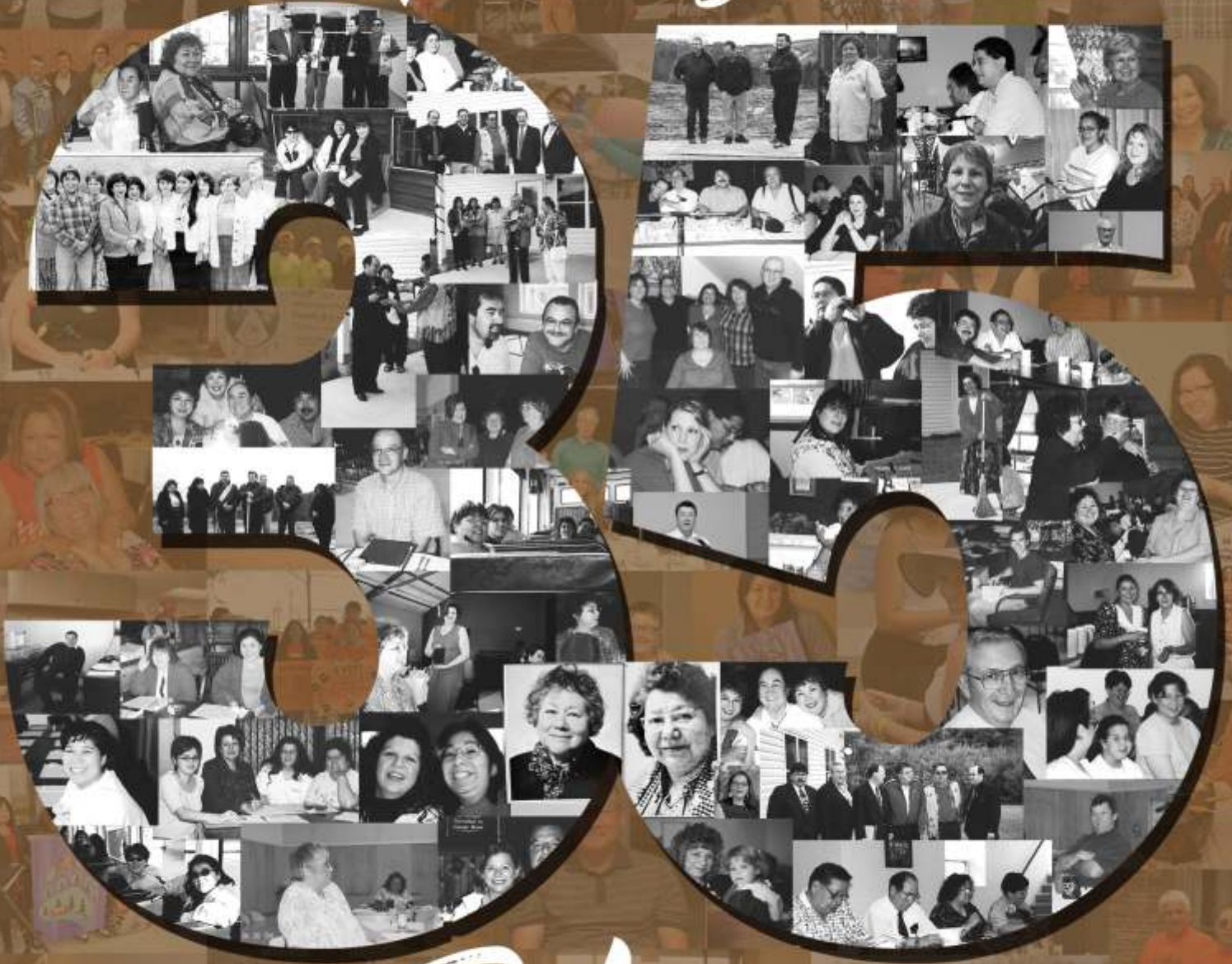




Reflecting on



Years

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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

61 Mini Mall Drive
Eskasoni, NS
B1W 1A6

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Executive Director - JOHNSON Arlene
Assistant Executive Director - PAUL Lenora
Executive Assistant - DENNY Rhonda
Office Manager - GOOGOO Carleen
Receptionist - SYLLIBOY Jaylene (LOA), DENNY Kirsten
Janitorial/Maintenance - STEVENS Eric, JOHNSON Chase, STEVENS Vincent

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

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

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Supervisor - LEVANGIE, Ann
Legal Counsel - DENNY Jessie, MACDONALD Jennifer
Paralegal - MARINER-WEBB Jennifer
Paralegal - CLARE Madonna

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, COMER, Daryl
Administration Assistant - PAUL Serena
Intake & Investigation Team - BOYCE Lynn, FULLER Shannon, BERNARD, Nikhea, MCCARTHY

Christina,
BONNAR Danielle

LONG-TERM CHILD PROTECTION

Supervisors - DENNY-SYLLIBOY Angeline, JEFFERY Madeleine
Administration Assistant - POULETTE Nora
Long-Term Child Protection Team - CROWE Kristin, CASEY Riviera, CARABIN, Sarah, JOHNSON Sarita, DENNY Charmaine
YOUNG Katie (Maternity leave), LEBLANC Amy, HILL Natasha, GOULD Connie, MACNEIL Alicia, SMITH Susan, MARSHALL Nilan (Social Work Assistant)

TEMPORARY CARE & CUSTODY

Supervisor - DOUCETTE Yvonne
Administration Assistant - SYLLIBOY Kerrie
Temporary Care & Custody - DOUCETTE Edna, LAFFORD Erica, COOLE Eileen, JOHNSON Dawn

FAMILY SUPPORT & CASE AIDE

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

CHILDREN IN PERMANENT CARE & CUSTODY SERVICES

Supervisor - WILLIAMS, Sheena
Administration Assistant - GOOGOO, Mary V.
Permanent Care & Custody Team - LAPORTE Trish, GALE Mickella, GOULD Gloria, GOULD Annie, JEDDORE Conchetta, GOUTHRO David, ABOUD Wendy

RESOURCE FAMILY SERVICES

Supervisor - YOUNG, Sheraine
Administration Assistant - FRANCIS, Lynn
Resource Family Team - MACDONALD Jacqueline,

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, FRANCIS Dorothy, YOUNG Charmaine, DENNY Nadia, KABATAY Cynthia

FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALING

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

WIKMANEJ KIKMANAQ

Supervisor - STEVENS, Lydia
Administrative Assistant - BASQUE, Tracey
Wikmanej Kikmanaq Eskasoni Team - YOUNG Sophie, FRANCIS, Jane, SYLLIBOY John Denny, YOUNG Melissa
Elder Spiritual Caregiver - SIMON Wilma

MANAGER of PREVENTION SERVICES

BASQUE Kristen

INDIAN BROOK OFFICE

PO Box 179
Hants County, NS
BON 2H0

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

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

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Supervisor - LEVANGIE Ann
Legal Counsel - MORTON, Katelyn



MFCSNS Staff Continued

Paralegal - MCCONNELL Christena

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

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

PROGRAM MANAGER FOR CHILD WELFARE

MEECH Keira

INTAKE & INVESTIGATION

Supervisor - NUTTER Jennifer
Administration Assistant - MARR Eileen
Intake & Investigation Team - MANN Ashley,
GOODMAN Karri, REVELS Leann, PARK Jennifer,
DAVIS, Angela (term)

LONG-TERM CHILD PROTECTION

Supervisor - INGLIS-ASSAFF, Pauline
Administrative Assistant - SPENCE Julie
Long Term Protection Team - HAMILTON Derick,
STEPHENS Marsha, RING, Nicole (BEAR RIVER)

TEMPORARY CARE & CUSTODY/LONG TERM

Supervisor - INGLIS-ASSAFF Pauline
Administrative Assistant - SPENCE Julie
Temporary Care & Custody
GARIEPY Kim, MCKELVIE Jennifer (LOA) BUTLER
Megan, THOMAS Melissa

FAMILY SUPPORT & CASE AIDE

Supervisor - HIGGINS Leeann
Family Support Team - KNOCKWOOD Annie,
MAYICH Earla, MICHAEL Julie, MARR, Juanita,
FOLEY, Shantal

Case Aide Team - PAUL, Joan, SACK Diane,
DOUCETTE Autumn

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 Katie,

FOSTER CARE

Supervisor for Resource Family - PHILLIPS Jodi
Administrative Assistant - BILODEAU, Erica
Foster Care Team - HANCOCK Norine, 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, TOMER
Catherine

WIKIMANEJ KIKMANAQ

Supervisor - DONNELLY Louise
Administrative Assistant - BASQUE, Tracey
Wikmanej Kikmanaq Indian Brook Team -
HILLIER Cassandra, BERNARD Roberta, COLLINS,
Kim

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

Administrative Assistant - HARRISON Dave
Long Term Protection - RING Nicole
Family and Community Healing -
DOUCETTE Cassie

WE'KOQMA'Q FAMILY & HEALING CENTRE

PO Box 310, We'koqma'q, NS, B0E 3M0

FAMILY HEALING CENTRE

Manager - WALKER Bev
Program Supervisor - POIRIER Bernadette
Administrative Assistant - WALKER Jean (LOA)
CHRISTIANO, Deborah
Night Support Worker - MILLER Krista (LOA),
GOULD, Kendra
Women's Outreach Worker - GOOGOO Claudine
Men's Intervention Worker - GOOGOO Doreen
(LOA), DENNY Kyle
Woman's Support Worker - WILCOX Olive,
MACEACHERN Carol
Assistant Support Worker - WILCOX Theresa
Child & Youth Outreach Worker - GILLIS Justine
Casuals - LEROY Lori, PHILLIPS Jessica, CREMO-
JULIAN, Kris, GOOGOO, Carol, BERNARD,
Keeisha, MURPHY, Julie

MILLBROOK FAMILY & HEALING CENTRE

PO Box 665, Truro, NS,
B2N 5E5

FAMILY HEALING CENTRE

Manager - WALKER Bev
Program Supervisor - PAUL Brooke (LOA)
MARTIN, Michelle
Administrative Assistant - MORRISON Susan
Night Support Worker - GLOADE Dora, MACNEIL
Mary Elizabeth
Women's Outreach Worker - MARTIN Sylvia
Men's Intervention Worker - WALSH J. Dan
Assistant Support Worker - MACKAY Elizabeth
(LOA), ODERKIRK, Bailey
Women's Support Worker - PAUL, Krista,
SYLLIBOY Mary
Child & Youth Outreach Worker - WINTERS Laura
Casuals - GOULD Lorraine, MARTIN Mary Ann,
BERNARD Wendy, Rann Summer, DREW, Terry,
MARTIN, Cindy

President's Remarks



Chief Deborah Robinson

Mi'kmaw Child Welfare Act Update

In 2017, the Assembly became involved with the proposed amendments to the CFSA. The Assembly's involvement resulted in the incorporation of approximately 25 amendments to the Act that reflect the unique cultural differences of the Mi'kmaw in child welfare proceedings.

1. One of the Preambles of the 2017 amended CFSA clearly speaks to the cultural identify of Mi'kmaq and aboriginal children being uniquely important for the exercise of the child's aboriginal and treaty rights.

2. The 2017 amendments to the CFSA now allow for Notices to the Band when a child protection proceeding has commenced involving a Mi'kmaw child. This now allows the child's Band to have the same Notice as any party to the proceeding would have. The Act also provides that a Band Designate may be present at the hearing. This is a recognition of the importance of the Band and community in the proceeding.

3. As of 2017, there is a new section in the Department of Community Services' (Department) Policy Manual dedicated to Mi'kmaw practice. Although it still requires some work, it is a good start.

4. In terms of placements of Mi'kmaw children, the amendments speak to a priority of placements for an aboriginal child that include kinship with a relative, a kinship, with a member of the child's community who is approved as a foster parent or last, an aboriginal foster parent.

5. In terms of child protection, there is definitely greater consideration being given to cultural

President's Remarks continued...

connection plans such as inclusion of genograms and ecomaps. Prior to the 2017 amendments, these were not considered. These new inclusions are now recognized for their importance to a child's culture and tradition as well as the impact on the child's development.

6. The amended Act now references referral of the parties to conferencing which may proceed as a family group conference. MFCS has had a great deal of success utilizing the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Circles where family and community are involved in decision making.

7. The inclusion of Customary Care in the amended Act is huge. Although it is referenced briefly in the Act, it speaks to the importance of who the Mi'kmaw child is connected to and the importance to the child's life. MFCS utilize customary care arrangements that have resulted in less children going into care.

8. Mi'kmaq Customary Adoptions - The court now recognizes that an adoption in accordance with the custom of the band can have the effect of an adoption under the Act. MFCS has been working on a Mi'kmaw Customary Adoption Protocol (still in draft) to support this customary practice.

9. Since the 2017 amendments, MFCS are now included at the provincial department table in terms of participating in policy development, work groups, etc.; particularly where it affects Mi'kmaw children, families and communities. Having child welfare policies created that apply to Mi'kmaq without the inclusion of MNFC did not work for our people and did not meet their needs. Now there appears to be a greater respect for the good work of MFCS such that they are praised and are recognized as leaders across Canada.

10. A real testament to the work of the MFCS is that the Department has started to recognize the value of MFCS' work for all social workers and the need to look at cultural connections, background, culture and its importance in decision-making.

11. Even though there may not be specific wording in the Act, there have been changes to child welfare policies that support the law and strongly support recognition of unique Mi'kmaw culture and practices. There is now a shift where the policies are built around the legislative practice.

12. The amendments to the CFSA have empowered MFCS to interpret the supporting policies to work with Mi'kmaw families and communities and to speak out when the policies don't.

13. MFCS are well on their way to meeting the needs of Mi'kmaw children and families through a Mi'kmaw perspective rather than the colonial lens of the Department. MFCS follow the Department's standards and policies but interpret the same to meet the unique needs of the families and communities they serve.

The amendments have not fixed all community-based problems. Some are still there but MFCS are working with stakeholders, community and families to address the issues.



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



Executive & Assistant Executive Directors Report

Welcome everyone to our 35th Annual General Assembly.

As the Executive Director of Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services (MFCS) of Nova Scotia, I am extremely proud of all our accomplishments over the past 35 years as a well established and respected Mi'kmaw child and family services agency. I strongly believe we all want to see our families grow stronger, healthier and be happier. We share this vision with all our First Nation's organizations.

Over the years I have witnessed our Mi'kmaw Nation become stronger with thoughtful leadership and through such move forward making dreams and ideas a reality. Along with strong leadership comes strong and healthy communities. Our Mi'kmaw communities are thriving today through our collective vision and desire to continue to push forward and regain control of our own affairs.

Through the years the Agency has grown significantly in staffing, location and programming. We now have offices in three locations – Indian Brook, Eskasoni and Bear River. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of my staff for their dedication and commitment for enhancing and strengthening the children and families with whom we work.

I also want to acknowledge my Management Team. As the Executive Director I am truly blessed and honored to work with the best team anyone could ask. My team consists of Assistant Executive Director, Lenora Paul, Assistant Executive Director, Monica Clarke Johnson, Finance Manager, Kendra Arseneault, Human Resources Manager, Holy MacDonald, Lead Lawyer, Ann Levangie, Communications Officer, George Paul, Executive Assistants, Anna Paul (Indian Brook Office) and Rhonda Denny (Eskasoni Office), Manager of Protection Services, Keira Meech, Manager of Prevention Services, Kristen Basque, Manager of the Healing Centres, Beverly Walker and Occupational Health and Safety Officer, Pius Trainor.

This is our 35th year in operation. We started as a small Agency with just 23 staff and we are now a staff of 200. We have grown over the years to meet the needs and demands of our growing Mi'kmaw communities. I would like to take this time to acknowledge and thank our social workers who were one of the first 23 staff. We embarked on the journey of having our own Mi'kmaw Agency that would better meet the needs of our families. I proudly believe culture, tradition and language remain a large part of what separates us from mainstream child



Executive Director, Arlene M Johnson BSW, RSW



Assistant Executive Director
Lenora Paul
MSW, RSW



Assistant Executive Director
Monica Clarke-Johnson
BSW, RSW

Executive & Assistant Executive Directors Report continued...

welfare.

Regardless of our role at MFCS, as staff we face many challenges. The work is fraught with difficult decisions that we know may impact a child and their family forever. Such painful decisions and the ramifications are not lost on our staff. However, it is the criticism that we face when the public perspective of the Agency is marred by harmful comments.

This spread of misinformation on social media platforms negatively affects our staff, their families and the families we are working so hard to help. We cannot defend our decisions or make any comments whatsoever due to confidentiality. What happens as a result of these types of attacks on the Agency is further distrust and a lack of confidence, which in turn has a detrimental impact on the excellent work the Agency is doing. We do not take our role and responsibilities lightly. We thrive to reflect professionalism and respect for the children and families with whom we work. Our work can be extremely challenging and rewarding at the same time. Therefore, it is important as Mi'kmaw people that we always work together in a manner that is respectful of each others' roles, responsibilities and limitations.

“This spread of misinformation on social media platforms negatively affects our staff, their families and the families we are working so hard to help.”

We are a child welfare Agency with a specific mandate and authority. We are not the police, the hospital or the Band Office. However, we continually work to foster positive and professional relationships with other agencies to work cooperatively. The more we understand the mandate of all organizations, I believe the more rewarding our work will become.

It is important to understand how the spread of disparaging comments which are inaccurate damage the Agency's reputation and hard work.

As I mentioned, we are often personally targeted. This also includes our children and grandchildren who are often bullied simply because their parent works for MFCS. This is collectively difficult for us, but we go on about our business the best we can. This cycle of lateral violence toward MFCS must stop. Hateful comments are not only hurtful to us, but to our families and in the end to our communities.

I believe it is important to talk about the work with families over the years in the area of prevention has been ever evolving. Our focus has always been and continues to be on prevention and the preservation and integrity of the family structure.

We model our work based on the Seven Sacred teachings. The majority of our social work staff are Mi'kmaq. As such, we are members of our Mi'kmaw communities throughout Mikmaki and other local communities of Nova Scotia. Our prevention teams offer many hands-on services in the home. I can assure you the staff of the Family Support Program are dedicated as they provide



Executive & Assistant Executive Directors Report continued...

one-on-one work with parents in a culturally competent manner. We are extremely fortunate to have Family Support Staff who speak the Mi'kmaw language. This enables services to be delivered to many of our families in their first language. We are making every effort to ensure our families understand the work that is necessary to help the family be healthy on all levels, including physically, emotionally and spiritually.

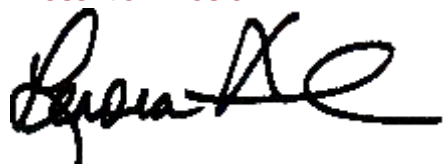
I also want to acknowledge the achievements of many of the parents of the families we work with who have made a commitment to change for the betterment of themselves and their children. We often receive positive feedback from families who have been appreciative of the services we have provided to them.

As we continue to grow and evolve as an Agency, we are excited about this next chapter as we embark on a new era in Mi'kmaw child welfare. We have been working cooperatively with KMKNO as we work toward the development of our own Mi'kmaw Child Welfare Act. This includes not only the Act itself but the development of policies which are respectful of our culture and families. Through policies designed by our Mi'kwaw leaders for our Mi'kmaw families I believe brings us to where we started on September 9, 1985. This date represents the day MFCS first opened our doors to provide joint services with the Department of Community Services. Moving from a provincial mandate to our own Mi'kmaw mandate continues to be a journey, but we are closer than ever before to realizing that vision.

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

Annual General Assembly Minutes 2019

Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES – 4 July 2019

Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia
ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY – 4 July 2019

The Annual General Assembly of the Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia was held July 4, 2019 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 Sidney Peters, Treasurer, Glooscap
Chief Carol Potter, Bear River
Chief Gerald Toney, Annapolis Valley
Chief Bob Gloade, Millbrook
Chief PJ Prosper, Paqtnkek
Chief Norman Bernard, Wagmatcook
Gail Christmas, Proxy for Chief Terry Paul, Membertou
James Marshall, Proxy for Chief Wilbert Marshall, Potlotek
Morley Googoo, Regional Chief, AFN
Lorraine Whitman, President, NSNWA

Staff and Guests:

David Yuill, Auditor, BDO
Gary Landry, Executive Director, Federation of Foster Families of NS
Jill Martin, Federation of Foster Families of NS
Debbie Thibault, Department of Community Services
George Savoury, Savoury Consultants
Natalie Doucette, Mi'kmaw Child Welfare Specialist
Jacklyn Paul, KNKMO
Heather McNeill, KMKNO
Anneliese MacPherson, New Start Counselling
Elizabeth Cremo, Director of Education, Eskasoni School Board
Michelle Marshall-Johnson, Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey
Emma Stevens, Singer, ABMHS
Carter Chaisson, Music Teacher, ABMHS

The meeting convened at 10:00am with Chief Deborah Robinson presiding. The opening prayer was said by Elder Glenda Wysote-Labillois, RSW, MSW.



AGA Minutes 2019 continued...

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The agenda was presented.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JULY 2018:
The minutes of July 5, 2018 were presented.

MOTION #2: It was moved by Chief PJ Prosper and seconded by Chief Norman Bernard to accept the minutes from July 5, 2018 as presented. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS: Chief Deborah Robinson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Arlene Johnson

MOTION #3: It was moved by Chief PJ Prosper, seconded by Chief Norman Bernard to accept the Executive Director's Report as presented. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Kendra Arseneau
Financial Report for the 2018-19 Fiscal Year is presented. David Yuill of BDO presents the Auditor's Report.

MOTION #4: It was moved by Chief Leroy Denny, seconded by Chief Sidney Peters to accept the financial report as presented. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS:
The Auditors appointed by the MFCS Board is BDO.

MOTION #3: It was moved by Chief PJ Prosper seconded by Chief Andrea Paul to accept BDO as the Auditors for Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of NS.

NEW BUSINESS:
George Paul presents a time-lapse video of the new building in Eskasoni.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
The MFCSNS AGA Keynote speaker is Glenda Wysote-Labillois from Listiguj, Quebec. She speaks on traditional teachings.

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE:
Special musical performance by ABMHS student singer Emma Stevens along with her music teacher Carter Chaisson on guitar singing the Beatles song "Blackbird" in Mi'kmaw and "My Unama'ki."

AGA Minutes 2019 continued...

Emma Stevens and Carter Chaisson will be travelling to Vancouver, BC to meet Sir Paul McCartney in person and attend his concert. Morley Googoo gives Emma and Carter a letter and gift to present to Sir Paul McCartney on behalf of the Mi'kmaw.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS:

Presentation of gifts to guests Emma Stevens, Carter Chaisson, and Glenda Wysote-Labillois.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Elder Wilma Simon said the closing prayer.

MOTION #4: It was moved by Chief Norman Bernard, seconded by Chief Sidney Peters to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 11:45am.



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.

Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...

Family Healing Centres

April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020

Many new and exciting changes have happened for both Healing Centres this year. Both Centres received new desk top computers including additional computers for in-house staff which now allows them to have their own computer at their workstation. Outreach staff share one desktop and one laptop for their needs when they are in and out of the office. Since the opening of the new office in Eskasoni, the Healing Centres were able to acquire the "new to us" desks from the old office. This was a welcome change for the Centres since most of the desks were over 25 years old. This started "operation organization" in particular for the We'koqma'q Centre. Bev and the Staff worked very hard to give the building a new/updated organized look and feel. Cleaning out the old and bringing in new, painting, curtains, tables and chairs, living room tables/accessories, Indigenous artwork and added touches made the Centre feel comfortable and homey. This was all helping us prepare for the open house, staff worked tirelessly, they were even still putting up the last curtain on the morning of the open house. The We'koqma'q Centre had an open house on July 23rd, 2019, this day was chosen to celebrate in honor of Jean MacLean; the one-year anniversary of her passing. The Millbrook Centre had a 25th anniversary open house on July 25th, 2019 which also honored Jean.



In the last 27 years there have been 1,559 women and 1,677 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.

Millbrook hosted a weekend Girls's youth retreat, June 7 – 9, 2019. This retreat was attended by six youth ages 16-19. They enjoyed the weekend and had workshops on topics such as Self-esteem, goals, consent, vision board, spa treatments, and movie/game night to name a few. We'koqma'q was not able to host a retreat due to being short staffed.

Even with in staff shortages, the Healing Centres teams were able to coordinate and/or co-coordinate or were involved in many events through out the province. Those included community breakfasts, Family fun days, Dec. 6th Day of Action events, Open houses, Health/Wellness fairs, a youth moose hunt, youth summer camp. In total the Healing



Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...

Centres organized/were involved in 22 community events and delivered 111 Community workshops. Our teams demonstrated dedication and commitment in achieving our goals to promote healing with our families and communities and their hard work was greatly appreciated.

Millbrook Centre was selected for a Children's room makeover which was sponsored by Women's Shelters Canada and Ikea. This initiative's purpose was to improve the lives of children's living in shelters. The Makeover of the Children's room took place on March 2-4, 2020. All the furniture, fixtures and accessories were donated and installed by Ikea Staff. The room was transformed into a beautiful comfortable space for Women, children and youth to relax and play.

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 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. In this year the outreach program in We'koqma'q was diminished in numbers, when two of the three were on leave and/or in an acting position.

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. Dan Walsh (Millbrook) and Doreen Googoo (We'koqma'q) were the Men's Outreach Workers for this year.

For one-to-one counselling there were 15 new clients and 17 on-going clients with 165 sessions completed. There were at three JTW groups completed this past year.

Women's Outreach Program: The Women's Outreach Program has an Awareness and Education module delivered regularly to the communities in addition to group and 1:1 counselling sessions. Sylvia Martin (Millbrook) and Claudine Googoo (We'koqma'q) were the Women's Outreach Workers for this year. There were 30 new clients and 25 on-going clients with 220 sessions completed. Some of the topics covered in the program are: Intimate Partner Violence, Self-Esteem, Healthy &



Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...



Unhealthy Relationships, Parenting, Grief and Loss, Trauma, Relapse Prevention

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.

on, Options to Anger etc.

Child/Youth Outreach Program: 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. Laura Winters (Millbrook) and Justine Gillis (We'koqma'q) were the outreach workers for this year although Justine was on leave for the majority of the year and the number reflect that. There were 36 workshops with 884 participants in the last year. There were 14 new and 10 on-going clients with 163 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/Krista Paul and Mali Sylliboy (Millbrook) and Olive Wilcox and Carol MacEachern (We'koqma'q). 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,

Training: The Healing Centres staff attended training this year in: Counselling Level I, HIFIS, PRIDE, Human Rights, NVCI, and First Aid. Canadian Domestic Violence Conference was held in Halifax on March 5-6, 2020 and was attended by Bev Walker, Bernadette Poirier, Michelle Martin, Dan Walsh and Olive Wilcox. Additional funding was donated to the Healing Centres from the Advisory Council on the Status of Women to help cover the costs of additional staff to attend this important conference.

Challenges: The Centres faced many staffing challenges this year. There were several staff on leave which left the We'koma'q Centre understaffed for most of the year. The



Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...

remaining staff worked hard and are commended for keeping the operation needs of the Centre priority. Another challenge began in March 2020 with the onset of Covid-19 and the Provincial State of Emergency. This was only the beginning of the Pandemic. The staff then operated at a minimum to keep social distance and kept the Centres clean and disinfected for the staff and resident's safety. The staff were very understanding of shift changes and working conditions. This was all new and we are all learning lessons from this experience.

New Staff April/18 – Mar/19: There have been some changes staff for both centres this year:

Krista Paul Millbrook Women's Support (November 2019)

Susan Morrison Millbrook Admin. Assistant (Jan 2020)

Brooke Paul Millbrook Program Supervisor (Mat. Leave February 2020)

Michelle Martin Millbrook Night Support (September 2019 – February 2020)

Millbrook Acting Program Supervisor (February 2020)

Claudine Googoo We'koqma'q Women's Outreach (May 2019)

Theresa Wilcox We'koqma'q Assistant Women's Support (May 2019)

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 October 17-18, 2019 Bev Walker and Doreen Googoo attended a training forum in Montreal.

On February 25-27, 2020 Bev Walker attended NACAFV's AGA and Shelter director training in Montreal. An Atlantic Shelter directors meeting in Halifax attended by Bev Walker, Bernadette Poirier and Michelle Martin.

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



Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...

From April 1st, 2019 - March 31st, 2020 The We'koqma'q Healing Centre had 16 women accompanied by 7 children stay at the Centre during this period with total bedstays of 872. The Millbrook Healing Centre had 23 women accompanied by 11 children stay at the Centre during this period with total bedstays of 1568.

	MILLBROOK	WE'KOQMA'Q
REASON FOR ENTRY:		
Already at Centre	2	1
Physical abuse	16	6
Verbal/Emotional/Psychological abuse	3	3
Threats to women and/or children	1	0
Other abuse (e.g., abuse by other family members)	2	0
Housing problem (non-abuse)	1	3
Other (non-abuse)	0	4
REFERRED BY:		
Self-referral	13	6
Multi-service agency	1	2
Social service agency	2	0
Medical /health agency/doctor	0	0
Other shelter	2	1
Relative/Friend	4	0
Other: MFCS	0	0
Police	1	6
Community Alcohol & Drug Worker/NADACA	0	0
Native Council of Nova Scotia	0	1
MFHC	0	0
Other	0	0
EMPLOYMENT SITUATION ENTERING THE CENTRE:		
Not employed/not looking for work/social assistance	16	8
Unemployed/EI	0	1
Occasional employment	1	1
Employed full-time/part-time	3	5
Self employed	1	0
Attending School	2	1
PHYSICAL DISABILITIES:		
Mobility	0	1
Visual	0	0
Hearing	0	0
Other	1	0
None	22	15
LEFT ABUSE SITUATION BEFORE:		
Yes	22	15
No	1	1
Not Known	0	0
USED SHELTER BEFORE:		
Yes	12	15
No	11	1
Not Known	0	0



Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...

MILLBROOK WE'KOQMA'Q

LEFT ABUSE SITUATION BEFORE:

Yes	22	15
No	1	1
Not Known	0	0

USED SHELTER BEFORE:

Yes	12	15
No	11	1
Not Known	0	0

REASON FOR LEAVING CENTRE:

Returned home	7	8
Found alternative housing	8	7
Asked to leave	4	0
Didn't like shelter	1	0
No known reason	1	0
Other	0	1
Access visit over	0	0
Going to Rehab	0	0
Still at MFHP Centre	4	1

DESTINATION/SITUATION:

Returned home to unchanged situation	3	1
Returned home to changed situation	4	6
Relatives/Friends/neighbors	6	6
Own new place/private housing	0	3
Own new place/assistance housing	3	0
Other shelter	0	0
Second stage housing	2	0
Other	1	0
Not Known	2	0
Alcohol & Drug Rehab Centre	0	0
Still at MFHP Centre	4	1

Total Bed Stays for Women and Children	1568	872
Total Access Visits: not overnight	91	6
Total Access Visits: Overnight	11	0
Total Crisis Calls	62	18

AGE GROUPS - WOMEN:

18-24	8	6
25-34	11	4
35-50	4	5
51+	0	1

Family & Community Resource Program

Maw-lukutimk Apoqnmuksinew

Wkjisu'k aqq Wutanl

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

Supervisor: Diana Christmas: MSW, BSW, RSW (Eskasoni)

Coordinators: Jeannie Googoo, Norman Sylliboy & Julia Gale

Administrative Support: Tracey Basque (Eskasoni)

Supervisor: Matilda Koopman (Sipekne'katik)

Coordinators: Cassie Doucette, Catherine Tomer & Glen Knockwood

Community Prevention Programs:

The Family & Community Resource team work directly with First Nation communities, community partners and Stakeholders, to develop and enhance support services and resources to directly assist in community programs and their delivery. The team delivers child and youth programs in schools, health centres and at other community functions. They have been actively involved with men and women wellness programs, parenting programs, seven sacred teaching programs, Fun days and Mikmaw traditional programs. After much discussion it was decided that the FEM program was underutilized and will be replaced by another program. However, that will be determined in the future.



Challenges:

Last year the Family and Community Resource Teams had a few challenges with new staffing and adjusting to a core set of programs. This year, Teams have been stabilized and consistency in program delivery and

community participation have greatly improved.

Training:

The Family & Community Resource Teams have participated in several in-house Mikmaw Training sessions facilitated by Wilma Simon. The weekly sessions were informative and interactive. The knowledge attained by staff will be helpful in program delivery throughout Mikmawki.

Strategic Action Plan:

The Family & Community Resource teams will continue to follow current Strategic Action Plan.

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 in house departments to determine if our programs are compatible to their specific needs, especially, for parents who may benefit from Group parenting programs.



Family & Community Resource Program continued...

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 Eskasoni Family & Community Resource Team have been very busy delivering programs throughout Unamaki. Some of the Core programs delivered were 2BBOYS, Girl Power, Seven Sacred Teachings and Men and Women Wellness programs. The 2BBOYS, Girl Power and Seven Sacred Teachings were delivered to children and youth in the schools. Programs were well attended by students and participation encouraged by teachers. Certificates of participation and door prizes were provided during Student graduation. Overall, the children and youth enjoyed these programs. Our goal for the following year is to deliver these programs to Eskasoni and Membertou Elementary schools.

The Men and Women Wellness programs were delivered in the communities at the Health and Wellness centres or community halls. Participation was consistent with attendance up and down depending on session delivered. Participants enjoyed the Grief, Healing through Art therapy, Healthy and unhealthy Relationships and Traditional Teachings. The sessions combined one hour of Teaching and one hour of Art and crafts. Each craft related to the session delivered. For example, when we did the session on Grief, participants completed a sea glass and rock therapy craft. When the



Family & Community Resource Development

Eskasoni Office: Core Programs 2019-2020

Months	2BBOYS		Girls Power		Cultural		Sacred Teaching		M/W Wellness		Other	
	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended	Programs	Attended
April					5	160	3	90	6	34	3	87
May					4	120			5	168	2	14
June					2	120			6	141	3	91
July					1	75					3	159
August												
September									1	6	5	212
October									4	51	2	11
November									10	199	3	25
December									6	41	4	275
January									5	34	1	8
February	2	5	3	8					4	24	3	71
March	2	4	2	6					3	15	3	12
Totals:	4	9	5	14	12	475	3	90	50	713	29	968

Family & Community Resource Program continued...

F & C Resource Info/Interagency 2019-2020

Months	F & C Info/Support Session		Interagency		Meeting		Training	
	Session	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended
April	2	225	1	14	10	81		
May	1	200	1	12	4	35	3	75
June			1	12	4	36	2	130
July								
August					1	8		
September	3	88	1	15	6	38		
October	4	300	1	15	4	20	3	35
November	3	38	1	10	3	17	1	75
December	1	6			1	6	2	64
January			1	7	3	39	3	104
February			1	8	2	8		
March							4	515
Totals :	14	857	8	93	34	288	18	998

Indian Brook and Bear River

This past year each community was provided with Family & community information sessions on programs. Six different programs. 2BBOYS, Girl Power, 7 Sacred Teachings (children, youth & adults), fem power, parenting program and wellness. Pictou, Millbrook, Indian Brook, Hammond Plains, Glooscap, Cambridge, Bear River, Wild Cat and Gold River all participated. Working in collaboration community, resource workers and other agencies, each community choose which programs would be present. Here is some of the feedback or evaluations from sessions.

Parenting:

Tell us what you learned: "helicopter parenting", "Parenting styles", "to be a better parent", "remembering my daughter growing up" "Time in/Time-out", , "7 sacred teachings", "respect is buffalo", "our cultures are very similar", "The role of toddler", , "More about the roles of each different types of family", "one thing I learned about parenting and how to take care of them", "Basic needs of all people needs to be up to par for our community – support groups", learned to take time to

reflection on my attitude", "Learned from program without young children to help dealing with the things happening down this way", "that there is no such thing as perfect parenting there will be ups and downs", "screen time to be more specific", "Listen to my kids", "to gather and talk", "Healthy support, parenting skills", "wish I had this when I was young", "I am an authoritarian parent with my oldest & attachment with my youngest", , "what non-interference is", "I liked learning about the circle of safety", "that we are not alone", "that all parents of all kids have struggles", "sharing is a huge part of our culture"

Mi'kmaw Cultural Values:

"Our cultures are very simple" "sweetgrass braid strands for mind, body & spirits", "Grand Parents Role, storey telling lesson learned and passed down" "That spirit is in everything and that no matter what everyone and everything should be treated with respect", "My culture is beautiful", "Mi'kmaw culture is very positive, caring", "respect is big in our culture", "Nature ways", "Traditional ceremonies-burning ceremony to let go"



Family & Community Resource Program continued...

Men Wellness:

Tell us what you learned: "I learned how to be honest with myself", "everything was great & I believe there should be more in the future", "I love the anger management course & cooking with a Elder also the Elder's presence", "I'm a little more patient", "I like it all", "The deep meaning of the Seven Sacred Teachings", "that openness & friendliness is alive & well in this community", "to give respect, you have to have respect", "listen with open mind-open heart", "I liked the cards with the readings about healthy living", "Learned about our culture", "Our people need to learn about language", "learned about 7 teachings & medicines",

Seven Sacred Teachings:

Tell us what you learned: "the beaver is the sacred animal for wisdom, wisdom is learning from both children and elders", "More knowledgeable about the 7 sacred teachings", "better understanding of the 7 sacred teachings" program without young children to help dealing with the things happening down this way", "that there is no such thing as perfect parenting there will be ups and downs", "screen time to be more specific", "Listen to my kids", "to gather and talk", Healthy support, parenting skills", "wish I had this when I was young", "I am an authoritarian parent with my oldest & attachment with my youngest", , "what non-

Indian Brook & Bear River Office - Core Programs 2019-2020

Months	2BBOYS		Girl Power		Fem Power		Sacred Teaching		Wellness		Parenting	
	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended
April	1	2							1	8		
May							4	50	1	0	3	24
June							5	37			3	24
July							3	18	1	7	7	52
August	2	0	2	3			2	13	4	26	12	31
September			3	11			1	30	4	25	10	40
October							1	1	2	17	7	30
November	1	7	3	11			4	23	3	20	10	45
December	1	4	1	1			4	19	2	13	7	32
January	1	10	4	12			4	13	4	15	9	47
February	3	30	2	8			3	30	7	33	3	16
March	2	15	1	4			3	23	3	17	6	43
Totals:	11	68	16	50			34	257	32	181	77	384

Other Community Events 2019-2020

Months	Volunteering		BR Open/ fun fair		Pow Wow		Heath Fair		Community		Supports/Wakes	
	Events	Attended	Event	Attended	Event	Attended	Event	Attended	Event	Attended	Event	Attended
April	4	52	1	75								
May	1	16					3	482	3	58		
June	2	38										
July	1	24									2	24
August	2	62									1	7
September	1	32										
October	1	6	1	60			1	70				
November												
December												
January												
February												
March												
Totals:	12	230	2	135			4	552	3	58	3	31

*Volunteer-F&CW helps in an event *Community- F&CW Not lead but helps facilitate *Support/Wake- Death in community support provided



Family & Community Resource Program continued...

interference is”, “I liked learning about the circle of safety”, “that we are not alone”, “that all parents of all kids have struggles”, “sharing is a huge part of our culture”

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. All 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 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 8-12years. 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

F&C Resource Info/Interagency 2019-2020

Months	F&C Info (lead)		Interagency	
	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended
April	3	21	1	11
May	3	57		
June	9	161		
July	2	14		
August	0	0		
September	0	0		
October	0	0		
November	0	0		
December	0	0		
January	0	0		
February	1	2		
March	0	0		
Totals:	18	255	1	11

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 will look at family roles and responsibilities, traditional parenting, non-interference, Story Telling and traditional ceremonies. Specific parenting issues



Family & Community Resource Program continued...

and challenges will be discussed, which include, parenting styles, needs and behavior, Time in vs Time out, Teachable moments, Safety and Security and stress management.

Overall, the Family & Community Resource Team delivered approximately, 305 programs, to children, youth, parents, men and women,

elders and community stakeholders. The Teams have reached out and touched over four thousand community members throughout Mikmawki. Overall, the programs have been well received in the schools and communities.



**MICMAC FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES
FIRST LOGO IN 1985**

Family Support and Case Aid Program

Apoqnmujik Wkjiksu'k

The Family Support Program promotes the healing 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 men, women and children in all First Nation communities in Nova Scotia through family based 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 internally through multiple Agency departments. Family Support utilizes a strengths based "whole family" approach in providing families with opportunities to build their resilience. The Family Support Program combines traditional and contemporary 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 continue to be embedded within our program's framework by the recognition of cultural humility and trauma informed promising practices.

Referrals have increased in providing supportive services to our families with the addition of a

fifth position in the Indian Brook office which will reduce contracted workers and enable us to provide better service our families in house. Referrals have also increased in working with parents whose children are in Customary Care. This has enabled children to remain in their community with extended family, while their parent (s) engages in supports to address their personal health and well being with the outcome of family preservation.

Family support participation in Immediate Response Circles has increased over the past year and remains an effective means of providing preventative support and connecting families with a circle of support rather than opening for involvement with the agency. Family support workers provide intensive programs, information and linkages to community resources over an 8 week period.

Working with families through the Early Intervention Program and the 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.

Referrals for youth in care is on the rise as we aim to better prepare them for exiting care. Family support will continue to work closely with Children in Care and Family Resource to



Family Support and Case Aid Program continued...

support children and their care givers. In house training such as PRIDE Training is the main source of ongoing education for our family support workers to increase their knowledge base. A family support worker received certified training through Kairos Canada: Blanket Exercise Facilitator Training, which teaches about Indigenous history. Communication continues to be our best way to bridge the gaps in service as we strive to meet regularly with caseworkers and community supports. This is reflected in the manner in which family support referrals are processed and carried out, in which meetings with referring case workers, Family Group Conferencing and external resources are integral to shaping and competing the goals of family support.

Trends and Highlights

Kristen Basque joined our department as our Program Manager. Since this time regular weekly video conferences have occurred working on consistent practice and resources between both offices.

We are navigating tools of technology to meet the needs of families accessing our program while responding to the restrictions of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Families are consistently provided support through telephone, email and visual time using a variety of virtual platforms. Ipads are replacing the binder system of resources which will allow access to the latest resources and programs electronically and decrease the use of paper. Iphones will be replacing our current work phones, which will greatly assist during our work from home. Video conferencing is becoming more popular for meetings which decreases travel costs and is a more efficient use of time.

We had four placement students this year, two of whom are moving on to the Bachelor of Social Work Program.

We are part of an internal working group examining how we can work collaboratively through Wikimanej Kikmanaq to develop a Foster Care Support Circle: Mawi-Apoqmatultijik Anko'taqatite'wk. We continue to participate in the facilities and family resources working group through the Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative and the community working group: Eskasoni Maw Apoqnumuanej Kikmanaq.

Yearly training for our service providers and regular electronic reminders are an effective means to ensure service provided to our families is effective and follows best practice. We have completed a Youth Mentor Training Manual which will be rolled out this year with our service providers. This will enable our Youth mentors to continue being goal focused in providing one on one support and role modeling for our youth.

A draft of Access Visitation Guidelines has been submitted to management and health and safety. It is currently being reviewed for future planning once restrictions are gradually lifted concerning in person contact.

Our strategic plan this year will involve developing a handbook for Service Providers which will include guidelines for transportation, access, youth mentoring and health and safety.

COPING THROUGH COVID

March 23, 2020 this world as we know it stopped and dealing with the unknown was our new reality. Although our doors closed to the public, we quickly rallied to develop strategies to continue our services keeping in mind health and safety for everyone. Family Support quickly transitioned from face to face contact with families, to organizing creative ways to provide support and meet the goals of our programs in supporting families. This brought challenges such as a sense of disconnect with the loss of face to face in person contact. Yet it has given

Family Support and Case Aid Program continued...

our families the chance to reconnect as a family and get to know one another again without dealing with outside stressors. Family support provided families with helpful information about how parents and their children can cope through this Pandemic.

Our case aide department also had to make the necessary changes to respond to the Pandemic. Transportation and access came to a halt. Youth mentoring services transitioned from face to face to virtual/telephone contact. This left most of our service providers without contracts and applying for financial aide. Our families are having virtual/telephone access with their children. This is heartbreaking as we try to keep our families safe from COVID. Our Emergency Measures Management Team is keeps us informed on updates from the Province on measures to deal with the virus and steps to take in a gradual reopening of services and supports. It is a time of uncertainty, but we are all in this together. We are resilient and we are strong!

Case Aide Program

Case Aides are an essential part of the Case Management Team: They schedule service providers to provide a variety of services to families, children and adults through transportation, access and youth mentoring. Our program ensures that service providers are appropriately vetted and trained. Case Aides work closely with the case management team to ensure referrals are completed in a timely and efficient manner. This department is the hub of the agency and communication remains crucial for services to best support our families. Our strategic plan this year enabled this department to be sufficiently staffed to better serve our families, children in care, share the workload and better manage our resources more effectively.

Family Support Program Referrals Received:
Family Support Program Staff: Total
Contracted 162

	<u>Eskasoni</u>	<u>Sipekne'katik</u>
Early Intervention	43	17
IRC	15	2
Supervision Order/Customary Care	67	56
Children in Care	10	8
Temporary Care and Custody	2	6
Foster Care	7	2
Over 16	2	1
Contracted Families	0	Protection: 43 PCC: 32
Total	146	167

Case Aide Program 2019-2020

Eskasoni

Transportation	2035
Access /completed sessions	1058
Youth Mentoring/Child and Youth Completed sessions	637

Sipekne'katik

Youth and Child	441
Y/C Sessions	1325
Access families	230
Access Completed	1740
Drives Completed	1604
PCC Youth/Child	203
PCC Y/C Sessions	823
PCC Access Families	91
PCC Access Completed	169
PCC Drives	737
PCC Family Support Sessions	288



Children in Permanent Care and Custody

Siaw-wsua'luj Mijua'ji'j

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 which has been renamed Kepmite'lsi Program. The name change was adopted to better reflect what the program is about. The meaning of Kepmite'lsi is Take pride in Who you are and where you come from. Kristen Basque, Prevention Manager, has graciously offered to co-ordinate the program with the assistance of the two Children in Care supervisors, two members from the Community Healing program 2 and two Children in Care workers to make up the Advisory Committee. 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 learning about their culture. 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: From April 2019 to March 2020 there 108 children in the permanent care and custody department. We have had 2 of our children move to the adoption department. We have had 3 youth graduate from high school and 0 graduate from NSCC. The agency had 2 youth exit from Permanent care and custody and 8 have entered into Post Care and Custody Agreements. This brings us to a total of 12 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 6 youth return to their parental home. We have been working with 4 families to have children terminate care and return to parent under a court order.

Many of your 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.

Challenges and Solutions:

Our team is always looking for family

Children in Permanent Care and Custody continued...

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 5 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 Kepmite'Isi 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:

Pauline Inglis-Assaff, RSW

Yvonne Doucette, BSW, RSW

The Temporary Care and Custody department (TCC) is an integral part of the protection team. The TCC dept works with all departments within the Agency to ensure the needs of the children and family are being met. TCC workers support protection and complete intake days like intake workers and work alongside long-term protection workers by working with the children with different status. TCC workers work with children who have temporary care status, customary care status and even permanent care status.

Once a child enters temporary care and custody, they are assigned a worker and may be placed in a foster home, they could also be placed in a group home or kinship home. The TCC worker will follow their file until permanency is established- this may mean the child returns home, exits care to the custody of another or enters permanent care status. In the event the child is granted permanent care status (PCC) the TCC worker will work to transfer that file to the PCC (or CIC- Children in Care).



TCC has seen a dramatic shift in children in care in the last few year with the implementation of the Alternative Family Care program. Children under this program as not in the care of the Agency; they are placed in Customary care. They are placed in the care of another family member.

As noted in the summary, less children are entering care.

From April 1, 2019 until March 31, 2020 there have been 74 AFC caregivers arranged for 109 children: A total of 54 families. AS of June 17, 2020, there are 33 AFC homes open, providing care for 57 children from 28 families.

The 41 closed AFC files provided care for 52 children. Of those 52 children, 2 were taken into care of the Agency, 26 were returned to their caregivers, 18 remained with the AFC caregiver under a Parenting Support Agreement (PSA), and 7 children are currently placed in different AFC homes when the placements broke down.

There are currently 33 AFC home open providing care for 57 children with Customary care Status.

There are 7 children with Permanent care and custody status in the TCC dept. awaiting transfer to the Permanent Care dept.

There are 6 children with Temporary Care and Custody Status in the TCC dept. (Note: for a period of approximately 1 month there were no children with TCC status in the TCC dept in the Eskasoni office).

In team discussions it is noted that there are a number of positives to the present day tcc dept and AFC program such as: less children in care, it maintains child's family, cultural and community connections, it strengthens family ties when successful, families are more open to cooperating with Agency intervention when

Protection – Temporary Care and Custody continued...

children are with families, there's less stress on the child when with family- same school/same friends etc & children can sometimes keep their animals and belongings which helps them settle in the placement.

In the same discussions it was also noted that there are challenges as well, such as: financial issues- AFC homes not financially supported or supported as well as foster parent home (example, respite/child care/ transportation/recreation/home worker), personal family conflicts can impact AFC placements, AFC homes are often at risk of 'breaking down', AFC caregivers have some input into case plan, but often want more, AFC caregiver concerns/issues can overshadow the parent needs and case plan, ongoing lack of foster homes & challenges with using Places of Safety (POS) as placements, including costs, hefty paperwork requirements and increased in-person contact requirements (every 4 days); lack of nurturing and culturally appropriate environments within POS

Staffing: Between the two offices there are 7 TCC social workers.

Training: The Temporary Care and Custody social workers engaged in several mandatory trainings, as well as training sessions offered outside of the Agency.

Sessions throughout the year including: CORE training, PRIDE training, Human Rights training, Addiction and Interventions, Understanding & Working with children/youth who have been sexually exploited and other trauma-informed sessions available through the agency and the Department of Community Services. In addition, our agency Elder provided Cultural Teachings to the protection team. Our Legal team hosted several information sessions on the new Federal legislation, Bill c-92: an Act respecting First

Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families.

Furthermore, Long-term protection social workers have participated in non-mandatory training offered by outside agencies. Some of these training include info sessions on Gladue reports, and the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Naloxone administration, restoring trust with mandated clients, working with Teens experiencing anxiety, using nature in the therapeutic process.



Child Protection - Long Term Protection Services

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

Teli-ikaluj Mijua'ji'jk

Submitted by: Louise Donnelly, Pauline Inglis-Assaff, Angeline Denny-Sylliboy and Madeleine Jeffery

Department Goals:

The Long-term Protection program begins working with families after the Intake and Investigation stage is complete. Workers within this program collaborate with family and community to develop a Culturally Safe Case Plan that alleviates the identified child protection risks. At the beginning and throughout the life of the long-term protection involvement families are given an opportunity to participate in a Wikimanej Kikmanaq. The circle allows social workers, family, community, and professionals inside and outside of the community to come together to support families on their healing journey. This way of relating with families supports our agency to build partnerships between immediate and extended family members, and the community at large. Families continue to report that they love this process and feel supported by all parties involved including the protection program.

The long-term protection program works with families under Early Interventions when risk is deemed low. When risk is deemed high, the long-term protection program work with families under Supervision Orders, Customary Care Agreements, Alternative Care Arrangements and temporary care arrangements. As a result of the Wikimanej Kikmanaq and Alternative Care Arrangements our agency has witnessed a significant decrease in the number of children coming into care of the agency. This year the mainland has 4 children in the TCC program. Eskasoni has one child in temporary care and custody and 43



children under Customary care (Alternate Family Care program). Refer to TCC Report for more statistical information.

When parents do require time away from home to address child protection concerns, agency social workers collaborate immediately with parents to identify alternative family members to care for their children so that they access the necessary supports and services to alleviate the child protection concerns. The Long-term Protection Program is committed to keeping children with family and community when possible. Services offered within our agency include: Family Support programming, Wikimanej Kikmanaq, and programming through the Healing Centers. Long-term protection social workers also support families to utilize programs and services available within their own communities and if families ask to use services outside of community workers facilitate that process.

The Long-term Protection team continues to 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 concerns. The primary

Child Protection - Long Term Protection Services continued...

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.

Challenges:

Staff retention has always been a challenge in the field of child welfare, particularly within the protection department. Some internal policy changes have helped to address this issue. Staff accepting positions within the Agency are required to remain in that position for 2 years, before they are eligible to apply for other positions within the Agency. This has allowed the protection team to reduce employee movement and enabled social workers to develop their practice skills more comprehensively within the department. This has a direct benefit to the communities and families we

serve in terms of continuity in service delivery and in building relationships with workers. A Staff mentoring position was also created to provide newer staff with hands on skill development and support in understanding the complexity of our work.

Utilizing the mentor allows Supervisors to focus their attention on overseeing case management and provides staff with situational guidance and support intended to increase their skill base and independence where appropriate. Supervisors also felt this position was helpful in facilitating their participation in Wikimanej Kikmanaq

circles, as the Mentor was available to support the protection team in their absence. This position is currently vacant, and staff are hopeful it will be filled in time.

There continue to be delays in the availability of Core trainings for staff, although there was an increase of training offered after the Agency experienced a brief crisis level lack of representatives available to work Emergency After-hours duty. This shortage created an undue level of stress for workers with Representative status as they were required to take on Duty responsibilities more often with less time off between scheduled Duty for self care and rejuvenation. Management and Supervisors worked diligently with the Department of Community Services and social workers to facilitate the Core training process required for Representative status and the crisis

was alleviated. Focus remains on ensuring Representative requirements are fulfilled in reasonable time frames for all Agency social workers. This has resulted in more staff available for Duty and reduced the stress and burden for all.



The increase in Duty workers across the Agency also represents increased service delivery for the families we work with, given the diverse and seasoned skill base of workers now included on the Duty schedule. Additionally, when scheduling Duty, the Agency is mindful of pairing Supervisors and front-line workers from



Child Protection - Long Term Protection Services continued...

different departments, this ensures a wider breadth of knowledge and expertise of the Duty team, which again, translates to higher quality service delivery.

One of the larger challenges identified by staff is the increased paperwork requirements required by changing legislations and policy province wide. Social workers prefer to prioritize in-person work with our families as a means of support and relationship building. However, workers feel their time is monopolized by paperwork demands. The Agency is exploring technological solutions, which may reduce the amount of time required to complete administrative duties, and it is hoped that this will enable workers to more effectively manage their time.

Training:

The Long-term protection social workers have participated in several mandatory sessions throughout the year including: CORE training, PRIDE training, Human Rights training, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, Addiction and Interventions and other trauma-informed sessions available through the agency and the Department of Community Services. In addition, our agency Elder provided Cultural Teachings to the protection team. Our Legal team hosted several information sessions on the new Federal legislation, Bill c-92.

Furthermore, Long-term protection social workers have participated in non-mandatory trainings offered by outside agencies. Some of these

trainings include: Indigenous Justice, Naloxone administration, restoring trust with mandated clients, supporting grieving families and DBT skills training. Eskasoni staff have also been participating in Mi'kmaq language classes at the office during lunch hour, sessions with elder Wilma Simon and have been participating in daily smudge and drumming with Wilma Simon.

The Long-term protection team (Indian Brook) participated in 58 Wikimanej Kikmanaq Circles between April 1, 2019 and March 31, 2020.

Achievements, Special Projects and Special Events:

This year has been an exceptionally challenging year with the COVID 19 crisis. Delivering the best possible services to our families was different however possible with the dedication of staff and Supervisors. Programming and support continued to be provided to the families we work with. The Long-Term team continues to strive for achievements and dedication to the families we work with. One of the goals for Long Term Protection this year is to be able to



Child Protection - Long Term Protection Services continued...

develop more culturally appropriate programs for families. Discussions with Kristen Basque, Manager of Prevention Services, have started and we are looking forward to coming up with traditional Mi'kmaq programs for our families. It is our hope that we will be able to work with elders and other community members to discuss traditional parenting programs that embrace our Mi'kmaq culture.

The Long-Term team in Eskasoni have also a traditional healer who offers therapy to individuals that have suffered trauma, PTSD, anxiety, depression and addictions issues. Lloyd Gould has been instrumental in helping heal many individuals with his expertise in Addictions and his countless years of experience in counselling. He combines traditional sacred teachings in his sessions along with modern day therapy.

The Alternate Family Care Program has certainly been an asset to the Agency. Presently we have only one child in Temporary care in Eskasoni and the rest of the children that had to be removed from parent's care (approximately 50 children in Eskasoni) reside with family in Alternate care homes. The Alternate Family care program has been a positive change for the Agency where children have been able to remain in their communities and with family. The financial support from the Province for this program has allowed many families to be able to care for their family.

During the COVID 19 crisis, the use of the Wikmanej Kikmanaq program was first put on hold. However, since the beginning of April, the Agency has been able to conduct virtual Wikmanej Kikmanaq circles with the use of tablets. The Long-Term team have been quite pleased with this change as the Wikmanej Kikmanaq program is a vital part of case planning for the families we work with.

In January 2020 an Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis Children, Youth and Families was passed by the Federal Government and taking this into consideration within the parameters of child welfare, it is the goal of the Long Term Protection Team to ensure that when making decisions for indigenous children the best interests as laid out in that act are taken into consideration. This means that we are developing an enhancement to our everyday long term protection work to ensure that Mi'kmaw culture and traditions are strengthened for every family. Understanding that having a strong sense of cultural identity and sense of community belonging can help individuals heal and grow, we are aiming to infuse every file with additional cultural awareness, to bring it into affidavits in court, case plans, risk management conferences and make it a constant part of the conversation about protection with our families. We are aiming to bring ceremony into the homes to strengthen the bonds within family, to offer Mi'kmaq language sessions for non-speaking parents to pass along to their children, to link families to cultural mentors for guidance, teaching and healing, to highlight the 7 sacred teachings and to offer lessons and materials in traditional crafts for parents and children to help with mindfulness and achieving emotional stability. It is our goal to make staff training in cultural humility a repeated and regular event so that all staff have empathy to work with families who continue to suffer intergenerational trauma and understanding about how colonialism has trampled on Mi'kmaw cultural values.

Goals for the Upcoming Year:



Kinship and Foster Care

Anko'tasultijik Mijua'ji'jk

Submitted by: 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. Our goal is to ensure that the children who are in the care of the Agency are placed in a safe Mi'kmaw Foster/Kinship home within a child's community. The Foster Care department also provides PRIDE Modules, Pre-service training and A 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. These criteria 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.”

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

Kinship and Foster Care continued...

Goals:

1. Concentrate on recruitment for Foster Care applicants. The Agency wants to ensure that our children coming into care remain within their respective family, community or within a Mi'kmaw home.
2. Retention of current Foster Homes
3. Maintaining support for our Foster Families.
4. Continue working collaboratively with the other departments within the agency to support our existing foster homes.
5. Networking with the 13 Mi'kmaw communities and organizations within NS.
6. Taking the FOTS program, that currently is in use at other agencies, and adapting it to our Agency to create a unique program that emphasizes our culture, traditions and practices.

Special Events

In the fall, Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services hosts an annual Foster Family Appreciation Banquets, one in Eskasoni and one in Indian Brook. This is a day when the Agency can show its appreciation to the foster families for all the hard work and dedication they show to our children in care. It also gives foster families an opportunity to support and connect with each other. In Indian Brook, the foster families were invited to an afternoon of apple picking followed by a hearty meal. The Eskasoni office invited their foster families to a day of family bowling and a locally provided meal in Membertou. Both banquets offered foster parents various door prizes, many of which were donated by local businesses. Gifts were personally delivered to those families who were unable to attend the banquet.

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

at the banquet who have reached these milestones.

Mi'kmaw Family Gathering

In the spring, the Indian Brook Office of Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services hosted the Federation of Foster Families and MFCS Gathering (Mawiomi). 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 and learn about the various resources that are available to our foster families and our children in care.

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.
- There has been an increase in foster families utilizing Wikimanej Kikamanaq. It is beneficial to families and social workers, as it creates an efficient open dialogue that allows all individuals involved to discuss viable placement options, family supports and leads to the retention of foster homes.
- There is an increase in the number of social workers participating in PRIDE modules.

Challenges and Solutions

- There is significant need for General Foster Parents within our Mi'kmaw communities. There has been an increase in recruitment efforts by our recruitment teams to reach this goal. We are also improving on our efficiency with following up on potential applicants.



Kinship and Foster Care continued...

- There are some kinship homes that are interested in being assessed for General Foster Care. Due to the requirements needed to open as a regular foster home, the process can take upwards of 6 months to complete. This lengthy process has led to an accumulation of awaiting applicants needing SAFE assessments. Due to this backlog, the Foster Care team in Eskasoni and the SAFE Assessment team in Indian Brook has assisted the Adoption and Resource family team in Eskasoni to complete them. Each member of the Eskasoni Foster Care team has completed one SAFE Assessment and the Indian Brook office has completed 7.
- Placement options should be explored for each child coming into care. i.e. Kinship homes, customary care, utilizing the Wi'kimanej Kikamanaq program.or Alternative Care Providers for Foster Homes.
- There is an increased need for respite exclusive homes. The solution would be to have potential respite providers identified during the

- kinship/SAFE assessment process.
- Communication between departments has been a challenge. However, being in the new building together, the departments have had better relations. There are monthly Placement Review meetings between the FC team and the Temporary Care Supervisor. In addition, the Foster Care team meets with the Permanent care supervisor. In Indian Brook, there are quarterly Program Communications meetings between the Agency supervisors.
- One of our challenges is the retention of our Foster Homes. We are designing a program which would be similar to the FOTS program but specifically designed to incorporate our Mi'kmaw traditional teaching. The basis of Mawi- Apoqmatultijik Anko'taqatite'wk is to enhance our support for our foster families by providing more training, consistent and efficient communication between departments and resources and by using the Wi'kimanej Kikamanaq program.

Spring 2019: IndianBrook:

MODULE:	DATE:	REGISTERED / ATTENDED:
Module 3	April 9, 2019	6/6
Module 1	April 27 & 28, 2019	8/8
FASD	May 8, 2019	14/14
Module 2	May 11 & 12, 2019	9/9
Module 6	May 22, 2019	6/6
Module 1(MB Healing Center)	May 24 & 25, 2019	10/10
Module 7	May 28, 2019	8/8

Spring 2019: Eskasoni:

MODULE:	DATE:	REGISTERED / ATTENDED:
Module 1	January 21 & 22, 2019	12/12
Module 2	February 20 & 21, 2019	12/10
Module 3	March 12, 2019	15/15
Module 4	April 4, 2019	12/10
Module 6	May 14 & 15, 2019	8/8
Module AS - 1	May 30 & 31, 2019	12/12
Module 6	July 23, 2019	10/9

Kinship and Foster Care continued...

Fall 2019: *IndianBrook*:

MODULE:	DATE:	REGISTERED / ATTENDED:
Module 1	August 27, 2019	8/8
Module 9	September 10 & 11, 2019	8/6
Module AS-2	September 19, 2019	8/8
Module 3	September 24, 2019	9/9
Module AS-4	October 1 & 2, 2019	12/ Cancelled for Fundamentals
Module 4	October 8, 2019	10/8
Module 2	September 16 & 17, 2019	9/9
Module 11	October 16, 2019	10/10
Module 5	October 21 & 22, 2019	8/7
Module 12	October 29, 2019	9/9
Understanding Trauma	November 5 and 6, 2019	14/14
Module 6	November 13 & 14, 2019	6/6
Module 2 (MB Healing Center)	March 18 th & 19 th , 2020	10/Cancelled due to Covid 19.

Fall 2019: *Eskasoni*:

MODULE:	DATE:	REGISTERED / ATTENDED:
FASD	October 24, 2019	24/22

Training

There are currently 3 trainers for our Agency.

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's 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



Kinship and Foster Care continued...

team equipped to protect and nurture children, and strengthen families.

Kinship Foster Homes/ A Tradition of Caring Program

A Tradition of Caring program is “A PRIDE support program with an educational component that is provided to kinship foster parents by the agency. The content mirrors that of Foster/Adopt PRIDE pre-service”. (Nova Scotia Foster Care Manual)

Recruitment

The Recruitment Social Workers for the Agency have attended several communities this year to present information sessions. The recruitment social workers have attended multiple community events for the purpose of promoting fostering. These events have included, but are not limited to, the NS Mi'kmaw Summer Games, Health Center Fairs, Treaty Day celebrations and various Powwows. Our recruiters have also organized community events for various occasions such as Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Back to School.

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 recruitment and retention.

To better support our Foster Families, we continue to use an Intake Placement schedule 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. We are trying to establish a more structural approach to effectively

communicate with the resource family teams.

We are currently in the process of developing the Mawi- Apoqmatultijik Anko'taqatite'wk Program. This has been a collaboration with multiple departments within the Agency.

Goals for the Upcoming Year

- To create a new Strategic Plan for Foster Care/Kinship.
- To create a strategic plan specifically for Recruitment.
- To continue to work together with Recruitment Social Workers and other departments to increase the number of Generalized Foster Homes.
- We need to create new recruitment opportunities within our communities. This will give our Recruitment Social Workers more opportunity to obtain foster homes to ensure children stay in their communities.
- To identify any foster families that may meet the criteria to become a Specialized Foster Home from the Eskasoni Office.
- Our goal for the program is to finish working on the policy. We are currently working alongside the other departments and are working collaboratively with Wikimanej Kikimanaq to complete the policy.

Stats for 2019-2020:

	Eskasoni	Shubie
Referrals Received	2	14
Kinship Homes	33	7
Kinship Homes convert to General	5	0
General Homes	11	16
Respite Exclusive Homes	7	6
Pre-Service Training Applicants	0	3
A Traditions of Caring Applicants	4	2
Closed Homes	14	4
Exit Interviews	3	5

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:

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.

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. Following a legal adoption, the link between the child and the birth parents is considered to be completely and permanently severed, replaced by a new link between the child and the adoptive parents. Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services (MFCS) not only recognizes the importance of openness and community, but also recognizes the importance of "custom adoption" and is continuing to work toward providing such an option to our Mi'kmaw adoptive families and children in permanent care. "Custom adoption" in very general terms

is defined as the cultural practice in which a child is raised by a person who is not the child's biological parent, according to the customary law of the family's community. It usually takes place between members of the immediate or extended family, although it may also involve people close to these families, such as friends or community members. By its nature, customary adoption varies from nation to nation, but it is common for the birth parents to give their consent and to maintain a role in the child's life.

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.

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



Adoption Program continued...

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.

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 parents(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.

Adoption outcomes for 2019/2020 year are as follows:

Of the 13 adoptive parents with an approved SAFE Assessment and waiting to adopt:

- # of prospective adoptive parents who reside in a First Nations community: 10
- # of prospective adoptive parents not residing in a First Nations community: 3

During the 2019/2020 fiscal year, there were 15 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 12.

Of the 12 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

Adoption Program continued...

- # of children adopted by their current foster parents: 10
- # of children adopted by new families: 2

Subsidized Adoption Program

Children who were adopted as infants are affected by the adoption throughout their lives. Children adopted later in life come to understand adoption during a different developmental stage. Those who have experienced trauma or neglect may remember such experiences, which may further complicate their self-image and special needs issues may also affect a child's adoption experience.

Children who were adopted at an older age and who experienced trauma earlier in life such as neglect, abuse, multiple foster placements or institutional care are likely to have additional developmental, social and emotional challenges.

Children who have experienced trauma or who are struggling with developmental or mental health issues may benefit from counseling and support services. Families may need additional education and support to address these problems with their children.

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

Adoption-related issues may arise for adopted children and their parents at any time.

Adoption is a life-long process that shapes children and their families. With effective communication, patience and post adoption support services, parents and children can work through adoption-related challenges to ensure everyone in the family is happy, healthy and well-adjusted.

Throughout the 2019/2020 Fiscal Year the Agency continued to provide support to 70 families through the Adoption Subsidy Program. Within these 70 families there were 124 children receiving a subsidy.

Openness in Adoption:

All adopted children grieve the loss of their biological family, their heritage and their culture to some extent. Adoptive parents can facilitate and assist this natural grieving process by being comfortable with using adoption language (eg, birth parents and birth family) and discussing adoption issues.

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



Adoption Program continued...

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 28 adoptive families, many of whom have more than one adopted child in their home, 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, one birth family 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.

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

Adoption Program continued...

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.
- Utilizing Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Conferences with Subsidized Adoption families seeking services and support for their child. However, this service is not recognized as a service that can be part of an Adoption Subsidy. To date, the Adoption Team has worked co-operatively with the coordinators of the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Conference Program to ensure our Mi'kmaw adoptive parents have access to this culturally important program.
- 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, as well as, being included in risk case conferences for Permanent Care and Custody. Also, the level of collaborative planning with DCS for Mi'kmaw children was greater over the past year.
- Increased need to support families through the Subsidized Adoption Program given the complexities of needs that begin to surface as

children grow and develop. Continued increase as children age/needs increase, the supports don't always align with need

- The number of children referred to the adoption program has decreased this year. However, the need for adoptive homes remains.

Guiding Values for Adoption and Goals for the upcoming year:

- All Mi'kmaw children need a safe and loving family.
- Mikmaw 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

The legal department's role with Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services is to provide legal advice and quality representation for Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services in all matters that take place before the Courts.

Changes to the Legal Department:

Prior to the end of the fiscal year, Paul Morris, Lead Counsel, was appointed to serve as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia (Family Division). While this is a major accomplishment for Justice Morris, it left a void in the legal department and organization as a whole. Justice Morris leaves a legacy as an advocate for the organization and an excellent lawyer in the courtroom. He will be missed, and we wish him well. I was appointed Lead Counsel after Justice Morris' departure. In September 2019, we also welcomed Madonna Clare as a paralegal in Eskasoni. At the end of the fiscal year, there was one vacancy in Sipekne'katik that is expected to be filled early into the succeeding fiscal year.

Legislative Changes:

An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families came into force across Canada on January 1, 2020. This legislation, co-developed with Indigenous partners, is to be read in conjunction with the provincial legislation and sets out principles applicable, on a national level, to the provision of child and family services in relation to Indigenous children. Among other things, it defines the factors to be considered when determining the best interests of an Indigenous child. It creates a priority of placement for Indigenous children (consistent with their best interests) and places an emphasis on preventive supports and services for Indigenous families. It

underlines the importance of working with communities to promote the best interests of Indigenous children.

In March 2020, the Nova Scotia Supreme Court (Family Division) was expanded outside of Cape Breton and the Halifax Regional Municipality to include Antigonish, Pictou, Truro, and Yarmouth. It is anticipated further expansions will take place to implement unified family courts throughout the entire province, which will replace Family Court and the two-tiered system.

The legal department will continue to participate in appropriate committees and consultations to make necessary adjustments regarding any legislative changes that occur federally, provincially, or within any of the 13 Bands that we serve in Nova Scotia.

Training/Professional Development:

The Nova Scotia Barristers' Society requires lawyers to complete and implement an annual continuing professional development plan. Our lawyers receive their continuing professional development through in-person education courses and conferences; online courses; webinars; and self-study. In addition, we are fortunate that Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services' staff training includes sessions on human resources and cultural competence to ensure our lawyers are up to date on issues that impact their legal work and roles as representatives of Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services.

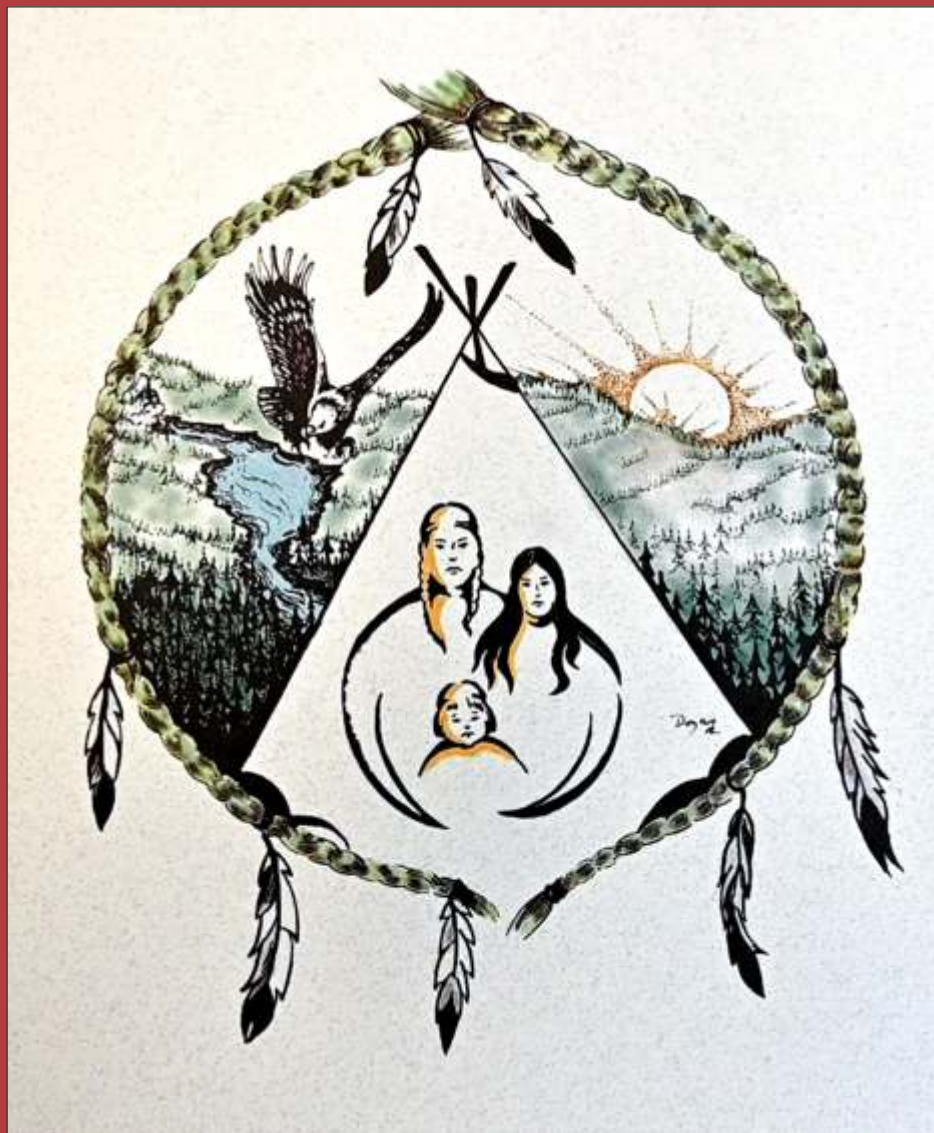
Goals for the Upcoming Year:

One goal is to hire a new lawyer for the Sipekne'katik office to bring the legal department to a full complement of lawyers. A

Legal Department continued...

snapshot of matters before the Court at the end of the fiscal year: 57 % involve children in the care of a parent or guardian under a Supervision Order; 36 % involve children in a Customary Care Supervision Order; 3% involve children in Temporary Care and Custody (kinship placement) and 3 % involve children in a Temporary Care and Custody (non-kinship) placement. This means that 96 % of the Orders

have the children residing with a parent or family in a customary care or kinship placement. The legal department continues to work closely with the social workers and supervisors to use the least intrusive means of intervention while ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of Mi'kmaw children living in First Nation communities are protected.



The late Dozay Christmas created this logo in 1992.
“As long as the sun rises and water flows in the streams.”
Our Mi'kmaw family will remain strong.

Human Resources

Nujo'tmumk Lukwaqney

Submitted by Holly MacDonald, Human Resource Manager

The Human Resources department consists of a Human Resource Manager, Human Resource Coordinator, Administrative Assistant and an Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator.

This past year has been both exciting and challenging, for staff at Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services. Eskasoni staff have been getting settled into their spaces in our new building as well as staff at the Bear River office with the opening of our new location. COVID-19 has forced management and staff to adapt to new ways of working day to day. Management and our Joint Occupational Health and Safety committee members have been working diligently together to ensure our staff and clients remain safe. Currently our offices remain closed to the public and a reduced workforce is in place. During this unprecedented time, we are faced with the challenge of how to work safely and effectively. We have put in stricter cleaning measures, following the Nova Scotia Department of Health guidelines. Social distancing markers have been placed throughout our locations, and additional hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed. Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services ensure employees have access to proper personal protective equipment. The safety of our employees and families is our top priority.

TRAINING

- 2SLGBT+ Workshop for Supervisors March 12, 2019 in Dartmouth conducted by John R. Sylliboy

- Human Rights training April 29-30 and September 25, 2019 in Eskasoni
- May 30-31 in Indian Brook conducted by The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission
- Naloxone and Substance Abuse training May 28th and June 17, 2019 in Eskasoni
- June 19-20 in Indian Brook and was conducted by NADACA
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention October 10-11, 2019 in Eskasoni conducted by Pius Trainor
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder October 24, 2019 in Eskasoni conducted by Nerissa Denny
- Cultural Humility Training November 18-19, 2019 conducted by Kristen Basque, Monica-Clarke Johnson, Lenora Paul, Wikimanej Kikmanaq, and Family and Community
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention October December 3-4, 2019 in Millbrook conducted by Pius Trainor
- First Aid and CPR training December 18-19, 2019 in Millbrook conducted by Pius Trainor
- Occupational Health and Safety Lunch and Learn February 14, 2020 conducted by JOHS committee
- Traditional Teaching February 28, 2020 conducted by Wilma Simon
- Medicine Wheel Teaching March 6, 2020 conducted Lottie Johnson

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

New positions within the agency are highlighted below.

ESKASONI

- January 3, 2019 – Adoption Social Worker
- January 7, 2019 - SAFE Assessor
- February 4, 2019 – 1-year Term Subsidy
- February 4, 2019 – 3-month term Social work mentor
- February 19, 2019 – Full time Receptionist
- February 25, 2019 - Social Work Assistant

Human Resources continued...

March 18, 2019 – TCC Administrative Assistant
March 18, 2019 – Intake Administrative Assistant
March 18, 2019 – Receptionist
April 2, 2019- Permanent Care and Custody Administrative Assistant
April 8, 2019 – Intake Social Worker
April 8, 2019 – Intake Social Worker
April 8, 2019 - Long-Term Protection Social Worker
April 10, 2019 - Family and Community Healing Administrative Assistant
May 7, 2019 - Administrative Assistant
May 8, 2019 – Long Term Protection Social Worker
May 13, 2019 – Permanent Care and Custody Social Worker
May 21, 2019 – Custodian
June 3, 2019 - Elder/Spiritual Caregiver
June 3, 2019 – Permanent Care and Custody Social Worker
September 23, 2019 – Full time Paralegal Assistant
October 28, 2019 - Long Term Protection Social Worker
October 31, 2019 - Administrative Family and Community/Wikimanej Kikmanaq
October 31, 2019 – Family and Community Resource Worker
November 12, 2019 - Long Term Protection Social Worker
November 25, 2019 – Manager of Prevention Services
July 13, 2020 – One-year term Long Term Protection Social Worker

SIPEKNE'KATIK

January 7, 2019 - 18-month maternity leave SAFE assessor
January 7, 2019 - 18-month maternity leave long term protection
January 7, 2019 - 6-month term intake
January 14, 2019 - Full-time long-term protection
January 31, 2019 - Full time Case Aide
February 4, 2019 - 18-month Term Case Aide
February 4, 2019 – Full time Family and Community
February 11, 2019 - Full time family support worker
February 14, 2019 - 6-month term Intake
February 19, 2019 - 3-month term Finance Clerk
May 7, 2019 – Full time Protection Program Manager
June 10, 2019 – 1-year term Long-term protection
June 10, 2019 – Intake Social Worker
June 11, 2019 - 18-month Term Temporary Care and Custody
June 24, 2019 - Long-term Protection Social Worker
June 24, 2019 – 1-year term Long-term protection
June 26, 2019 – 1-year term Intake Social Worker
September 3, 2019 – Long term/Temporary Care and

Custody Supervisor
September 3, 2019 – Family Support Supervisor
October 16, 2019 – 1-year term Case Aide
October 15, 2019 – 1-year term Family Support
October 21, 2019 – 1-year term Wikimanej Kikmanaq
October 21, 2019 - Family Support Worker
March 2, 2020 – Full time Intake Social Worker
March 9, 2020 – Full time Lead Counsel
June 1, 2020 – Full-time Long-Term protection
June 1, 2020 – Two-year term Long-Term protection
June 1, 2020 – Full-time Case Aide
June 1, 2020 – Full-time Case Aide
June 15, 2020 – Full time Legal Counsel
June 29, 2020 – Six-month Term Case Aide

BEAR RIVER

March 18, 2019 – Administrative Assistant
March 25, 2019 – Family and Community Resource Worker
March 25, 2019 - Social Worker
August 26, 2019 - Family and Community Resource Worker

WE'KOKMAQ FAMILY HEALING CENTRE

May 8, 2019 - Women's Outreach Worker
May 13, 2019 - Women's Assistant Support Worker
May 27, 2019 - Term Program Supervisor

MILLBROOK FAMILY HEALING CENTRE

January 31, 2019 – Part time Administrative Assistant (TERM)
February 11, 2019 – Women's Outreach Worker
November 12, 2019 – Women's Support Worker
September 6, 2019 – Night Support Worker

RESIGNATIONS AND RETIREMENT

Throughout our two office locations and both Family Healing Centers we have had fourteen employees resign from their positions from April 2019 to April 2020.

One employee has retired from their position.



Child Protection- Intake and Investigations

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

2019-2020 Annual Report: Child Protection Intake and Investigations Team, Eskasoni and Indian Brook

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 implemented the Immediate Response Circle (IRC) program, which is used at Intake. This Program was designed to assist families in resolving issues by bringing family and community supports together. The goal

continues to be 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 2019 to March 2020 (inclusive) saw the Eskasoni office process 568 Intakes/Referrals, which is a decrease of 226 referrals from last year. Of the 568 referrals received, the Agency made the decision to Investigate 413 referrals and the decision to Not Investigate 150 referrals received. The Indian Brook office processed 424, which is a decrease of 12 referrals from last year. 104 of these referrals were deemed to not meet the criteria for investigation, leaving 320 referrals being investigated. The predominant Major Presenting Problems identified in both offices were Risk of Physical Harm-Parent Substance Abuse (208), Risk of Physical Harm- Inadequate Parenting Skills (205) and Family Violence (171).

How any challenges were remedied:

There continues to be considerable staff movement on the intake teams. The continued support of the Program Manager has been a great asset for the Intake team. The Mentor Position has been discontinued. Senior staff on the Intake teams have been assisting new workers in this regard. In March 2020 COVID-19 presented many challenges on how intakes were received, processed, and responded to. A "Go out" roster was created to ensure an equal distribution of work for staff and limiting in person client contact, in keeping with the Provincial directives related to the Pandemic.

Child Protection- Intake and Investigations continued...

The Roster included all staff who had previous Protection Experience. The Intake Teams are very appreciative of the additional support from the other Agency Programs.

Training:

Intake workers from both offices were able to access several Training Opportunities this year. Some of these include: Immediate Response Circle Training, Department of Community Services Child Welfare Symposium in Membertou, PRIDE Training, Human Rights Training, Fundamentals of Child Welfare, Fundamentals of Child Protection, Investigation and Assessment of Child Sexual Abuse (IACSA) Training, Intimate Partner Violence Training, and Department of Community Services 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 time lines 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 time frame. Workers aim to meet this goal however there are often many factors which impede this process.

During this reporting period the World was impacted by a Global Pandemic. This Pandemic

created many challenges for the Intake team and many creative solutions were implemented to ensure the ongoing assessment of risk to children.

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. The Intake Teams look forward to continued participation in the Immediate Response Circle Program.



Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Conference Program

Wikimanej Kikmanaq Wkjiksu'k Mawteskatultijik aqq Mawaknutma'tijik

Supervisor: Kristen Basque, BSW, RSW

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 has welcomed Tracey Basque to the team as Administrative Assistant. Presently 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 who was our Administrative Assistant is currently completing her hours for her Bachelor of Social Work.

The Wikimanej Kikmanaq Team has had a very busy year. In April 2019, our agency participated in an Immediate Response Circle Pilot Project for approximately six months. The target communities identified were Eskasoni and Sipekne'katik. Immediate Response Approach is a dual track response to reports of abuse and neglect. It is a different way of engaging families in certain cases that have come to the attention of the intake and investigation team. Immediate Response Circle Approach allows the agency to better meet the needs of the family while keeping children safe and assessing risk throughout this process. This process works with the family and community in a collaborative approach and non-judgemental manner. The goals of Immediate Response Circles are to keep children safe; maintain and strengthen healthy families; and to prevent future child welfare involvement and better meet the need of the individual family. The Family Support Team play an important part in working with the families to provide intensive supports to strengthen the family.

The Immediate Response Circles were very well received by the families as well as our community partners. We have continued offering the Immediate Response Circle after

Wikimanej Kikmanaq continued...

the Pilot Project was over.

Elder/Spiritual Caregiver: Wilma Simon
Our Agency is extremely fortunate to have Wilma Simon on staff as our Elder/Spiritual Caregiver to share her wealth of knowledge and experiences. Wilma is a kind caring person who is always willing to impart her traditional and spiritual knowledge to all staff each day. Each day Wilma offers a morning smudge and prayer for those in need in our healing room and graciously shares lessons in drumming for those interested. Prior to Covid-19, Wilma would host monthly learning opportunities with staff where she would invite an Elder/Knowledge keeper to provide teachings on various topics such as traditional medicines, smudging and teachings of the medicine wheel. This is a wonderful way to allow staff to learn about Mi'kmaw values, customs, and traditions.

Manager of Prevention Services: In December 2019 I moved into the new position as Manager of Prevention Services for our agency. The programs I would be managing would include Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Circle Program, Family & Community Resource Program and the Family Support & Case Aide Program. I'm very grateful for this opportunity and very excited about the opportunities this position presents.

Challenges and Solutions:

As the whole world is very much aware, we have been living in a pandemic since March 2020. It has been difficult for many to try to adjust to this new way of living and working. It has caused many to be fearful of what could happen as we learn more about this very deadly virus. Despite all these fears, as social workers we have a responsibility to ensure families are safe and children are safe, so we

must put on a brave face and push forward. Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC Team continued to support families through regular phone contact just to check in and have a chat. The team worked hard on exploring innovative ways of engaging families and support them through these very difficult times. Currently, the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Team are offering Virtual Family Group Circles and Immediate Response Circles via various platforms such as Zoom, Teams and Skype. I'm extremely proud of the Team for truly embracing these challenges and engaging our families so they have the opportunity to plan for their children and families.

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.
- Develop guidelines to ensure that Family Group Circles could be held with proper precautions in place to keep everyone safe.
- 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
- Update Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC Brochure and Wikimanej Kikmanaq Forms
- Include an Elder in every Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC.
- 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



Wikimanej Kikmanaq continued...

communities we serve.

Statistics of Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC for April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020:

Total number New of Referrals received by the Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC program is 81.

Total Number of Immediate Response Circle Referrals received is 27 requests.

Eskasoni Office:

Long Term Protection = 20 referrals

Temp Children in Care = 3 referrals

Permanent Care = 4 referrals

Foster Care = 2 referrals

Adoptions = 1 referral

Indianbrook:

Long Term Protection = 25 referrals

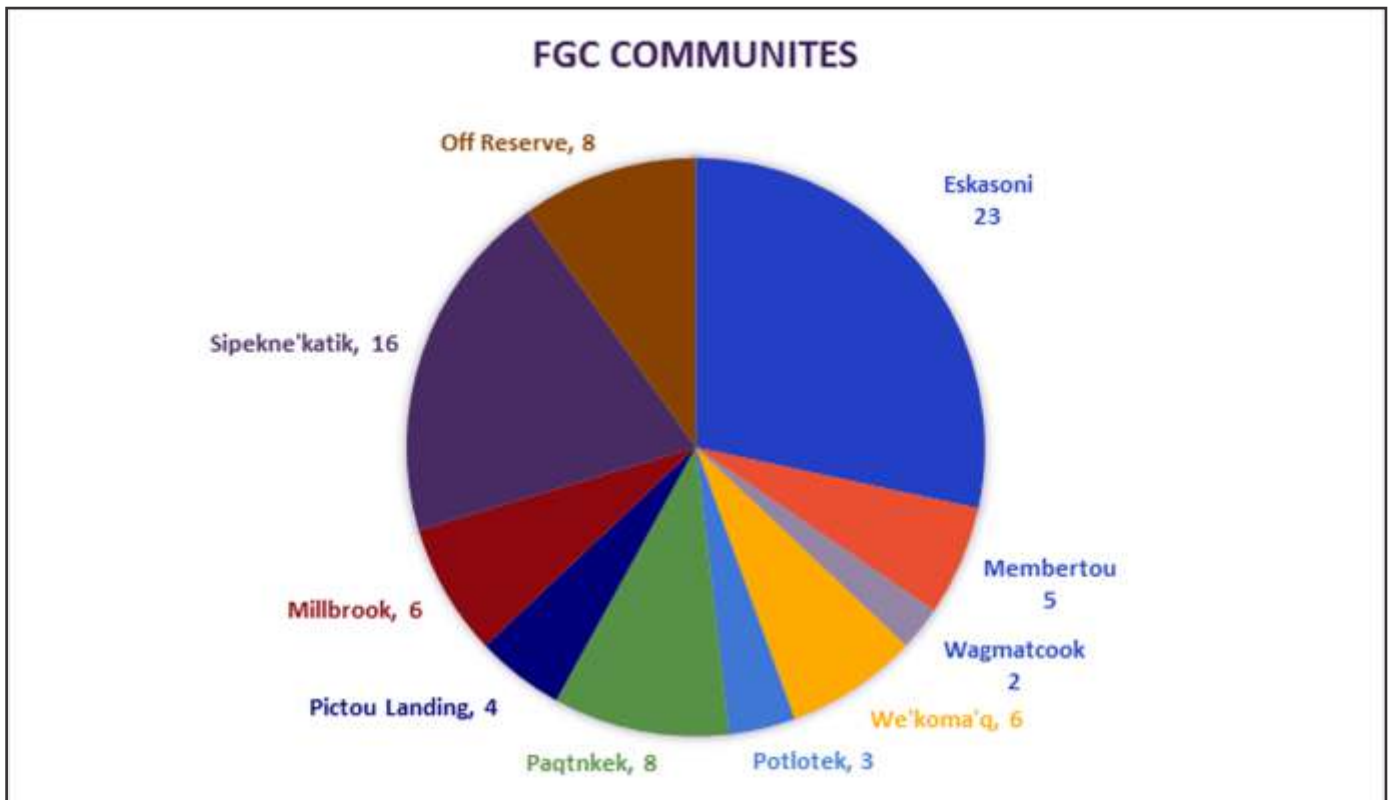
Temp Children in Care = 6 referrals

Permanent Care = 8 referrals

Foster Care = 0 referrals

Adoptions = 1 referral

TOTAL = 81



Communications Department

Nutewistog

Submitted by George Paul
Communications Officer – MFCSNS
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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 over 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.

2019-2020 Communications Strategies Applied or Ongoing:

Continue to brand new MFCSNS Logo:

Since the new logo was launched 2 years ago I could comfortably say our new look has been



Communications Department continued...

well established. All offices have the new letterhead and envelopes. Outside the walls of the organization the new logo is seen more often through events, advertising and sometimes social media outlets. At the 2019 Mi'kmaw Summer games in We'koqma'q our two event tents showcasing our new logo was front and center at FUN DAY. The retractable screens have been used on many different occasion and events. The slogan "Children Are Gifts from the Creator. Mijua'ji'jik na ikmuksik'kik Kisu'lkw," as our Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services organization's tag in our letterhead, powerpoint template, and our event tents. The organization's tag, "Children Are Gifts from the Creator," is something I want to work or use more within our organization.

Special Publications:

The inside work and the outside work of the MFCS still needs improvement and more collaboration with other departments. Many people don't know all the great things MFCS does. Last fiscal year I wrote two foster parent stories in the Mi'kmaq Maliceet Nation News. This fiscal year hasn't been that great. I had no feature stories in the paper. I completed the Eskasoni grand opening write-up which can be seen in the July 2019 issue of MMNN. I hope to write informative stories and video of what certain departments do at MFCSNS and I hope to do more feature stories



Special Events:

There were a few event during the fiscal year that I supported or covered. They include, foster parent appreciation day on October 22, 2019, MFCS Christmas Social, 2019 Summer games Fun day, created a new design for Orange Shirt Day and was able to get extra money from NADACA and Eskasoni Band to have more shirts printed and given out to Eskasoni Schools, Indian Brook School and Bear River Chief and Council. Our staff also participated in Orange Shirt Day in all three communities. I covered the Healing Center 25 Anniversary at both offices. Eskasoni MFCS staff held a special party for our co-worker, Norman Sylliboy who was selected as the new Mi'kmaq Grand Chief of the Mi'kmaw Nation. Cover KMK Child Welfare Conference. Covered Minister of Social Services Kelly Regan visit to Eskasoni's new building. Covered Family and Community Resource seven sacred teaching graduation in Potlotek and took picture. I also covered and help organize our 2019 AGA and the Eskasoni grand opening on May 17, 2019.

Creating communication packages/speeches:

Last year I completed the 2019 AGA report. I also completed the foster care support circle chart. I made again our one of kind Christmas cards. Wrote speeches for Chief Leroy Denny and Executive Director, Arlene Johnson for the grand opening of the new Eskasoni building. Completed support service banners and resource family team banner. Wrote speech for Chief Deborah Robinson during peak of covid to thank the unseen essential social workers for their hard work during these times. Was working with supervisor to have a staff wellness day in May 2020 but covid happened. I was working on new MFCS ID cards on November of 2019. We had a mock sample of how I wanted the new cards to look and we were going to start them but communication was

Communications Department continued...

delayed then covid happened. I hope to re-establish communications with the Commissionaire Office in Halifax.

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. I was working on what's called rack cards for each department and completed three but still need to complete that job.

Capacity building to implement Communication plan:

The tools necessary to implement my communication plans require equipment. To date all the communications material that I have created is done on my computer in my garage. We have a new beautiful printer but I wasn't able to utilize it again this fiscal year. With the purchase of our new digital camera I am in the process of creating educational and promotional video for specific departments. When covid hit I came to the realization that more videos have to come out from MFCSNS. Just an note regarding videos. During Covid we

started doing 'Coping with Covid' videos in April with the Family and Community Resource team from Eskasoni and Indian Brook. More videos came out after April. This will be discussed in next years AGA report.

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



Notes



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

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020**



**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020**

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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, 2020, 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, 2020, 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.

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

Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
July 31, 2020

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT MARCH 31, 2020

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Bank	4,970,925	3,683,443
Short term investments (Note 2)	4,163,641	4,086,584
Restricted cash (Note 3)	30,525	33,655
Receivables (Note 4)	926,409	1,121,766
Prepaid expenses	87,794	87,758
	<u>10,179,294</u>	<u>9,013,206</u>
TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 5)	9,164,854	3,220,313
	<u>19,344,148</u>	<u>12,233,519</u>
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Payables and accruals (Note 6)	1,697,663	2,268,941
Trust liability	30,525	33,655
Deferred revenue (Note 7)	1,747,039	263,571
Current portion of capital lease obligation (Note 8)	139,169	-
	<u>3,614,396</u>	<u>2,566,167</u>
LONG TERM		
Capital lease obligation (Note 8)	5,848,980	-
	<u>9,463,376</u>	<u>2,566,167</u>
NET ASSETS (Page 6)		
Unrestricted	(2,284,082)	3,447,039
Internally restricted		
Operating contingency reserve	2,000,000	2,000,000
Replacement reserve	1,000,000	1,000,000
Investment in tangible capital assets	9,164,854	3,220,313
	<u>9,880,772</u>	<u>9,667,352</u>
	<u>19,344,148</u>	<u>12,233,519</u>

Uncertainty related to COVID-19 (Note 13)

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:

President

Treasurer

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

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
SUMMARY STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020

		2020	2020	2019
		Budget (Unaudited)		
		\$	\$	\$
REVENUE				
Indigenous Services Canada (Note 7)		23,051,492	23,676,757	23,231,855
Province of Nova Scotia		1,997,000	1,418,567	2,003,965
Government of Canada - Child Tax Benefits		760,000	657,961	862,416
HST rebates		580,000	460,105	580,238
Interest, donations and other		112,000	186,580	122,532
		26,500,492	26,399,970	26,801,006
EXPENSES				
Operating	Pg 8	15,091,000	14,542,366	13,567,286
Family Healing Centers	Pg 9	993,419	945,309	1,027,736
Family Violence and Prevention	Pg 10	276,581	183,884	301,151
Prevention	Pg 11	3,735,000	2,970,004	2,550,440
Maintenance	Pg 12	7,403,600	6,330,898	6,248,174
Provincial Settlement	Pg 13	1,812,000	1,214,089	1,871,915
		29,311,600	26,186,550	25,566,702
SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES		2,811,108	213,420	1,234,304
ALLOCATION:				
Operating	Pg 8		(2,431,860)	(153,324)
Family Healing Centers	Pg 9		7,285	14,719
Family Violence and Prevention	Pg 10		-	(28,761)
Prevention	Pg 11		2,152,712	664,801
Maintenance	Pg 12		485,283	736,869
			213,420	1,234,304

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, 2020**

	Unrestricted Net Assets	Internally Restricted Operating Contingency Reserve	Internally Restricted Replacement Reserve	Invested In Tangible Capital Assets	2020	2019
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
NET ASSETS - beginning of year	3,447,039	2,000,000	1,000,000	3,220,313	9,667,352	8,433,048
Surplus (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	734,754	-	-	(521,334)	213,420	1,234,304
Tangible capital asset additions	(6,465,875)	-	-	6,465,875	-	-
NET ASSETS - end of year	(2,284,082)	2,000,000	1,000,000	9,164,854	9,880,772	9,667,352

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, 2020

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM:		
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Surplus of revenue over expenses	213,420	1,234,304
Items not involving cash:		
Amortization	521,334	250,111
	<u>734,754</u>	<u>1,484,415</u>
Changes in non-cash working capital items:		
Receivables	195,357	340,537
Prepaid expenses	(36)	(33,880)
Payables and accruals	(571,278)	561,597
Trust liability	(3,130)	3,983
Deferred revenue	1,483,468	263,571
	<u>1,839,135</u>	<u>2,620,223</u>
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of tangible capital assets	(6,465,875)	(1,722,822)
Purchase of short term investments	(77,057)	(64,695)
	<u>(6,542,932)</u>	<u>(1,787,517)</u>
FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds from capital lease obligation	6,100,000	-
Repayments on capital lease obligation	(111,851)	-
	<u>5,988,149</u>	<u>-</u>
INCREASE IN CASH DURING THE YEAR	1,284,352	832,706
CASH - beginning of year	3,717,098	2,884,392
CASH - end of year	<u>5,001,450</u>	<u>3,717,098</u>
CASH CONSISTS OF:		
Bank	4,970,925	3,683,443
Restricted cash	30,525	33,655
	<u>5,001,450</u>	<u>3,717,098</u>

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, 2020

	2020	2020	2019
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Indigenous Services Canada	11,272,504	11,272,504	12,457,731
Province of Nova Scotia	265,000	244,097	265,852
HST rebates	580,000	460,105	580,238
Interest, donations and other	100,000	133,800	110,141
	12,217,504	12,110,506	13,413,962
EXPENSES			
Advertising and promotion	80,000	36,863	42,342
Amortization	270,000	513,941	235,944
Conferences and training	225,000	171,032	201,528
COVID-19 response	-	594	-
Electricity	75,000	100,510	44,105
Employee assistance program	18,000	7,405	13,868
Foster Family Support	31,000	15,254	19,624
General	1,000	-	253
Insurance	90,000	90,766	42,007
Interest and bank charges	9,000	8,145	7,774
Interest on capital lease obligation	-	229,312	-
Library and resources materials	5,000	4,480	701
Membership dues and subscriptions	60,000	64,947	32,172
Office supplies and stationery	148,000	113,526	115,380
Postage and delivery	15,000	16,539	13,829
Professional fees	128,000	35,203	207,082
Rentals - offices	350,000	4,400	47,161
Repairs and maintenance	175,000	196,829	139,426
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	11,881,000	11,618,097	11,025,850
Telephone and communication	100,000	73,079	77,895
Travel	1,290,000	1,136,592	1,179,935
Travel and honorarium - Board	140,000	104,852	120,410
TOTAL EXPENSES	15,091,000	14,542,366	13,567,286
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(2,873,496)	(2,431,860)	(153,324)

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

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FAMILY HEALING CENTERS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020

	2020	2020	2019
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Indigenous Services Canada			
Project Haven	729,893	780,227	942,779
Pension	114,986	114,986	97,526
Province of Nova Scotia - Gender Responsive Program	20,000	14,725	-
Family Violence & Prevention administration fee	-	41,500	-
Donations and other	2,000	1,156	2,150
	<u>866,879</u>	<u>952,594</u>	<u>1,042,455</u>
EXPENSES			
Advertising and promotion	1,500	1,097	2,911
Amortization	8,000	7,393	14,168
Conferences and training	8,000	10,462	6,279
Employee assistance program	3,000	792	1,529
Gender Responsive Program expenses	20,000	14,725	-
Household supplies	20,000	23,222	17,047
Insurance	12,000	11,580	39,984
Interest and bank charges	500	-	243
Library and resource materials	1,000	78	-
Membership dues and subscriptions	1,000	400	-
Office supplies and stationery	13,500	8,233	7,800
Professional fees	6,500	3,802	2,313
Repairs and maintenance	41,000	61,006	39,604
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	792,419	729,477	820,854
Telephone and communications	13,000	16,605	12,390
Travel	32,000	37,348	45,801
Utilities	20,000	19,089	16,813
	<u>993,419</u>	<u>945,309</u>	<u>1,027,736</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES			
	<u>993,419</u>	<u>945,309</u>	<u>1,027,736</u>
SURPLUS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(126,540)	7,285	14,719

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, 2020**

	2020	2020	2019
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Indigenous Services Canada	276,581	183,884	272,390
EXPENSES			
Administration costs	36,000	41,500	32,335
Conferences and training	2,000	2,072	1,000
Public education and workshops	25,000	9,332	10,705
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	183,581	115,413	233,575
Telephone and communications	1,000	-	-
Travel	29,000	15,567	23,536
TOTAL EXPENSES	276,581	183,884	301,151
SURPLUS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	-	-	(28,761)

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
PREVENTION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020

	2020	2020	2019
	Budget (Unaudited)		
	\$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Indigenous Services Canada	3,913,957	5,112,592	3,205,000
Donations and other	10,000	10,124	10,241
	3,923,957	5,122,716	3,215,241
EXPENSES			
Family Services			
Court-Ordered Supervision (Page 23)	2,331,000	1,814,346	1,814,411
Early Intervention (Page 23)	265,000	265,703	179,779
Programs			
Family & Community Resource (Page 24)	876,000	676,173	556,152
Healing Center Outreach (Page 24)	255,000	208,973	-
Immediate Response Circles (Page 24)	8,000	4,809	98
	3,735,000	2,970,004	2,550,440
SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	188,957	2,152,712	664,801

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

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
MAINTENANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020

	2020	2020	2019
	Budget (Unaudited)		
	\$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Indigenous Services Canada	6,743,571	6,212,564	6,256,429
Government of Canada - Child Tax Benefits	660,000	603,617	728,614
	7,403,571	6,816,181	6,985,043
EXPENSES			
Permanent Care (Page 25)	5,017,600	3,867,650	3,810,816
Subsidized Adoptions (Page 25)	1,318,000	1,301,191	1,240,210
Voluntary Care	-	-	93
Temporary Care (Page 25)	1,068,000	1,162,057	1,197,055
	7,403,600	6,330,898	6,248,174
SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(29)	485,283	736,869

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, 2020

	2020	2020	2019
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Province of Nova Scotia	1,712,000	1,159,745	1,738,113
Government of Canada -Child Tax Benefits	100,000	54,344	133,802
	1,812,000	1,214,089	1,871,915
EXPENSES			
Access	130,000	189,114	260,185
Alternative Family Care program payments	-	17,750	-
Baby needs	10,000	1,600	5,284
Board including competency and special rates	211,000	202,483	302,602
Clothing	28,000	17,003	24,670
COVID-19 response	-	2,050	-
Cultural development	5,000	2,252	1,971
Daycare	40,000	26,814	45,090
Discretionary expenses	20,000	3,171	-
Drug testing	10,000	20,640	3,442
Education supplies and other costs	69,000	66,370	41,589
Facility and place of safety	820,000	376,865	832,205
Family conferencing	10,000	6,730	4,732
Holidays, special occasions, vacation	40,000	5,391	13,464
Independent living	35,000	15,649	21,766
Legal fees	20,000	12,655	13,379
Medical and dental	28,000	9,459	14,846
Mentorship	87,000	78,227	104,363
Miscellaneous	5,000	373	3,555
Non-prescription personal needs	7,000	2,800	5,585
Other - inventory	12,000	3,376	5,608
Personal development	12,000	6,614	8,860
Professional fees	118,000	115,997	102,698
Recreation	37,000	7,917	12,183
Registration - births	1,000	490	120
Respite	35,000	14,418	30,653
Spending	16,000	5,631	6,465
Training	1,000	-	-
Travel autopayment	5,000	2,250	6,600
	1,812,000	1,214,089	1,871,915
SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	-	-	-

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

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020

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 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 when able to be reasonably estimated. Amortization is provided on a straight-line basis over the assets estimated useful lives at the following annual rates:

Buildings	4%
Building under capital lease	4%
Furniture and fixtures	10%
Computer	20%
Leaseholds improvements	10%

Revenue Recognition

Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the appropriate restricted fund in the year in which the related expenses are incurred.

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. The main estimate relates to the useful lives of tangible capital assets.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020

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 and operations of the Agency which includes administrative, buildings, utilities, salaries, travel and other related expenses of the Agency other than the program funds described below.

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

Prevention - Relates to prevention family services (court-ordered supervision and early intervention) and prevention programs of the Agency.

Maintenance - Relates to costs for children in care.

Provincial Settlement - Relates to maintenance and prevention costs of children in care and children who are receiving family services that are billed to and reimbursed by the Province of Nova Scotia.

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, 2020

2. SHORT TERM INVESTMENTS

Short term investments consist of the following:

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Premium Investment Savings Account	3,119,307	3,062,968
High Interest Notice Account	1,044,334	1,023,616
	4,163,641	4,086,584

3. RESTRICTED CASH

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

4. RECEIVABLES

Receivables consist of the following:

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Province of Nova Scotia	681,343	811,029
HST recoverable	208,577	273,355
Other	36,489	37,382
	926,409	1,121,766

5. TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

	Cost \$	Accumulated Amortization \$	2020 Net \$	2019 Net \$
Buildings	3,018,926	824,766	2,194,160	2,310,525
Building under capital lease	6,207,706	248,308	5,959,398	-
Furniture and fixtures	995,194	244,528	750,666	769,742
Computer	336,812	112,086	224,726	140,046
Leasehold improvements	37,400	1,496	35,904	-
	10,596,038	1,431,184	9,164,854	3,220,313

Refer to Note 8 for more information on building under capital lease.

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020

6. PAYABLES AND ACCRUALS

Payables and accruals consist of the following:

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Operating	248,642	267,060
Maintenance	542,736	706,526
Accrued salaries and benefits	795,609	1,110,740
Government remittances payable	56,725	77,147
Accrued travel reimbursements	53,951	107,468
	<u>1,697,663</u>	<u>2,268,941</u>

7. DEFERRED REVENUE

Deferred revenue consists of the following:

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women - COVID-19 funding	20,000	-
Province of Nova Scotia - Gender Responsive Program	10,767	20,000
	<u>30,767</u>	<u>20,000</u>
Indigenous Services Canada		
Family Violence & Prevention	92,697	-
Healing Centers	138,491	-
Maintenance	531,007	243,571
Prevention	954,077	-
	<u>1,716,272</u>	<u>243,571</u>
	<u>1,747,039</u>	<u>263,571</u>

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020

7. DEFERRED REVENUE (continued)

Funding received by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) 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:

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Current fiscal year funding received from ISC	25,149,458	23,475,426
Prior year ISC deferred revenue	243,571	472,723
	25,393,029	23,948,149
Total ISC funding available	25,393,029	23,948,149
Other Agency revenues other than Provincial Settlement	1,509,124	1,697,236
	26,902,153	25,645,385
Total revenues available to the Agency	26,902,153	25,645,385
Total expenses per statement of operations	26,186,550	25,566,702
Less: Provincial Settlement expenses billed to Province of Nova Scotia	(1,214,089)	(1,871,915)
Add: Tangible capital asset purchases funded by ISC	365,875	1,722,822
Less: Amortization of tangible capital asset purchases already funded by ISC	(152,455)	(15,795)
	25,185,881	25,401,814
Total expenses funded by ISC and other Agency revenues	25,185,881	25,401,814
Indigenous Services Canada deferred revenue	1,716,272	243,571

Indigenous Services Canada revenue recognized on the statement of operations:

Current year funding received from ISC	25,149,458	23,475,426
Add: Prior year ISC deferred revenue	243,571	-
Less: Current year ISC deferred revenue	(1,716,272)	(243,571)
	23,676,757	23,231,855
Total ISC revenue recognized on the statement of operations	23,676,757	23,231,855

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020

8. CAPITAL LEASE OBLIGATION

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 rental lease payments to Eskasoni First Nation equal to the mortgage and interest payments according to the mortgage terms until the mortgage is completely paid. Ownership of the building will then be transferred to the Agency. The Agency is responsible for all operating, maintenance and utility costs of the building. The mortgage was finalized and payments commenced in June 2019.

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Capital lease, bearing interest at 4.56%, amortized over 25 years, with monthly principal and interest payments of \$34,116.	5,988,149	-
Less: Current portion due within one year	(139,169)	-
	5,848,980	-

Repayments of the capital lease obligation for the next five fiscal years are as follows:

	\$
2021	139,169
2022	145,649
2023	151,850
2024	160,090
2025	166,957
	763,715

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 \$662,793 (2019 - \$604,458).

MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020

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, 2020.

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 risk of non-collection on receivables is mitigated by the fact that the majority of the Agency's receivables are from government sources. There have been no changes in this 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 and capital lease obligation. The Agency does not actively manage this risk.

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020**

12. 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.

Certain expenses were not reclassified (maintenance legal expenses and Outreach program expenses) as prior year funding with Indigenous Services Canada was reconciled and confirmed to be classified within the program funding. For fiscal 2020, it was agreed that these expenses be classified under new funding categories. Maintenance legal expenses are now classified under maintenance funding rather than operating funding and Healing Center Outreach program expenses are classified under prevention funding rather than under Healing Center funding.

13. UNCERTAINTY DUE TO COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 in Canada and on the global economy increased significantly. As the impacts of COVID-19 continue, there could be further impact on the Agency, its funders and donors. Management is actively monitoring the effect on its financial condition, liquidity, operations, suppliers, industry and workforce. The Agency relies on both Federal and Provincial funding, the greatest of which is Federal funding from Indigenous Services Canada. The Agency is not expecting a large impact on its revenues as it is not heavily reliant on donations and fundraising revenues, its annual funding formulas are not impacted by COVID-19 and both Indigenous Services Canada and the Province of Nova Scotia have communicated their intention to be supportive of additional COVID-19 costs. Given the daily evolution of the COVID-19 outbreak and the global responses to curb its spread, the Agency is not able to fully estimate the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak on its results of operations, financial condition or liquidity at this time.

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020**

14. SALARIES AND BENEFITS

	Operating	Family Healing Centers	Family Violence and Prevention	Family and Community Resource	Healing Centers Outreach	2020	2019
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Salaries - social workers and supervision	5,927,489	-	-	-	-	5,927,489	5,847,727
Salaries - family support	860,605	-	-	-	-	860,605	872,972
Salaries - program counsellors	-	248,813	98,913	285,514	160,094	793,334	770,553
Salaries - standby and callback	178,071	-	-	-	-	178,071	100,286
Salaries - management and clerical	2,991,748	191,718	-	185,289	-	3,368,755	2,978,566
Salaries - other	166,671	192,609	-	-	-	359,280	337,009
	10,124,584	633,140	98,913	470,803	160,094	11,487,534	10,907,113
Employment Insurance	144,271	11,721	1,748	7,216	2,905	167,861	179,823
Canada Pension	386,137	27,789	4,693	19,169	7,254	445,042	432,305
Group pension	595,307	26,846	5,553	26,146	8,941	662,793	604,457
Group benefits	286,246	21,948	4,506	12,323	3,696	328,719	312,682
Workers Compensation	81,552	8,033	-	-	-	89,585	86,296
Benefits - contra	-	-	-	-	-	-	(4,787)
	1,493,513	96,337	16,500	64,854	22,796	1,694,000	1,610,776
	11,618,097	729,477	115,413	535,657	182,890	13,181,534	12,517,889

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
SCHEDULE OF PREVENTION EXPENSES - FAMILY SERVICES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020**

	Court-Ordered Supervision	Early Intervention	2020 Budget (Unaudited)	2020	2019
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
EXPENSES					
Access	526,563	-	760,000	526,563	629,515
Alternative Family Care	212,295	1,500	240,000	213,795	64,407
Baby needs	80	-	5,000	80	2,850
COVID-19 response	3,350	-	-	3,350	-
Cultural development	1,095	74	7,000	1,169	3,537
Daycare	25,248	-	56,000	25,248	43,149
Discretionary	2,802	707	36,000	3,509	-
Drug testing	223,380	3,562	300,000	226,942	282,726
Educational supports	2,212	14,464	3,000	16,676	594
Family conferencing	21,668	2,210	30,000	23,878	25,529
Legal	124,977	1,401	255,000	126,378	201,863
Medical and dental	32,575	1,676	107,000	34,251	83,601
Miscellaneous	2,391	-	12,000	2,391	6,174
Mentorship and family support	208,605	144,075	381,000	352,680	303,169
Personal development	858	-	8,000	858	468
Professional fees	418,390	87,924	370,000	506,314	334,152
Recreation	613	663	9,000	1,276	3,469
Registration - births	3,314	-	4,000	3,314	2,723
Respite	3,930	-	8,000	3,930	5,454
Youth support (16+)	-	7,447	5,000	7,447	810
	1,814,346	265,703	2,596,000	2,080,049	1,994,190

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

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
SCHEDULE OF PREVENTION EXPENSES - PROGRAMS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020**

	Family and Community Resource Program	Healing Centers Outreach	Immediate Response Circles	2020	2020	2019
	\$	\$	\$	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
EXPENSES						
Advertising and community support	-	-	-	6,000	-	12,681
Community workshops	53,846	-	-	120,000	53,846	42,421
Conferences and training	8,599	2,153	-	14,000	10,752	5,618
Immediate Response Circle meetings	-	-	4,809	6,000	4,809	-
Office and program supplies	4,813	5	-	7,000	4,818	608
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	535,657	182,890	-	861,000	718,547	437,610
Telephone	2,122	-	-	5,000	2,122	1,971
Travel	71,136	23,925	-	120,000	95,061	55,341
	676,173	208,973	4,809	1,139,000	889,955	556,250

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

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA
SCHEDULE OF MAINTENANCE EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020**

	Permanent Care	Subsidized Adoption	Temporary Care	2020	2020	2019
	\$	\$	\$	\$ Budget (Unaudited)	\$	\$
EXPENSES						
Access	166,056	384	104,135	348,000	270,575	505,098
Baby needs	5,941	-	4,109	41,000	10,050	30,968
Board	826,909	1,099,508	70,754	2,107,000	1,997,171	2,291,803
Clothing	87,640	94,547	10,973	218,000	193,160	212,253
COVID-19 response	12,900	450	1,200	-	14,550	-
Cultural development	18,179	-	318	31,000	18,497	14,136
Daycare	20,750	39,289	9,175	125,000	69,214	159,773
Discretionary	9,229	-	108	42,600	9,337	-
Drug testing	-	-	9,034	50,000	9,034	62,226
Education supplies and other costs	125,196	3,600	2,744	172,000	131,540	99,186
Facility and place of safety	1,483,868	-	732,217	2,400,000	2,216,085	1,317,657
Family conferencing	18,245	-	3,726	31,000	21,971	20,845
Holidays, special occasions, vacation	64,033	-	7,359	210,000	71,392	86,376
Independent living	47,933	-	-	53,000	47,933	56,149
Inventory/Other	22,488	-	9,185	57,000	31,673	34,195
Legal fees	16,840	8,747	28,869	80,000	54,456	-
Medical and dental	96,123	1,629	10,552	164,000	108,304	173,381
Mentorship	364,914	28,134	8,942	440,000	401,990	422,794
Miscellaneous	5,519	1,503	5,942	26,000	12,964	16,609
Non-prescription personal needs	28,276	-	2,798	52,000	31,074	40,855
Personal development	26,355	100	2,882	41,000	29,337	29,964
Professional fees	95,219	16,615	107,308	188,000	219,142	238,318
Recreation	116,239	6,685	6,940	209,000	129,864	157,942
Registration - births	479	-	924	3,000	1,403	1,781
Respite	115,973	-	12,592	145,000	128,565	171,021
Spending	63,232	-	5,421	108,000	68,653	50,394
Training	164	-	-	11,000	164	2,350
Travel autopayment	28,950	-	3,850	51,000	32,800	52,100
	3,867,650	1,301,191	1,162,057	7,403,600	6,330,898	6,248,174

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

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

61 Mini Mall Drive
Eskasoni, Nova Scotia, B1W 1A6
Tel: (902) 379-2433 / (800) 263-8300
Fax: (902) 379-2381

Box 179, Shubenacadie
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.**

