCSNS Staff Continued

Operating Payables - SACK, Ellie
Child Maintenance Payables Clerk - GEHUE, Hillary, NUTTER, Jennifer J., DEUVILLE, Matthew
Senior Child Maintenance Payables Clerk - PAUL, Lisa

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

INTAKE & INVESTIGATION

Supervisor - NUTTER, Jennifer
Administration Assistant - MARR, Eileen
Intake & Investigation Team - MANN, Ashley, INGLIS-ASSAFF, Pauline (Social Work Mentor), GOODMAN, Karri, LONG, Samantha (Leeann Revel Mat)

LONG-TERM CHILD PROTECTION

Supervisor - DONNELLY, Louise
Administrative Assistant - SPENCE, Julie
Long-Term Child Protection Team - FORD, Kelly, MACEACHREN, Mary, BACON, Lillian, ELSON, Sarah, TANG, Andy

TEMPORARY CARE & CUSTODY/LONG TERM

Supervisor - HIGGINS, Leeann
Administrative Assistant - SPENCE, Julie
Long Term Protection Team - HAMILTON, Derek, PARK, Jennifer (term)
Temporary Care & Custody
MACPHERSON, Anneliese, GARIEPY, Kim
MCKELVIE, Jennifer

FAMILY SUPPORT & CASE AIDE

Supervisor - SAULNIER, Annette
Family Support Team - KNOCKWOOD, Annie, MAYICH, Earla, TOMER, Catherine, MICHAEL, Julie
Case Aide Team - MARR, Juanita, SACK, Diane (term), MACKENZIE, Terra

CHILDREN IN PERMANENT CARE & CUSTODY SERVICES

Casework Supervisor - MARACLE, Denise
Administration Assistant - PAUL, Virginia
Permanent Care & Custody Team - CROWE, Emily
GALLANT-WHITE, Michelle, WELLS, Carolyn, YOUNIS, Corrine, BADLWIN, Nicole

ADOPTION

Supervisor - MCKEE, Lesley
Administration Assistant - BILODEAU, Erica
Adoption Team - RAFUSE, Ruby, WHITE, Julie, MCDERMOTT, Sean, FAULKNER, Kattie (Mat), STEPHENS, Marsha (term)

FOSTER CARE

Supervisor for Resource Family - PHILLIPS, Jodi
Foster Care Team - HANCOCK, Norine, COLLINS, Kim. SAULNIER, Annette (PRIDE), ALI, Jessica, KNOCKWOOD, Ella (Recruitment/Pre-service)

FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALING

Supervisor - Matilda Koopmann
Family and Community Healing Team - KNOCKWOOD, Glen, DOUCETTE, Cassie

WIKIMANEJ KIKMANAQ

Supervisor - BASQUE, Kristen
Administrative Assistant - BERNARD, Nikhea
Wikmanej Kikmanaq Indian Brook Team - HILLIER, Cassandra, BERNARD, Roberta

BEAR RIVER OFFICE 89 Reservation Road Bear River, NS BOS 1B0

Administrative Assistant - HARRISON, Dave
Long Term Protection - RING, Nicole
Family and Community Healing - SWINAMER, Belynda

WE'KOQMA'Q FAMILY & HEALING CENTRE PO Box 310, We'koqma'q, NS, BOE 3M0

FAMILY HEALING CENTRE

Manager - WALKER, Bev
Program Supervisor - POIRIER, Bernadette
Administrative Assistant - WALKER, Jean
Night Support Worker - MILLER, Krista
GOOGOO, Cammeilia

Women's Outreach Worker - GOOGOO, Claudine
Men's Intervention Worker - GOOGOO, Doreen
Woman's Support Worker - WILCOX, Olive, MACEACHERN, Carol
Assistant Support Worker - WILCOX, Theresa
Child & Youth Outreach Worker - GILLIS, Justine
Casuals - PIERRO, Mary Helen, LEROY, Lori, PHILLIPS, Jessica, CREMO-JULIAN, Kris

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

FAMILY HEALING CENTRE

Manager - WALKER, Bev
Program Supervisor - PAUL, Brooke
Administrative Assistant 50% - PAUL, Nancy
Night Support Worker - GLOADE, Dora
MARTIN, Cynthia
Women's Outreach Worker - MARTIN, Sylvia
Men's Intervention Worker - WALSH, J. Dan
Assistant Support Worker - MACKAY, Elizabeth
Women's Support Worker - FOLEY, Shantel
SYLLIBOY, Mary
Child & Youth Outreach Worker - WINTERS, Laura
Casuals - MACNEIL, Betty, GOULD, Lorraine
MARTIN, Mary Ann, MARTIN, Michelle, BERNARD, Wendy

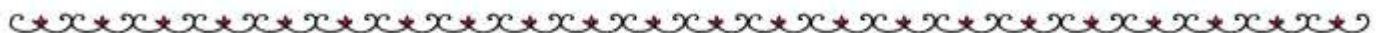


Annual General Assembly

Delta Hotels by Marriott

Thursday, July 4, 2019

Opening of AGA 2019	Please Welcome your Emcee - Chief Rod Googoo of We'koqma'q Opening Prayer with Elder Glenda Wysote-Labillois, RSW, MSW
Call to Order	Approval of Agenda Approval of Last Year's Annual General Assembly Minutes Business Arising from the Minutes
Reports	President's Report - Chief Deborah Robinson - Approval of President's Report Executive Director's Report - Arlene Johnson - Approval of Executive Director's Report
Financial Report	Report on the Audited Financial Statements BDO and Kendra Arseneau, Finance Manager - Approval of audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2019 Appointment of auditor for March 31, 2020 fiscal year
Nominations	Nominations and approval of the Executive Committee Members of MFCSNS
New Business	
Keynote Speaker	AGA Keynote Speaker - Glenda Wysote-Labillois - Speaks on Traditional Teachings
Special Performance	Emma Stevens & Carter Chaisson - Singing Blackbird in Mi'kmaq and My Unama'ki
Closing Prayer	MFCSNS In House Elder, Wilma Simon



Annual General Assembly Minutes 2018

Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES – 5 July 2018

The Annual General Assembly of the Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia was held July 5, 2018 at 10:00am at the Delta Hotel, Dartmouth, NS.

PRESENT

Board: Chief Deborah Robinson, President, Acadia
Chief Leroy Denny, 1st Vice President, Eskasoni
Chief Mike Sack, 2nd Vice President, Sipekne'katik
Chief Andrea Paul, 3rd Vice President, Pictou Landing
Chief Rod Googoo, Secretary, We'koqma'q
Chief Carol Potter, Bear River
Chief Gerald Toney, Annapolis Valley
Chief Bob Gloade, Millbrook
Chief PJ Prosper, Paqtnkek
Gail Christmas, Proxy for Chief Terry Paul, Membertou
Larry Peters, Proxy for Chief Sidney Peters, Treasurer, Glooscap

Staff and Guests: Lorraine Whitman, President, NS Native Women's Association
Jessica Skinner, Auditor, BDO
Gary Landry, Executive Director, Federation of Foster Families
Kelly Besler, Director, Child Protection & Children in Care
Wendy Bungay, Director of Placement Services
Debbie Thibault, Department of Community Services
George Savoury, Savoury Consultants
Natalie Doucette, Mi'kmaw Child Welfare Specialist
Jill Barkhouse, Child Welfare Specialist
Donna Kaulbeck, Child Welfare Specialist

The meeting convened at 10:05am with Chief Roderick Googoo presiding. The opening prayer was said by Chief Leroy Denny.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The agenda was presented.

MOTION #1: It was moved by Chief Mike Sack, and seconded by Chief Gerald Toney to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS: Chief Deborah Robinson

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT (CFSA) UPDATE: Chief PJ Prosper & Angelina Amaral

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Arlene Johnson

LOGO PRESENTATION:

Communications Officer George Paul unveils the new Mi'kmaw Family Logo.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Kendra Arseneau

Financial Report for the 2017-18 Fiscal Year is presented. Jessica Skinner of BDO presents the Auditor's Report.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS:

The Auditors appointed by the MFCS Board is BDO.

MOTION #3: It was moved by Chief Carol Potter, seconded by Chief Gerald Toney to accept BDO as the Auditors for Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of NS.

CLOSING PRAYER: Lorraine Whitman said the closing prayer.

MOTION #4: It was moved by Chief Mike Sack, seconded by Chief Gerald Toney to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 11:45am.



President's Remarks



Chief Deborah Robinson

As President of Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia I take great honor and pride to represent this Agency. I want to welcome our Chiefs who make up the Board of Directors and Executive Board. Also a big welcome to our elders, staff, foster parents, kinship care families, youth and special guests.

Our theme this year is prevention by expanding our services. This fiscal year for 2018 and 19 will be remembered as historical and trailblazing.

Historical for the openings of the two new Mi'kmaw Family buildings in Bear River and Eskasoni but also trailblazing as Mi'kmaq Family officially expands to reach all parts of Nova Scotia.

These are historic times for Mi'kmaw Family as we continue to move forward and continue to create our own Mi'kmaq path for our children and our Mi'kmaw Family.

I believe our future step is to evaluate the working conditions of the Indianbrook office because I feel we must, we need to expand the Indianbrook office to provide comfortable working conditions and to expand our services.

We are incorporating our traditional practices in our Agency and we are witnessing positive results. We must continue in this direction and my hope is to have more of our services provided in Mi'kmaq.

It takes a special person to work in this field. We know the work is demanding and challenging. With this said, we also need to focus on our employee's as well. We need to continue to promote the healthy well-being of our staff by providing special programs, training or simply team building activities.

President's Remarks continued...

We also need to be more open with staff members to address any growing concerns they may have so that we could remedy to the solution.

We also need to sensitize our staff with Mi'kmaq cultural educational activities and be more inclusive to our LGBTQ+ family.

I believe this is my 10th year as president of Mi'kmaq Family and my passion and commitment continues to grow because my energy is rooted in the dedicated people who make this agency grow and break new grounds.

We must take care of our own so that they could take care of our Mi'kmaq Families.

On behalf of all the Nova Scotia Chiefs, I want to say thank you to the staff and wish a warm welcome to all of the new staff who have joined us during the year.

Thank you to Indigenous Service Canada, that

provides the bulk of our funding. Natalie, Leonard, Wendy, Kelly and staff from the Department of Community Services who also provides funding, support and expertise. Also thank you to the foster parents, kinship care families, elders, service providers and other agencies.

A special thank you to our senior management team; Arlene, Lenora and Monica. Once again thank you for joining us today at our AGM.

It is because of your collective efforts, dedication and support that we are stronger together and more effective together.



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



Executive & Assistant Executive Directors Report



Executive Director, Arlene M Johnson BSW, RSW



Assistant
Executive Director
Lenora Paul
MSW, RSW



Assistant
Executive Director
Monica Clarke-Johnson
BSW, RSW

Welcome everyone to our 34rd Annual General Assembly.

This year we honor our dear friend and co-worker Jean McLean who lost her battle to cancer on July 23, 2018. Jean was instrumental in bringing the two Healing Center's in We'koqma'q and Millbrook. She was an advocate in promoting safe family environments and reducing family violence in Aboriginal communities.

Jean was the Manager of both Healing Centres. Her resolve and compassion to help end violence against women will continue to resonate throughout our Mi'kmaq communities so that the rest of us can follow in her footsteps. We will miss your beautiful smile Jean and you will never be forgotten.

As you may have noticed on our front cover of our AGA report, this year belongs to Eskasoni's Emma Stevens and we at Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services want to celebrate Emma's amazing journey.

For those who haven't heard or have been hiding under a rock, Emma's musical journey began with beautiful video rendition of the Beatles song "Black Bird" sung in Mi'kmaq. The song was created in recognition of the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

Who would have thought a Mi'kmaq rendition of "Black Bird," would literally go viral. To date this video has been watched over 900 thousand times, getting close to a million. The video has garnered worldwide attention for not only Emma but the Mi'kmaq Nation. Sir Paul

Executive & Assistant Executive Directors Report continued...

McCartney himself gave a shout out to the video and said it was "Really cool check it out" and also our Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau tweeted Emma and the Eskasoni School.

These last few months have been crazy for Emma and Eskasoni's high school teacher Carter Chaisson. They have been to Kenya, Ottawa and have made special musical appearances throughout Nova Scotia.

What many people don't know is that Emma is a child in care. We have seen Emma grow and blossom and we at Mi'kmaw Family are extremely proud of her. We will continue to support your journey Emma and we wish you only the best.

[This year's AGA theme is prevention by expanding our services.](#)

So what does prevention mean to Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services? It means better support service for our families, in their own homes and environment.

This year, we have so many things to celebrate that in return will create better services for our Mi'kmaq families who come into our doors.

On April 26 of this year we officially opened up a new satellite office in Bear River First Nation and we now have a permanent location in the south shore. By expanding our services we are fulfilling our goal to reach all the Mi'kmaw communities in all parts of the province.

By having a third location in the south shore area we will be more visible and we can provide more family and community programs in that area. Also by having a permanent home in Bear River we now improve our response time to deal with Child Protection matters. We want to

thank Bear River Chief, Carol Dee Potter and her council for making this possible.

This time last year our Eskasoni offices were overcrowded and fragmented. Our departments were scattered throughout Cape Breton. Our main office ran out of office space and our rented trailers were full to the max.

Our transition to our new building in February was hectic but exciting and we have settled in very comfortably. We are now one big family. We had our Grand Opening on May 17 and it was an amazing event. We had close to 400 visitors and we had so many great comments and overall it was a great community event.

Now that we are all together our focus can now shift towards expanding and improving our services not only in Cape Breton but all of Nova Scotia.

With that said, I want congratulate and welcome all our new employees to our Mi'kmaw family and I want to wish the new Bear River staff the best of luck.

Today our staff is reaching close to 200 in all our offices in Nova Scotia and the demand for our services is greater than it has ever been before. The work they do comes with great stress and great rewards but we must never forget our employee's. We have our annual AGA and Christmas staff party every year but more needs to be done to help enrich the employee morale and bonding within our organization.

We plan on addressing this in the next fiscal year and create more staff building activities for each department.



Executive & Assistant Executive Directors Report continued...

Today many of our programs are focusing on prevention and helping the families. We have one-of-a-kind culturally appropriate programs, such as Wikimanej Kikmanaq family group conference program, Mi'kmaw community programs, Seven Sacred Teaching school programs and a new pilot program called immediate response circle (IRC). We want to achieve consistency in all our service and reach families sooner than later.

In this AGA report I encourage everyone to take time to read the reports of each department and witness the dedication our agency has in improving the lives of our children and families.

Also in this report, our communications officer, George Paul, wrote a few feature stories that were published in the Mi'kmaq Maliceet Nation News. Part of George's communication strategy is to highlight and celebrate the people and the families that make Mi'kmaw Family work. They are beautiful stories and I encourage everyone take the time to read them.

Before I conclude my speech I have to speak about this special place in our new building. This room is the centerpiece of our building and inside the round room birch bark walls balances the room. In the center natural light projects down from the glass floor above. Also in the center is our beautiful healing drum that represents the heartbeat of our Mi'kmaw Family. This room it is a place meant for teaching, healing, praying, smudging, gatherings and all forms of prayers are welcomed in this room.

It is so beautiful and relaxing in this room and the special name we gave this room is "Atlasma'l Kijjaqamiij" meaning rest or heal your spirit.

From now on this room will have Wilma Simon

as our in-house elder and she will be tending to this healing room and we will invite visiting elders to come do traditional teachings for families and staff members.

We want to thank everyone here today for their continued support. To Wendy Bungay, Natalie Doucette, and the Staff of the Department of Community Services.

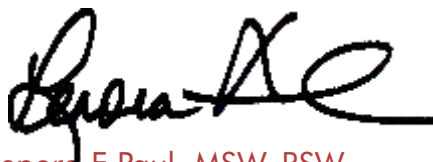
A Special Thank you to our President of Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of NS, Chief Deborah Robinson for her leadership, direction and compassion. A heartfelt appreciation to all the Chiefs of Nova Scotia and who provide the support and leadership to continue on in our journey to provide better services for our Mi'kmaq families.

And our Agency would not be possible without DCS and Indigenous Service Canada for their continued funding support.

Wela'liek,



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

Keynote Speaker

Glenda Wysote-Labillois RSW, BSW, MSW

As we continue to incorporate our own Mi'kmaq identity and traditional teachings within Mi'kmaq Family and Children Services of Nova Scotia. Our key resource will always be the teachings of our Mi'kmaq elders, especially our grandmothers.

Today at our AGA we are honored to have a beautiful Mi'kmaq mother, grandmother who has gained vast knowledge in the social work field, addictions field and expertise in traditional and non-traditional healing.

Her name is Glenda Wysote-Labillois and she comes from Listuguj New Brunswick.

Glenda is a wife, a mother to two beautiful daughters and grandmother of three. Her education background is in Social Work and received her BSW Degree from University of Maine in Presque Isle, Maine. She later received her MSW from University of Orono, in Orono Maine.

She is a Registered Member of New Brunswick Association of Social Workers and obtained a Certificate in Community Development and Alcohol and Drug Counseling from the Nechi Institute in Alberta/Keyano College. She has also taught Native Studies for Cape Breton University in her community.

Today Glenda is the Sole Proprietor and owner of Sacred Fire Healing Lodge in Uggiganjig, NB. And has been involved in the Traditional Way of Life for 28 years. This is where she had found her identity as a Mi'kmaq Woman.



In Glenda's words,

"To be able to pray and sing in my own language has help me to gain the confidence and receive the Wisdom and Knowledge from Elder's throughout my journey. Language has been the backbone of my spirit; it has provided me with the tools to share with all my brothers and sisters. I am sharing these teaching with you to bring back our Traditions and Culture. As Aboriginal descendants we need to take our rightful place in society."

We are humbled today to receive Glenda's teachings and wisdom.



Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program

Nepitmumkl Mi'kmawe'l Wkijksu'l



Manager: Bev Walker

Department Role and Goals:

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 We'koqma'q 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 women who have experienced violence 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 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 one of the reasons for children coming into care of the agency, it is vital that the programming meet the needs of our families.

Purpose:

Our purpose is to empower and support women, men and children affected by family violence as well as decrease the incidence of family violence in First Nation Communities. We promote safety, well-being and justice for all persons affected by family violence while respecting their right to self-direction and control of their own lives.

We are committed to listen to the voice of those who are affected by family violence and using their experiences to guide our work.

We believe that perpetrators of family violence are accountable for their abusive behaviour. We believe in the use of Mi'kmaw language and encourage employees and participants to use their own language.

In Loving Memory of Jean McLean

July 23, 2018, we lost a beautiful soul. Jean McLean was the Manager of the Healing Centres. She began her career with the agency in 1992, when the first Healing Centre was preparing to be opened in We'koqma'q, as the Senior Counsellor (now called Program Supervisor). She became Program Coordinator (now called Manager) of both Centres in 1994, after the Millbrook Centre opened. She retired in February 2007 but came out of retirement to once again be the Manager in April 2013. She was instrumental in the planning and program development of the Centres. Her commitment and dedication to helping end

Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...



In Loving Memory of Jean McLean

violence against women and the Centres was clear and evident. Jean's passion had always been to promote safe family environments and to reduce family violence in Aboriginal communities. She advocated to have fiscal increases for staff salaries, since they were so underpaid, and most recently upgrading of computers and furniture for the Centres. This was a long battle, but she persevered, was successful, and we are thankful. She was a leader and a trailblazer for the rest of us who will follow in her footsteps.

We miss her dearly and will never forget her kindness, grace, calm voice of reason, wise advice, great sense of humour, and her beautiful smile that lit up the room.

Wela'liek Jean, for everything, it was an honour to know you. Nemultis.

Family Healing Centres

This year the Millbrook Family Healing Centre is celebrating their 25th anniversary. We'koqma'q is now 26 years but did not have a celebration for the 25th last year, respecting the passing of Jean McLean. Later this year both Centres will host an Open house to celebrate and honor Jean McLean. In the last 26 years there have been 1,620 women and 1,678 children pass through our doors for help in that time. The Healing Centres are still seen as a safe place for women and their children.

The Centres also host retreats for women and girls and a girl's camp in the summer. Millbrook hosted a two-day Elder's retreat on October 16 – 17. We'koqma'q hosted a girl's camp July 16 – 19. Both events were well attended and enjoyed by all participants.

Even with a high turnover in staff, the Healing Centres teams were able to coordinate and/or co-ordinate or were involved in many events through out the province. Those included community breakfasts, Dec. 6th Day of Action events, Open houses, Women's wellness day, Professional Development days, Faceless Dolls/MMIW events, Family Violence Prevention day, Kindness Rocks, Sister in Spirit events, Pipe ceremony, Lunch & Learns, Family Fun Day, Bike Rodeos, Health/Wellness fairs, a youth moose hunt and a youth retreat. In total the Healing Centres organized/were involved in 24 community events and delivered 195 Community workshops. Our team demonstrated dedication and commitment in achieving our goals to promote healing with our families and communities and their hard work was greatly appreciated.

The Outreach Program faces numerous challenges in delivering the programs. There are only 6 people to deliver the outreach program to our communities across Nova Scotia. The geographical distribution of our



Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...

First Nation communities and the severe weather conditions in the winter months, there is no one to deliver the specific program if the worker is sick or on vacation, travelling that is required for program delivery takes a toll on the individuals, so our programs are not always delivered as planned. The outreach program requires additional human resources to keep up with the increasing referrals and requests for programming.

Men's Outreach Program and the "Journey of the Two Wolves - Tapusijik Paqtismk": The Men's Outreach program provides Mi'kmaw men the opportunity to receive important

knowledge and education about being non-abusive to an intimate partner, ex-partner and/or family members. The "Journey of the Two Wolves" consists of a 5-17 session information workshop that focuses on the wholistic healing. The outreach services also include one-to-one counselling, support and education groups.

The Men's Outreach Workers, Doreen Googoo, of the We'koqma'q Centre and Dan Walsh of the Millbrook Centre have worked hard this year to keep up with the demand for this program. In all there were 36 new clients and 36 on-going clients with 228 sessions completed. There were at least four groups that have been completed this past year.

Women's Outreach Program: The Women's Outreach Program is instrumental in the delivery of the Men's Outreach Program by a joint program that delivers the women's



component of the program. The program also has an Awareness and Education module delivered regularly to the communities in addition to the group and 1:1 counselling sessions. Jacklyn Paul/ Sylvia Martin of the Millbrook Centre and Chelsea MacLellan of the We'koqma'q Centre were the Women's Outreach Workers in the past year. There were 25 new clients and 15 on-going clients with 215 sessions completed. Some of the topics covered in the program are: Intimate Partner Violence, Self-Esteem, Healthy & Unhealthy Relationships, Parenting, Grief and Loss, Trauma, Relapse Prevention, Options to Anger etc.

Child/Youth Outreach Program: The Child/Youth Workers are Laura Winters of the Millbrook Centre and Justine Gillis of the We'koqma'q Centre. The Child/Youth Outreach Worker also works with shelter staff to ensure the children and youth who reside at the shelter receive similar programming to address the issues of domestic violence. There were 93 workshops with 1180 participants in the last year. There were 41 new and 14 on-going clients with 382 sessions completed for this program. Some of the topics that are covered in this program are; Hands are Not for Hitting, Tea tree tells/ Safe Talk, Bullying, Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships, Internet Safety/ Cyber bullying, Self Esteem, Seven Sacred Teachings, Girl Power, 2B Boys, Faceless Dolls, Talking Sticks, Options to Anger etc.

In-House Programs: The In-House programs are facilitated by the Women Support Workers Shantel Foley and Mali Sylliboy of the Millbrook Centre and Olive Wilcox and Carol MacEachern of the We'koqma'q Centre. Some of the programs offered are; Intimate Partner Violence, Healthy/Unhealthy relationships, Safety Planning, Nobody's Perfect, Little Eyes Little Ears, Sacred Children, Healing Journey, Beyond Trauma & Violence, Self Esteem,

Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...



Relapse Prevention etc. They work with the clients in the residence by providing support, counselling, advocacy, transportation, referrals, parenting, budgeting, meal planning and family violence awareness.

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 Program staff have received some training in these areas of concern.

Training: The Healing Centres staff attended training this year in: Addictions & Naloxone, Asist, Family Services Early Intervention, Jaqueline Campbell Danger Assessment, Matrimonial Real Property, Cultural Sensitivity, Human Rights, & Wik'manej Kikmanaq.

Challenges: The Centres faced enormous challenges in the past years 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, it has been difficult to deliver 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.

New Staff April/18 – Mar/19: There have been several changes and turnover in staff for both centres this year which has also made the work challenging:

Bev Walker, Manager of Healing Centres (Oct./18-present)
Jacklyn Paul Millbrook Program Supervisor (Dec/18 - Jan/19)
Brooke Paul Millbrook Program Supervisor (Jan/19 - present)
Mary 'Mali' Sylliboy Millbrook Women's Support (June/18 - present)
Nancy Paul Millbrook Admin. Assistant (Nov/18 - Dec/18 sick leave)
Susan Morrison Millbrook Admin. Assistant (term Jan/19 - present)
Sylvia Martin Millbrook Women's Outreach (Feb/19 - present)
Cynthia Martin Millbrook Night Support (October 5, 2018 - present)
Chelsea MacLellan We'koqma'q Women's Outreach (May/18 - March/19)
Claudine Googoo We'koqma'q Women's Outreach (May/19 - present)
Theresa Wilcox We'koqma'q Assistant Women's Support (May/19 - present)

The National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence (NACAFV) is an organization whose mandate is to reduce family violence nationally by advocating for Shelters and transition house workers who provide the frontline services to Indigenous women and children, survivors of violence in Canada. They represent the First Nation shelters across Canada and has been providing training at no extra cost to the Agency. Each year NACAFV is funded for training of front-line workers in the shelters and manager/directors. On November 27 – 30th, 2018 Bev Walker and Bernadette Poirier attended a training forum in Montreal.

On February 25 – 28, 2019 Bev Walker and Bernadette Poirier attended NACAFV's AGA and Shelter director training in Toronto. NACAFV was also able to advocate/ co-ordinate a meeting of the Atlantic Shelter directors in Halifax which was attended by Bev Walker, Bernadette Poirier and Brooke Paul.

The Healing Centre Staff are faced with challenges and obstacles every year, but the commitment and dedication of the staff make our program what it is; they work hard with the resources we have to help our people in their most vulnerable time of need. We look forward to the next year working with our communities to help make them safer for everyone.

Wela'liek

Bev Walker, Manager of the Healing Centres



Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...

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

The We'koqma'q Healing Centre had 27 admissions from April 1st, 2018 - March 31st, 2019. A total of 5 children have stayed at the Centre during this period. Total bedstays of 345. The Millbrook Healing Centre had 27 admissions in the same time frame. There were a total of 10 children that stayed at the Centre during this period. Total bedstays of 1366.

	MILLBROOK	WE'KOQMA'Q
REASON FOR ENTRY:		
Already at Centre	2	0
Physical abuse	23	5
Verbal/Emotional Abuse	0	3
Threats to women and/or children	0	0
Other abuse	0	2
Housing problem (non-abuse)	3	12
Other (non-abuse)	1	5
REFERRED BY:		
Self-referral	15	20
Multi-service agency	1	1
Social service agency	2	0
Medical /health agency/doctor	1	1
Other shelter	3	0
Relative/Friend	5	0
Other: MFCS	0	3
Police	0	0
Alcohol & Drug Worker/NADACA	0	1
Native Council of Nova Scotia	0	0
MFHC	0	0
Other	0	1

EMPLOYMENT SITUATION ENTERING THE CENTRE:

Not employed/not looking for work/social assistance	20	23
Unemployed/EI	3	3
Occasional employment	0	1
Employed full-time/part-time	3	0
Self employed	0	0
Attending School	1	0

	MILLBROOK	WE'KOQMA'Q
PHYSICAL DISABILITIES:		
Mobility	3	1
Visual	0	0
Hearing	0	0
Other	0	3
None	24	23
LEFT ABUSE SITUATION BEFORE:		
Yes	25	20
No	2	2
Not Known	0	5
USED SHELTER BEFORE:		
Yes	22	19
No	5	8
Not Known	0	0

REASON FOR LEAVING CENTRE:		
Returned home	11	12
Found alternative housing	11	10
Asked to leave	3	1
Didn't like shelter	0	0
No known reason	0	0
Other	0	2
Access visit over	0	0
Going to Rehab	2	1
Still at MFHP Centre	2	1

DESTINATION/SITUATION:		
Returned home to unchanged situation	4	10
Returned home to changed situation	4	1
Relatives/Friends/neighbors	6	9
Own new place/private housing	4	2
Own new place/assistance housing	1	0
Other shelter	4	2
Second stage housing	1	0
Other	0	1
Not Known	1	0
Alcohol & Drug Rehab Centre	2	1
Still at MFHP Centre	2	1

Total Bed Stays for Women and Children	1366	345
Total Access Visits: not overnight	122	34
Total Crisis Calls	38	17

AGE GROUPS - WOMEN:		
18-24	4	5
25-34	10	1
35-50	10	19
51+	3	2

Family & Community Resource Program

Maw-lukutimk Apoqnmuksinew

Wkjisu'k aqq Wutanl

Supervisor:

Diana Christmas: MSW, BSW, RSW (Eskasoni)

Coordinators: Wilma Simon, Norman Sylliboy & Julia Gale

Administrative Support:

Jeannie Googoo (Eskasoni)

Supervisor:

Matilda Koopman (Sipekne'katik)

Coordinators: Cassie Doucette, Belynda Swimaner & Glen Knockwood

The Family & Community Resource teams work directly with our Mikmaw First Nation communities, community partners and stakeholders, to identify, develop and enhance support services/resources that directly assist in program delivery. All programs are delivered in partnership with interagency committees, First Nation schools, Health Directors and Health Centers, Mental Health and Addictions Services, Native Friendship Centre, NADACA and Chief & Councils.

Community Prevention Programs:

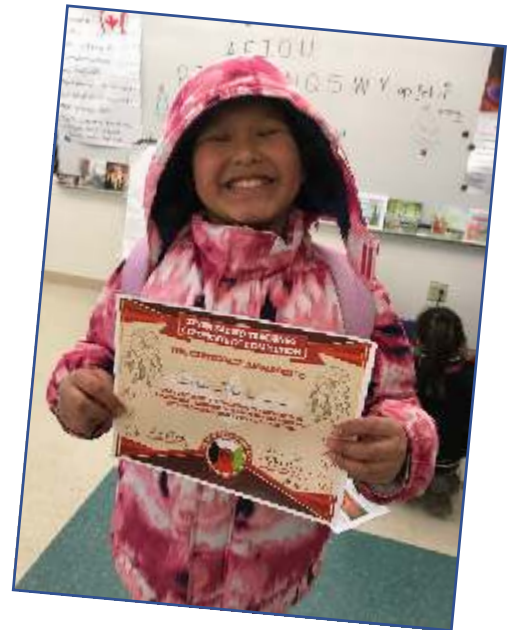
The Family & Community Resource teams work directly with First Nation communities, community Partners and Stakeholders, to develop and enhance support services and resources that directly assist in community programs and their delivery. Three core child and youth programs, namely, 2BBOYS, Girl Power and Seven Sacred Teachings have been delivered within the school systems and at community health centres. Also, the teams have been busy with establishing and delivering both Men & Women Wellness programs and the newly revised Aboriginal Parenting programs. Other program they have been involved with over the past year, include, Men's program, home alone program, sisters in spirit walk,

basic shelf, fun day activities and cultural programs. The Eskasoni team assisted Waycobah, with their annual Youth Cultural camp in Orangedale, NS in June and

attended a workshop in Membertou, " Healthy Living through Addictions". The teams were active in community Fun day activities, the biggest, during the Mikmaw Summer Games in Eskasoni. The team organized and participated with Paqtnekek First Nation a Sisters in Spirit walk and a MADD Canada function.

Challenges:

Over the past year the Teams have been adjusting to a number of challenges, especially, in staffing and program delivery. Both teams have been consistent in program delivery, however, Community participation remains a challenge. Common concerns and challenges brought forward by communities is that the programs are too long and limited. In the past, Family & Community Resource teams would be involved in many community activities and events. However, due to limited Core programming, the teams are not able to be out in the communities as they once were. Also, the Sipekne'kakik Family & Community team



Family & Community Resource Program continued...



consists of all new staff and are adjusting to their respective communities and program delivery. They too are challenged with community participation as they begin to familiarize themselves and navigate throughout their communities and building community partnerships.

Training:

The Family & Community Resource Teams have conducted and participated in a couple of in-house Training. The Sipekne'kakik team revised two new programs, the Men/Women's Wellness program and the parenting program, Taking Care of our own by Janet Fox. Also, the Eskasoni team participated in Pride Training workshops to update their skills and to enhance their personal and professional development.

Strategic Action Plan-Prevention Services:

Over the past year the Family & Community Resource team have been meeting with Management and George Savoury Consultants, to redesign and enhance the Family & Community Resource program. As part of the ongoing strategic action plan, six Core programs were identified with two core programs being revised, namely, the Women/Men Wellness program and the Aboriginal Parenting program. All programs

are being delivered throughout Mikmaki, with exception to the revised programs, which will commence in April/May, 2019. There is a need to maximize the current resources and target greatest need with existing resources. As part of the Strategic Plan for 2018, an Administrative support staff was hired in Eskasoni and Jeannie Googoo commenced her new role and responsibilities April 1st, 2019. There remains a need to hire an Administrative support staff for the Sipekne'kakik office. Wilma Simon will be vacating her Family & Community position and will transfer into a new role as Elder/Spiritual Caretaker.

There is a need to identify gaps in services/programs for parents, children and youth not involved with child protection services. The Family & Community Resource program will work with agency Departments to determine if our programs are compatible to their specific needs, especially, for parents who may benefit from Group parenting programs. There is a need to evaluate and better show case programs that are working well in the communities. Lastly, how can we better utilize elders in programming throughout Mik'maki. The Family & Community Resource Teams will continue to work towards achieving these goals and objectives.

Programs Delivered:

The Family & Community Resource program works closely with our Mikmaw communities, Stakeholders, Elders, Parents and Youth to provide and present programs on a variety of topics. The majority of programs embrace Mikmaw Traditional Teachings, Values, Beliefs and Culture.

2BBOYS: 8 weeks program for boys 8-12 years. This Program is geared specifically for boys and its main goal is to build and enhance

Family & Community Resource Program continued...

qualities in young boys to be the best they can, utilizing the medicine wheel concept. Some of the topics discussed through guided group discussion and role playing is self-talk, what are emotions, ways to talk and channel frustration and anger, building empathy, body shift, diversity, mediation/relaxation methods, social media awareness and misuse of alcohol and drugs.

Girl Power: 8 weeks program for girls 8-12 years. This program is geared specifically for young girls and its goal is to enhance their skill development in building healthy connections and self-esteem. Topics discussed in small group guided discussions and role playing are, what is girl-power, skill building, journal writing, positive body image, creative visualization, boundaries, friendships and peers, channeling frustration and anger management, giving back to your community.

Fem Power: 7 weeks program for young mothers, 15-25 years. This program is a self-care program that provides a variety of topics to young mothers utilizing educational tools, skill development and creativity in a nurturing environment. Topics discussed are skill development, body image, coming alive, healthy relationships, "changing our stories", women and anger, and creating the life you want.

Seven Sacred Teachings: All ages, especially, children and youth. Sharing the Teachings of Wisdom, Honesty, Humility, Respect, Courage, Love and Truthfulness in relationship to our everyday lives.

Women/Men Wellness program: 8 weeks program. This program is for both men and women and are delivered in separate groups. The goal of the program is to enhance skill



development and to recognize the daily challenges that these groups face daily. Topics discussed through guided group discussions are, anger and stress management, Mikmaw cultural teaching, basic shelf, First Nation financial fitness, healthy relationships and community resources.

Parenting program: "Taking care of our own", developed by Janet Fox. This program is delivered in 6-8 weeks, with emphasis on Parenting our children. The Program explores family roles and responsibilities, traditional parenting, non-interference, Story Telling and traditional ceremonies. Specific parenting issues and challenges will be discussed, which include, parenting styles, needs and behavior, Time in Time out, Teachable moments, Safety and Security and stress management.



Family & Community Resource Program continued...

Overall, the Family & Community Resource Teams delivered approximately, 288 programs, to children, youth, parents, men and women, elders, community stakeholders, and teachers. They have reached out and touched over five thousand community members throughout Mi'kmawki.

Overall, the programs have been well received in the schools and communities.

Eskasoni Office

Family & Community Resource Department - Core Programs 2018-2019

Months	2BBOYS		Girl Power		Fem Power		Sacred Teaching		M/W Wellness		Parenting	
	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended
April	2	40	4	85			9	439	1	22		
May	7	102	6	101			1	60	3	76		
June	3	45	3	57			1	24				
July							2	44				
August												
September												
October							1	30	1	25		
November	3	9	2	12			5	83	1	20		
December	3	17	4	24			7	185	1	16		
January											1	10
February							3	52	4	38		
March							2	60	1	25		
Totals:	18	213	19	279			31	977	12	222	1	10

Other Programs 2018-2019

Months	Home Alone		Men's Program		Cultural		Sister in Spirit		Basic Shelf		Fun Day/Madd	
	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended
April	1	18										
May			4	32	4	49						
June			2	13	4	58					1	175
July			4	28	8	204						
August					3	48					1	750
September	1	60	1	12							1	75
October	1	60	1	8			1	80	1	5		
November			3	22								
December			1	20								
January			3	30								
February			1	9	2	33						
March			1	3	1	12					2	39
Totals:	3	138	21	177	22	404	1	80	1	5	5	1039

F&C Resources Info

Months	F&C Info/Support Sessions		Interagency	
	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended
April	1	11		
May			1	15
June			1	16
July				
August				
September	1	36	1	15
October	1	70	1	15
November			1	15
December			1	17
January	5	60	1	17
February	1	10	1	16
March			1	21
Totals:	9	187	9	147

Family & Community Resource Program continued...

Indian Brook Office

Family & Community Resource Department - Core Programs 2018-2019

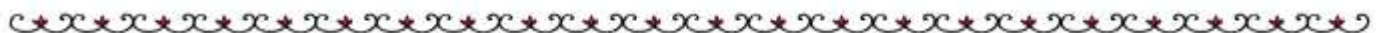
Months	2BBOYS		Girl Power		Fem Power		Sacred Teaching		M/W Wellness		Parenting	
	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended
April	2	8	2	12								
May	1	4	1	6								
June												
July			2	14								
August	2	4										
September	2	8	2	10								
October	4	16	6	34	3	16	9	86				
November	3	17	1	5	2	10	5	53				
December	1	6	2	14	1	5	3	21				
January	1	2										
February	2	6							1	6		
March	2	4							1	8		
Totals:	20	75	16	95	6	31	19	171	2	14		

Other Programs 2018-2019

Months	Read & Play		Car Seat Safety		Bike Rodeo		Baby Sitting		Cultural		Fun Day/Madd	
	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended
April	2	35	1	40								
May					1	137	1	6	2	7		
June			1	40							1	50
July			1	45			1	1			2	50
August			1	56	1	12						
September			2	95								
October												
November												
December												
January												
February												
March												
Totals:	2	35	6	276	2	149	2	7	2	7	3	100

F&C Resources Info

Months	F&C Info/Support Sessions		Interagency	
	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended
April	2	33		
May			1	9
June				
July				
August				
September			1	9
October				
November				
December				
January	1	1		
February	4	203		
March	9	36		
Totals:	16	273	2	18



The Greatest Gift: Love

By George Paul
Communications Officer
MFCNS

The greatest gift a foster parent could give a child in care is simply love. In this special Christmas issue of the Mi'kmaq Maliceet Nation New, Mi'kmaw Family and Children Services of Nova Scotia (MFCNS) is honored to celebrate and express our genuine gratitude to Gerald Robert and Mabel Francis for over thirty years of being loving and supportive foster parents.

It takes special people to be foster parents and both Gerald and Mabel of Eskasoni have gone above and beyond their expected role as foster parents.

Nearly in their 70's both Gerald and Mabel have amazingly taken in 87 foster kids in 31 years. For the common foster family these numbers are staggering but for Gerald and Mabel it's just another day in the Francis family.

In Mabel's words, "Back in those days it wasn't called foster parents. Those day communities took care of each other and there was more support."

Mabel's parents also took care of families' children so it wasn't a big thing for Mabel and Gerald to take in children in need of care, "The first

time I took foster kids in was because I wanted someone to keep George (son) company," said Mabel, "and after our first foster kids, our house was pretty well open from then."

Mabel and Gerald first home wasn't that big but the house was

provide three meals a day. I would never deprive them of food. Diner time and lunch time was packed. Grocery would cost around 500 dollars a week," said Mabel. One of Mabel and Gerald first foster kids was Theodore Johnson.

Theodore (Tee) remembers that summer day when he was only 10 when he and his younger siblings were taken into foster care, "I was taken to another home while my younger siblings were taken to Mabel and Gerald's. I moved from one house to another but eventually I got to be with my siblings," said Tee.

"Life was different from before, was hard, didn't know them. The unknown was the hardest.

Not long after it felt like home, plus I had my siblings. Made thing easier living with my siblings," said Tee.

"Keeping the family connection was important to us. Our foster kids had to know who their family members were, cousins, uncles, great aunts and so on. Gerald kept the boys busy with sports, ball and hockey and kids were always playing sports outside. I took care of them like our own and Mi'kmaq was only spoken in our homes and education was important," said Mabel.

If you know Tee and his foster Francis brothers they were all about sports, especially ball. "Sports was a big thing at the house. Gerald would take us to ball games and took us to



Mi'kmaw Family and Children Services of Nova Scotia recently presented Gerald Robert and Mabel Francis a certificate in appreciation for 30 years of being foster parents. Amazingly, Gerald and Mabel have taken in 87 foster kids in 31 years. Today they have 6 foster children in care.

Photo by George Paul

always filled with children. Not only did they have 5 of their own kids but also raised 3 foster kids. So their kids along with the foster kids had friends times two. At any time there could be close to 30 plus kids in and out at the Francis home.

"We had a total of 87 kids come to our home, we have seen everything from walls being destroyed, kids staying out late and kids hiding weapons. What's surprised me the first time was when kids hid their food. You have to understand how they lived before. Many kids didn't have much food so when they got it, they stored it," said Mabel.

"Today in my house I make sure I keep the fridge full every day and

The Greatest Gift: Love

hockey in town. Gerald loved sports and growing up we always watch him play hockey and ball,” said Tee.

Foster Care & Adoption Supervisor, Sheraine Young of MFCNS fondly remember always hanging out at the Francis residence, “Growing up, their home was always packed with kids, it was an inviting home and we were always fed, it was a welcoming home. And it's still like that today,” said Sheraine.

As a Supervisor for foster care, Sheraine says Gerald and Mabel have been a godsend when we needed to take children into care, “They have been fostering for many years, many time when we were stuck they would help until we found another placement,” said Sheraine, “And they have taken sibling groups over the years. Ensure children are kept together. Being placed with your siblings will help while the parents get the help they need.”

“They understand the family connection and that all families are unique. Mabel would always tell the children who they are, who they are related, and who's their family. Children need to know that and that they know where they belong. Keep the family connections,” said Sheraine.

Mabel and Gerald were fortunate that they never went to residential school but Mabel has witness first-hand what residential school has done to the core of Mi'kmaw families, “When kids were in residential school and when they grew up they didn't know how to be mothers,” said Mabel.

Executive Director of MFCNS, Arlene Johnson, knows all too well what residential school has done to Mi'kmaq families and Native families throughout Canada, “The trauma and abuse experienced by

those who went to residential schools continues to have a lasting effect in our Mi'kmaw families. Today the intergenerational impact are felt through our children.”

“We have gone to Gerald and Mabel for over 30 years and they know the effects of residential school and we are so grateful to have such loving and generous foster parents,” said Arlene, “By sharing their story as foster parents this is our way to say 'Thank You' for all you have done for MFCNS.”

“They have amazed me throughout the years,” said Sheraine, “I would like to thank Mabel and Gerald Robert and their family for being that loving, caring, home. They both have a big hearts and truly love children. We can't even thank them enough for being there for us. Even their own children have played a role in taking care of the foster kids.”

“The values I have today are from the actions of how Gerald and Mabel treated each other and how they treated us while growing up. Without realizing I too have those same qualities today, to be respectful, be kind and treat people the way you want to be treated. Today me and my wife are also foster parents,” said Tee.

“Thank you for everything,” said

Tee, “If it wasn't for them I would not have nothing. They gave me a chance to live my life normally. I don't think of them as foster parents I take them as my real parents. Just want to wish my parents Gerald and Mabel a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and thank you for everything you have done for us.”

And to this day Gerald Robert and Mabel go about their everyday lives without any praise or accolades but the rewards they receive is the love they get in return.

In Mabel's words, “It is hard to be a foster parent, you get emotionally involved. You have to really think it over if you want to be foster parent. It will affect your family but I have no regrets.”



Family Support and Case Aid Program

Apoqnmujik Wkjiksu'k

Supervisors:

Deborah Boyd (Eskasoni)

Annette Saulnier (Sipekne'katik)

The Family Support Program promotes the well being , safety and development of Mi'kmaq children and their families by delivering culturally appropriate programs which focus on healthy parenting, life skills, access to community resources and working collectively as part of a support team.

Services are provided to families in all First Nation communities in Nova Scotia through home visitation and working in conjunction with Agency and Community resources to help address risk and build protective capacities within families. Referrals to the Family Support Program are received from Intake, Long Term Protection, Children in Care, Temporary Care and Custody and Family Resource (Foster Care).

Inherent within our program is a strong emphasis on culture, partnerships with parents, and community linkages that influence the broader determinants of health. Family Support utilizes a family centered “whole family” approach in providing families with opportunities to strengthen family functioning.

The Family Support Program combines traditional and contemporary parenting skills information in a holistic manner, encouraging balance with one's spiritual, emotional, mental and physical well being based on the Seven Sacred Teachings.

Family Support contributes to the case management team and supports families participating in the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family

Group Conference Program. Family support workers connect with families in a way which engages their cooperation and commitment to change by being sensitive to their fears of seeking and receiving help, mutually developing tasks in program delivery (material and planning), and building parental confidence and hope.

The recommendations from The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada are embedded within our program's framework by the recognition of cultural safety and trauma informed promising practices.

Case Aide Program:

Schedulers and Case Aides are an essential part of the Case Management Team: They provide a variety of services to families, children and adults: transportation, schedules for access and in special circumstances youth mentoring. They ensure service providers are adequately vetted and trained as well as receive up to date information.

Case Aides transport children and adults to and from their homes, foster homes, facilities and various medical, dental, psychological, education, counseling appointments and cultural or recreational activities. Staff 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 completed in a timely and efficient manner.

The Customary Care /Alternative Care Program has enabled caregivers to provide for transportation and access for children in their

Family Support and Case Aid Program continued...

care . As a result, there has been a reduction in referrals to the Eskasoni Case Aide Department compared to previous years.

Achievements, Special Projects and Special Events:

- Working with families through the Early Intervention Program and the Differential Response Model (Immediate Response Circle) has enabled families to receive support, build capacity and make important community and professional linkages which preserve the family unit with positive outcomes . Referrals to our program are completed early in this service cycle so that families with early stage difficulties will not get worse; child maltreatment will be reduced; families build confidence in accessing help on their own; families recognize that child protection involvement make a positive difference in their lives; community partnerships increase ; perceptions of work done by Child Welfare improves and the need for more intrusive and costly services later is reduced.

Approximately 50 percent of the Family Support Case Load for this reporting period was Early Intervention (Voluntary Services), a significant increase from the previous year.

- Family Support Case Conferencing: Referring workers and supervisors are invited to meet with family support supervisors and workers to review the necessary resources and strategic measures which can be utilized to meet the needs of the family.

- Deborah Boyd was re-elected as a National Executive Board Member of FRP Canada (Family Resource Programs Canada). Position ended August 2018.

- Deborah Boyd presented at Mount St. Vincent University Conference on Early Childhood Partners in Research, Policy and Practice: Mobilizing Connections to Build Early Learning Partnerships in NS.

- Three students completed placements with the Family Support Program

- Family Support, together with the case management team, forged a close partnership with Jordan's Principle and Eastern Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Mental Wellness Team.

- Supervisors were invited to collaborate on an Agency working group lead by Intake and Wikimanej Kikmanaq in the development of a differential response model to supporting families through the Immediate Response Circle.

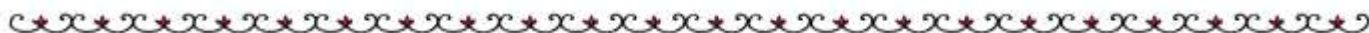
- Communications Strategy: Developed Program Tagline: "We Believe Every Parent Wants the Best for their Children."

- Publication of New Family Support Brochure: All staff and families referred to the family support program are provided with this brochure , which is rooted in the seven sacred teachings.

- A Manual for orienting new staff to the Family Support and Case Aide Program has been drafted and will be rolled out in the upcoming year with staff for feedback and adjustment.

Significant aspect of program supports and services:

The majority of referrals to the Family Support Program are from child protection; however increased collaboration with other Agency departments have resulted in an increase in referrals from intake, children in care and foster care. Expanding resources through increased staffing of the Family Support and Case Aide Programs provided opportunities to better meet the needs of families, particularly with voluntary services. Both offices uphold quality assurance of family support and case aid programs through regular supervisor consultation, working within the case management team, unit/team meetings and training to review the



Family Support and Case Aid Program continued...

standards, procedures and trends in the field. We are extremely proud of the hard work and dedication of our family support and case aide teams!

Strategic Plan 2019-2020 for the Family Support/Case Aide Programs align with the FNCFS multi-year work plan which helps FNCFS agencies connect to the delivery of prevention services with the ultimate goal of reducing the number of children in care.

Family Support initiatives strive to cultivate community well being through addressing the inequalities of the determinates of health, promote healthy child/youth development and preservation of the family:

- Skills Competency/Training Professional Development for conferences and workshops on program based and skills based concepts. This will include the Signs of Safety Program in working with families, and additional training specific to trauma, addictions and FASD.
- Prevent the occurrence or re-occurrence of harm/trauma to children and youth by providing intensive family support services: Partnership with IRC Program, Early Intervention, Family Community Healing, Children in Care, Foster Care. Staffing positions if needed.
- Family Reunification: In addition to participating in Wikamanej Kikimanaq to collaborate on strengthening families to maintain unity and implement Agency exit planning, returning children home is a time of celebration for families; but also a time of stress and adjustment. As part of this transition planning, family support will continue to play a vital role in delivering programs and include traditional ceremony into the reconnection of children with their parent(s) through elder

consultation and stakeholder reviews which reflect the Seven Sacred Teachings and cultural practices.

- Increase networking and collaborative work within Agency: Presentations team meetings; Attend risk management meetings; Case conferencing specific to family support planning.
- Enhanced Child Family Initiative
- Attend subcommittee on Facilities and Family Resource Centre: KMKNO; Collaborate KMKNO: Agency workers: focus group on needs of families; Collaborate with MK Working Group to engage parents in early learning and positive parenting.
- Increase collaboration with Family Community Healing Program
- Attend team meetings and present at FCH team meeting on Family Support;
- Provide presentations to target groups organized by FCH; Attend session planning meetings with FCH Staff and Family support; Session planning meetings with FCH; Share resources: Provide USB to staff for program; Annual Strategic Plan reviews.
- Culturally relevant programs to meet the emerging and complex needs of parents, children and youth: Programs are to continually reflect culture and current trends; Resource materials through e-book, printouts, books/ dvd; Attend program specific training on evidence informed practice for parenting and culture; Elder and service provider consultation and linkages.
- Communication Strategy: Update Brochure and Updates on Website.
- Provide family support services to foster parents: support placement capacity and prevent breakdown.

Family Support and Case Aid Program continued...

- Provide support to foster families, Presentations to department and FP banquets. Develop an MOU between Family Support and Family Resource to train and provide professional development to a family support worker designated for Foster Resource Department.
- Increase community connections/confidence and investment in family support services: Share outcomes and seek input from community stakeholders: health, education, youth services, mental health, justice, addictions services.
- Cultivate working relationship with Jordan's Principle, NS Early Intervention , Maternal Child Health and Mi'kmaw Mental Health Wellness teams.
- Learning opportunities for students: Provide opportunities to learn and acquire knowledge in the field of social services and family support, Student placements for university and college level for those interested in working in the family support field, Presentations to staff and students at college/university level; Build linkages with university/college staff.
- Data Analysis : Streamline data collection from both offices regarding family support and case aide departments to accurately capture information specific to these services.; Assist in the transition to CCM.
- Orientation manual specific to Family Support and Case Aide Departments, Roll out draft manuals for all new employees of the case aide and family support departments with staff in conjunction with HR.
- Roll out case management manual to all family support workers and provide opportunities for feedback and adjustments.
- Youth Mentoring Manual Completion of a manual for youth mentor service providers in consultation with Agency and elders to ensure

information is culturally appropriate.

- All new staff receive cultural sensitivity training; All Service Providers are to receive cultural sensitivity training; Increase resources for culturally relevant programs and professional practice.
- Administration/Quality Assurance. The guidelines and practices in both offices are consistently maintained: Team Meetings; Annual Unit Meetings; Quarterly Department Supervisor Meetings; Maintain updates for Resource Programs List and Library.

Family Support Program Referrals Received:
Total: 210 Families Contracted Referrals: 96
Total: 306 Families

	Eskasoni	Sipekne'katik
Early Intervention	52	20
Supervision Order	58	20
S.O Customary Care	12	8
Children in Care	14	8
Temporary Care and Custody	12	
Foster Care	6	0
Contracted Family Support	0	96
Total	154	152

Case Aide Program

Number of Sessions	Eskasoni	Sipekne'katik
Transportation	2763	3049
Access	1556	3842
Youth Mentoring/Child and Youth	499	2404
Total	4818	9295

Training/Professional Development/Special Projects: Supervisors/Staff

- Mount St. Vincent University: Early Childhood Development Research and Policy
- NSCC: Resource support and curriculum development
- Pride Modules - HR Policy
- Cultural Sensitivity - Health and Safety
- SSM : Aware NS Safety for Supervisors
- Mi'kmaw Rights Subcommittee: Family Resource and
- Wikimanej Kikmanaq - Service Provider Training
- Human Rights Training and LGBTQ Workshop for Supervisors
- Cannabis Education and Naloxone



Child Protection- Intake and Investigations

Teli-ikaluj Mijua'ji'jk-Koqqwa'luj Mijua'ji'jk aqq Pipanuijkatekemk

Supervisors:

Lucinda Hiscock and Madeline Jeffery
(Eskasoni)
Jennifer Nutter (Indianbrook)

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 the children in the home. Intake workers are the first point of contact between the families and agency. This is always carried out with the best interest of the children in mind and using the least intrusive measures when possible. As per the Agency's mandate, the team's focus is 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 utilizes 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. The Agency has been developing an Immediate Response Circle (IRC) program to be used at Intake that is designed to assist families in resolving issues by bringing family and community supports together. The

goal is to assist families in developing their own strategies to resolve issues identified and to promote self-determination; all while ensuring the safety and well-being of the children.

The most significant aspect for the Supports and services offered through your department (include statistics). Trends over the last year, etc. April 2018 to March 2019 (inclusive) saw the Eskasoni office process 794 Intakes/Referrals, which is an increase of 310 referrals from last year. Of the 794 referrals received, the Agency made the decision to Investigate 661 referrals and the decision to Not Investigate 133 referrals received. The Indian Brook office processed 436, which is an increase of 82 referrals from last year. 91 of these referrals were deemed to not meet the criteria for investigation, leaving 345 referrals being investigated. The predominant Major Presenting Problems identified in both offices were Risk of Physical Harm-Parent Substance Abuse (355), Risk of Physical Harm- Inadequate Parenting Skills (287) and Family Violence (248).

How any challenges were remedied:

Although there has been considerable staff movement on the intake teams this past year, there have been additions of support in the form of a second intake supervisor in Eskasoni; the creation of a program manager position for the entire protection team; the development of a mentor social worker specifically for the protection teams, and the opening of both Eskasoni and Bear River offices.

Training:

Intake workers from both offices have been able to access the following training this year. Some of these include: Wikimanej Kikmanaq, DCS

Child Protection- Intake and Investigations continued...

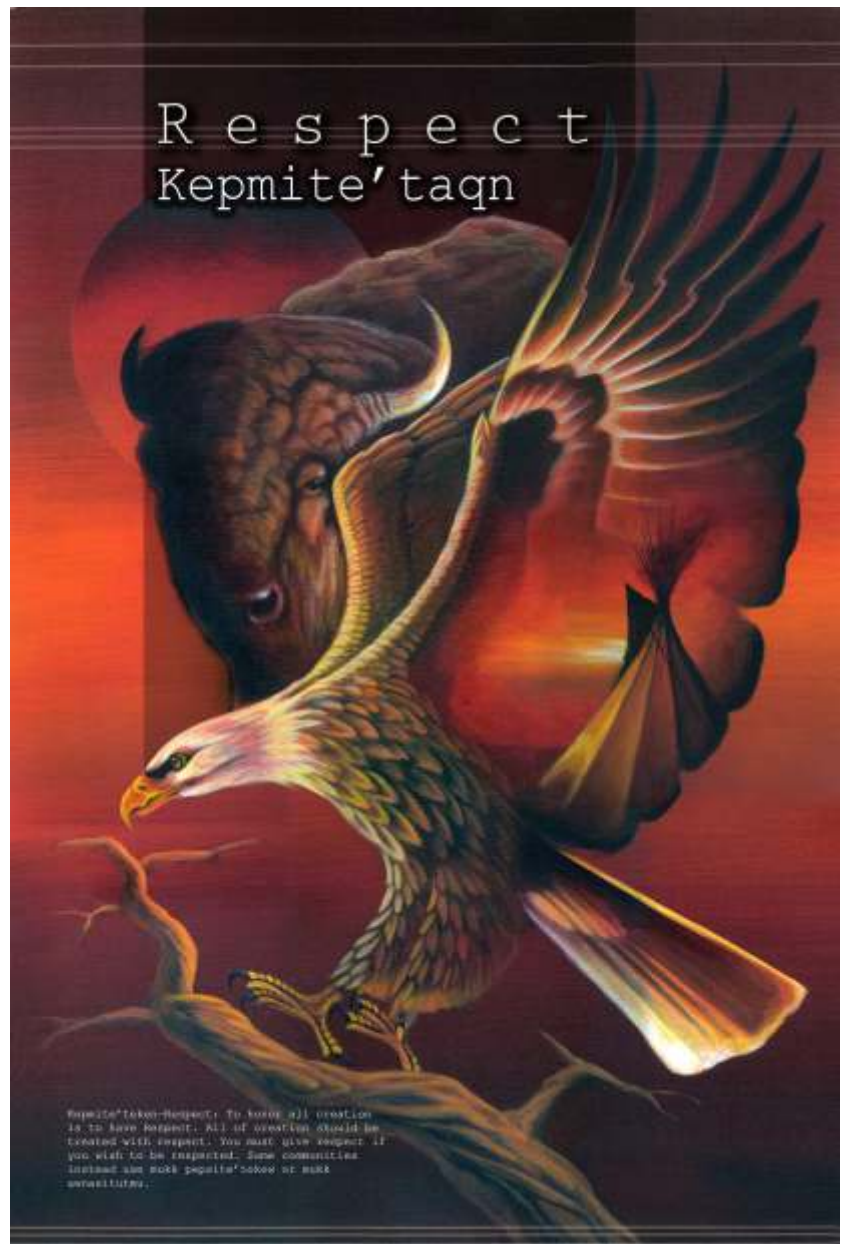
Child Welfare Symposium, PRIDE Training, Advanced Practices in Child Maltreatment Training – IWK, Human Resources Training, Fundamentals of Child Welfare and Fundamentals of Child Protection Training, and DCS Webinars.

Process efficiency and standards compliance Intakes are allocated by numbers and communities when reasonable 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. Better use of effective time management has resulted in overtime being minimized. Flexible work schedules have been implemented when needed to meet job performance expectations. As social workers, we recognize that children's concept of time is very different than that of adults. 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. Provincial standards require investigations to be completed within an eight-week timeframe. Workers aim to meet this goal however there are often many factors which impede this process.

Goals for the upcoming year:

The Intake Team's goals for the upcoming year is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children we work with and continue to work with families and communities in a positive, respectful and meaningful way. We hope to continue to grow

relationships with the supports and services in the communities we serve while being thorough and comprehensive in gathering information to strengthen the families. As always when carrying out the work we are doing, the team is keeping in mind the least intrusive approach when warranted. In collaborating with the Wikimanej Kikmanaq program, the Intake team is looking forward to the IRC Pilot Program rollout in the upcoming year.



Children in Permanent Care and Custody

Siaw-wsua'luj Mijua'ji'i

Supervisors:

Denise Maracle, BSW, RSW (Indian Brook)

Sheena Williams-Denny, BSW, RSW (Eskasoni)

Department Role and Goals:

The role of the Children in Permanent Care Department with Mi'kmaw Family and Children Services is to ensure that our children receive the supports and services required to thrive in their childhood and become successful adults. One of the main goals is to develop and maintain permanency whether that be through placement with or return to family, long term foster placements and or adoption. This is done while striving to maintain connection to their family, community and culture.

Achievements, Special Projects and Special Events:

One of the main programs that the PCC department is involved in is our Independent Living Program. We are currently re-organizing so we have not provided the program this year. But are on track to have it start up again in 2020. This is a program for youth ages 17- to 21 years old to assist with obtaining the skills they need to live on their own as well as making connections with other youth in care. We provide 4 weekend retreats as well as one day workshops throughout the year. Practical information is provided such as how to budget, maintain healthy relationships, safety planning, meal preparation as well as introducing customs and teachings. The youth learn about the seven sacred teachings as well as participate in making a rattle and a drum, traditional dancing and receiving teachings around smudging. We assist them in beginning to develop their traditional "bundle". During the graduation the youth are given their Spirit

Name and animal by a respected elder.

Most Significant aspect for the Supports and services offered through your department:

The PCC teams from April 2018 to March 2019 had 113 children in the permanent care and custody department. We have had 6 of our children move to the adoption department. We had 7 youth graduate from high school and 2 graduate from NSCC. We currently have 2 youth attending university. The agency had 10 youth exit from Permanent care and custody and 8 have entered into Post Care and Custody Agreements. This brings us to a total of 9 youth who are in PCCAs. This allows the agency to provide financial support while the youth pursue their education after the age of 19. The agency also saw 4 youth return to their parental home. We are working with 2 families to have children terminate care and return to parent under a court order.

Many of our youth have received the Outstanding Youth Awards which recognizes Nova Scotian children between the ages of 13 – 18 years old who have demonstrated at least one of the following: educational achievement; leadership; outstanding achievement in sport/culture/hobby; shown tenacity in overcoming personal obstacles and/or have a plan for the future.

One of our youth preformed a beautiful song in Mi'kmaw for the OYA group. She has now recorded her second music video with her school Allison Bernard Memorial High School and has travelled to Africa with her music teacher Carter Chiasson to perform for the United Nations.

Children in Permanent Care and Custody continued...

Challenges and Solutions:

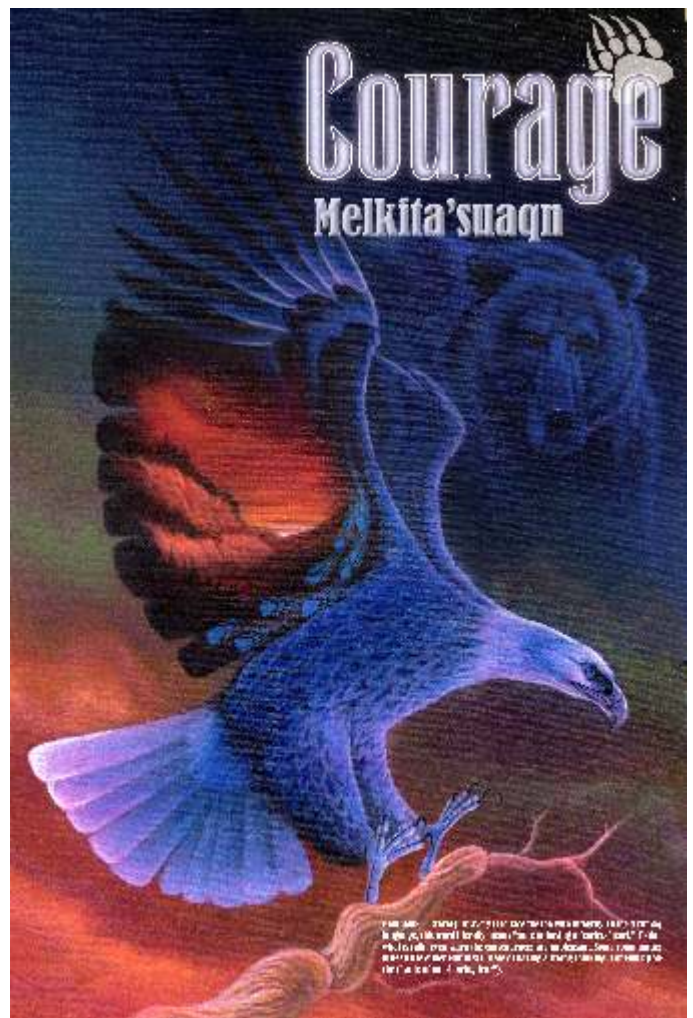
Our team is always looking for family placements and the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Conferencing (WKFGC) department has been invaluable for this. Our department has been working closely with the WKFGC team and this has been very successful. Several of our homes are kinship placements that have been found through this method. However, it is important to note that the issues that our youth have are becoming more complex and specialized. This means that families must have the training and skills necessary to be able to work with some challenging youth. This is where we need to provide supports and training to help our families become more knowledgeable of the issues and diagnosis that our youth face. The agency also encourages students of social work to complete their field placements with the agency. Our department provided placement opportunities for 2 students.

Training:

All of our social work staff are members of the NSASWC and are required to complete 40 hours of training in order to be a registered social worker in Nova Scotia. This would include different workshops and training such as Family Group Conferencing Training, First Aid Training, CFSA amendments, Drug Recognition, Truth and Reconciliation as well as FASD training and mental wellness. Staff of the agency are required to complete mandatory training as directed by management which includes child welfare fundamental training, Pride training as well as agency developed training such as Cultural Sensitivity. We are working towards ensuring that our team completes the mandatory fundamentals training in order to receive representative status.

Goals for the upcoming year:

Some of the goals that our team has is to continue to work closely with WKFGC as well as the adoption team to work towards permanency for our children. We recognize the importance of family connection and want to continue to have children placed with and reunited with family as much as we can. Our department is also supporting families that have made changes to have children return home. We are continuing to develop our Independent Living Program to ensure that we assist our youth in being prepared to exit care and thrive in their independence, while building their cultural identity.



Protection – Temporary Care and Custody

Teli-ikaluj Mijua'ji'jk – Maqatewi-ankweyut Mijua'ji'jk

Supervisors:

Yvonne Doucette, BA, BSW, RSW

Leeann Higgins, BA, BHE, BSW, RSW

The TCC department is responsible for working with and maintaining files for children in Temporary Care & Custody. Among the many roles of the TCC social worker are: to assess the needs of the child and develop a case plan for each child. Workers will supervise the placement and ensure the necessary services are provided to each child.



The TCC social worker is also responsible for reviewing the child's ecomap, genogram and cultural connection tool. All planning for the child is done with their best interests in mind at all times. This process may include a family group conference, case conference at school or a comprehensive plan of care involving the child's caregivers and social workers.

The ultimate goal in TCC is to establish permanency for the child. Permanency may mean returning the child to their parent, a parent support agreement through family court placing the child with an alternative guardian as agreed upon by the family, adoption or preparing the child for independent living through permanent care and custody.

At the end of March 2019 there were 10 children in TCC in the Eskasoni office and 2 children in the Indian Brook office. There were 6 children with PCC status in the Eskasoni office waiting to be transferred to the Children in Care Department for permanency planning at

the end of March 2019. There is 1 child with a PCC status in the Indian Brook office awaiting transfer for adoption once the permanency planning has been completed.

Over the past year the TCC department has worked with a number of children who have either returned to their birth family or extended family under a Parenting Support Act through the court. The number of children transferring to adoption has decreased. However, it is worth noting that most of the children transferring to adoption are being adopted by family.

The need for foster homes and placements to meet the rising needs of the children we are currently dealing with continues to be a challenge. The need for specialized care is on the rise and we have had to utilize Place of Safety's on a more frequent basis. This concern is being heard from the province and more specialized placements have been identified as in dire need as the number of children with ASD diagnosis rises and behavioral issues related to complex needs of our children who have been

Protection – Temporary Care and Custody continued...

exposed to trauma and parents with substance abuse issues.

Keeping this in mind, the province has rolled out the PIC Tool which is a more comprehensive application for placement to capture the child's story and their needs as well as their strengths. This form can be completed on the computer and saved on the child's file. It becomes a working document to utilize for foster placements and residential. This is particularly useful to retain valuable information regarding the child.

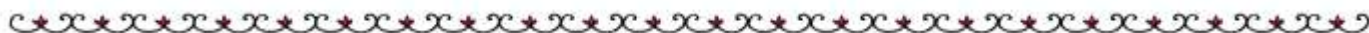
On a positive note, the number of kinship homes is on the rise for placement. The size of families is definitely a contributing factor with larger families living in the Eskasoni area allowing more family members to be assessed through this process. This is only one contributing factor to be considered. Another option for placement that is on the rise is Customary Care Supervision Orders. This allows children to be placed by family with extended family while the parents address their protection concerns. This is a less intrusive practice which allows the child to be cared for in a family arrangement without a care status. There has been a drastic change noted over the past year with the rise of Customary Care Arrangements and a decrease in the number of children in the Temporary Care of the agency. The current stats are as follows: There are 2 children in TCC in the Indian Brook office and 18 children in Customary Care. This shows a huge decline from 22 children in TCC last year to 2 this year. The current stats (June 2019) in the Eskasoni office are as follows: There are 8 children in TCC and 38 children in Customary Care.

One shortcoming of Customary Care that was identified is financial support. This piece often

deterred families from being able to assist due to lack of financial support resulting in more kinship placements for the purpose of financial support. This was identified across the province which resulted in working groups to determine solutions. Hence the Alternative Family Care Program was rolled out in December 2018. The AFC Program is a financial support program intended to provide a temporary less intrusive option to support children who are not in the agency's care to maintain their existing family relationships while there is Child Protection Involvement.

The Program aims to be an option that supports case plans where the goal is to reunite the child with their family. Parental support of the care arrangement and involvement in the case plan is expected. The customary care provider and everyone 12 years or older in the home are required to complete several background checks. An application form will be completed and the AFC Agreement will be signed. A start up amount of \$500 for the first child and \$250 per additional child (\$1000 max) in the first month. \$250 per month per child thereafter (no maximum). Income through the AFC Program is not taxable and will not impact the child or caregiver's eligibility for other social programs such as the Child Care Subsidy. Payments will be received for up to 18 months or until the child is reunified with their parents, the child protection case closes, or the child is transitioned into another care arrangement.

With the increase in the number of children in Customary Care and the decrease in the number of children in TCC, the agency has expanded the responsibility of the TCC department. Currently the TCC department carries a mixed caseload of children in TCC as well as children in customary care. This change provides more support to the customary care



Protection – Temporary Care and Custody continued...

provider and a more individualized service to the child. Prior to this change the long-term worker carried the children on their caseload and due to the demands of their role they weren't able to adequately support the customary care provider. Since this change came into effect we have received positive feedback from all involved.

Staffing remains a concern in this field as more stressors are placed on workers meeting the never-ending challenges of paperwork and balancing this with spending time with these children, planning for their needs and working with these families. The agency continues to support us in this area with an increase in staffing and requiring new workers to remain in their position for two years before moving on. We are hoping this will help deal with staff turnover and provide more stability for our families having to deal with less worker changes. We currently have 3 TCC social workers in the Eskasoni office and we have 3 TCC social workers in the Indian Brook office.

As part of establishing the AFC program the TCC staff attend training; other trainings attend over the past fiscal year include Training for:

- Interviewing and Assessing Child Sexual Abuse (IACSA).
- Safety for Supervisors and Managers training (AWARE NS)
- PRIDE 1 The Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children at Risk
- PRIDE 2 Using Discipline to Protect, Nurture and Meet Developmental Needs

- Fundamentals of Child Protection & Child Welfare
- Sexual Exploitation
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Wikimanej Kikmanaq
- Reclaiming Social Work!

For the upcoming year the TCC department looks forward to new training opportunities as well as continuing to work with families for successful outcomes for children in care.



Child Protection - Long Term Protection Services

Teli-ikaluj Mijua'ji'jk - Siawa'sik

Teli-ikaluj Mijua'ji'jk

Supervisors:

Angeline Denny Sylliboy, BA, BSW, RSW, MSW
(Eskasoni office)

Daryl Comer, BA, BSW, RSW (Eskasoni office)

Leeann Higgins, BA, BHE, BSW, RSW (Indian
Brook office)

Louise Donnelly, BACS, BSW, RSW, (Indian
Brook office)

Department Role and Goals:

The Long-term protection team begins working with families after the Intake and Investigative process is complete. Social Workers within this program collaborate with families and community to develop culturally safe case plans that mitigate identified risk to children and support families to find their path to healing. Services offered within our agency include; Family Support programming, Wikimanej Kikmanaq, and programming through the Healing Centers. Workers also support families to utilize programs and services available within their own communities.

The Long-term Protection team work collaboratively with community resources such as NADACA, Mi'kmaw Lodge, Schools, Band offices, Chief and Council, Health Centres and resources outside of the communities to support families address complex issues they face. The primary goal of the Long-term protection team is to ensure safety of the children while considering impacts of historical trauma, and culture/community as protective factors.

Achievements, Special Projects and Special Events:

The Wikimanej Kikmanaq (Family Group Conferencing) continues to shape many positive relationships between, Agency, families and

communities. Last year our agency held 66 FGC's on the mainland, with 38 FGC's in Eskasoni, for a total of 104

FGC circles for the year. This way of case planning allows families the safe space to take an active role in defining how they are going to meet their goals and who is going to support them on their healing journey. We continue to have many successful stories of parents successfully addressing their issues using this process. This way of relating with families is strengthening partnerships between immediate, extended family members, and the community at large.

The use of Customary Care Arrangements and Alternative Family Care Programs as alternative routes for families are used to give parents opportunity to address their issues while family provide care to their children. It is always our hope that we can use least intrusive measures with families as well cause the least disruption in the lives of the children while ensuring children's safety.

Over the last year, our agency has witnessed a significant decrease in the number of children coming into care of the agency (Refer to statistical data on the TCC Report Sheet). It is the hard work and dedication of families and communities assisting social workers to identify culturally safe placement options for our children. It is also the hard work and dedication of the long-term protection team supporting families to achieve their goals and ensuring children's safety.

On April 26th, the agency officially held a grand opening for our third office in Bear River.



Child Protection - Long Term Protection Services continued...

Nicole Ring was hired as the child protection worker for this office. She has a mixed caseload of intake and long-term files. The area she covers includes Bear River, Acadia, and Annapolis First Nation. She is currently being supervised from the Indian Brook office. The opening of this office will reduce the travel time to meet response times in a more effective manner.

Challenges/Solutions:

One of the most difficult challenges faced by both offices, Eskasoni and Indian Brook is Employee retention. Being able to have staff remain in Long Term Protection for several years has been a difficult challenge due to the high stress and fast paced job. The difficulty of Employee retention on our families is having a new worker come into their lives and developing the relationship and trust with that worker all over again. It is our hope that we can see more First Nations Social workers work within our program. It is our hope as Supervisors of Long-Term Protection to be able to work with the Agency to develop solutions that will help to retain staff within our Program. Getting staff trained to become Representatives of the Agency has also been challenging due to difficulties the Province has been having with their Training Program. Staff are waiting for long periods of time to complete the mandatory training, resulting in the Protection having less staff have their Representative status. The staff who have Representative Status end up getting burnt out by doing the extra work on behalf of the Agency. The Province has been working on more training and having projects completed on a timely manner to help get more workers to get their Representative Status.

Training:

Long Term Protection staff have participated in many different types of training sessions such as

Core training, PRIDE, Nalaxone training, Customary Care Training, FASD Seminar, Hepatitis B Seminar and Police Seminar on Drugs. Staff are continually educating themselves to better help and support the families we work with. We also have a number of workers that now have completed their training that was required for representative status. At this time in Eskasoni we are waiting on approval for four of these applications to be marked and approved for representative status which will be huge help as there are only a small number of people doing duty at this time.

Goals for the upcoming year:

Some of the goals that our team has for the upcoming year is to continue to work with families, deliver services in a timely manner, and continue to strive for good outcomes for families, with the goal of continuing the trend of fewer children coming into care of our Agency. Another goal is to obtain more consistency with the workers of the Long-Term Protection teams and help alleviate the turnover of workers. Losing experienced workers has led to overworked teams and causes difficulty for our Agency's ability to deliver services to our families.

Kinship and Foster Care

Anko'tasultijik Mijua'ji'jk

Supervisors:

Helen Doyle, BSW, RSW

Supervisor - Adoption & Resource
Family/Kinship (Eskasoni Office)

Jodi Phillips, BSW, RSW

Casework Supervisor – Resource Family – Foster
Care (Indian Brook Office)

Sheraine Young, BSW, RSW

Casework Supervisor – Resource Family – Foster
Care (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 (MFCS) with an alternative family environment (Kinship Home). Our goal is to ensure that the children in care of the Agency are placed in a safe Mi'kmaw Foster/Kinship home within a child's community.

The Foster Care department also provide PRIDE Module and Pre-service training and Traditions of Caring program. On-going support is available to general foster parents and kinship homes by their assigned social worker. This level of care ensures that children placed in these homes are fully supported while in transition.

When seeking Foster Care and Kinship placements for children, our goal is to match foster/kinship homes based on the current situation and the needs of the child(ren), when possible. The Foster Care Team will also determine if a Foster/Kinship Home is considered an appropriate home for the child based on certain criteria. This may include but not limited to extended family, community

members, culture, language, behaviors, and location.

Foster Care placement options include:

Kinship Care: "is a full-time care of children who are in the Minister's care and custody, by relatives or other adults with the children have had a pre-existing relationship." However, children who come into care in Mi'kmaw communities are in the care and custody of Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of NS.

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 after-hours."

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

Conditional Respite: "The purpose of the conditional respite approval process is two-fold:
a) To provide general foster parent applicants with an opportunity to gain brief intervals of foster parenting experience while proceeding through, and awaiting the completion of, the full approval process;
b) To address a systemic need for respite foster care providers who can provide relief for foster families caring for children in care."

Respite Care Exclusive: "are approved individuals, are mature adults who provide short-term respite care to an identified child in care or for a specific foster family only."



Kinship and Foster Care continued...

General Respite: "Fully approved general foster families who wish to provide respite for other foster families."

Program Goals:

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

Other goals for our Foster Care department include:

1. Retention of current Foster Homes.
2. Maintaining Support to our Foster Families.
3. Continue working collaboratively with the other departments within the agency to support our existing foster homes.
4. Networking with the 13 Mi'kmaw communities and organizations of NS.

Special Events:

In the fall, Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services (MFCS) annually hosts a Foster Family Appreciation Banquet. Some of our Foster Families were invited to a large feast and activities for the families. Others were invited to a private event which included a gift certificate for a free meal. Both banquets came with door prizes. Foster Parents are recognized each year by the Department of Community Services (DCS) for their 5, 10, 15 or more years of service. Certificates 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.

Also, one of our Foster Families was honored for being Foster Parents for over 30 years and fostering over 80 children. There was a

beautiful article written by MFCSNS Communications Officer, George Paul that was published in the Mi'kmaw Maliseet Newspaper, December 2018 Issue. They were also presented with a certificate and a gift from DCS and MFCS.

Mi'kmaw Family Gathering:

In the fall, the Eskasoni Office of Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services hosted the Federation of Foster Families and MFCS Gathering (Mawiom). The Gathering was an opportunity for Foster Parents, Mi'kmaw Family Staff, and the Federation of Foster Families to connect and discuss Foster Care related issues.

Trends:

- There continues to be a need for General Foster Care homes within our Mi'kmaw communities.
- Our long-term Foster Homes continue to close either due to children aging out of care or being adopted.
- With the implementation of the Alternative Family Care Program, there is a decrease in kinship assessments. This has allowed for a less intrusive option for families in our communities.

Challenges and Solutions:

- There is significant need within our Mi'kmaw communities for General Foster Parents. This year, Kristen Basque and her team have recently taken on Recruitment for the Eskasoni Office. We see this as a benefit as the Wikimanej Kikamanaq has the networking capabilities within the Unama'ki communities to be successful.
- There are some kinship homes that have the potential as being assessed as General Foster Care homes. We are in the process of completing SAFE Assessments and offer the mandatory training to meet these requirements.

Kinship and Foster Care continued...

- Placement options should be explored for each child coming into care. I.e. Kinship homes, customary care, utilizing the Wikimanej Kikimanaq program or Alternative Care Providers for Foster Homes.
- Communication between departments has been a challenge. However, being in the new building together, the departments have had better relations. Monthly Placement Review meetings between the FC Supervisor and the Temporary Care Supervisor.

Training:

Nerissa Denny is the new PRIDE/Pre-Service Trainer for the Eskasoni Office. She will begin training staff and Foster Parents in the fall or 2019.

PRIDE Pre-Service Training:

The PRIDE (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 PRIDE Pre-Service Program to become approved as a Foster Home and to attend other Foster Family training.

PRIDE Module Training:

PRIDE Module Training is mandatory training for all social workers. Ongoing training for social workers is offered to promote the development of skills required to provide ongoing foster family assessment and support.

The provision of ongoing education and training services for foster parents is a critical function of the Foster Care Program. This training is open to both regular and kinship homes. Education and training services supports foster family retention by providing ongoing in-service training designed to develop and enhance foster parents' knowledge and skills.

Skilled foster and adoptive parents are integral to providing quality services.

Foster and adoptive parents should be qualified, prepared, developed, selected, and certified to work as members of a professional team equipped to protect and nurture children, and strengthen families.

Kinship Foster Homes/Tradition of Caring Training:

"Kinship Foster Care is the temporary, full time, day to day care of children who are in the agency's care and custody, by relatives or by other adults with whom the children have had an established relationship". (Nova Scotia Foster Care Manual)

Recruitment:

The Recruitment Social Worker for the agency has attended several communities functions this year. These efforts have included but not limited to the NS Mi'kmaw Summer Games, Treaty Day celebrations and information sessions.

Effective Planning and Development of Programs, Regulations and Standards:

To provide on-going support to Foster/Kinship families through the utilization of the Wikimanej Kikimanaq Program. This places the child's needs in the forefront of any or all decisions made. It also aids our foster care department in



Kinship and Foster Care continued...

recruitment and retention.

To better support our Foster Families, we continue to use Intake Placement schedules to ensure that there is a Foster Care Social Worker available in the office during working hours.

Both the Eskasoni and Indian Brook Foster Care Supervisors meet monthly, and respective teams meet quarterly, to ensure fluidity of the Foster Care Program.

A Placement Information Collection (PIC) Tool was implemented in February. This replaced the A & B Forms that were used for placement and respite services. Each foster care worker inputs the PIC Tool data onto a tracking tool that is on the shared drive.

Goals for the Upcoming Year:

- To continue to follow through with the yearly Strategic Planning for Foster Care/Kinship.
- To continue to work together with Recruitment and other departments to increase the number of Generalized Foster Homes.

- To identify any foster families that may meet the criteria to become a Specialized Foster Home from the Eskasoni Office.
- Planning the Foster Outreach Therapeutic Supports Program (FOTS). Individualized FOTS are used to support foster parent retention by providing individualized therapeutic support services to foster families experiencing particularly challenging circumstances or crises. The Foster Care Supervisors are now attending the Provincial FOTS meetings to get a better understanding of the program and how it can be applied to MFCS Foster Homes.

Stats for 2018-19:

Referrals Received	24
Kinship Homes	65
Kinship Homes converted to General	2
Regular Homes	30
Pre-Service Training Applicants	3
Traditions of Caring Training Applicants	23
PRIDE Module Training Applicants	179
Closed Homes	14
Exit Interviews	14

Children
ARE GIFTS FROM THE
Creator

Adoption Program

Siaw-wsua'lut aqq kiskwenut Mijua'ji'j

Submitted by:

Lesley McKee B. J. (Hons.), M.S.W., R.S.W. -
Casework Supervisor, Indian Brook Office
Helen Doyle B.A., B.S.W., R.S.W. - Casework
Supervisor, Eskasoni Office

Brief description of the role of the Adoption
Department and goals:

Generally speaking, to “adopt” means “to take
by choice into a relationship, especially to take
voluntarily as one's own child.”

Adoption is the legal process that gives children
a permanent, loving relationship with a new or
extended family when their birth families are
unable to care for them. Adoption is intended
to provide children with the stability and lifelong
security that comes from a permanent home.

At MFCS we place children for adoption from
infants to teenagers with loving families.
We believe all children require a stable and
continuous relationship with a nurturing person
to help promote their physical, social,
emotional and intellectual development and
abilities. For our children in care, these
relationships are especially important due to
their early traumatic experiences which have
often placed them at greater risk for high risk
behaviors including homelessness, failure to
finish high school, unemployment and
engaging in troublesome behaviors such as
substance misuse.

Our foster parents often become adoptive
parents to the children they foster should that
child not be able to return home. It is our
primary goal that should a child not be able to
return to his/her birth family that the child be
adopted by relatives. As this is not always

possible, we also must recruit potential adoptive
families for specific children who are waiting for
adoption.

Whenever possible, we want our children to
remain with family and in their home
community. When this is not possible, we look
to other Mi'kmaw families residing both on and
off First Nation communities as adoptive
homes. The selection of a family must focus on
the needs of the child being placed, while
recognizing that each child and family has
individual strengths.

Adoption is about a lasting commitment to
make a difference in a child's life. At MFCS, we
are looking for families who can learn and
grow with our children, so they develop to their
full potential. Do you have what it takes to
provide a loving, stable and supportive home
for a child who needs extra support?

Training for Prospective Adoptive parents:

The purpose of the training is to help
prospective adoptive parents decide if adopting
a child(ren) is right for their family. The training
provides opportunities to develop knowledge
and awareness of adoption related issues, as
well as, figure out for themselves their
commitment and readiness to proceed with
adoption. In addition to the information and
insight gained through the training experience,
participants may begin to develop an informal
support network with other prospective adoptive
parents. The courses lay a foundation of
knowledge that participants continue to build
on as they welcome children into their lives
through adoption.



Adoption Program continued...

Training for our prospective adoptive parents includes:

- Info Session (3 hours)
- Pre-Service (27 hours)

Information discussed in training includes the following:

- Adoption and child welfare systems, processes, and laws
- Attachment and loss
- Child development and issues specific to the needs of adopted children
- The effects of neglect, lack of stimulation, abuse, and institutionalization on children
- Identity formation and the importance of cultural and racial awareness
- The importance of cultural connections and continuity for children

The Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) and Approving an Application:

The Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) is a series of interviews with a MFCS social worker. The interviews are used to assess the relationships and dynamics of the prospective adoptive family or parent, as well as, their capacity to understand and meet the needs of a child at the time of placement and just as importantly, the future. The interviews also provide a valuable opportunity for families or prospective parents to self-assess their overall strengths and abilities, and to establish a relationship with their assessment worker. The assessment worker completes a written family assessment, outlining the Agency's decision on whether to approve the prospective adoptive parent(s). The written assessment contains supportive documentation including the family's Application to Adopt, Criminal Record Checks, Child Abuse Registry checks, prior contact checks, financial statement, medical checks, and personal references, as well as, several home interviews and in-depth questionnaires. If approved by the Agency, the

prospective adoptive parent(s) are registered in the adoptive program and actively considered for a placement.

Although the Recruitment worker falls under the Foster Care Program, this position is twofold in that the Agency is not only actively recruiting foster parents, but adoptive parents as well.

Recruitment Adoption outcomes for 2018/2019 year are as follows:

- # of prospective adoptive applicants: 27
- # of prospective adoptive applicants who withdrew their application: 2
- # of prospective adoptive applicants who completed training: 31
- # of prospective adoptive applicants waiting for training: 13
- # of prospective adoptive parents waiting for an Adoption SAFE Assessment: 45
- # of prospective adoptive applicants who are in the process of an Adoption SAFE Assessment: 12
- # of prospective adoptive parents approved: 7
- # of prospective adoptive parents not approved: 0
- Of the 7 adoptive parents approved and waiting:
- # of prospective adoptive parents who reside in a First Nations community: 45
- # of prospective adoptive parents not residing in a First Nations community: 5

During the 2018/2019 fiscal year, there were 14 children in adoption probation (awaiting finalization). The Agency was not involved any inter-provincial adoptions this year. The number of adoptions finalized during this time was 13.

Of the 13 adoptions finalized within this fiscal year a further breakdown is as follows:

- # of Section 68 (Voluntary Adoption) & Section 68(A) Adoptions (A Child-Specific Voluntary Adoption): 0
- # of children adopted by their current foster parents: 12
- # of children adopted by new families: 1

Subsidized Adoption Program:

The single most powerful tool by which the child welfare system can encourage adoption and support our adoptive families is through

Adoption Program continued...

adoption subsidies. Often, assistance is provided to encourage adoption of special needs children and remove any potential financial barriers to adoption for families. Foster parents who adopt their foster children who have been in their home for a minimum of 12 months and the Agency has determined it will cause the family financial hardship to lose the board and clothing, the family may continue to receive such with no further income test. For adoptive parents who have not fostered, an income test is applied to determine if the family would qualify for board and clothing. Within the Adoption Subsidy Program, most payments to adoptive families are the actual costs of services not covered by their personal medical plan or the provincial/federal medical systems.

Specialized rates are based on the extraordinary needs of the child, and/or the additional parenting skills needed to raise the child. The "Exceptional Needs Assessment Tool", otherwise known as the ENAT, determines the exceptional care rate provided to a child. The rates for such are as follows:

- LOW - \$200 per month
- MODERATE - \$300 per month
- HIGH - \$425 per month

Throughout the 2018/2019 Fiscal Year the Agency continued to provide support to 64 families through the Adoption Subsidy Program. Within these 64 families there are 116 children who are receiving a subsidy.

Openness in Adoption:

An Openness Agreement allows adoptive parents, and often the adopted child, to interact with the child's birth parents and/or extended birth family relatives. Openness can vary greatly from family to family and may change over time. An open adoption is becoming increasingly common, in part due to a growing

recognition of the potential benefits of supporting an adopted child or youth to establish and/or maintain connections with his or her birth family. Such agreements are not legally binding but are based in good faith between the people involved. And, they are as unique as the families involved. They are always based on the needs of the child(ren). During this fiscal year, the adoption program continued to support 23 adoptive families, which includes 35 children, who maintain connections with birth family through an Openness Agreement.

Depending on the comfort level of the adoptive parents, children and birth family, contact may be through pictures and letters once a year to personal contact. We are also seeing an increase in families who have fostered the child they are adopting informally maintaining contact with the child's birth family.

Options Counseling:

Another service within the Adoption Program is Options Counseling. This service is provided to birth parents who are contemplating whether to parent their child when born, or to make another plan for their child - which may include voluntarily placing their child for adoption. During the past fiscal year, no birth families requested this service from the Agency.

How many challenges were remedied?

We acknowledge that tangible outcomes, such as prevention of adoption disruption or dissolution, are difficult to track. It is challenging to prove conclusively that families would have had a negative experience without the Subsidized Adoption program's intervention. We believe the ongoing support offered within this program has played a significant role in maintaining permanency and avoiding adoption disruptions or dissolutions.



Adoption Program continued...

Staffing:

The adoption team is a part of the Resource Unit which encompasses the Foster Care Department and Adoption Department. As such, the Indian Brook office has one dedicated Adoption worker (80% position) along with two workers whose focus is completing Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) Assessments. One worker's prime focus is adoption and the other has foster care. The fourth worker in the adoption program holds the subsidized adoption caseload. The Adoption Team also shares an Administrative support position with the Foster Care Team. To meet the level of support required by our adoptive parents through the Adoption Subsidy program, an additional Adoption Subsidy worker may be required within the Adoption Team to ensure services.

The Eskasoni Adoption Team consists of two adoption workers, one SAFE Assessor who completes assessments for adoption and foster care, an Adoption Subsidy worker, Traditions of Caring (TOC) trainer and a Conditional Kinship Assessor.

Training Opportunities for Staff:

Over this past fiscal year staff from both offices have had the opportunity to participate in such training as The Working Mind, Respectful Communication in the Workforce, Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Conference Family Group Conference (FGC) Training, School's Plus Training, Exploring Ethics, Understanding Trauma and SAFE Assessment Training.

Timely completion of quality reviews, compliance reviews:

The mandate of the Department of Community Services (DCS), in conjunction with Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services, is to improve the services and outcomes for children both on

and off First Nations communities throughout this province by way of advocacy, accountability and review, including audits. As we draw from previous Audit and Compliance reports, we continue to strive for best practice while following policy and the Agency's mandate. The transition for children from Permanent Care and Custody (PCC) to the Adoption Program, when this is identified for them, continues to be completed without undue delay.

Ongoing Trends:

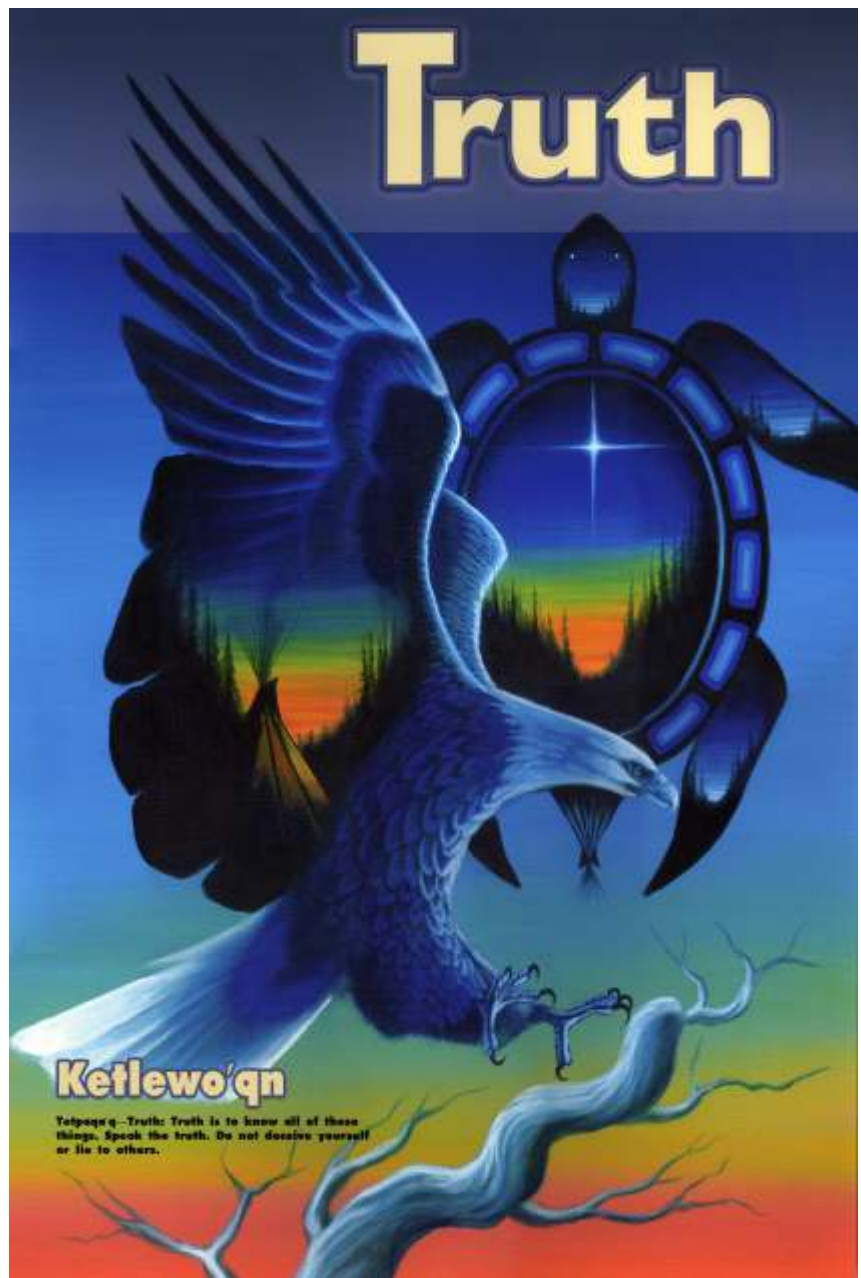
As we reviewed this past fiscal year, the Adoption Team noted a continuation of the trends identified the previous year, as well as, a couple other trends noted this year. They are as follows:

- An increase in the number of younger children being referred to adoption.
- Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Conferences with Subsidized Adoption families seeking services and support for their child.
- A greater level of involvement by the adoption worker to not only participate, but to be involved in the planning and collaboration of a child's comprehensive plans of care in which adoption has been identified as the goal.
- An increase in the number of children adopted by families other than their foster parents. This carries over to an increase in the amount of work for the adoption team as such placements involve greater planning/matching and pre-placement.
- Increased need to support families through the Subsidized Adoption Program given the complexities of needs that begin to surface as children grow and develop.
- While the number of children requiring an adoptive family is increasing, the number of adoptive applicants is not growing at the same rate.

Adoption Program continued...

Guiding Values for Adoption and Goals for the upcoming year:

- All Mi'kmaw children need a safe and loving family.
- Mi'kmaw language, culture and traditions continue to be key in considering a child for adoption.
- Age and special needs are not considered a reason why a child cannot be adopted.
- We recognize the importance of sibling relationships and make every effort to place siblings together for adoption. When this is not possible, we encourage openness between adoptive families to ensure the children continue to have contact with each other.
- Contact or communication with the birth family, when in the best interest of the child, is not a barrier to adoption. Openness in adoption enables members of the adoption circle to maintain family and cultural connections and relationships, as well as, assist the child in developing a strong, healthy identity.



Legal Department

Nuji wsku'muet wjit Mijua'ji'jk

Supervisor: Paul Morris

The legal department's role with Mi'kmaw Family and Children Services is to provide legal advice and quality representation for Mi'kmaw Family in all matters that take place before the Family Court, Supreme Court (Family Division) and Court of Appeal within Nova Scotia.

Achievements, Special Projects and Special Events:

We have had a full complement of staff in all positions all year with two lawyers and one paralegal located in Eskasoni and two lawyers and one paralegal in Indian Brook. This was accomplished in accordance with the Strategic Plan and the goal of providing all legal services for Child protection in-house for Mi'kmaw Family.

Legislative Changes:

The amended Children and Family Services Act came into effect on March 1, 2017 which resulted in a number of changes in how matters are dealt with in the court system. During this year, Mi'kmaw Family has been involved with an initiative to proceed with Mi'kmaw legislation in the area of child protection and many of our employees have been consulted on an ongoing basis with respect to this initiative. As well, during this year the Government of Canada brought forward Bill C-92 which proposes legislation which clarifies and empowers the ability of each Band to assert their self-government right in relation to Child protection proceedings. As of the writing of this report the current government had not completed the legislative process to approve and enact this Bill into law.

The legal department will continue to participate in appropriate committees to make necessary adjustments regarding any legislative changes which may occur with the Province of Nova Scotia, Government of Canada as well as with each of the 13 Bands which we service in Nova Scotia.

Training/Professional Development:

All of our lawyers are required annually by the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society to complete continuing professional development in areas such as ethics, practice management and substantive legal knowledge.

Staff of Mi'kmaw Family are required to complete mandatory training as directed by management which includes human resource training, cultural awareness training, etc. as well as participating in training specific to child protective legal services.

Goals for the upcoming year:

In reviewing a snapshot of our files currently before the Court at the end of the fiscal year approximately 88% of the files involving children before the Court involve children who are being cared for by direct or extended family. Of these only 13% are kinship placements and the other 75% involving the least intrusive forms of court intervention of Supervisory or Customary Care Orders. The legal team continues to work closely with the social workers and their supervisors to ensure that the interventions to protect the children in the communities Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services serves are both the least intrusive while ensuring the safety and well-being of children and families.

Human Resources

Nujo'tmumk Lukwaqney

Submitted by Holly MacDonald, Human Resource Manager

Department Role:

The Human Resource department manages resources related to employees and supervisors, handling conflict resolution, providing advice and guidance to management as well as staff.

Our department consists of the Human Resource Manager, Human Resource Assistant, Administrative Assistant and the Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator.

Our department is responsible for the following:

- Recruitment and staffing
- Labor and employee relations
- Developing, promoting, and enforcing personnel policies
- Orientation of new staff
- Equality and diversity
- Providing guidance regarding disciplinary actions
- Serving as a primary contact for work related injuries
- Requesting professional development for staff
- Promoting a respectful workplace
- Being an active member of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Achievements:

The Human Resource Management System came into effect in September 2018.

The Time and Attendance software will soon follow to increase accountability within the workplace.

During this fiscal year new policies and procedures have been implemented in the workplace.

Occupational Health and Safety:

Education of safety within the workplace continues to be incorporated within Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services, through posters being distributed through the different work sites.

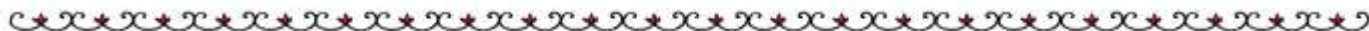
Our Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator attends various team meetings to address any concerns or questions about health and safety.

The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee continues to strive to keep our employees and all those that enter our buildings, safe. The committee meets monthly, to address any concerns that were brought forward and to seek ways to ensure employees work in a safe working environment. The JOHS committee conducts inspections of all buildings within Mi'kmaw Family Children's Services to ensure the safety of buildings and staff.

Nonviolent Crisis Intervention has been completed with the Joint Occupational Committee.

Training was arranged with staff in the Eskasoni and Indian Brook offices, this was delayed due to unforeseen circumstances; This training is scheduled to commence in the upcoming months.

A major yet rewarding task this year was the exciting move of the Eskasoni staff into our new larger building; to comfortably include all staff from three offices in Eskasoni and one in Sydney. This move was completed safely and as efficiently as possible.



Human Resources continued...

Professional Development:

Cultural Awareness training is mandatory training for all employees.

Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of N.S. is committed to providing culturally relevant training which reflect our Values.

These are the trainings which were provided this year:

- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) took place on October 9-10, 2018 Conducted by Blair Paul Alcohol and Drug Addiction worker and ASSIST Trainor
- Cultural Awareness took place on October 17-18, 2018 Conducted by Kristen Basque, Monica Clarke-Johnson, Lenora Paul, Natalie Doucette, and Matilda Koopmann
- Substance Abuse and Naloxone training took place on October 25, 2018 and October 29, 2018. Conducted by Wekatesk Augustine Adolescent Education and Accreditation Coordinator NADACA
- Information session from the Nova Scotia Early Childhood Development Intervention Services took place on November 5, 2018 Conducted by Valerie Donovan
- 2SLGBT Workshop for Supervisors took place on March 6, 2019 Conducted by John R. Sylliboy
- Human Rights 101 for Supervisors took place on March 12, 2019 Conducted by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission
- Human Rights 101 took place on May 30-31, 2019 Conducted by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission
- Naloxone and Substance Abuse Training took place on May 28th, June 17th, 19th and 20th Conducted by Wekatesk Augustine

Staffing:

To date Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia has a total of 194 employees.

Office locations:

Eskasoni 98 employees

Indian Brook 72 employees

Bear River 3 employees

There is a total of 21 employees working out of the We'komaq and Millbrook Family Healing Centres.

Employment Opportunities:

The Agency has grown over the past year. New positions created are highlighted below.

Eskasoni:

- Aug 20, 2018 - Long-Term Protection
- Aug 20, 2018 - Intake Social Worker
- August 27, 2018 - Intake Social Worker
- August 27, 2018 - Case Aide**
- September 4, 2018 - Long-Term Protection SW
- September 10, 2018 - Long-Term Protection SW
- November 15, 2018 - Wikimanej Kikmanaq**
- December 3, 2018 - 13-Month Term Adoption Social Worker
- December 4, 2018 - Long-Term Protection
- January 3, 2019 - Adoption Social Worker
- January 7, 2019 - SAFE Assessor
- February 4, 2019 - 1-Year Term Subsidy Social Worker
- February 4, 2019 - 3-Month Term Social Work Mentor**
- February 19, 2019 - Receptionist
- February 25, 2019 - Social Work Assistant**
- March 18, 2019 - Temporary Care and Custody Administrative Assistant
- March 18, 2019 - Intake Administrative Assistant
- March 18, 2019 - Receptionist**

Millbrook Family Healing Centre:

- October 22, 2018 - Manager of Healing Centre's
- November 19, 2018 - Part Time Administrative Assistant
- January 22, 2018 - Program Supervisor
- January 31, 2019 - 7-Month Term Part Time Administrative Assistant
- February 11, 2019 - Women's Outreach

Human Resources continued...

Sipekne'katik

August 27, 2018 - Case Aide

September 4, 2018 - Long-Term Protection SW

September 10, 2018 - 1-Year Term Intake Social Worker

September 10, 2018 - Long-Term Protection SW

September 10, 2018 - Long-Term Protection SW

December 5, 2018 - One Year Term Social Work Mentor

January 7, 2019 - 18-Month Term SAFE Assessor

January 7, 2019 - 18-Month Term Long Term Protection SW

January 7, 2019 - 6-Month Term Intake Social Worker

January 14, 2019 - Long-Term Protection SW

January 31, 2019 - Case Aide

February 4, 2019 - 18-Month Term Case Aide

February 4, 2019 - Family and Community Worker

February 11, 2019 - Family Support Worker

February 14, 2019 - 6-Month Term Intake Social Worker

February 19, 2019 - Full time Finance Clerk

Bear River:

March 18, 2019 - Administrative Assistant

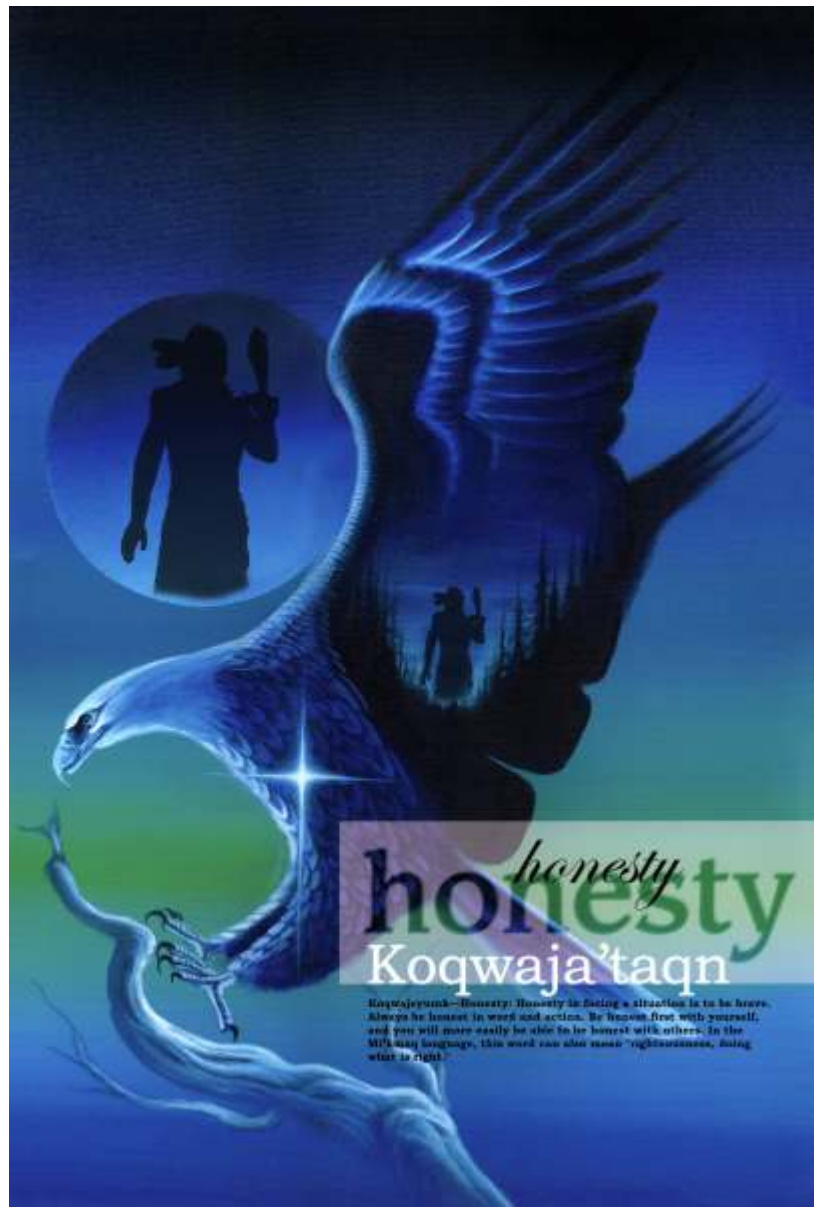
March 25, 2019 - Family and Community Resource Worker

March 25, 2019 - Social Worker

Resignations and Retirement:

Throughout our four office locations we have had eleven employees resign from their positions from the period of July 2018 to March 2019.

One employee has retired from their position.



Love Fills the Void

By George Paul
Communications Officer
MFCSNS

Most often you don't hear or know about foster parents or families that go above and beyond just foster care. In this special feature story from Mi'kmaw Family and Children Services of Nova Scotia (MFCSNS) we are honored to celebrate and give special thanks to three generations of foster families. They are the Melanson and the Hallett family who have been fostering Mi'kmaq children for over 14 years in the valley area of Nova Scotia.

This three generation foster family affair is all about filling the void with Love. For Mary Ann Melanson (Gram) and daughter Melanie Ann Hallett and her husband Rick, the decision to become foster parents was a simple choice of helping those who need help.

In Melanie's younger years she knew what it was like to be alone and needing help. For Rick he was a foster child and was raised by a loving foster family. Today Melanie and Rick's daughter just recently became a foster parent because their daughter grew up with foster siblings.

When Melanie's mother Mary Ann Melanson was seriously thinking about being a foster parent just after her retirement 15 years ago. Both Melanie and mom Mary Ann decided to do it together and they both applied to become foster parents.

What inspired Mary Ann to become a foster parent those many years ago more had to do with faith and no knowing what to do after her retirement. So for many days she prayed and smudged and asked the



It's a three generation foster family affair for the Melanson and the Hallett family who have been fostering Mi'kmaq children for over 14 years in the valley area of Nova Scotia. In photo from left is Mary Ann Melanson (Gram) and daughter Melanie Ann Hallett and her husband Rick. Melanie and Rick's daughter just recently became a foster parent.

Photo by George Paul

creator to send her a message. Not soon after a lady from Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services came up to Mary Ann and asked her if she wanted to be a foster parent to a little boy. Once she saw the picture of the little baby boy she told the lady to bring him here.

Mary Ann said, "The creator send him to me because I always wanted a boy. And 14 years later he is still my boy."

During those year's Mary Ann would do emergency respite care for Mi'kmaw Family. Before Mary Ann and Melanie move to a new home they had a big house with 5 bedrooms and plenty of extra clothes. They would take in foster kids' short term. Mary Ann said during her emergency respite care times she said she has probably cared for over 80 children.

Mary Ann recently retired from emergency respite but still tries to keep in touch with her foster kids through social media, "I'm known to my kids as Gram. They may not know Mary Ann but they know

Gram," laughed Mary Ann.

For Mary Ann's daughter Melanie Ann Hallett she was a full time registered nurse before being involved in foster parenting. Melanie Ann is the only foster parent from Mi'kmaw Family who cares for children with severe special needs and medical conditions in Nova Scotia.

Because of Melanie's background she is a full time care at home foster parent and has to be available to the children 24/7. Melanie and Rick care for 2 special complex need children and a foster kid who will be graduating this year.

For Melanie and Rick caring for special complex need children is self-rewarding especially when you see the progress of the children before they first arrived at their home.

"I don't refer to them as my foster kid, I say, 'This is my boy.' They don't need that stigmatism on them, I don't feel that's the appropriate way to identify children in care in our families, because if we consider

Love Fills the Void

them as foster children then we really don't have the heart to have them," said Melanie.

As respite foster parents Melanie and Mary Ann always made it their mission to instill the Mi'kmaq culture with all the Mi'kmaq children in their care, "Our children with medical needs still participate in powwows and have their own regalia. We spend time in other first nations so they know who they are. No matter where you live your culture should not be taken from you."

"Sometimes when you get the kids in care, sometime they are not proud of who they are or where they come from. We have spent a lot of time letting them feel proud and taking them and showing them all the positives," said Melanie.

"As foster parents it up to us to make them even prouder of who they are. Important that they know aboriginal people all across the province, living everywhere and succeeding in many different ways. I think those children need to be proud of who they are and where they come from before any healing can take place," added Melanie.

Melanie only has great praise for the social worker from Mi'kmaq Family, "Through the years of me fostering for Mi'kmaq Family I have been treated extremely well. When we as foster parents have a good working relationship with an understanding, caring social worker, our

foster care experience is a much better. That's the key to having good homes and happy children is our social workers."

"I believe it's important for social workers to spend ample amount of time with foster families and the children and so that they could see them as a family unit. Our home is open 24/7 to the agency, they don't need to call, they could pop in, that's how it should be," said Melanie. "I know what it was like to need help. That's why I do it. I chose to be a foster parent. If I could reunite a child with mother and father and

letting them know that their child is safe. I know what it feels to be alone. Giving that support back to other families is important so that the parents can get their act together and make it possible for them to come back home," said Melanie.

Melanie also stressed the importance of having a good working relationship with the biological parents. She say it makes fostering so much better for the children, "They need to see us not as bad people but that we love them too. Takes a village to raise a child. That is one of the best experience I

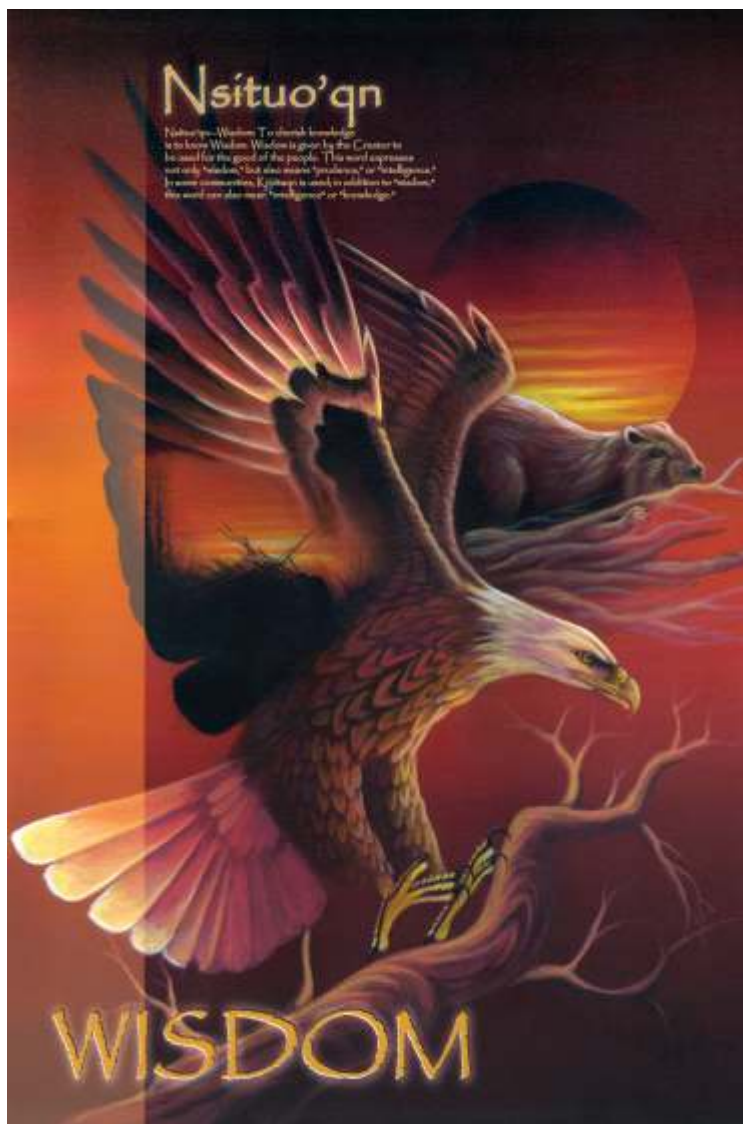
had when the biological parents were on board. The child felt better, I felt better and they felt better."

Melanie added that it's important for the children to see that you not trying to replace anybody, you are just trying to help, "And if you can be part of a healthy reunification that's a wonder feeling."

So in Melanie's own words, "Love fills the void." But after meeting Melanie, Rick and Gram, you realize that void is not only for the child in care but also for the foster parents.

On behalf of Mi'kmaq Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia we are extremely grateful to the Melanson and the Hallett family for sharing their foster family story.

If you are thinking of becoming a foster parent contact Mi'kmaq Family at www.mfcsns.ca.



Communications Department

Nutewistog

Communications Officer – George Paul
George.paul@novascotia.ca
902-577-0073

Communications is ongoing, never ending and sustained communications are essential to the progress and success of the Mi'kmaw Family & Children Services (MFCS) of Nova Scotia. Targeted communications strategies will help ensure key messages are consistently conveyed to primary audiences and that opportunities for creating awareness, building relationships, and enhancing understanding are well-known.

The MFCS initiative faces significant communications challenges. Effective communications initiatives over time will help address these communications challenges. The vision for MFCS extends across Nova Scotia. Achieving that vision is at the heart of this communications plan.

Key Messages:

1. Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia empowers Mi'kmaw families. We support parents and caregivers in raising children who have a strong sense of worth.
2. MFCS recognizes and respects the importance of traditional teachings. Children are gifts from the creator.
3. We strive to ensure the safety and well-being of First Nations children, young people and families by facilitating the transfer of traditional knowledge to guide and support families.

Key Challenges:

Knowledge and perception. There is a stigma attached to social services, especially more towards aboriginal social services. With sustained communication be it educational,

multi-media campaign, social media, community events, and so on. In due time that public perception will gradually change but will never be completely eliminated. In some cases, this will involve informing new people, organizations, and others about specific work it does and issues it faces. In other cases, it will involve reinforcing key messages or altering perceptions.

Range of the Organization. MFCSNS has almost 200 employees throughout Nova Scotia which provide services for the entire 13 bands in Nova Scotia and often beyond. Establishing effective communication and communication strategies for all departments will take a team effort to make is work.

2018-2019 Communications Strategies Applied or Ongoing:

Continue to brand new MFCSNS Logo:

With the new MFCSNS logo launched last year it is vital the logo sustains that recognition as the new look. It has been a gradual change within the organization with new print material such as letterheads and envelopes.

Outside the walls of the organization the new logo is being seen more often with advertising and other social media locations. Last summer we purchased two event tents showcasing our new logo and three new retractable screens. The event tents were both used at last year's summer games FUN DAY and the retractable screens have been used on many different occasion and events.

Communications Department continued...

I have also branded the slogan "Children Are Gifts from the Creator. Mijua'ji'jk na iknmuksi'kik Kisu'lkw," as our Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services organization's tag in our letterhead and our event tents. More branding material will be required in the future.

Special Publications:

The inside work and the outside work of the MFCS needs to be visible and memorable. Many people don't know all the great things MFCS does. One of the first things I focused on is writing feature stories for the Mi'kmaq Maliceet Nation News. I asked the foster care department if any of the foster parents would be willing to open up and tell their foster care parent story. I was able to do two foster care parents. One family from Eskasoni and another family from Berwick in the valley area. I posted the Eskasoni foster story on my own facebook page and the response was amazing. I also did a grand opening story which will be in the July 2019 issue of MMNN. The goal is to have at least 4 feature stories per year.

Special Events:

There were a few event during the fiscal year that I supported or covered. They include, foster parent gathering on October 4, 2018, foster parent movie day, MFCS Christmas Social, took picture and created material for Seven Sacred Teaching program and Women Wellness day for Family & Community Resource Program. I also covered and help organize our 2018 AGA and the Bear River grand opening.

Creating communication packages:

Last year I created the AGA report and it was the first time we included all the Mi'kmaq names for each department. This will continue from now on and I plan on having all material with the Mi'kmaq language included plus it creates a visual identity for our organization.

Created the Seven Sacred Teaching certificate, pride certificates, and made special generic certificate for other programs. I also worked with the Human Resource department to create a new employee welcome package. I also worked with Wikmanej Kikmanaq to create work material to reflect more of our culture and not so generic. I also made the 13 Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq community profiles with respective Chief's pictures and info on their communities.

Implementing a communications campaign strategy for specific departments:

Even though most of the work done by MFCS is confidential there are other department that do require some good and effective public relations. I've worked with a few departments during the fiscal year in creating material but I need to sit down with each department and see what they need. One future project is to create a Seven Sacred Teaching work book for Family & Community Resource Program. More help is needed for foster care and adoption.

Capacity building to implement Communication plan:

The tools necessary to implement my communication plans require equipment. To date most of the communications material that I have created was done from my home computer. Our move to the new building has been great but I still create material from my garage. We have a new beautiful printer but I wasn't able to utilize it this fiscal year. I will for certain next year. I have acquired a new Nikon Z6 video/still camera in December 2018 and my goal is to create educational or promotional video starting in the next fiscal year. I may need to improve my publishing and video editing skills with future courses on graphic, video and publishing courses.



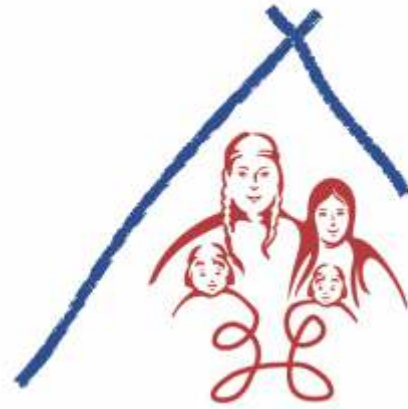
Communications Department continued...

Did You Know?

The seven sacred teaching that you have seen throughout this report were scanned poster that were in English only. With some special Photoshop magic I was able to include and match the English text with Mi'kmaq text in all the posters. Also in the "Honesty" poster, I replace the Sabre with the image of Glooscap which I Googled from Millbrook.

Communications is never ending. Please let me know if you have any thought, question or ideas to improve MFCS Communications.

Thanks for reading my report,
George Paul – PR George
Communications Officer - MFCSNS



Mi'kmaq
Family
& Children's
Services
of Nova Scotia



Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Conference Program

Wikimanej Kikmanaq Wkijksu'k Mawteskatultijik aqq Mawaknutma'tijik

Supervisor: Kristen Basque, BSW, RSW (Eskasoni and Indianbrook)

Department Role and Goals:

The Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Conference is a way of giving families the opportunity to get together in a safe space to try and make the best plan possible for the children.

Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC 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 Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC 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. It is the goal of the program to ensure that families are empowered to develop cultural appropriate and child focused plans that encourages strong healthy Mi'kmaq families in our communities.

Wikimanej Kikmanaq Staff and Special Events:

The Wikimanej Kikmanaq team is very fortunate

to welcome an additional FGC Coordinator to the Cape Breton Area in this fiscal year. Melissa Young started her Coordinator position with the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Team in December 2018. Currently the team consists of Cassandra Hillier and Roberta (Bobbi-Jo) Bernard who work in the mainland communities from Yarmouth to Pictou Landing. John Denny Sylliboy, Lydia Stevens, Sophie Young and Melissa Young are the FGC Coordinators who work in the Cape Breton Area also including Paqtnekek. Nikhea Bernard is the Administrative Assistant for the program.

A few members of the Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC Team were privileged to have an opportunity to attend and present at "The Future of Social Work Conference" in Calgary. It was an excellent opportunity to showcase and highlight some of the innovative ways in which we are trying to work collaboratively with our families and communities.

Challenges and Solutions:

It is important for the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Conference Team to be able to reach out to Communities, families and other identified supports to the families and children to establish respectful professional relationships. The biggest challenge for the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Team is to get the information about the FGC program to the families so they may have the opportunity to utilize the program earlier in their involvement rather than later. Continuously doing presentations about the Wikimanej Kikmanaq and attending



Wikimanej Kikmanaq continued...

community functions to provide information has been very helpful in getting the information to the families and communities.

Goals for the upcoming year:

- The Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC Team's goals for the upcoming year are to continue to work with families and communities in a positive, respectful and meaningful way;
- Continue in developing and updating a resource manual for each First Nation Community. The manual would include all the contact information of resources each community uses on and off reserve.
- Promote and Inform Communities, Service providers, leadership, departments about Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC Program.
- Improve Wikimanej Kikmanaq Filing System and Tracking tool to meet the needs of the program requirements.
- Update Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC Brochure and Wikimanej Kikmanaq Forms.
- Include an Elder in every Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC.
- To create a common practice for the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Coordinator to fully explain the program to the families rather than the Protection Worker.
- To ensure that we are working from a trauma informed care approach with all our families.
- To gain more insight and training in the area of mental illness.
- Continue to try to improve the overall program so that we are always working towards meeting the needs of the families and communities we serve.

Statistics of Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC for April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019:

Total number of Referrals received by the Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC program is 88 referrals in total.

- The Indianbrook office submitted 46 new referrals to the FGC program and approximately 95 Family Group Circles were held during this fiscal year for the mainland communities.
- Eskasoni Office submitted 38 new referrals to the FGC and approximately 75 Family Group Circles were held during this fiscal year for the Cape Breton and Paqntkek Communities.
- Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC had 4 referrals submitted by professionals within the community and/or self-referrals.

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

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019**



**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019**

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Independent Auditor's Report

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

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia (the Agency), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2019, the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Agency as at March 31, 2019, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Agency in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon, in the annual report.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information identified above and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

We obtained the annual report prior to the date of this auditor's report. If, based on the work we have performed on this other information, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact in this auditor's report. We have nothing to report in this regard.





Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with 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.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Agency's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Agency or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Agency's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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 Agency's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.



- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Agency's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Agency to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants

Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
June 18, 2019



MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT MARCH 31, 2019

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Bank	3,683,443	2,854,720
Short term investments (Note 2)	4,086,584	4,021,889
Restricted cash (Note 3)	33,655	29,672
Receivables (Note 4)	1,121,766	1,462,303
Prepaid expenses	87,758	53,878
	<u>9,013,206</u>	<u>8,422,462</u>
TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 5)	3,220,313	1,747,602
	<u>12,233,519</u>	<u>10,170,064</u>
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Payables and accruals (Note 6)	2,268,941	1,707,344
Trust liability	33,655	29,672
Deferred revenue (Note 7)	263,571	-
	<u>2,566,167</u>	<u>1,737,016</u>
NET ASSETS (Page 6)		
Unrestricted	3,447,039	3,685,446
Internally restricted		
Operating contingency reserve	2,000,000	2,000,000
Replacement reserve	1,000,000	1,000,000
Investment in tangible capital assets	3,220,313	1,747,602
	<u>9,667,352</u>	<u>8,433,048</u>
	<u>12,233,519</u>	<u>10,170,064</u>

Commitment (Note 12)

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:

President

Treasurer

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

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MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
SUMMARY STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

		2019	2019	2018
		Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE				
Indigenous Services Canada (Note 7)		19,227,174	23,231,855	19,010,967
Province of Nova Scotia		2,565,000	2,003,965	2,159,317
Government of Canada - Child Tax Benefits		935,000	862,416	923,834
HST rebates and other		692,250	702,770	689,867
		23,419,424	26,801,006	22,783,985
EXPENSES				
Operating	Pg 8	15,098,500	13,567,286	12,178,602
Family Healing Centers	Pg 9	1,242,500	1,027,736	1,011,458
Family Violence and Prevention	Pg 10	344,000	301,151	301,820
Prevention	Pg 11	2,582,000	2,550,440	1,938,172
Maintenance	Pg 13	8,420,000	6,248,174	7,280,013
Provincial Settlement	Pg 14	2,380,000	1,871,915	1,997,963
		30,067,000	25,566,702	24,708,028
SURPLUS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES		(6,647,576)	1,234,304	(1,924,043)
ALLOCATION:				
Operating	Pg 8		(153,324)	(2,913,806)
Family Healing Centers	Pg 9		14,719	(145,783)
Family Violence and Prevention	Pg 10		(28,761)	(101,820)
Prevention	Pg 11		664,801	1,204,570
Maintenance	Pg 13		736,869	32,796
			1,234,304	(1,924,043)

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



MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

	Unrestricted Net Assets	Internally Restricted Operating Contingency Reserve	Internally Restricted Replacement Reserve	Invested In Tangible Capital Assets	2019	2018
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
NET ASSETS - beginning of year	3,685,446	2,000,000	1,000,000	1,747,602	8,433,048	10,357,091
(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses	1,484,415	-	-	(250,111)	1,234,304	(1,924,043)
Tangible capital asset additions	(1,722,822)	-	-	1,722,822	-	-
NET ASSETS - end of year	3,447,039	2,000,000	1,000,000	3,220,313	9,667,352	8,433,048

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, 2019

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM:		
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	1,234,304	(1,924,043)
Items not involving cash:		
Amortization	250,111	148,220
	1,484,415	(1,775,823)
Changes in non-cash working capital items:		
Receivables	340,537	155,499
Prepaid expenses	(33,880)	27,536
Payables and accruals	561,597	32,845
Trust liability	3,983	(17,519)
Deferred revenue	263,571	-
	2,620,223	(1,577,462)
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of tangible capital assets	(1,722,822)	(131,689)
Purchase of short term investments	(64,695)	(4,021,889)
	(1,787,517)	(4,153,578)
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH DURING THE YEAR	832,706	(5,731,040)
CASH - beginning of year	2,884,392	8,615,432
CASH - end of year	3,717,098	2,884,392
CASH CONSISTS OF:		
Bank	3,683,443	2,854,720
Restricted cash	33,655	29,672
	3,717,098	2,884,392

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, 2019

	2019	2019	2018
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Indigenous Services Canada	8,320,443	12,457,731	8,316,892
Province of Nova Scotia	300,000	265,852	272,379
HST rebates and other	680,250	690,379	675,525
	9,300,693	13,413,962	9,264,796
EXPENSES			
Advertising and promotion	30,000	42,342	18,751
Amortization	200,000	235,944	146,602
Conferences and training	220,000	201,528	540,374
Electricity	55,000	44,105	45,659
Employee assistance program	20,000	13,868	13,573
Equipment leases	6,000	8,071	4,009
Foster Family Support	35,000	19,624	19,973
General	1,500	253	1,242
Insurance	45,000	42,007	39,895
Interest and bank charges	10,000	7,774	8,115
Library and resources materials	10,000	701	5,301
Membership dues and subscriptions	25,000	32,172	19,200
Office supplies and stationery	136,000	107,309	111,063
Postage and delivery	15,000	13,829	12,789
Professional fees	381,000	207,082	412,014
Rentals - offices	144,000	47,161	31,406
Repairs and maintenance	200,000	139,426	188,178
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	11,971,000	11,025,850	9,525,505
Telephone and communication	95,000	77,895	81,188
Travel	1,348,000	1,179,935	859,449
Travel and honorarium - Board	151,000	120,410	94,316
TOTAL EXPENSES	15,098,500	13,567,286	12,178,602
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(5,797,807)	(153,324)	(2,913,806)

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

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MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FAMILY HEALING CENTERS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

	2019	2019	2018
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Indigenous Services Canada			
Project Haven	942,779	942,779	785,360
Pension	97,526	97,526	78,715
Miscellaneous	2,000	2,150	1,600
	1,042,305	1,042,455	865,675
EXPENSES			
Advertising and promotion	1,500	2,911	746
Amortization	2,000	14,168	1,618
Conferences and training	10,000	6,279	8,163
Employee assistance program	3,000	1,529	1,010
Household supplies	20,000	17,047	18,942
Insurance	41,000	39,984	39,384
Interest and bank charges	500	243	254
Library and resource materials	1,000	-	-
Membership dues and subscriptions	1,000	-	400
Office supplies and stationery	13,000	7,800	6,076
Professional fees	8,500	2,313	4,355
Repairs and maintenance	96,000	39,604	11,380
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	943,000	820,854	837,261
Telephone and communications	13,000	12,390	11,170
Travel	73,000	45,801	56,311
Utilities	16,000	16,813	14,388
	1,242,500	1,027,736	1,011,458
TOTAL EXPENSES			
SURPLUS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(200,195)	14,719	(145,783)

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



MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FAMILY VIOLENCE AND PREVENTION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

	2019	2019	2018
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Indigenous Services Canada	236,426	272,390	200,000
EXPENSES			
Administration costs	41,000	32,335	36,872
Conferences and training	2,000	1,000	1,991
Public education and workshops	25,000	10,705	16,532
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	246,000	233,575	221,423
Travel	30,000	23,536	25,002
TOTAL EXPENSES	344,000	301,151	301,820
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(107,574)	(28,761)	(101,820)

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

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

	Family and Community Healing (Page 12)	Court-ordered Supervision	Early Intervention	2019	2019	2018
	\$	\$	\$	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE						
Indigenous Services Canada	924,000	1,636,100	644,900	3,130,000	3,205,000	3,130,000
Other	10,241	-	-	10,000	10,241	12,742
TOTAL REVENUE	934,241	1,636,100	644,900	3,140,000	3,215,241	3,142,742
EXPENSES						
Access	-	629,515	-	-	629,515	-
Alternative Family Care	-	64,407	-	-	64,407	-
Baby needs	-	2,850	-	2,000	2,850	138
Cultural development	-	3,537	-	4,000	3,537	296
Daycare	-	43,149	-	40,000	43,149	29,142
Educational supports	-	594	-	2,000	594	11
Family and Community Healing (Page 12)	556,152	-	-	934,000	556,152	704,939
Family conferencing	-	20,451	5,078	30,000	25,529	21,308
Immediate Response Circles	-	-	98	-	98	-
Medical	-	350,934	15,393	264,000	366,327	232,231
Miscellaneous	-	6,174	-	10,000	6,174	3,016
Mentorship	-	206,725	96,444	650,000	303,169	402,149
Personal development	-	468	-	12,000	468	4,593
Professional fees	-	477,871	58,144	610,000	536,015	534,284
Recreation	-	2,670	799	12,000	3,469	1,764
Registration - births	-	2,723	-	3,000	2,723	1,740
Respite	-	2,343	3,111	4,000	5,454	607
Youth support (16+)	-	-	810	5,000	810	1,954
TOTAL EXPENSES	556,152	1,814,411	179,877	2,582,000	2,550,440	1,938,172
SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	378,089	(178,311)	465,023	558,000	664,801	1,204,570

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, 2019

	2019	2019	2018
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Indigenous Services Canada	924,000	924,000	691,000
Other	10,000	10,241	12,742
	934,000	934,241	703,742
EXPENSES			
Advertising and promotion	6,000	-	-
Community support	30,000	12,681	14,500
Community workshops	121,000	42,931	88,070
Conferences and training	12,000	5,618	21,678
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	652,000	437,610	498,931
Telephone	5,000	1,971	3,826
Travel	108,000	55,341	77,934
	934,000	556,152	704,939
SURPLUS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	-	378,089	(1,197)

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

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MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
MAINTENANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

	2019	2019	2018
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Indigenous Services Canada	6,500,000	6,256,429	6,500,000
Government of Canada - Child Tax Benefits	820,000	728,614	812,809
	<u>7,320,000</u>	<u>6,985,043</u>	<u>7,312,809</u>
EXPENSES			
Permanent Care and Custody (Page 24)	4,838,000	3,810,816	4,131,418
Subsidized Adoptions (Page 24)	1,293,000	1,240,210	1,199,204
Voluntary Care (Page 24)	11,000	93	357
Taken Into Temporary Care (Page 24)	2,278,000	1,197,055	1,949,034
	<u>8,420,000</u>	<u>6,248,174</u>	<u>7,280,013</u>
SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	<u>(1,100,000)</u>	<u>736,869</u>	<u>32,796</u>

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



MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
PROVINCIAL SETTLEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

	2019	2019	2018
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Province of Nova Scotia	2,265,000	1,738,113	1,886,938
Government of Canada -Child Tax Benefits	115,000	133,802	111,025
	2,380,000	1,871,915	1,997,963
EXPENSES			
Access	340,000	260,185	281,021
Baby needs	6,000	5,284	4,873
Board	270,000	226,525	260,356
Board - competency payments	5,000	310	3,715
Board - special rates	100,000	75,767	82,517
Clothing	45,000	24,670	27,955
Congregate care	830,000	811,474	800,272
Cultural development	5,000	1,971	2,967
Daycare	60,000	45,090	52,528
Drug testing and other medical	40,000	18,288	17,519
Education supplies and other costs	33,000	41,589	20,865
Facility - other	70,000	20,731	58,549
Family conferencing	10,000	4,732	2,192
Independent living	30,000	21,766	23,426
Legal fees	30,000	13,379	22,221
Mentorship	205,000	104,363	127,269
Miscellaneous	5,000	3,555	2,550
Non-prescription personal needs	10,000	5,585	5,877
Other - inventory	10,000	5,608	5,398
Personal development	21,000	8,860	15,236
Professional fees	120,000	102,698	93,739
Recreation	30,000	12,183	11,508
Registration - births	1,000	120	444
Respite	57,000	30,653	48,838
Spending	41,000	19,929	22,660
Training	1,000	-	18
Travel autopayment	5,000	6,600	3,450
	2,380,000	1,871,915	1,997,963
SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	-	-	-

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

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MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

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 Indigenous 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.

Basis 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.	

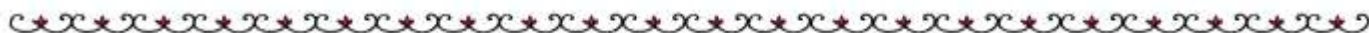
Revenue Recognition

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, 2019

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. Each fund represents a different program that the Agency administers. Restricted surpluses are not maintained for each fund/program due to the nature of the Agency's funding. Each year, if one program incurs a surplus and another program incurs a deficit, one program's surplus can cover the other's deficit. In addition, if the Agency incurs an overall surplus for all programs in a year, any surplus related to INAC contribution revenues is expected to form part of the Agency's budget for the subsequent fiscal year. The following are the different funds/programs of the Agency:

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

Family Healing Centers - Relates to the operation of Centers 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.

Invested in Tangible Capital Assets Fund - Relates to investment in tangible capital assets.

Internally Restricted

Replacement Reserve - created to internally restrict \$1,000,000 of surplus for future tangible assets requirements and replacements.

Operating Contingency Reserve - created to internally restrict \$2,000,000 of surplus for future operational and future program funding requirements.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

2. SHORT TERM INVESTMENTS

Short term investments consist of the following:

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Premium Investment Savings Account	3,062,968	3,015,852
High Interest Notice Account	1,023,616	1,006,037
	4,086,584	4,021,889

3. RESTRICTED CASH

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

4. RECEIVABLES

Receivables consists of the following:

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Province of Nova Scotia	811,029	723,622
HST recoverable	273,355	682,896
Other	37,382	55,785
	1,121,766	1,462,303

5. TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

	Cost \$	Accumulated Amortization \$	2019 Net \$	2018 Net \$
Buildings	3,011,815	701,290	2,310,525	1,532,442
Furniture and fixtures	920,305	150,563	769,742	80,232
Computer	212,520	72,474	140,046	123,091
Household materials	-	-	-	11,837
	4,144,640	924,327	3,220,313	1,747,602



**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019**

6. PAYABLES AND ACCRUALS

Payables and accruals consist of the following:

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Operating	267,060	129,512
Maintenance	706,526	694,308
Accrued salaries and benefits	1,110,740	739,655
Government Remittances Payable	77,147	47,723
Accrued travel reimbursements	107,468	96,146
	2,268,941	1,707,344

7. DEFERRED REVENUE

Deferred revenue consists of the following:

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Province of Nova Scotia - Gender Responsive Program	20,000	-
Indigenous Services Canada - Maintenance	243,571	-
	263,571	-

The Gender Responsive Program was funding received by the Healing Centers to administer a program funded by the Province of Nova Scotia. Funding was received just prior to March 31, 2019 and no expenses were incurred for this program by year end. The program expenses will be incurred and is expected to conclude during fiscal 2020.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

7. DEFERRED REVENUE (continued)

Funding received by Indigenous Services Canada was reconciled with other Agency revenues and eligible expenses and tangible capital asset purchases funded by Indigenous Services Canada.

A reconciliation of deferred revenue is as follows:

	2019 \$
Fiscal 2019 funding received from Indigenous Services Canada	23,475,426
Fiscal 2018 surplus funding from Indigenous Services Canada	472,723
Total Indigenous Services Canada funding available	<u>23,948,149</u>
Other Agency revenues other than Provincial Settlement	1,697,236
Total revenues available to the Agency	<u>25,645,385</u>
Total expenses per statement of operations	25,566,702
Less: Provincial Settlement expenses billed to Province of NS	(1,871,915)
Add: Tangible capital asset purchases funded by Indigenous Services Canada	1,722,822
Less: Amortization of tangible capital asset purchases already funded by Indigenous Services Canada	<u>(15,795)</u>
Total expenses funded by Indigenous Services Canada and other Agency revenues	<u>25,401,814</u>
Indigenous Services Canada deferred revenue	<u>243,571</u>
Indigenous Services Canada revenue recognized on the statement of operations:	
Fiscal 2019 funding received from Indigenous Services Canada	23,475,426
Less: Deferred revenue	<u>(243,571)</u>
	<u>23,231,855</u>



MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

8. EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES

In the latter part of fiscal 2017, Indigenous Services Canada provided additional operations and maintenance funding of approximately \$5.3 million to assist the Agency in preparing for changes in provincial legislation within the Province of Nova Scotia's *Children and Family Services Act* which became effective March 1, 2017. Since this funding was approved and received in the latter part of the 2017 fiscal year, the Agency was not able to hire positions and incur costs that were anticipated to be incurred within the timelines that were established in the original budget submission to Indigenous Services Canada for consideration of additional funding for the changes in legislation. Due to the nature of the funding, additional funding amounts cannot be deferred but are required to be shown as a surplus in a fiscal year. Indigenous Services Canada confirmed \$4,171,822 in surplus funding for the March 31, 2017 fiscal year.

For the March 31, 2018 fiscal year, Indigenous Services Canada provided levels of base funding consistent with the 2017 fiscal year not including the additional \$5.3 million described above. As a result, the Agency expected to incur a deficit for the year ending March 31, 2018 to spend the excess funding received from Indigenous Services Canada in the March 31, 2017 fiscal year. The actual deficit for the year ending March 31, 2018 was (\$1,924,043).

During fiscal 2019, Indigenous Services Canada confirmed with the Agency that the remaining surplus funding for the year ending March 31, 2018 was \$472,723 and that any future calculated surplus funding amounts should be recorded as deferred revenue at the end of each fiscal year. As a result, for the March 31, 2019 fiscal year, the Agency recorded deferred revenue by reconciling funding received from Indigenous Services Canada and other Agency revenues against eligible expenses and tangible capital asset purchases funded by Indigenous Services Canada. The deferred revenue amount, along with a reconciliation calculation, is outlined in Note 7.

9. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

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

10. 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 \$604,458 (2018 - \$520,856).

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

11. 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, 2019.

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 payables and accruals. Since the Agency's current assets exceed its current liabilities, liquidity risk is considered to be low.

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 premium investment savings and high interest notice accounts. However, these short term investment accounts are low risk.



**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019**

12. COMMITMENT

During fiscal 2019, a new building was constructed in Eskasoni First Nation for new Agency office space. The building was constructed by Eskasoni First Nation on behalf of the Agency with the agreement that the Agency pay rent to Eskasoni First Nation equal to the mortgage and interest payments according to the mortgage terms.

To date, the mortgage has not yet been finalized due to outstanding construction matters. The Agency has agreed with Eskasoni First Nation that rent payments will commence once the mortgage is finalized and fully drawn. The total estimated mortgage is \$6.2 million for construction costs, amortized over 25 years at fixed interest rate of 4.26% for 10 years. Based on these terms, the estimated monthly mortgage payment/rent is expected to be \$33,500 and will commence in fiscal 2020 once the mortgage is finalized.

13. 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, 2019**

14. SALARIES AND BENEFITS

	Operating	Family Healing Centres	Family and Community Healing	Family Violence and Prevention	2019	2018
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Salaries - social workers and supervision	5,847,727	-	-	-	5,847,727	5,094,928
Salaries - family support	872,972	-	-	198,457	1,071,429	952,414
Salaries - program counsellors	-	240,892	253,888	-	494,780	564,922
Salaries - standby and callback	100,286	-	-	-	100,286	106,343
Salaries - outreach	-	77,316	-	-	77,316	44,745
Salaries - management and clerical	2,654,027	191,496	133,043	-	2,978,566	2,497,126
Salaries - other	127,205	209,804	-	-	337,009	339,538
	9,602,217	719,508	386,931	198,457	10,907,113	9,600,016
Employment Insurance	156,791	15,214	5,770	2,048	179,823	153,914
Canada Pension	378,381	34,368	14,491	5,065	432,305	376,609
Group pension	542,200	34,803	21,384	6,070	604,457	520,856
Group benefits	275,487	24,009	9,034	4,152	312,682	351,165
Workers Compensation	77,407	8,889	-	-	86,296	85,960
Benefits - contra	(6,633)	(15,937)	-	17,783	(4,787)	(5,400)
	1,423,633	101,346	50,679	35,118	1,610,776	1,483,104
	11,025,850	820,854	437,610	233,575	12,517,889	11,083,120

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
SCHEDULE OF MAINTENANCE EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019**

	Voluntary Care	Permanent Care and Custody	Subsidized Adoption	Taken into Temporary Care	2019	2018
		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
EXPENSES						
Access	-	201,360	-	303,738	505,098	725,816
Baby needs	-	9,650	62	21,256	30,968	28,096
Board	-	896,380	780,060	177,482	1,853,922	1,925,484
Board - special rates	-	139,493	272,797	25,591	437,881	452,945
Clothing	-	98,542	90,650	23,061	212,253	224,609
Congregate care	-	1,079,574	-	238,082	1,317,656	1,798,102
Cultural development	-	11,633	-	2,503	14,136	19,933
Daycare	-	62,981	52,802	43,990	159,773	227,115
Drug testing and other medical	-	148,611	2,127	84,869	235,607	246,787
Education supplies and other costs	-	78,292	13,014	7,879	99,185	42,914
Family conferencing and circles	-	12,866	-	7,840	20,706	30,175
Independent living	-	56,149	140	-	56,289	59,898
Inventory/Other	-	21,213	-	12,982	34,195	49,457
Mentorship	-	380,435	1,970	40,389	422,794	542,480
Miscellaneous	-	13,610	147	2,852	16,609	24,762
Non-prescription personal needs	-	33,281	-	7,574	40,855	38,302
Personal development	-	29,100	-	864	29,964	97,394
Professional fees	93	115,701	20,725	101,799	238,318	229,508
Recreation	-	131,609	5,716	20,617	157,942	140,249
Registration - births	-	1,092	-	689	1,781	3,421
Respite	-	134,903	-	36,118	171,021	163,872
Spending	-	111,874	-	24,897	136,771	161,808
Training	-	2,217	-	133	2,350	6,736
Travel autopayment	-	40,250	-	11,850	52,100	39,150
	93	3,810,816	1,240,210	1,197,055	6,248,174	7,280,013

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

NEW MI'KMAQ FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA BUILDING
BEAR RIVER FIRST NATION
GRAND OPENING



“These Stars Will Protect Our Workers”

New Eskasoni Mi'kmaq Family Building Officially Opens

By George Paul
Communications Officer
MFCNS

The day could not get any grander when the new Mi'kmaq Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia (MFCNS) held its official grand opening of the new building in Eskasoni on May 17, 2019.

For Arlene Johnson, Executive Director of MFCNS, the new three-story, 6.2 million dollar brick building, with Mi'kmaq 8-pointed stars surrounding the building, it represents great opportunity.

Johnson said this building represents an opportunity for more coordinated and expanded services and better care for the children and their families that need the services the agency offers.

“We were using our old building, a trailer, the fishery building and we were also renting an office on George Street in Sydney, so we were quite fragmented,” Johnson said.

“It means a lot to us to be together.” The “us” is the 97 Eskasoni-based employees MFCNS who provide services throughout Cape Breton.

“We come a long way and have grown leaps and bounds because we as a Mi'kmaq social service are carving our own path and creating our own culturally appropriate programs, that fill the needs of the

families that come to our doors.”

“Today many of our programs are focusing on prevention and helping the families before it gets worse. We have one-of-a-kind culturally appropriate programs, such as Wikimanej Kikmanaq family group conference program, Mi'kmaq community programs and a new pilot program called Immediate Response Circle. We want to achieve consistency in all our service and



Eskasoni Chief, Leroy Denny leads the Mi'kmaq Immersion performers with the honor song.

reach families sooner than later.”

It took several years to get the \$6.2-million project off the ground. Johnson said she and the service's lawyer, Dennis James, met with the Eskasoni chief and council about the concept and obtained their support. After many meetings, negotiations, drafting of documents, the project also gained the support of the province's 13 chiefs.

“We were expanding our services based on the human rights tribunal, we were receiving additional funding, and all the recommendations from the, TRC - the Truth and Reconciliation Commission - we made sure that we incorporated those,” Johnson said.

The main funder for the agency is

Indigenous Services Canada. The new building has also been designed so that it can accommodate future growth. Eskasoni Chief Leroy Denny described the process as not being easy, but it was made possible through the widespread support that the project received.

The staff moved into the building in February but the community was invited to officially celebrate its grand opening and tour the building.

The grand opening was more like a show, with Mi'kmaq Immersion singers opening up the event with an honor song and music from YouTube sensation Emma Stevens singing Blackbird in Mi'kmaq, to uplifting speeches, a ribbon cutting, blessings, fiddle music and of course a community feast

held downstairs.

Many Chiefs from other bands in Nova Scotia, government officials and representatives of other organization that work with Mi'kmaq Family and Children's Services were also on hand.

The front of the building is adorned with six large eight-pointed stars with the four direction colors, an important Mi'kmaq symbol.

Johnson said it was important to have the Mi'kmaq culture represented in the building's design.

“It really indigenizes the building, but our building is large and imposing, so it represents that this is a Mi'kmaq building,” Johnson said.

“These stars will protect our workers, because the work they do

“These Stars Will Protect Our Workers”

New Eskasoni Mi'kmaq Family Building Officially Opens

is really tough,” said Chief Leroy Denny, “These stars will help our Mi'kmaq families as well, our children especially.”

“And we all know, since the construction of the building it was being constantly attacked through social media. Comparing it to something horrific from our past. That stigma has to end because this building is about protecting our children first not taking them away,” added Chief Denny.

“Breaking that stigma is crucial and we must demystify the work that is done by Mi'kmaq Family and Children's Services. Educating our people of the work we do inside this building is important but we also want community members to feel comfortable inside its doors,” added Johnson.

One area in this building is the healing room, “This room is the centerpiece of our building. Inside the room you will see a drum that represents the heartbeat of Mi'kmaq family. It is a place meant for teaching, healing, praying, smudging, gatherings and all forms of prayers are welcomed in this room,” said Johnson.

“This room will become a sacred place and we wanted to give this room a special Mi'kmaq name. We asked Mi'kmaq language experts Elizabeth Paul, Arlene Stevens and Barbara Sylliboy to find a special name for this room and they

suggested the name "Atlasma'l Kjjjaqamij" meaning rest or heal your spirit. We thought it was perfect.”

A special painting was created by Mi'kmaq artist Loretta Gould which will be placed above the entrance door of the healing room. The specially designed painting represents the sacred healing room where the light shines above and the seven sacred teachings are the foundation.

“We wanted the light above to shine inside the room and have an eagle soaring above. Because in the seven sacred teachings the eagle represents love and that is what every child wants and needs,” said Johnson.

“From now on this room will have Wilma Simon as our in-house elder and she will be tending to this healing room and we will invite visiting elders to come do traditional teachings in this room for families and staff members,” said Johnson.

“It's such a wonderful place to be,” added Johnson, “It's peaceful in here, we're reaching out to our communities. Today, having our community here and having a meal with everyone that's here, it also helps with reconciliation with the communities and how we're perceived, we'd really like to change that.”

“We're not just child protection, it's all about family support, and it's all



about preventative services.”

In Chief Denny's final words, “So today we celebrate this new beautiful building and we celebrate the people who work inside this building because they are making a difference.”

“We honor your work, we honor your past and we will always be here to support you.”

Building was designed by Ken MacNeil Architect and constructed by Joneljim Construction. The brick laying work is said to be the biggest job in Atlantic Canada.

The MFCSNS in total has over 190 staff throughout Nova Scotia with 97 staff members in the Eskasoni office.

There are 3 MFCSNS offices in Nova Scotia, Eskasoni, Indianbrook and the new Valley satellite office located in Bear River First Nations.

The MFCSNS Bear River building held its official grand opening on April 26, 2019. MFCSNS also has 2 Healing Centers in Nova Scotia.



Elapultimk Elmi'knik

L'nue'kati'l ta'n mu nesana'nuk
wjit mijua'ji'jk, mekite'tmi'tij
teli-L'nu-ulti'tij, melknaql wjkjksu'l
aqq melkiknewa'tumkl aqq
apoqntmumkl wutann.

Our Vision

First Nations Communities:
Where children are safe and
proud of their First Nations
culture; families are strong and
communities are strengthened
and supported.

Services

Healing Centres
Healing Programs
Kinship and Foster Care
Family Support
Child Protection
Resource Programs
Case Aid Programs
Child Protection
Temporary Care
Long Term Protection
Permanent Care
Foster Care
Adoption Program
Wikimanej Kikmanaq
Family Conferences



Mi'kmaw
Family & Children's Services
of Nova Scotia

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Hants County, Nova Scotia, B0N 2H0
Tel: (902) 758-3553 / (800) 263-8686
Fax: (902) 758-2390

89 Reservation Road
Bear River, Nova Scotia, B0S 1B0
Tel: (902) 376-3553

Mijua'ji'jk na iknmuksi'kik Kisu'lkw. **Children Are Gifts from the Creator.**

