

# 2022 Annual Report



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



## *Honoring Our Service Providers*

WELA'LIK FOR PROVIDING THESE  
ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO OUR CHILDREN,  
FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.  
WITHOUT YOU THIS WOULD NOT  
BE POSSIBLE.

*Welaliek Thank You*

*Foster Parents  
Adoptive Parents  
Respite Providers*



*Mentors  
Access Facilitators  
Drivers*

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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 - HERNEY Keely, MARSHALL Celia

### **HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

Human Resource Manager - MACDONALD Holly  
Occupational Health & Safety Coordinator - TRAINOR Pius (LOA)  
Human Resource Coordinator/Admin - STEVENS Justin  
Human Resource Administrative Assistant - PAUL Ruby

### **LEGAL DEPARTMENT**

Legal Counsel/Supervisor - DENNY Jessie  
Legal Counsel - JOE Maddison  
Paralegal - MARINER-WEBB Jennifer  
Paralegal - CLARE Madonna  
Paralegal - SUDDS Angela P/T

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Communications Officer - PAUL George

### **FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

Finance Clerks - GOULD Alaina, JEDDORE Kerri

### **CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES**

#### **MANAGER of PREVENTION SERVICES**

BASQUE Kristen

#### **CHILD WELFARE SPECIALIST for MI'KMAW**

MEECH Keira

#### **CHILD WELFARE SPECIALIST**

DOUCETTE Natalie

### **INTAKE & INVESTIGATION**

Supervisors - HISCOCK Lucinda, BRAIN Jennifer  
Administration Assistant - PAUL Serena, SUDDS Angela P/T  
Intake & Investigation Team - BOYCE Lynn, FULLER Shannon, BERNARD Nikhea, SYLLIBOY Yvette, GOUTHRO Heather

### **LONG-TERM CHILD PROTECTION**

Supervisors - ABOUD Wendy, JEFFERY Madeleine  
Administration Assistant - SYLLIBOY Jaylene  
Social Work Assistant - GIDEON Emerald  
Long-Term Child Protection Team - CASEY Riviera, CARABIN Sara, JOHNSON Sarita, YOUNG Chakira, CLARKE Linda, LAMEMAN Caitlin, HILL Natasha, MACNEIL Alicia, LEBLANC Amy, CANOVA Lucia

### **TEMPORARY CARE & CUSTODY**

Supervisor - DOUCETTE Yvonne  
Administration Assistant - SYLLIBOY Kerrie Anne  
Temporary Care & Custody - COOLE Eileen.  
DOUCETTE Edna, JOHNSON Dawn, SYLLIBOY Tonia, McCarthy Christina

### **FAMILY SUPPORT & CASE AIDE**

Supervisor - BOYD-CROWTHER, Deborah  
Administration Assistant - CHIN, Mishka  
Family Support Team - STEVENS Shelley, SYLLIBOY Vera (LOA), ISAAC Abby, FRANCIS Shelly, MARSHALL Amber, DOUCETTE Jermaine  
Case Aide Team - ISADORE Erin, MARSHALL Benjamin, MACDONALD David

### **PERMANENT CARE & CUSTODY SERVICES**

Supervisor - WILLIAMS-DENNY, Sheena  
Administration Assistant - YOUNG Louisa  
Permanent Care & Custody Team - DENNY Charmaine, GALE Mickella, GOULD Annie, JEDDORE Conchetta (LOA), GOUTHRO David, LAPORTE Trish,

### **FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION**

Supervisor - YOUNG, Sheraine  
Administrative Assistant - FRANCIS, Lynn  
Resource Family Team - MACDONALD Jacqueline, LAFFORD Erica (PRIDE), CAMPBELL Malcolm, TOURNIDIS Jocelyn, FRANCIS Dorothy, SIMON Rhonda.

### **RESOURCE FAMILY AND ADOPTION**

Supervisor - DOYLE, Helen  
Administrative Assistant - LAFFORD, Marcia  
Adoption and Resource Team- O'QUINN Sherri, YOUNG Charmaine, DENNY Nadia, KABATAY Cynthia

### **FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALING**

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

### **WIKMANEJ KIKMANAQ**

Supervisor - STEVENS, Lydia  
Administrative Assistant - BASQUE Tracey  
Weli-Iknmakwemk/Blessings of Life Coordinator - Denny-Sylliboy Angeline  
Wikmanej Kikmanaq Coordinators - FRANCIS Jane, SYLLIBOY John Denny, YOUNG Melissa, GOULD Connie

## **INDIAN BROOK OFFICE** **PO Box 179** **Hants County, NS** **B0N 2H0**

### **OFFICE MANAGEMENT**

Assistant Executive Director - CLARKE-JOHNSON Monica  
Executive Assistant/Office Manager - VACANT  
Receptionist(s) - GOOGOO Bonnie  
Filing Clerk - MARR Megan  
Janitorial/Maintenance - EVANS Clarence

### **LEGAL DEPARTMENT**

Legal Manager/Counsel - LEVANGIE Ann  
Legal Counsel - MORTON, Katelyn  
Paralegal - LESLIE Cheryl

### **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., DEAUVILLE Matthew  
Senior Child Maintenance Payables Clerk - PAUL Lisa

# MFCSNS Staff Continued

## CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

### INTAKE & INVESTIGATION

Supervisor - NUTTER Jennifer  
Administration Assistant - OBOMSAWIN Mirya  
Intake & Investigation Team - MANN Ashley,  
GOODMAN Karri, PARK Jennifer,  
DAVIS Angela

### LONG-TERM CHILD PROTECTION

Supervisor - FORD Kelly, MCKELVIE Jennifer  
Administrative Assistant - SPENCE Julie  
Long Term Protection Team - HAMILTON Derick (LOA),  
AGUAYO Anna, BEAUDOIN Emma, BERNARD Maddie,  
MACKINNON Maira, MACPHAIL Katelyn,

### TEMPORARY CARE & CUSTODY/LONG TERM

Supervisor - INGLIS-ASSAFF Pauline  
Administrative Assistant - SPENCE Julie  
Temporary Care & Custody Team - LIBERTY Sarah,  
OBRIEN Trish,  
REVELS Leanne, BUTLER Megan

### FAMILY SUPPORT & CASE AIDE

Supervisor - HIGGINS Leeann  
Family Support Team - MAYICH Earla, MICHAEL Julie,  
MARR Juanita, FOLEY Shantel, WINTERS Laura,  
KNOCKWOOD Glen.  
Case Aide Team - PAUL Joan, KNOCKWOOD Lesley,  
SACK Diane

### PERMANENT CARE & CUSTODY SERVICES

Casework Supervisor - MARACLE Denise  
Administration Assistant - PAUL Virginia  
Permanent Care & Custody Team - CROWE Emily,  
GALLANT-WHITE Michelle, BALDWIN Nicole,  
GOODMAN, Kari

### ADOPTION

Supervisor - MCKEE Lesley  
Administration Assistant - BILODEAU Erica  
Adoption Team - RAFUSE Ruby, WHITE Julie,  
MCDERMOTT Sean, TANG Zhe 'Andy', FAULKNER Katie  
LOA,

### FOSTER CARE

Supervisor - PHILLIPS Jodi  
Administrative Assistant - BILODEAU, Erica  
Foster Care Team - COLLINS Kim, HANCOCK Norine,

SAULNIER Annette (PRIDE), ALI Jessica,  
KNOCKWOOD Ella (Recruitment/Pre-service)

### FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALING

Supervisor - CHRISTMAS Diana  
Family and Community Healing Team - PHILLIPS  
Courtney

### WIKIMANEJ KIKMANAQ

Supervisor - DONNELLY Louise  
Administrative Assistant - BASQUE, Tracey  
Wikmanej Kikmanaq Coordinators - GLOADE  
William, HILLIER Cassandra, MACEACHERN Mary

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

Administrative Assistant - HARRISON Dave  
Social Worker - HAMILTON Derick LOA  
Family and Community Healing - DOUCETTE Cassie,  
PHILLIPS Courtney (TERM)

### WE'KOQMA'Q FAMILY HEALING CENTER, PO BOX 310 We'koqma'q, NS BOE 3M0

Manager of Family Healing Centres -  
WALKER, Bev  
Program Supervisor - POWERS Ann Marie  
Administrative Assistant -  
PHILLIPS-CULLEN Jessie  
Night Support Worker - MILLER Krista,  
MACLEOD Jillian  
Women's Support Worker - WILCOX Olive  
(leave), MACEACHERN Carol (leave),  
BASQUE Katerina (term)  
Women's Support/Outreach -  
GOOGOO Shaylene  
Assistant Women's Support -  
WILCOX Theresa (leave), PECK Brenda (term)  
Women's Outreach Worker - GOOGOO Claudine  
Men's Outreach Worker - CANTWELL Mike  
Child/Youth Outreach Worker -  
PHILLIPS Brittany  
Casuals: MACNEIL Debbie, GOOGOO Carol,  
LEROY Lori-Anne, GOULD Kendra,

BASQUE Konnor, MARTIN Shanika, GOULD Sage

### MILLBROOK FAMILY HEALING CENTER PO BOX 665 Truro, NS B2N 5E5

Manager of Family Healing Centres -  
WALKER Bev  
Program Supervisor - PAUL Brooke  
Administrative Assistant - MORRISON Susan  
Night Support Worker - GLOADE Dora,  
DENNY Jennifer  
Women's Support Worker - SYLLIBOY Mali,  
SHARPE Michelle, CONLEY Poppy  
Women's Support/Outreach -  
ORDERKIRK Bailee (Mat Leave) vacant  
Women's Outreach Worker - GILBERT Autumn  
Men's Outreach Worker - WALSH Dan,  
POWER Michael  
Child/Youth Outreach Worker - MACNEIL Megan  
Casuals: MARTIN Mary Anne, MARTIN Cyndi,  
MARTIN Michelle, SMITH Kim, DREW Terrie,  
COLPITTS Bev, LANGILLE Katie, LOHNES Shawna,  
VANIER Rachelle

# President's Remarks



**Chief Deborah Robinson**

## Welcome Everyone to our 37th AGA.

As President of Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia I take great honor and pride to represent this Agency. I want to welcome special guest and welcome our Nova Scotia Chiefs who make up the Board of Directors and Executive Board.

We all know it has been a challenging last few years for us all. It is through these challenges a new way of approaching social services has evolved. For many of our social workers and staff, we had to re-imagine our work and adapt to a new norm.

It is from your creativeness and new way of doing work from home, that has made you more resilient yet still effective in supporting our families. I want to congratulate each and every one of you.

What has also transpired in the last few years is the collaborative approach in creating a new Mi'kmaw Child Welfare Act. It is only through working collaboration and open communication that this new Child Welfare Act will come to fruition.

For me, and also our past and present leaders, self-governance was an idea that started way back. During my years, I realized that leadership doesn't come from leaders, it comes from the people. The creation of our new Mi'kmaw Child Welfare Act is a true meaning of people working together. We are so close to making this Act a reality.

The Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia are reclaiming complete jurisdiction and governance over child and family well-being matters for our Mi'kmaw citizens. It became clear in 2017, during the review of the Nova Scotia Children and Family Services Act amendments that not all Mi'kmaw concerns resulted in CFSA revisions. Major gaps that did not address Mi'kmaw cultural and traditional needs and the way Mi'kmaw communities' function were missing from the current legislation.

Caring for our Mi'kmaw children and families is a collective responsibility and one the Assembly stands behind. Since 2017, through Assembly resolution, the Maw-Kleyu'kik Knijannaq (MKK) Initiative which translates to "keeping our children together" was launched as a mechanism for the Assembly to



## President's Remarks continued...

build a Mi'kmaw-specific Mi'kmaw Child and Family Well-Being Customary Code and policies, to depart from the provincial and federal legislation imposed on Mi'kmaw communities.

The work of the MKK Initiative is all about what will make it better for the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia in child and family well-being matters. While innovative in some respects, the MKK Initiative relies heavily on a return to traditional culture and practices in caring for our children. Through engagement, priorities were identified for the Customary Code.

The following is not an exhaustive list but main priorities were identified throughout many Mi'kmaw engagements with Elders, leadership, youth, field experts, social workers, professionals, academics, community members and others:

- Mi'kmaw Jurisdiction and Governance
- Application to all Mi'kmaw in Nova Scotia
- Customs, Traditions and Ceremonies
- Mi'kmaw Principles and Values
- Best Interests of a Mi'kmaw Child
- Child Placements
- Child and Family involvement in decisions affecting them
- Culturally respectful services
- Mi'kmaw Customary Adoption Protocol
- Aging out of care
- Roles of traditional and contemporary leadership and community members

The MKK Initiative is in its final year of drafting the tools needed. At that point, it will be up to our Mi'kmaw leadership and communities to determine if we are ready for implementation. If that is the case, the Mi'kmaq will sit with Canada and the province of Nova Scotia at the Main Table to negotiate a s.35 sectoral

agreement for the successful funding and implementation model for the Mi'kmaq to take its rightful place in caring for our Mi'kmaw children and families.

The Customary Code and policies, built by the Mi'kmaq for the Mi'kmaq, and where the entire family stands at the center, will support holistic family wellness and step away from colonial practices of separation. This is the Mi'kmaw way of knowing and doing.

On behalf of all the Nova Scotia Chiefs, I want to say thank the staff of MFCSNS. We praise you; we honor you and we thank you for your dedicated services. I also want to wish a warm welcome to all of the new staff members who have joined us during the year.

Wela'liog.



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 to our 37th Annual General Assembly.

I would like to open my remarks by saying welcome to Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services (MFCS) 37th Annual General Assembly to our guests, Chiefs who are our Board of Directors, and finally to our staff.

During the last two years, the pandemic has proven we can adapt and change while ensuring our families and children remain a priority. As a result, I want to reflect on the fact there truly has never been a better time in the history of our Agency to showcase the Agency's enduring strength and the resilience of our communities. As a Mi'kmaw Agency we work hard to maintain positive relationships with our leadership, elders, and stakeholders as we continue to provide quality services.

This year our front cover celebrates the people who make MFCSNS work. These are the supporting workers who are not on the payroll of MFCS but play a vital role in supporting Mi'kmaq families. They are your service providers, drivers and foster parents.

We also take pride in the fact we continue to provide a sustainable child welfare service that represents our families and children with a holistic approach utilizing our culture and traditions. In doing such, we are bringing to life the direction of our vision and mission statement. Throughout the pandemic MFCS has ensured ongoing capacity development, governance, accountability, and program design.

I would also like to take this time to acknowledge the ways our Agency (board, management team, supervisors, and staff) navigated through a second year of this world-wide pandemic. They have all shown remarkable resilience as they showcased their skills at an elevated level. Our own staff at times have had to effectively work from home while balancing meeting the needs of their families and the needs of the families we serve. Our staff showed an unwavering dedication to ensuring our Mi'kmaw families and children remained protected and supported in a cultural manner. We are well on our way to transitioning into following our own Mi'kmaw Children and Family Services Act.

Over the past 37 years MFCS has evolved into the Agency it is today. We are continuing to change and evolve as we reclaim our rights, traditions, values and beliefs in parenting practices and healing as individuals and as communities. Throughout our Agency's journey, we have been guided expertly by a talented and visionary team of board and staff members who have all shared in the responsibility of continuously identifying the needs of our Mi'kmaw families and creating programs to ensure those needs are met. Over the years we have vastly expanded our programs and partnerships at every level from prevention to protection, as well



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...

as children in care, foster and adoption. Our family support program and family and community healing program have grown exponentially throughout the pandemic to ensure families feel supported and were not feeling isolated.

This past year at MFCS there has been various changes – some expected and some not. However challenging change can be at times hard. It is through change that we experience growth, new opportunities, and new beginnings.

The Agency continues to work with KMKNO regarding the Maw-kleyu'kik Knijnaq Initiative as we reimagine and reclaim our right to govern ourselves and the way in which we provide child protection services to our Mi'kmaw communities.

As we continue to lean on strength-based practices and our suite of prevention programs through our Family Support Program and the Community and Healing Program; and by continuing to develop, strengthen and collaborate with our many partnerships, families and children have been supported and safe. Our wrap around service model is a holistic approach to helping our families and children. Through our approach of prevention and protection services working together we are building a strong foundation to create healing, continuity, and trust.

Afterall, our Mi'kmaw culture and values have always told us that families are strongest and safest when they are together and supported. Our kinship services are at the base of this belief. Without family stepping up for family, our children would continue to come into care in alarming rates like other Indigenous communities across Canada. This past year, our Agency only had six children in temporary care. MFCS is a leading Indigenous Agency in Canada and has been recognized as such by the Department of Community Services (DCS), Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and other Indigenous child welfare agencies. I have also continued to represent the Agency as I sit on the Board of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada where the progress of MFCS is truly evident and respected.

From the beginning, the Agency has had a unique relationship with DCS based on respect and understanding. As we have grown and evolved, so has DCS in their understanding of the needs of our Mi'kmaw communities. As policies are developed through DCS, we have always had input. At the same time, DCS has always been open to ensuring the policies support our beliefs, and in fact, we have come to the point of a shared vision.

DCS has always supported and embraced us in every area so that we are in line with the goals of our Agency, allowing us to work in a culturally relevant manner. DCS has supported us in the development of Wikimanej Kikmanaq – Mi'kmaw Family Group Circle (FGC), Immediate Response Circles (IRC), and the ongoing development of a Custom Adoption program. From the beginning DCS has supported the First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Act (FNIM) taking precedence and have made all their department offices aware as well. DCS also continues to financially support a Mi'kmaw Child Welfare Specialist position for the Agency. A second such position is financially covered by Indigenous Services. I would like to acknowledge my appreciation to DCS in their sincere effort to stay on top of the information coming to them from the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada so that together we are moving forward in a culturally sensitive manner.

I'd like to personally acknowledge and thank our DCS counterparts Tracy Embrett, Executive Director of Child, Youth and Family Services, Wendy Bungay, Director, Child, Youth and Family Services – Project Director, Kelly Besler, Director of Child Protection, Jill Barkhouse, Director of

## Executive & Assistant Executive Directors Report continued...

Child Welfare Specialists, Mary Craig, Manager Adoption Services, Rachelle Williams, Director of Placement/Resources, Georgeina MacKinnon, Project Coordinator Foster Care Redesign, Jennifer Moore, Auditor, Scott Clarke, Coordinator of Child Protection, Natalie Downey, Director of Prevention and Early Intervention Services, Stacey Greenough, Coordinator of Children in Care, Mairi MacLean, Coordinator of Child, Youth and Caring Programs and Administrative Support, Cheryl Watts, Sarah Merrick and Beth Phillips, and Wilma Crowell. They have all played an integral role in the growth of our Agency moving toward our own Mi'kmaw Children and Family Services Act.

Intimate Partner Violence is the second most common reason why children come into the care of MFCS. Dr. Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada stated, "Domestic violence affects children's physical development and well being."

Our Healing Centres play an important role in providing safe housing for women and children experiencing Intimate Partner Abuse, while also providing education and support to our families and communities. Our two centres work with all our Mi'kmaw communities in the province from Acadia to Membertou. Our resources are culturally designed to help our families make the changes they need to be healthy for themselves and their children. Our Healing Centre staff work in cooperation with the Agency when families experience intimate partner violence, and this cooperation has been shown to be critical in their healing. Working together is a powerful tool in and of itself.

As we move forward, a critical ingredient of reconciliation is for Indigenous people to have the autonomy over our ability to care for our children and reconstruct our families in our way. Only through such efforts will our departure from colonization be ours. Wela'lin to all, past and present, who have joined us on our historic journey, and to all those who are currently walking hand in hand with us into our future.

Sincerely,

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 2021

## Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY – 8 October 2021

The Annual General Assembly of the Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia was held October 8, 2021 at 10:00am at the Delta Hotel, Dartmouth, NS.

### PRESENT

Board:

- Chief Deborah Robinson, President, Acadia
- Chief Gerald Toney, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Annapolis Valley
- Chief Leroy Denny, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Eskasoni
- Chief Andrea Paul, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, Pictou Landing
- Chief Carol Dee Potter, Secretary, Bear River
- Chief Sidney Peters, Treasurer, Glooscap
- Chief Mike Sack, Sipekne'katik (Virtual)
- Chief Bob Gloade, Millbrook
- Chief Tma Francis, Paqtnkek
- Chief Norman Bernard, Wagmatcook (Virtual)
- Gail Christmas, Proxy for Chief Terry Paul, Membertou
- John L. Bernard, Proxy, We'koqma'q
- Regional Chief PJ Prosper, AFN
- James Marshall, Proxy for Chief Wilbert Marshall, Potlotek

Staff and Guests:

- Jacklyn Paul, KNKMO
- Wendy Bungay, Department of Community Services
- Jill Barkhouse, Coordinator, Child Protection, DCS
- George Savoury, Savoury Consultants

The meeting convened at 10:19am with President Chief Deborah Robinson presiding. The opening prayer was said by Grand Chief Norman Sylliboy.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** The agenda was presented.

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM April 16, 2021:**

The minutes of April 16, 2021 were presented.

**MOTION #2:** *It was moved by Chief Carol Dee Potter and seconded by Chief Bob Gloade to accept the minutes from April 16, 2021 as presented. Motion carried.*

# AGA Minutes 2021 continued...

**PRESIDENT'S REMARKS:** Chief Deborah Robinson

**MOTION #3:** *It was moved by Chief Carol Dee Potter, seconded by Chief Gerald Toney to accept the President's Report as presented. Motion carried.*

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Arlene Johnson (Video)

**MOTION #4:** *It was moved by James Marshall, seconded by Chief Andrea Paul to accept the Executive Director's Report as presented. Motion carried.*

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Kendra Arseneau

Financial Report for the 2019-20 Fiscal Year is presented. BDO could not be present.

**MOTION #5:** *It was moved by Chief Carol Dee Potter, 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 #6:** *It was moved by Chief Sidney Peters seconded by Chief Carol Dee Potter to accept BDO as the Auditors for Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of NS.*

**APPROVAL OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF MFCSNS:**

**President** – Chief Deborah Robinson      **3<sup>rd</sup> Vice** – Chief Andrea Paul  
**1<sup>st</sup> Vice** – Chief Gerald Toney              **Secretary** – Chief Carol Potter  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice** – Chief Leroy Denny              **Treasurer** – Chief Sidney Peters

**MOTION #7:** *It was moved by James Marshall, seconded by Chief Carol Dee Potter to accept the Executive Committee Members as presented. Motion Carried.*

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

Grand Chief Norman Sylliboy closes the AGA with the prayer.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 12:00pm.





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



## Annual General Assembly

Legends Gaming and Convention Center, Millbrook

Friday, July 15, 2022

10:00am

1. Opening of AGA 2022 – Chaired by Chief Deborah Robinson
2. Opening Prayer with Mi'kmaq Grand Chief Norman Sylliboy
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Approval of Annual General Assembly Minutes from October 8, 2021
6. President's Report – Chief Deborah Robinson
7. Approval of President's Report
8. Executive Director's Report – Arlene Johnson
9. Approval of Executive Director's Report
10. Report on the Audited Financial Statements  
– Kendra Arseneau, Finance Manager
11. Approval of audited financial statements for the year ended Mar 31, 2022
12. Appointment of auditor for March 31, 2022, fiscal year
13. Announcement of the Mi'kmaw Family Executive Committee Members:
  - **Announcement by President of MFCS**
  - **Updated Child Abuse Registry and Police Checks needed for all Board members.**
15. Closing Prayer with Mi'kmaq Grand Chief Norman Sylliboy

# Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program

## Nepitmumkl Mi'kmawe'l Wkijksu'l



### Manager:

Bev Walker (Millbrook & We'koqma'q)

### Department Role and Goals:

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 women and their children. The Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program services include short term shelter for women who have experienced violence and their children, 24-hour support services, individual and group programming, life skills training and access to community resources, advocacy, information, prevention, education (individual, group and community based) and referrals. As well as Outreach programs for men, women, & youth.

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 Family Violence education, 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 today. With domestic violence being the one of the top 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.

### Family Healing Centres

April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022

In the last 29 years there have been 1636 women and 1710 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.

As we were still in a Global pandemic with many restrictions in place, we were closely monitoring how this is affecting our clientele. With some restrictions being lifted we were able to do more in person workshops and sessions with precautions in place. For most of this year the Centres were still working at a reduced capacity for in-house admissions. The amount of work reflected on the numbers of Covid-19



## Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...

cases in any Community throughout the province. If there was a rise in numbers in a particular area the sessions would be changed to virtual or by telephone; staff were able to accommodate and be flexible at any given time.

Both Centres struggled with staffing at some point this year, although the We'koqma'q Centre was hit the hardest; at one point for several months working with only 2 (out of 7) in-house staff, supervisor, casuals and outreach staff, all did their best to keep the Centre operational. This included doing work that was beyond the scope of their positions. As stressful as this was, they all pitched in and did their best to help. The remaining staff at both Centres were dedicated and worked as a team, they are commended for the effort they put in to not only help their fellow co-workers when necessary but to also stay committed to the people we serve. Bev Walker spent several months at the We'koqma'q Centre cleaning out the old, organizing and revamping the Centre and programs, in addition to training new staff that was hired.

### We would like to welcome new staff this year:

In We'koqma'q, Program Supervisor - Ann Marie Powers; Administrative Assistant - Jessie Phillips-Cullen; Women's Support/Outreach – Shaylene Googoo; Women's Support (term) – Katerina Basque; Child/Youth Outreach worker – Brittany Phillips, Men's Outreach – Mike Cantwell, Assistant Women's Support (term) Brenda Peck, Night Support Jillian MacLeod (June 2022) and several casual workers. In Millbrook: Men's Outreach - Michael Power, Women's Support - Michelle Sharpe May 2022, Poppy Conley June 2022 and several casual workers.

With the Pandemic still in effect and many

restrictions still in place, the Healing Centres were not always able to provide in-person Community workshops during the year. However, during this time staff from both Centres delivered 19 workshops with 276 participants. Staff also created educational live and pre-recorded videos that are posted on our Facebook pages to reach a wider audience. This increase in an online presence is noted in our page likes, shares, and views. There were 16 videos posted with a total of 4522 views to date.

**Training:** Staff were able to participate in many training sessions this year which include: P.R.I.D.E, NVCI, First Aid, Mi'kmaw Language classes, WHIMIS, ASSIST, HIFIS, addictions, commercial sexual exploitation, Etuaptmumk: two eyed seeing, 2SLGBTQI inclusion mental health, criminal justice, planning future programming, Zones of Regulation, Re-imagining Youth Care, Child & Youth Best Practices, Sexual Abuse, Mi'kmaw Pride: Grand Council, Naloxone, Human Trafficking, Trauma Informed approaches, Domestic Violence.

### Men's Outreach Program and the “Journey of the Two Wolves -Tapusijik Paqtismk”:

The Men's Outreach program provides Mi'kmaw/Indigenous men the opportunity to receive important knowledge and education about being non-abusive to an intimate partner, ex-partner and/or family members. The “Journey of the Two Wolves” consists of a 5-17 session information workshop that focuses on the wholistic healing. The outreach services also include one-to-one counselling, support, and education groups. The Men's Outreach workers for Millbrook are Dan Walsh and Michael Power. Mike Cantwell joined our team at the We'koqma'q Centre in October 2021. **This year the men's outreach program worked with 62 individuals, completing 330 sessions.**

## Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...

**Women's Outreach Program:** The Women's Outreach Program provides programming, support, and advocacy to women in their own community. This year they continued to keep in contact with clients by phone and virtually and had an increase with in-person visits. Sylvia Martin (Millbrook) was the outreach worker this year and has recently retired, we wish you all the best Sylvia!! Our new outreach worker is Autumn Gilbert who was previously working as a term Women's Support Worker. Claudine Googoo (We'koqma'q) continues as the Women's Outreach Worker for this year. Some of the topics covered in the program are: Intimate Partner Violence, Self-Esteem, Healthy & Unhealthy Relationships, Parenting, Grief and Loss, Trauma, Relapse Prevention, Options to Anger etc. **This year the women's outreach program worked with 45 individuals, completing 227 sessions.**

**Child/Youth Outreach Program:** The Child/Youth Outreach Worker not only works with youth in our communities but 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. Megan MacNeil (Millbrook) celebrates her 1 year with us as the C/Y worker. In We'koqma'q the C/Y worker was Jen Vivien, who was with us for three months. Brittany Phillips was hired in December 2021. 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. **This year the Child/Youth Outreach program worked with 26 youth and completed 140 sessions.**

**In-House Programs:** The needs of victims of

Intimate Partner Violence are constantly changing. Staff continue to be trained and updated on addictions and, mental health issues, which are still the top factors why victims reach out for help, in addition to IPV. Our programs are designed to support and educate individuals to live a healthy, violence free lifestyle.

The In-House programs are facilitated by the Women Support Workers, and Women's Support/Outreach Workers. They are supported by the Assistant Women's Support worker although, this year, this position has been changed to a Women's Support position to have additional staff who deliver programming to our residents. There have been many changes with in-house staffing this year. In Millbrook: Krista Paul (ws) resigned and Michelle Sharpe (ws) is now in that position. Mali Sylliboy (ws) returned from leave in June 2022; Liz MacKay (aws) resigned, and Poppy Conley (ws) was hired in June 2022. Bailee Oderkirk, (ws/or) went on Maternity leave, her position is still currently vacant. In We'koqma'q Olive Wilcox (ws), Carol MacEachern (ws), and Theresa Wilcox (aws) are all currently on leave. Katerina Basque (ws term), Brenda Peck (aws term) and Shaylene Googoo (ws/or) are the current in-house staff.

Some of the programs offered are Intimate Partner Violence, Healthy/Unhealthy relationships, Safety Planning, Nobody's Perfect, Little Eyes Little Ears, Beyond Anger, Healing Journey, Beyond Trauma & Violence, Self Esteem, Relapse Prevention etc. They work with the clients in-house by providing support, programming, advocacy, transportation,





## Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...



referrals, parenting, budgeting, meal planning, to name a few.

The Healing Centres are fortunate to be members of The National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence (NACAFV) which 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. During this year there were no in-person meetings or training with NACAFV.

We are members of the Transition House Association of Nova Scotia (THANS). A provincial organization of the transition houses across Nova Scotia. THANS has been very helpful this year in navigating the provincial guidelines of the pandemic for shelters. There were biweekly virtual meetings with Public Health to ensure that our shelters and the women we serve were well informed and following the guidelines for public safety during and after the provincial lockdown.

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

Wela'liek  
Bev Walker, Manager of the Healing Centres

### Healing Center Staff List:

#### We'koqma'q Family Healing Centre

**PO BOX 310 We'koqma'q, NS B0E 3M0**

Manager of Family Healing Centres – WALKER, Bev

Program Supervisor – POWERS, Ann Marie

Administrative Assistant – PHILLIPS-CULLEN, Jessie

Night Support Worker – MILLER, Krista

MACLEOD, Jillian

Women's Support Worker – WILCOX, Olive (leave)

MACEACHERN, Carol  
(leave)

BASQUE, Katerina (term)

Women's Support/Outreach – GOOGOO, Shaylene

Assistant Women's Support – WILCOX, Theresa (leave)

PECK, Brenda (term)

Women's Outreach Worker – GOOGOO, Claudine

Men's Outreach Worker - CANTWELL, Mike

Child/Youth Outreach Worker – PHILLIPS, Brittany

Casuals: MACNEIL, Debbie; GOOGOO, Carol; LEROY, Lori-Anne; GOULD, Kendra; BASQUE, Konnor; MARTIN, Shanika; GOULD, Sage

#### Millbrook Family Healing Centre

**PO BOX 665 Truro, NS B2N 5E5**

Manager of Family Healing Centres – WALKER, Bev

Program Supervisor – PAUL, Brooke

Administrative Assistant – MORRISON, Susan

Night Support Worker – GLOADE, Dora

DENNY, Jennifer

Women's Support Worker – SYLLIBOY, Mali

SHARPE, Michelle

CONLEY, Poppy

Women's Support/Outreach – ORDERKIRK, Bailee

(Mat Leave)

vacant

Women's Outreach Worker – GILBERT, Autumn

Men's Outreach Worker - WALSH, Dan

POWER, Michael

Child/Youth Outreach Worker – MACNEIL, Megan

Casuals: MARTIN, Mary Anne; MARTIN, Cyndi; MARTIN, Michelle; SMITH, Kim; DREW, Terrie; COLPITTS, Bev; LANGILLE, Katie; LOHNES, Shawna; VANIER, Rachelle

# Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...



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

From April 1st, 2021 - March 31st, 2022 The We'koqma'q Centre had 21 women accompanied by 7842 children stay at the Centre during this period with total bed stays of 842. The Millbrook Centre had 28 women accompanied by 15 children stay at the Centre during this period with total bed stays of 1278.

	WE'KOQMA'Q	MILLBROOK
<b>REASON FOR ENTRY:</b>		
Already at Centre	1	2
Physical abuse	2	8
Verbal/Emotional/Psychological abuse	10	8
Threats to women and/or children	0	10
Other abuse (e.g., abuse by other family members)	1	0
Housing problem (non-abuse)	5	1
Other (non-abuse)	3	1
<b>REFERRED BY:</b>		
Self-referral	8	23
Multi-service agency	0	0
Social service agency	0	0
Medical /health agency/doctor	0	0
Other shelter	4	0
Relative/Friend	1	1
Other: MFCS	4	2
Police	2	2
Community Alcohol & Drug Worker/NADACA	0	0
Native Council of Nova Scotia	0	0
Other	2	0
<b>EMPLOYMENT SITUATION ENTERING THE CENTRE:</b>		
Not employed/not looking for work/social assistance	17	24
Unemployed/EI	1	2
Occasional employment	0	0
Employed full-time/part-time	2	2
Self employed	0	0
Attending School	1	0
<b>PHYSICAL DISABILITIES:</b>		
Mobility	4	1
Visual	0	0
Hearing	0	0
Other	0	1
None	17	26
<b>LEFT ABUSE SITUATION BEFORE:</b>		
Yes	18	14
No	1	10
Not Known	2	4



# Mi'kmaw Family Healing Program continued...



	WE'KOQMA'Q	MILLBROOK
<b>USED SHELTER BEFORE:</b>		
Yes	17	12
No	2	16
Not Known	2	0
<b>REASON FOR LEAVING CENTRE:</b>		
Returned home	4	6
Found alternative housing	3	9
Asked to leave	3	3
Didn't like shelter	0	4
No known reason	4	1
Other	4	5
Access visit over	0	0
Going to Rehab	0	0
Still at MFHP Centre	4	2
<b>DESTINATION/SITUATION:</b>		
Returned home to unchanged situation	2	5
Returned home to changed situation	2	3
Relatives/Friends/neighbors	6	9
Own new place/private housing	0	0
Own new place/assistance housing	0	0
Other shelter	4	2
Second stage housing	0	2
Other	2	4
Not Known	2	3
Alcohol & Drug Rehab Centre	0	0
Still at MFHP Centre	4	2
<b>Total Bed Stays for Women and Children</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>1278</b>
<b>Total Access Visits: not overnight</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Total Access Visits: Overnight</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Total Crisis Calls</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>AGE GROUPS - WOMEN:</b>		
15-24	8	6
25-34	7	9
35-50	6	8
51+	1	5
<b>AGE GROUPS - CHILDREN</b>		
0-2	5	4
3-5	1	3
6-10	1	3
11-15	1	3
16+ w/mother	1	0

# Family & Community Resource Program

## Maw-lukutimk Apoqnmuksinew

### Wkjisu'k aqq Wutanl

Sipekne'katik Office Team:

Supervisor: Matilda Koopman (Retired-May 31st, 2022)

Workers: Catherine Tomer, Glen Knockwood & Courtney Philips

Eskasoni Office Team:

Supervisor: Diana Christmas

Workers: Jeannie Googoo, Julia Gale, Norman Sylliboy & Jaylene Sylliboy (PT Administration)

The Family & Community Resource teams work directly with our Mi'kmaw First Nation communities, and 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 inter-agency committees, First Nation schools, Health Directors and Health Centers, Mental Health and Addictions Services, Native Friendship Centre, NADACA and Chief & Councils. All programs embrace Mi'kmaw Traditional Teachings, Values, Beliefs and Culture.

Due to Covid-19, Public Health & Safety regulations and mandatory Emergency lockdowns, Family & Community staff were prohibited from visiting communities and or providing in-person programs within communities. In November 2021, Family & Community was permitted to schedule and start programming with Covid-19 protocols applied, however, the provincial case numbers rose, and in-person programming was again on hold. Since the onset of Covid 19, regular face to face workshops and program delivery has been very sporadic. This is reflective in our in-person core program charts.



However, staff were able to participate in virtual meetings, conduct virtual in-house training and participate in a wide spectrum of Virtual Webinars, Health & Wellness Conferences, Workshops, Mikmaw Language classes and Trauma Informed Practice Training. Also, this training provided staff with Participant certificates. Much of this Training was very useful to staff as our staff and Teams received little Training in the past several years. Overall, Covid 19 with its restrictions had its pros and cons, with the Pros allowing our staff to participate in much needed informative virtual workshops and Training.

This year I had an opportunity to supervise Tammy Bernard an MSW Student, attending Sir Wilfred Laurier University. Unfortunately, Tammy did not have an opportunity to visit our offices in Eskasoni or Shubenacadie due to Covid 19 restrictions. However, thanks to Zoom, we were able to meet weekly, allow for in-house training with staff from both offices and she was able to participate in webinars, workshops, and conferences. Tammy's Field Placement ended with Mikmaw Family & Children Services May 25th, 2022. Tammy will be Graduating with her



## Family & Community Resource Program continued...

### Eskasoni Core Programs 2021-2022

Months	2BBOYS		Girl Power		Sacred Teaching		Wellness		Parenting	
	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended
April					1	18				
May										
June										
July										
August										
September					2	18				
October					1	30			1	5
November					1	10			2	10
December									1	5
January										
February										
March										
<b>Totals:</b>					<b>5</b>	<b>76</b>			<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>

### Eskasoni: Events 2021-2022 Virtual webinars, Conferences, Training and Committee meeting

Months	F&C info/support session		Interagency, Apoquamawey Kitmanaq		Agency, stakeholder, committee Meeting		Virtual cultural Training/webinars/		OHS Meeting		Virtual conferences	
	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended
April	2	16			2	22	9	190				
May					2	55	10	205	1	10	1	70
June	1	40	1	20	2	7	5	95	2	20	2	100
July					1	6			1	5	1	100
August					1	4						
September	1	40			5	102	4	90	1	10	4	260
October	1	10	1	15	1	20	4	190			4	400
November			1	15	1	5			1	10		
December			1	10	4	35					2	150+
January					2	9					1	65
February	1	4			2	50	2	100+			3	280
March			1	15	1	20					3	440
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1585</b>

### Eskasoni Staff Training, Conferences & Webinars attended: Ap31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 ril 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, to March

Master Social Work Degree from Sir Wilfred Laurier University in October, 2022.

Congratulations to Matilda Koopman on her retirement as Supervisor for the Family & Community Resource program. She will be greatly missed by the Eskasoni and Sipekne'katik Teams.

- "Listening to One Another"-Facilitators McGill University

- Medicine Wheel Teachings: Cassie and Jeannie
- Mikmaw Ceremonies & Traditional Teachings: Julia and Catherine
- "Indigenous Grief & Trauma Informed Practice"-Thunderbird
- Etuaptmunk, "Two Eyed Seeing"- Albert Marshall
- Mikmaw Language classes- Michele Marshall
- Mikmaw Pride Training workshops- Norman Sylliboy & Wilma Simon
- LGBTQ Symposium
- Empowering Kids Affected by Family Addiction: Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

## Family & Community Resource Program continued...

- Indigenous Mental Wellness & Addiction Training- Atlantic Policy Congress
- Domestic Violence & its Affects on Families
- Learning Lodge on Mikmaw Livelihood Rights- St Xavier University
- Healing Collective Trauma Practice
- Understanding Two-Spirited, from a Mikmaw Perspective- Nick Phillips
- Atlantic Indigenous Health Conference- Atlantic Policy Congress
- Taking Care of Our Own Parenting workshop-

- Julia & Jeannie
- Vicarious Trauma Webinar-Thunderbird
- Mikmaw Maliceet Atlantic Youth Conference- Atlantic Policy Congress
- Trauma informed Practice: CASW
- 2SLGBTQ1A Gender Violence Training
- Decolonizing Healing Journey
- Sexual Exploitation of Children & Youth- TESS
- Tess: Module 6, Supporting impacted Parents
- Mikmaw Cultural Practices: Jeannie & Julia
- Grief & Bereavement: Crisis & Trauma Resource Institute

### Sipekne'katik: In Person Core Programs 2021-2022

Months	2BBOYS		Girl Power		Sacred Teaching		Wellness		Parenting	
	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended	Sessions	Attended
April										
May									4	2
June										
July									4	6
August										
September									5	5
October									5	5
November					1	7				
December										
January										
February										
March										
Totals:					1	7			18	18

### Family & Community Resource Department: Sipkne'katik

#### Other 2021-2022

Months	In-house Virtual Training		F&C Team Virtual/Office		Cultural & meet with community		Virtual Conference & Webinars	
	Events	Attended	Meeting	Attended	Event	Attended	Event	Attended
April	4	40	4	4	1	25	1	4
May	2	4	4	4	1	25	1	2
June	1	8	4	4				
July			4	4				
August	4	4	4	4			2	2
September			4	4	11	16		
October			4	4	9	36		
November			4	4	2	15		
December			4	4				
January	2	4	4	4				
February	3	200	4	4				
March	3	4	4	4	6	14	1	4
Totals:	19	264	48	48	30	131	5	12



# Family Support and Case Aid Program

## Apoqnmujik Wkjksu'k

### Supervisors:

Deborah Boyd & Leeann Higgins

The Family Support Program promotes the wellness and healing of Mi'kmaq children, youth and families by delivering culturally based 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 people in all Indigenous communities in Nova Scotia and also in urban areas under special agreements, through family based home visitation.

Referrals to the Family Support Program are received internally through multiple Agency departments. Family Support provides help to families through a strengths based, trauma informed and holistic approach. Our work is guided by the Seven Sacred Teachings: Love, Courage, Honesty, Respect, Wisdom, Truth, and Humility and our mission is to build on the resilience of families.

The framework of the Family Support Program is based on concepts of wellness from the Medicine Wheel and the perspective of Etuaptmuk (Two Eyed Seeing). Etuaptmuk was developed by Eskasoni Mi'kmaq elder Albert Marshall and refers to seeing the strengths of Indigenous ways with one eye, and simultaneously seeing the strengths of Western ways with the other eye. Family Support integrates traditional and contemporary information in a holistic manner, encouraging balance with one's spiritual, emotional, mental and physical well being. Exploring indigenous programs and how

we can infuse Mi'kmaq culture, language and teachings within our supportive work with each family is ongoing. Humility plays an important part in our work, in which we offer a bundle of resources to parents and youth in the beginning of our contact. These include books, program information, seven sacred teachings cards and a smudge bowl kit. This sets the tone of establishing a respectful and culturally humble connection with families using our services.

The certified training family support staff received this year through Thunderbird Partnership Foundation and The Listening to One Another Program enriched our understanding of trauma informed approaches through an indigenous lens, enabling us to provide effective methods and practices with families. Family support workers connect with families in a way which engages their cooperation and commitment to change by being sensitive to the trauma they have experienced. Family Support Workers forge a close connection with those receiving services and recognize that every family has strengths and an ability to achieve their full potential. We work closely with families to mutually develop goals in program delivery (resources, material and planning) and build on their confidence and hope.



“Wellness from an indigenous perspective is a whole and healthy person expressed through a sense of balance of body, mind, emotion and spirit. Central to wellness is belief in one's connection to language, land, beings of creation, and ancestry, supported by a caring family and environment.” (Elder Jim Dumont)

## Family Support and Case Aid Program continued...

Family Support works closely with case management teams and also supports families participating in the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Conference Program. Family support is also involved in the Immediate Response Circles, the MAK Program (Mawi-Apoqmatultijik Anko'taqatite'wk Program) with Family Resource Foster Care Program and is part of a working group looking at how family support can provide services to adoption families. Referrals continue to increase in supporting parents whose children are in Customary Care. This has enabled children to remain in their community with family, while their parent (s) engages in supports to address their personal health and well being with the outcome of family reunification and preservation.

Referrals to the family support program are becoming more complex and demands more resources from the department in terms of meeting the unique needs of each family. One referral often has multiple people attached to requesting services, such as parents, youth, children and AFC caregiver or foster parent. A typical file can have as many as three people in separate locations receiving family support services by one family support worker. Some files have two workers assigned in order to meet the goals for support services in a timely and consistent manner. Our statistics reflect each "identified client"; however, attached to each client can be one or two additional people. Our goal is to provide a whole family approach in supporting positive outcomes for families. Communication continues to be our best way to bridge the gaps in services as we strive to meet regularly with caseworkers and community supports and stakeholders. Each program supervisor attends regular communications meetings with office supervisors in order to maintain the lines of

communication among the departments and discuss ways our departments can work in tandem to support each others' mandate and collectively and collaboratively work together in the best interest of our families.

### Case Aide Program

Case Aides are an essential part of the Case Management Team. They schedule, train, help recruit service providers and work collaboratively with the referring social workers in providing a variety of services to families, children and adults through requests for transportation, access visitation and youth support. Our program ensures that service providers are appropriately and consistently 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. We navigated through challenging periods where there was changeover in staffing and the continuous changes regarding guidelines from the Covid-19 Pandemic. This led to senior case aide staff taking on multiple roles, for which we are grateful. Both offices are fully staffed to better serve our families, children in care, share the workload and better manage our resources. A Case Aide is dedicated for the Eskasoni and Mainland offices for Children in Care and they are part of a working group in the development of the Kepmitle'si Program. These case aides attended certified cultural camp curriculum training through Carrier Sekani Family Services : Back to the Land: A Guide to Indigenous Cultural Resurgence through Youth Culture Camps. Streamlining case aide tasks and the use of accessing information on the shared drive through Excel has also contributed to the smooth operation in the department for transportation, access visitation, youth support,





## Family Support and Case Aid Program continued...

scheduling, service provider training, invoicing and service agreements.

Throughout the ebb and flow of changes regarding the pandemic guidelines, we are very fortunate that our service providers stayed with us. We continue to encourage access to be family led wherever possible. We now have a steady flow of applicants to become service providers with our Agency and this has alleviated stress associated with finding available service providers to meet the requests for services.

### Coping With Covid

The pandemic posed less of a challenge with the delivery of services this year for family support workers, in which the transition from in person to virtual was smoother due to staff having the technical tools and confidence to provide quality and continuous services (I pads and laptops). Staff took advantage of free training available through virtual conferences. Providing services virtually was challenging in some areas with poor internet service and families having access to minutes for their telephones. Family support worked closely with case management to ensure families were provided minutes by the Agency. Despite these obstacles, family support and case aide workers were very determined in making sure families were consistently contacted and supported. We have had to adapt to living with the realities of Covid, which has created absenteeism of our service providers and therefore case aides and family support workers have been approved to fill this void when necessary. The continuity of services to our families is a testimony of our staff's dedication, commitment and resilience in meeting these challenges head on with incredible strength and determination.

### Trends and Highlights

- Training to build on skills in providing trauma

informed support to families through an indigenous lens

- Use of technical tools to capture data on shared drive for case aides
- Updating forms
- Mi'kmaq language classes
- Regular team and unit meetings
- Staff received laptops to work between office and home during pandemic
- Monthly videoconferencing with program supervisors and manager Kristen Basque to :
  - Review, assess and evaluate tasks/goals of work plans
  - Update job descriptions
  - Covid-19 Pandemic Public Health Guidelines for Family Support, Access, Youth Support and Transportation.
  - Ensure consistent practice and resources between offices.
  - Training to reflect culture and current trends in service delivery
- Two indigenous students from NSCC completed placements in the Family Support
- Team outings resumed for self care
- Supervisors 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 and also support Adoption parents.
- We continue to participate in community working groups: Eskasoni Maw Apoqnumuanej Kikmanaq.
- Supervisors submit monthly reports to Program Manager detailing statistics, highlights and challenges which serve to better evaluate our programs and meet program objectives.
- Completed group training for all youth support service providers on Mi'kmaq Culture from Family and Community Healing Program
- Presentations to agency departments on programs and services
- Successful outcomes from service provider recruitment

## Family Support and Case Aid Program continued...

- Implemented tracking system for invoices in collaboration with finance
  - Rates and Reimbursable Guidelines for Service Providers: Program Supervisors meetings with finance supervisor and comptroller prior to the start of the fiscal period to review issues regarding rates and reimbursable guidelines. This will take place every year.
  - Rates for service providers have been approved for increase starting April 1, 2022.
  - Continuity of Services : Services can adapt in order to maintain consistency through Technology Tools for family support sessions, youth support and access families when needed.
  - Staffing roles: Case Aides have been streamlined for transportation, access (protection) and youth support and all requests from Children in Care.
  - Family support continues to build a library of resources on culturally based parenting programs.
- Training:**
- Two Eyed Seeing: Elder Albert Marshall
  - Mental Wellness Team information session
  - Human Trafficking and Exploitation Awareness
  - Listening to One Another Indigenous Parenting and Youth Support Program Training
  - Intake presentation to staff from intake supervisors.
  - Virtual Training: Indigenous Health : Atlantic Policy Congress
  - Certified Training: Thunderbird Partnership Foundation
  - Virtual Training: Indigenous Mental Wellness and Addiction
  - ICM Documentation and CFSA Timeline Training: Agency Legal Department /Manager Protection Services
- Self Care for staff :Access to cultural resources / training
  - Learning opportunities for Staff
  - Regular Team & Unit Meetings: Continuity of Services in Units/ info sharing/Strategic Planning.
  - To be fully staffed to meet the needs of the families accessing services through the Family Support and Case Aide Departments.
  - Monthly reports from staff/ supervisors to Program Manager
  - Access elders to provide additional support to families.
  - Work in collaboration with the Weli-Iknmakwemk/Blessings of Life Coordinator to develop a comprehensive list of resources available for all parents accessing services through this agency.
  - Update orientation manual for new workers and service providers.
  - Family Support and Case Aide Forms and document updates are ongoing.
  - Regular presentations to Agency Teams on Family Support and Case Aide Programs.
  - Communication Strategy: Update Brochures; Updates on Website; information cards for parents on access procedures, videos on programs and services.
  - Service Provider Recruitment strategy to attract Mi'kmaq Applicants and applicants who are experienced in land based teachings.
  - Service provider group training and yearly re-certification
  - Professional development for staff through Agency, DCS, Community Stakeholders, webinars from Achieve, CTRI (Crisis Trauma Resource Inst.), You Tube and Pride on self care, communication, understanding trauma, impact of residential schools, reconciliation, etc. Share resources with Service providers.
  - Technology training to build confidence in using multiple platforms

### Goals for 2022-2023

#### Family Support and Case Aide Departments:



## Family Support and Case Aid Program continued...

Total: Family Support Program Referrals Received : 244 referrals

Total Number of Sessions: 2808

	<u>Eskasoni</u> Office (Cape Breton)	Mainland Office
Early Intervention	25	25
Monitoring	1	0
IRC	10	8
Supervision order	37	33
Supervision Order/Customary Care	27	21
Children in Care	21	3
Temporary Care and Custody	6	5
Foster Care	5	5
Over 16 Youth Support	2	2
Contracted Families	0	0
MAK	3	2
<b>TOTAL FILES</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>104</b> (new60/closed65)
<b>TOTAL SESSIONS</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>1687</b>



### Case Aide Program 2021-2022

#### Eskasoni

Drives Completed	414
Access families	64
Access /completed sessions	1345
Youth Support	46
Youth /Child Completed sessions	821
Number of invoices	2275

#### Mainland

Youth and Child	47
Y/C Sessions	689
Access families	33
Access Completed	2159
Drives Completed	1321
PCC Youth/Child	23
PCC Y/C Sessions	775
PCC Access Families	16
PCC Access Completed	202
PCC Drives	343
PCC Family Support Families	14
PCC Family Support Sessions	79



# Children in Permanent Care and Custody

## Siaw-wsua'luj Mijua'ji'i

### Supervisors:

Denise Maracle, BSW, RSW  
(Indian Brook)

Sheena Williams-Denny, BSW, RSW  
(Eskasoni)

This is our second year in the pandemic and while we have worked out some issues, it has still been a struggle. On the mainland, there has been additional turmoil in the form of having to move locations. We are currently settled in Dartmouth but are anxiously waiting for a more permanent location.

We are getting back to having in person meetings slowly and this has sorely been missed. We are now seeing how much families have been struggling through the lock down. We have continued to deliver services to our youth and families but it is not the same as meeting face to face. Everyone is happier that things are starting to open up, there has been a hybrid model of in person and virtual for school settings and youth can now see their friends more regularly. Access was another service that had to be implemented in a different way. During the lock down many of our regular meetings had to be completed virtually but social workers were able to visit their youth while following COVID protocol, wearing masks, staying 6 feet apart etc.

Our youth have been resilient though this tumultuous time, doing the work they are required to do for the most part. We have offered service to our youth and care givers virtually, like therapy, youth support and even Wikimanej Kikmanaq circles have been done virtually during the times the Nova Scotia Provincial government has enforced a state of

emergency.

At the time that some of our youth would be moving on independently, it was recognized that it would be unfair to send them off during this uncertain time unsupported. The agency and government agreed that youth would be provided an opportunity to have additional financial support during this time of state of emergency. The Post Care and Custody Agreement Covid Extension has been continued and will end June 2022. The agency supported 6 youth through this program. We also had 3 PCCAs for education continue through this time.

At year end the Mainland PCC team had 25 youth in permanent care, 1 youth return home to parent, 4 youth were transferred to the Disability Support Program, 4 youth on an Education PCCA, 6 PCCA Covid Extensions and 2 youth supported through our Over 16 program.

The Eskasoni PCC team had 43 youth in permanent care, 2 youth in PCCA's and 1 youth under a YS agreement, 3 youth moved home with parents and their care status was terminated, 8 children moved to adoption, 5 youth exited care at the age of 19 and 1 youth passed away.

The supervisors and the newly appointed committee continue to work on the Kepmite'lsi program to hopefully have it up and running for 2022/2023.



# Protection – Temporary Care and Custody

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

### Supervisors:

Yvonne Doucette, BACS, BSW, RSW

Pauline Inglis-Assaff, RSW

Child Protection investigates reports of alleged child abuse and neglect, attempts to reduce the risk of harm and, when necessary, provides out of home support for children when it is believed a child is at imminent risk of harm and the child's safety and well being cannot be assured by any other means, and, the identified risk may be mitigated with the engagement of the parent, and service provision and support by the agency. The overall goal is the return of the child to the parent. When the goal of reunification is not possible due to unalleviated risk, creating a permanency plan for the child/youth is essential. Permanency planning may include exploring family/community placements, adoptions or Permanent Care and Custody (PCC).

The Temporary Care & Custody team is a vital part of the Protection team and provides services to children and youth who are unable to remain in the home during the Child Protection involvement. Children and Youth

unable to remain in the family home may be involved with the Agency as a child taken into the temporary care and custody of the Agency (TCC), or, as a child in care of an individual other than the Agency or the parent/primary caregiver (Customary Care Supervision Order).

The TCC team is responsible for providing supports and services to Customary Caregivers caring for children under the Supervision of the Agency. Customary caregivers are eligible for nominal monetary supports provided through the Alternative Family Care Program (AFC). When a child is unable to remain in the home, they are assigned a Temporary Care & Custody Social Worker, who will work directly with the child/youth. The TCC Social Worker will assess the needs of the child and implement support services. The TCC worker is responsible for the child's physical, emotional, psychological, educational, behavioural and cultural/spiritual needs while in Temporary Care. When a child/youth is unable to remain in the home, but a family or community member is identified to provide care for the child, the TCC worker will monitor the care of the child and collaborate with the caregiver to ensure the child's basic needs are met and support services are in place; the Customary Caregiver has legal custody of the child.

The Temporary Care & Custody team saw a continued decrease in the number of children being taken into care and an increase in Customary Caregiver Supervision orders; as has been the trend since the advent of the AFC financial program in 2018. From April 1, 2021 to March 31 2022 the Agency opened a total of 54 Customary Caregiver homes (18 mainland, 36 Cape Breton) and took 6 youth into care (3



## Protection – Temporary Care and Custody continued...

mainland, 3 Cape Breton). The mainland office closed 14 Customary Care homes utilizing the AFC program; Of the closed homes 5 saw children returned to their parental home, 1 child went PCC and there were 2 placement breakdowns which saw children be placed at an alternate Customary Care home which subsequently closed with PSA's (Parenting Support Act) in place; 6 homes closed with PSA's in place..

The success of Customary Care and AFC program has resulted in more children remaining in their communities, connected to their culture, family and friends, and reflects the power and resilience of community in caring for families and youth.

The Eskasoni office has closed 31 AFC files closed over the last year; there are presently 27 AFC homes open. The Eskasoni TCC team has worked with 10 children in TCC over the last year and has provided supports and services to over 80 children; at least 45 children have been returned home or were placed in the care and custody of a family member. At the end of the fiscal year TCC is working with 3 children with TCC status and 49 children with S3 status. There were at least 5 children who entered PCC after being in Customary care; and two children



from TCC were granted PCC status.

The 2021/22 year has been a successful, but challenging year for the TCC team. The global pandemic created barriers to contact and service delivery for families and workers. The Agency implemented numerous Covid-19 practices and protocols in response to the ever-changing crisis. Agency workers worked diligently to meet the challenges presented and successfully implemented virtual supports and services whenever possible, provided technology to families to support their ability to engage in services and reduce isolation, implemented virtual access, when in-person access was not possible, and were mindful of increasing contacts with youth and caregivers during all phases of the Pandemic.

Throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Agency saw an increase in families struggling with substance abuse and mental health concerns for adults and youth; compounded by the reduced availability of mental health and addictions services and excessive wait-times for Public and Private services. The cumulative effects of these ongoing issues, negatively impacts outcomes for our families. The TCC team has relied heavily on Agency supports



## Protection – Temporary Care and Custody continued...



through The Wikmanej Kikmanaq program, Family Support Program, Healing Centers, and Community/Prevention program to fill pandemic related service gaps.

The TCC team works to support Customary Caregivers, as well as the youth in their care. Customary Caregivers are crucial to children, youth and families involved with the Agency, however, the level of supports available through the AFC program fall short of the needs. TCC Workers and Customary Caregivers have consistently expressed the need to have daycare, babysitting and respite supports included in the Provincial AFC program.

Currently, Customary Caregivers are referred to community supports, such as Jordan's Principle to secure funding for the above noted services; however, Caregivers are required to source their own service providers, which can be a barrier for them. In consideration of the ongoing placement crisis within the province, revisiting the limits and structure of the AFC program may well be beneficial to the long-term outcomes for youth, families, and communities. It is a primary goal of the TCC department to

preserve family and community placements that may struggle without supplemental support.

### Staffing & Training

Between the two offices there are two TCC Supervisors (1 Mainland and 1 Cape Breton) and 8 TCC Social Workers (4 mainland, 4 Cape Breton). Currently there are 3 TCC positions waiting to be filled and 1 currently vacant due to maternity leave.

TCC workers, like all Social Workers, prefer to prioritize

in-person contact and direct-work with youth and families. The Pandemic restrictions, staffing issues and the overly burdensome administrative and documentation requirements of TCC continues to pose challenges to in-the-field service delivery and relationship building.

The Agency is exploring Social Work Assistant positions to help alleviate the administrative burdens of our work.

The TCC team has engaged in mandatory and voluntary training opportunities throughout the year. Topics of training events attended include, but are not limited to, CORE training, PRIDE training, legal training, Youth Sexual Exploitation, Addiction and Interventions and other trauma-informed sessions available through the agency and the Department of Community Services, Workplace mental health training, Self preservation skills, Vicarious Trauma, Social Work Ethics and ongoing professional development training opportunities.

# Child Protection - Long Term Protection Services

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

## Teli-ikaluj Mijua'ji'jk

### Supervisors:

Madeleine Jeffery & Wendy Aboud (Unama'ki)  
Jen McKelvie & Kelly Ford (Mainland)

### Department Goals:

The Long-term Protection program begins working with families once the Intake and Investigation stage is complete and an identified child protection concern is determined. The Program offers supports and services to family's youth and children in order to prevent or alleviate any child protection concerns there were identified through the Intake and Investigation stage. Once a family is open to Long Term services a Culturally Safe Case Plan is developed, the family is offered to participate in a Wikimanej Kikmanaq to establish family and community supports and to develop a Case Plan based on the child's, families and caregivers needs as identified by the family. The circle allows social workers as well as the family's supports to attend, such as, their family, community and any professional that is working with the family to support them through their own healing journey. This has been the practice for a number of years and it has been the strength that the Agency has built partnerships between families, members of the family, identified support systems as well as the community, which not only strengthens the families we are directly working with but also the community as a whole. The circle continues to be a huge asset within the Protection Team and the families that have utilized this unique service have been having positive experiences as well as being able to understand and develop their own Case Plan in a culturally appropriate manner.

The Long-Term protection program also works

with families under an Early Intervention Agreement where families work cooperatively and collaboratively with the Agency, the family understands the identified protection concerns and voice their willingness to work with the Agency to alleviate those concerns. The Agency is able to offer this type of involvement when the risk to the child is deemed low and more intensive services are not required. When the risk to the child is deemed high, the Long-Term Protection program works with families under court orders which include, Supervision Order, Customary Care Supervision Order (Alternative Family Care) and Temporary Care and Custody Order. The Agency continues to explore family and community placements for children, when the risk to the child is deemed too high that the child is no longer safe in their parent's care.

Since the Agency continues to build relationships with the communities as well as being able to offer funding through the Alternative Family Care program many children are placed with their families or a community placement. This has continued to reduce the number of children in Temporary Care and Custody of the Agency, meaning children are not in the care of the Agency and are with their families or community members during a very stressful and challenging time for the child, parents, families and community.

The Long-Term Protection Team continues to be mindful of the placements of children and the importance of keeping children in their communities and with their extended families whenever possible. The Long-term protection program is committed to keeping children with family and community when possible, and this continues to be explored during the time the parent is not in the parenting role. Services





## Child Protection - Long Term Protection Services continued...

offered within our Agency include Family Support programming, Wikimanej Kikmanaq and programming through the Healing Centers. The Agency continues to work with the Health Centers in each community in order to have parents set up with programs within their own communities, however if a parent identified that they wish to have services outside of the community this is also facilitated in order for the parent to complete the work to alleviate the protection concerns. It is also important that there are times when a court file can close, and we continue offering services under an Early Intervention in order to maintain the progress the families have made and continue offering services that the families have found helpful in a voluntary way. The Long-term protection team continues to have the same goal, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children while considering impacts of historical trauma and offering services to families that are culturally appropriate and safe and utilizing the community, family and parents of children in order to do so.

### Challenges/Solutions:

Staff Retention continued to be an on-going challenge for both Eskasoni and Mainland offices; staff shortages negatively effects both the families we work with as well as the workers who have to absorb the extra duties. To help remedy the situation Supervisors would regularly check in with workers to see how to best support them and help prioritize work duties. The Agency as a whole did regular job postings and interviews, took on BSW students and created a Social Work Assistant position. Currently both offices are fully staffed.

Long Term Child Protection during the second year of a Global Pandemic – Covid continued to provide unique challenges for both workers and families. The Agency was very responsive to

addressing the on-going concerns by developing various strategies, such as FGC via Zoom, providing phones and phone minutes to clients, and providing up-dated technology to workers so we could continue to provide services to families to address protection concerns.

The Mainland office faced another significant challenge when they were evicted from the office in Indian Brook. Long Term workers had to work from home once again, which caused a disconnect from their co-workers and caused further challenges in receiving information/reports in a timely manner. Being evicted from the community also caused regression in the relationships which have been cultivated over time between MMF and the communities we serve. The Agency is working to remedy this by providing temporary offices in the Dartmouth area while preparing to rebuild in a new community; there are also ongoing meetings with the communities we serve to help repair the working relationship.

### Staffing:

Currently, the Long-term Child Protection Teams are both at full compliment and are as follows:

#### Unama'ki (Cape Breton)

- Two Supervisors
- Ten Long-term Social Workers
- One Administration Assistant

#### Mainland

- Two Supervisors
- Eight Long-term Social Workers
- One Administration Assistant

### Training:

This past year our employees were offered various training opportunities to engage and promote their professional development. Unlike other years, these training sessions were held virtually, which allowed us to reform and adjust to COVID-19 and enhance our skills and abilities by continuing to engage in community

## Child Protection - Long Term Protection Services continued...

training events, as well as mandatory training, which included, but not limited to:

- *Fundamentals of Child Welfare*
- *Fundamentals of Child Protection*
- *IACSA (Sexual Abuse Interviewing)*
- *Domestic Violence Training (2-day)*
- *Trauma Informed Approaches in Our Work. Understanding and Practice (Thunderbird)*
- *Indigenous Mental Wellness and Addictions Training*
- *Indigenous Helper Wellness: Building Skills for Self-Care*
- *Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking with Karly Church*
- *Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation*
- *Understanding and Working with Youth Who Have Been Sexually Exploited/Trafficked*
- *Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence*
- *Intake 101- Receiving Referrals*

### Student Placements:

The Eskasoni Office was able to house three BSW Students this past year and we are pleased to advise that two of our Students were hired in Long-term Protection upon completion of their placement and degree.

### Achievements, Special Projects and Special Events:

Our greatest achievement over the last year has been talking a Family Focussed Approach and implementing prevention programs and services. Special projects will include the promotion of preventative services and programs, engaging families; while promoting our Alternative Family Care Program, where children can remain in the home of their family.

The Long-Term Protection Department is planning to develop a video to explain our work to communities and individuals. We will be able to send the video to all Bands and incorporate it within the MFCS website for anyone to access. We are hoping to dispel myths often associated with our work by making the video and to supplement it with an in-person presentation where requested.

### Goals for the upcoming year:

It is the goal of the Long-Term department to enhance specific Mi'kmaq cultural practices within the healing work for families. To incorporate both traditional methods for managing risk to children and modern Mi'kmaq knowledge. As such we will be adapting our case plans to embed our services within a Mi'kmaq framework, utilising community resources where possible. We are fortunate to be able to offer Agency services of Wikimanej Kikmanaq, Healing Centres, Mi'kmaq teachings within Family Support as well as cultural mentors for our children. We will also continue to liaise with community partners NADACA, Jordan's Principle, Eskasoni Mental Health, Community Health Centres, the Youth Project, Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq, KMKNO, police services, MK and schools/daycares in all Bands of the province. While we continue to bring files before provincial courts, our goal is to highlight to the Family Court judiciary, the need for Mi'kmaq specific services as the means to foster positive change within the Mi'kmaq families we serve.

We aim to develop a range of culturally relevant services within our case plans including sweats, drumming, language classes, elder consultations, and ceremony. We would like to provide teachings and materials for clients to use Mi'kmaq craftwork in mindfulness practices, included within Dialectical Behaviour Therapy and to increase emotional regulation. Whilst over the past year pandemic restrictions caused the Long-Term Protection team to adopt new working practices, they also enabled us to become creative in our work of providing services to adult caregivers to alleviate risks to children. Incorporating more technology within our work will enable clients to receive services remotely and benefit from the ever-growing volume of indigenous virtual programming across the continent.



# Kinship and Foster Care

## Anko'tasultijik Mijua'ji'jk

### Supervisors:

Jodi Phillips, BSW, RSW

Foster Care Mainland

Sheraine Young, BSW, RSW

Foster Care Cape Breton 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 parents 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 the child with suitable homes based on the child's needs, behaviors, and age. 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 are not limited to, relationship with the child such as extended family or community members, culture, language, 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:

- 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;
- 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."

### Goals:

1. An essential goal for foster care continues to be recruitment. The Agency needs to recruit Mi'kmaw families to ensure our children

## Kinship and Foster Care continued...

coming into care remain within their communities or within a Mi'kmaw foster home.

2. Seeking kinship homes when possible.
3. Retention of current foster homes.
4. Maintaining support for our foster families by providing training, MAAK circles, home visits, guidance, and emotional support.
5. Continue working collaboratively with the other departments within the Agency to support our existing foster homes.
6. Networking with the 13 Mi'kmaw communities and various Mi'kmaw organizations within NS.
7. Provide MAAK circles for all new conditional kinship foster homes.

### Special Events

Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services hosts an annual Foster Family Appreciation event, one in Eskasoni and one in Indian Brook. This is a day when the Agency can demonstrate its appreciation to the foster families, for their dedication they show to our children in care. It also gives foster families an opportunity to support and connect with each other. Due to Covid-19, these events had to be altered to accommodate the provincial restrictions.

Foster parents are recognized each year by the Department of Community Services (DCS) for their 5, 10, 15 or more years of service. Certificates were hand delivered to the foster parents.

The Indian Brook Foster Care team arranged care packages, which were delivered to each of our foster families.

The Eskasoni Foster Care team organized a Foster Family Appreciation event. They participated in a cultural journey tour on Goat Island.

### Trends

- Our long-term foster homes continue to close, either due to children aging out of care or being adopted.
- The Alternative Family Care Program continues to be the chosen option for families due to its less intrusive requirements. This has resulted in less children coming into the care of the Agency and requiring kinship/foster care placements.
- With the implementation of Mawi-Apoqmatultijik Anko'taqatite'wk circles (MAAK), more foster families are utilizing it for extra support. This has created an efficient open dialogue that allows all individuals involved with the family to discuss viable placement options, respite options and creating a support plan for the foster family. The MAAK circles are also designed to help with the retention of our foster homes.
- Covid-19 continued to impact our foster families, resulting in them requiring additional supports from their social workers and outside resources. The Agency did provide extra monetary support to help cover costs associated with Covid-19.

### Challenges and Solutions

- There is significant need for general foster parents within our Mi'kmaw communities. However, Covid 19 provincial restrictions limited recruitment efforts over the fiscal year.
- Due to Covid-19 provincial restrictions, PRIDE, ATOC and Pre-Service training have been challenging. Once provincial restrictions relaxed, the trainers commenced facilitating the training. However, they still limited the number of participants in training per session.
- There are numerous kinship foster homes that are interested in being assessed for general foster care. The foster care teams will continue to work closely with the S.A.F.E assessors to prioritize the completion of the required



## Kinship and Foster Care continued...

assessments.

- There is an increased need for respite exclusive homes. The solution would be to have potential respite providers identified during the conditional kinship assessment, S.A.F.E assessment and, the Annual Review and Update. This is especially important as respite provides the families with support to help maintain the placement.

### 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 and optional for foster/adoptive parents. Ongoing training is offered to promote the development of skills required to provide ongoing foster family assessment and support. Education and training services improves foster family retention by providing specialized training designed to develop and enhance foster parents' knowledge and skills.

### 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.

### Spring 2021: *Indian Brook*:

MODULE:	DATE:	REGISTERED
FASD	April 7, 2021	6
Module 1	April 14 & 15, 2021	6
Module 2	April 21 & 22, 2021	6
Module 3	April 29, 2021	6/Cancelled due to Covid-19
Module 4	May 6, 2021	6/Cancelled due to Covid-19.
Module 6	May 12 & 13, 2021	6/Cancelled due to Covid-19.
Module 11	May 20, 2021	6/Cancelled due to Covid-19.
Module 12	May 27, 2021	6/Cancelled due to Covid-19.
Understanding Trauma	June 15 & 16, 2021	6/Cancelled due to Covid-19.

- **The registration numbers for each group during the Spring 2021 training schedule were capped at 6 participants and 2 trainers to allow for social distancing.**
- **Modules 1, 2, and 3 were able to move forward before Covid-19 measures were returned.**
- **In addition to these modules, partnerships were made with DCS Central Region for Understanding Trauma and FASD. Both offerings were cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions.**

# Kinship and Foster Care continued...

## Fall 2021: Indian Brook:

MODULE:	DATE:	REGISTERED
Module 3	September 9, 2021	3
Module 4	September 15, 2021	7
Managing Transitions	September 23, 2021	8
Module 5	October 5, 2021	1
FASD	October 13, 2021	6
Module 6	October 20, 2021	2
Module 11	October 27, 2021	6
Module 12	November 3, 2021	11
Trauma	November 8 & 10, 2021	3

- **A partnership was formed with DCS Central Region for the Understanding Trauma and FASD.**

The content mirrors that of Foster/Adoption PRIDE Pre-Service” (Nova Scotia Foster Care Manual).

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, ATOC training had been put on hold. After Covid-19 measures were lessened, there were 17 families that were awaiting ATOC training. Five families completed the ATOC program during this fiscal period.

### Recruitment

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, recruitment events were limited. The recruitment worker was able to host in-person and online Foster Care Information Sessions for the mainland and Eskasoni. The recruitment worker also hosted a Back-to-School event in Chapel Island.

The foster care supervisors and the recruitment worker continued to work on the Annual Foster Care Recruitment Strategic Plan.

### Effective Planning and Development of Programs, Regulations and Standards

The Mawi- Apoqmatultijik Anko'taqatite'wk (MAAK) circles have been a positive addition to the foster family supports. It also aids our foster care department in recruitment and retention. Both the Eskasoni and Indian Brook foster care supervisors meet monthly to discuss pertinent information and relay the information to the teams

to ensure fluidity within the foster care program.

### Goals for the Upcoming Year

- To create a new Strategic Plan for the foster care department.
- To create a Strategic Plan specifically for recruitment. We need to create new recruitment opportunities to obtain foster homes to ensure our children coming into care stay within their communities.
- Recruitment Social Worker will continue to work with the Communications Officer to develop new recruitment material.
- To identify any foster families that may meet the criteria to become a Specialized Foster Home from the Eskasoni Office.
- Our goal for the Mawi- Apoqmatultijik Anko'taqatite'wk (MAAK) circles is to continue working with other departments to develop support plans for our foster parents.
- To provide group training opportunities for our foster families focusing on various topics that are relevant to parenting our children in care.



## Kinship and Foster Care continued...

### Stats for 2021-2022

	<u>Eskasoni</u>	<u>Indian Brook</u>
General Foster Care Referrals Received	0	6
General Foster Care Homes Opened	4	0
Current General Foster Homes	47	11
Kinship Referrals	14	15
Kinship Homes Opened	13	9
Current Kinship Homes	26	10
Kinship Homes Converted to General	1	0
Respite Exclusive Homes Opened	6	3
Current Respite Exclusive Homes	9	7
Pre-Service Training Applicants	0	0
Pre-Service Training Completed	0	0
A Traditions of Caring program Applicants	14	5
A Traditions of Caring program Completed	4	1
Closed Kinship Homes	14	4
General Foster Care Homes Closed	1	3
Exit Interviews	0	0
MAAK Referrals	4	3

## **MFCSNS AFTER HOURS CONTACT NUMBERS**

**Cape Breton 1-800-263-8300 and  
(902) 379-2433**

**Mainland 1-800-263-8686 and  
(902) 758-3553**



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

[www.mfcsns.ca](http://www.mfcsns.ca)

# Adoption Program

## Siaw-wsua'lut aqq kiskwenut Mijua'ji'i

### 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:

The intention of the Adoption program at MFCS provides 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. For our Mi'kmaw birth and adoptive families, the link between the child and their birth parents is often joined as an additional link between the child and the adoptive parents is formed.

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 when the child does not 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.

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.

The importance of gathering family history:  
One of the most important steps in providing permanency for children through adoption is ensuring that the prospective adoptive families have detailed background information about the child and the child's birth parents and extended family and community. Fully disclosing all available information is a child welfare professional's legal responsibility as well





## Adoption Program continued...

as an essential element of a successful adoption. Complete disclosure benefits the child and the adoptive family in the following ways:

- To help the prospective adoptive family make a fully informed decision.
- To ensure the adopted child will have full knowledge of his or her family, medical and genetic history.
- To help prospective adoptive parents understand what supports and services might be needed.

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 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

## Adoption Program continued...

foster parents, but adoptive parents as well.

### Recruitment Adoption outcomes for 2021/2022 year are as follows:

- Of the 5 adoptive parents approved and waiting:
- # Of prospective adoptive parents who reside in a First Nations community: 3
- # Of prospective adoptive parents not residing in a First Nations community: 2
- During the 2021/2022 fiscal year, there were 5 children placed for adoption. The Agency was not involved any inter-provincial adoptions this year. The number of adoptions finalized during this time was 6.

### Of the 6 adoptions finalized within this fiscal year a further breakdown is as follows:

- # Of children adopted by their current foster parents: 6
- # Of children adopted by new families: 0

SAFE Assessments completed for foster care: 7.

### Options Counseling:

Under the Adoption Program, Options Counseling is mandated for adoptions under Section 68, 68(A) (Agency and private voluntary relinquishments) and 70(A) (kinship private) of the CFSA. 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, the Department of Community Services requested that MFCS complete Options Counselling with 2 birth families living on reserve who were connected to off reserve family private Section 70(A) adoptions.

### 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



## Adoption Program continued...

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 2021/2022 Fiscal Year the Agency continued to provide support to 69 families through the Adoption Subsidy Program. Within these 69 families there were 118 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 (e.g., 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 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 25 adoptive families and their children to 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.

### 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 is comprised of

## Adoption Program continued...

one supervisor, one Adoption social worker along with two social 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 social 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 one supervisor, two adoption workers, one SAFE Assessor who completes assessments for adoption and foster care, an Adoption Subsidy worker, as well as an administrative support person solely dedicated to the Adoption program,

### Training Opportunities:

Our staff continue to be encouraged to seek out training opportunities pertaining to the work they are doing with families to remain aware of trends in adoption but to also increase their own knowledge base.

All children in foster care have come into care because of experiencing abuse and/or neglect. For many children, the transition to a permanent home and the termination of their birth parents' rights may trigger intense feelings of loss and grief. These feelings are natural and often occur at different stages throughout the lifelong journey of adoption. Grief that is not addressed may display itself in problem behaviors, self-medication, anger, or denial. Children and youth in foster care or who are adopted may

need help labeling their feelings and understanding that they are grieving.

The initial experience of separation from parents may also evoke a sense of rejection in children, even if they are very young. Youth who are adopted from foster care often project their feelings of rejection onto their adoptive parents. This behavior may be a sign the child is experiencing trauma—an emotional response to a past event that threatened him or her or caused physical or emotional harm. For some children, separation from their birth families can be traumatizing, especially if they do not understand why they were removed from their homes and families.

Given the above, the adoption team continues to educate themselves regarding attachment issues, grief and work from a trauma approached perspective. Due to covid-19, in person workshops have not been possible, however, all team members have actively availed themselves to attending webinars on a variety of topics to help them help adoptive families prior to placement, during placement and post placement.



## Adoption Program continued...

### Timely completion of quality reviews, compliance reviews

The mandate of the Department of Community Services (DCS), in conjunction with Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services, is to improve the services and outcomes for children both on and off First Nations communities throughout this province by way of advocacy, accountability and review, including audits. As we draw from previous Audit and Compliance reports, we continue to strive for best practice while following policy and the Agency's mandate. The transition for children from Permanent Care and Custody (PCC) to the Adoption Program, when this is identified for them, continues to be completed without undue delay.

### Ongoing Trends:

*As we reviewed this past fiscal year, the Adoption Team noted the following trends:*

- More children are moving from Protection to a Parental Support Agreement (PSA) with family as opposed to coming into the permanent care of the Agency
- With less children coming into the PCC of the Agency, less are being referred to Adoption.
- Heightened stress on subsidized adoptive families throughout Covid.
- Utilizing Wikimanej Kikmananq Family Group Conferences with Subsidized Adoption families seeking services and support for their child. During this fiscal year, unfortunately there was 1 adoption break down. We see Family Group Conferencing as an important cultural means to assist our adoptive families during a difficult time and hopefully prevent the adoption from breaking down. This services support is now recognized as a formal support that can be part of an Adoption Subsidy. To date, the Adoption Team has worked co-operatively with the coordinators of the Wikimanej Kikmananq Family Group Conference Program to ensure our Mi'kmaw adoptive parents have access to this culturally important program.

- There has been an increased need to support families through the Subsidized Adoption Program given the complexities of needs that begin to surface as children grow and develop. As children grow and mature, more needs and support continue to be required to maintain the adoptive home and prevent an adoption breakdown. A post adoption program and supports need to be available to our post adoptive families.
- Adoptive families utilizing supports through the Jordan's Principal program when a needed service is not covered under the Adoption subsidy program.
- The number of children referred to the adoption program has again decreased this year. We believe that Covid-19 has been a factor in this as well as the decrease in prospective adoptive applicants.

### Guiding Values for Adoption and Goals for the upcoming year:

- All Mi'kmaw children need a safe and loving family.
- Mi'kmaw language, culture and traditions continue to be key in considering a family for a child for adoption.
- Age and special needs are not considered a reason why a child cannot be adopted.
- Recognizing 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 (MFCS) is to provide legal advice and quality representation for all offices of MFCS in all child protection matters that take place before the Courts.

### Changes to the Legal Department

In June 2021 Madison Joe joined the legal department in Eskasoni as legal counsel, replacing Jennifer MacDonald who left to pursue other opportunities. Madison is from Membertou First Nation and has been an excellent addition to our legal team. We have a full compliment of lawyers with Madison joining our team. Cheryl Leslie filled the position of paralegal on Mainland to fill the vacancy left by Chris McConnell's retirement early in 2022. Jessie Denny moved into the role of Supervisor of Legal Services in our Eskasoni office.

**Move of the Mainland Office**  
This year created challenges with the move from Sipekne'katik First Nation on short notice. This also occurred at a time where there was a staff shortage in the legal department. There was a brief period where the legal department was housed in a temporary location in Shubenacadie but is now settled in the Dartmouth office location. The legal team continued to provide uninterrupted service during this period. The Mainland legal team worked hard to ensure the quality of legal



services was not disrupted during this transition.

### Matters Before the Court

As of March 31, 2022, 50% of Court orders (involving MFCS) had children placed in the care of their parent or guardian and 43% of Court orders were Customary Care Orders where children were placed with a family or community member. This means that 93% of court orders involving MFCS resulted in children remain within families. It is rare to have a child in the care of MFCS and not placed in a familial or community placement. As of March 31, 2022, there were 7% of our Court Orders that were Orders for Temporary Care and Custody.

While the emphasis on less intrusive placement (such as family and community) has been in place for years, an Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, Metis , children, youth and families (enacted in January 2020) codified the requirement to consider these placements as paramount, wherever possible. The emphasis



## Legal Department continued...

continues to be on maintaining family and cultural connections wherever possible. Supreme Court Family Division has completed the transition throughout the province for all family law matters. Our legal team is regularly involved with meetings and consultations with the Court about this transition and other matters respecting the Courts.

The Courts are interested and prioritizing ways for the Courts to adopt more culturally competent and aware services and practices. Our legal team is regularly consulted by the Courts regarding these changes and initiatives. 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 each of the 13 Bands which we serve in Nova Scotia.

### Covid-19

This year has been a challenging one for everyone. The second year with Covid-19 has meant that many of us have had to pivot in the way things were done and the legal department was no exception. The Courts in Nova Scotia continued to operate under an essential services model.

Child protection cases are considered essential and as such continued through the Covid-19 pandemic. The statutory timelines associated with our work did not change so matters had to proceed. Court has largely proceeded by telephone, with a few in person exceptions being made in some rare cases. This created a unique set of challenges. The legal team continued to work with judges, Court staff and the protection team to transition as seamlessly as possible to this new way of doing things. Each Court is different in their approach to proceeding. Given the changes in the Covid-19 pandemic and public restrictions, there has been an expansion in in-person proceedings. That said, the vast majority of matters continue

to be proceeding by telephone. It is expected this model will continue. Our legal team will continue to work with all stakeholders to make this process move as smoothly as possible.

### Training/Professional Development

All lawyers are required to complete annual continuing education to comply with the requirements of the Nova Scotia Barristers Society. Each lawyer is required to keep track of their annual continuing education and prepare a "continuing education plan" annually. Our lawyers receive their legal education through in person and online learning sessions as well as independent study. In addition, we are fortunate that MFCS staff training that includes topics such as human resource training and cultural training to ensure our lawyers are up to date on issues that impact their legal work and roles as staff at MFCS.

The legal team also provides training to the social work staff on legal aspects of their practice and changes within the Court.

### Goals for the Upcoming Year

The legal team continues to work closely with the social workers and supervisors to ensure that the interventions put in place to protect children in communities are the least intrusive options available to the children while at the same time, ensuring safety and well-being of children and families. The legal team will continue to provide the best legal advice available to the situations that present themselves.

# Human Resources

## Nujo'tmumk Lukwaqney

Submitted by:

Holly MacDonald, Human Resource Manager  
Pius Trainor, Occupational Health and Safety  
Coordinator

The Human Resources department consists of the Human Resource Manager, Human Resource Coordinator/Administrator, Administrative Assistant and the Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator.

On September 20, 2021, Justin Stevens joined our team as Human Resource Coordinator/Administrator and has been a great addition to the team.

This year has been different from a Human Resources perspective. With a global pandemic that spread throughout world, MFCS, like many employers, had to address unprecedented situations. The commitment, and adaptability of our employees throughout the pandemic has been commendable as we adapted to new ways of delivering services day to day.

With the unexpected move of the Sipekne'katik office our employees have temporarily moved into their new office spaces in Shubenacadie and Dartmouth. The division of office space has been understandably difficult, and we are eager to have everyone together again.

The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee continue to meet regularly and have been working on updating policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities, and committee member training. Throughout the global pandemic the JOHS committee supported employees by administering rapid testing and provided

information as it evolved.

### TRAINING

In person training and workshops have been on hold due to the pandemic.

Employees have been able to access webinars and participate in conferences online.

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The number of employment opportunities circulated from January - December 2021 increased from 15 last year to 52 postings. New positions which have been created within the agency are highlighted below.

### ESKASONI

January 25, 2021 – Family Support Worker  
February 1, 2021 – Receptionist One-year Term  
February 8, 2021 - Case Aide One-year Term  
February 16, 2021 – Long Term Protection  
Social Worker  
March 1, 2021 – Intake Supervisor  
March 17, 2021 – One-year Term Long Term  
Protection Social Worker  
April 1, 2021 – One-year term Family Support  
Worker  
April 1, 2021 – Child Welfare Specialist  
May 20, 2021 – Night Support Worker  
June 14, 2021 – Permanent Care and Custody  
Administrative Assistant  
June 22, 2021 – Legal Counsel  
June 28 - Protection Social Worker  
August 19, 2021 – Custodian  
August 23, 2021 – Long Term Protection Social  
Worker  
August 30, 2021 – Administrative Assistant 50%  
Intake 50% Family and Community  
August 30, 2021 – Receptionist  
August 30, 2021 – Receptionist  
September 7, 2021 – Intake Supervisor





## Human Resource continued...

September 20, 2021 – Human Resource  
Coordinator/Administrator  
September 27, 2021 – Intake Social Worker  
November 1, 2021 – Case Aide  
November 1, 2021 – Long Term Protection  
Social Worker  
November 29, 2021 – Case Aide

### SIPEKNE'KATIK

January 22, 2021 – Long Term Protection  
Supervisor  
January 25, 2021 – Four-month Term Social  
Work Assistant  
February 8, 2021 – Temporary Care and  
Custody Social Worker  
February 8, 2021 – Intake Social Worker  
February 15, 2021 – Family Support Worker  
April 26, 2021 – One-year Term Long Term  
Protection Social Worker  
May 31, 2021 – Long Term Protection  
Supervisor  
May 31, 2021 - Temporary Care and Custody  
Social Worker  
July 5, 2021 – 18-month Term Long Term  
Protection Social Worker  
July 19, 2021 – One-year Term Social Work  
Assistant  
Aug 23, 2021 – FGC Social Worker  
Sept 1, 2021 – Long Term Protection Social  
Worker  
Sept 7, 2021 – Long Term Protection Social  
Worker  
Oct 12, 2021 – Custodian

### Bear River:

April 19, 2021 – One-year Term Family &  
Community Resource Worker  
September 2, 2021 - Social Worker

### WE'KOKMAQ FAMILY HEALING CENTRE

February 1, 2021 – Women's Support/Outreach  
One Year Term  
April 6, 2021 – Term Men's Outreach Worker

May 20, 2021 – Night Support Worker  
August 16, 2021 – Child and Youth Outreach  
October 12, 2021 – Men's Outreach Worker  
November 22, 2021- Night Support Worker  
December 7, 2021 – Part time Administrative  
Assistant  
December 7, 2021 – Child and Youth Outreach  
December 7, 2021 – Women's  
Support/Outreach  
December 9, 2021 – Assistant Women's Support  
TERM

### MILLBROOK FAMILY HEALING CENTRE

March 1, 2021 – Women's Support/Outreach  
One Year Term  
March 15, 2021 – Women's Support Worker  
One Year Term  
March 29, 2021 - Child and Youth Outreach  
April 6, 2021 – Men's Outreach Worker  
May 5, 2021 – Night Support Worker

### RESIGNATIONS AND RETIREMENT

The global pandemic has affected many aspects  
of our lives including the workforce.  
January - December 2021 we received twenty-  
six resignations and six retirements.

***Thank you to our retirees  
for their years of service to  
the Agency, their  
commitment to our families,  
communities and  
colleagues has not gone  
unnoticed.***

# Child Protection- Intake and Investigations

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

2020-2021 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 the Agency. Intake investigations are 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 continues to utilize Early Intervention Agreements to work with families voluntarily to ensure supports and services are in place that will help to address the risks identified. By working voluntarily with families, we can focus on prevention while partnering with and utilizing appropriate community supports and resources. When involvement starts early and is proactive rather than reactive, there are better outcomes for children and families. The Intake Team strives to support families while completing thorough investigations. There continues to be fewer numbers of children coming into Agency care as the Intake Team is prioritizing family

arrangements when there is a need.

The Immediate Response Circle (IRC) program is an integral part of the intake process and continues to be utilized for low to moderate risk referrals. This goal of the program is to assist families in resolving issues by bringing family and community supports together, allowing them opportunity to develop their own strategies to resolve issues identified and to promote self-determination; all while ensuring the safety and well-being of the children.

With the ending of the Birth Alerts in Nova Scotia the Agency has developed the Expectant Parent Circle Program. This allows the Agency to be able to continue to support Expectant Parents. Although the information is received through Intake, the Intake Team has no further role and the families are supported by the Wikimanej Kikmanaq program.

### The most significant aspect for the Supports and services offered through your department (include statistics).

#### Trends over the last year, etc.:

April 2021 to March 2022 (inclusive) saw the Eskasoni Office process 690 Intakes/Referrals, which is a decrease of 73 referrals from last year. Of the 690 referrals received, the Agency made the decision to investigate 457 referrals and the decision to not investigate 233 referrals received. The Mainland Office processed 561 referrals, which is an increase of 49 referrals from last year. Of the 561 referrals received, 433 referrals were accepted for investigation and 128 were not investigated.

The predominant Major Presenting Problems identified in both offices were Risk of Physical



## Child Protection- Intake and Investigations continued...

Neglect- Parent Substance Abuse (262), Risk of Physical Harm- Inadequate Parenting Skills (225), Family Violence (208), and Child Emotional/Behavior (139).

### How any challenges were remedied:

Staff movement on the Intake Teams in both offices has not been as challenging as in previous years. For the most part, the teams have remained at full complement throughout the year.

Moving into the second year of the Global COVID-19 pandemic there have been continued challenges, however, we have created strategies to manage these while ensuring we are meeting the needs of our families.

The Mainland Office experienced a move from the Indian Brook Office which resulted in the Intake Team working from home for a period of time. The team has recently begun transitioning into their new workspace in Dartmouth, NS.

### Training:

Workers have completed CORE training online over the last year with the Department of Community Services. Some workers participated in training that focused on Child Exploitation and human trafficking. Workers have also been able to access webinars offered by the Nova Scotia Collage of Social Workers and the Canadian Association of Social Workers, that focused on self-care, stress management, and topics related to working during a Pandemic. There was collaboration with Thunderbird to provide the Agency with training regarding trauma informed approaches within an Indigenous perspective to our work. The Agency also offered PRIDE Training.

### Process efficiency and standards compliance:

The Global COVID-19 Pandemic continued to require several adaptations and modifications

through the second year; however, restrictions have slowly lifted, and we are better navigating the changes

and transitions. The team has worked hard to continue meeting the Provincial and Federal Guidelines and Standards throughout this challenging time; adapting and developing strategies to ensure we continue providing quality service to the families we work with.

### Goals for the upcoming year:

The Intake Team's goals for the upcoming year remain to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children we work with and continue to work with families in a positive, respectful, and meaningful way. It is also important that we continue building on our relationships with our community partners by working together to achieve our goals. One way we can do this is by promoting and offering circles through the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Program, including Immediate Response Circles and Family Group Circles. The Intake team maintains collaboration with the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Program to ensure families are being offered participation in Circles in a timely manner. The Intake team will continue notifying the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Program Supervisor of any new files opening to long term to allow prompt communication between the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Program and the family regarding Family Group Circles.



# Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Conference Program

## Wikimanej Kikmanaq Wkijksu'k Mawteskatultijik aqq Mawaknutma'tijik

### Supervisors:

Louise Donnelly – Indian Brook Office

Lydia Stevens – Eskasoni Office

### Department Role and Goals:

The Wikimanej Kikmanaq Family Group Circle Program is a way of giving families the opportunity to get together in a culturally safe environment to try and make the best family wellness 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 with the family. It shifts the power back to the families and empowers them to take responsibility for their children and family. But at the same time, MFCS retains the responsibility to ensure the families wellness plans meet the physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental needs of the children, and respects the culture and values of the family.

The Wikimanej Kikmanaq FGC process fosters cooperation, collaboration, and importantly communication between professionals and families. It upholds the integrity and dignity of the family by enlisting the collective power of families and their communities to address their own issues and solve their own problems. It is the goal of the program to ensure that families are empowered to develop cultural appropriate and child centered plans that encourage strong healthy Mi'kmaw families in our communities.

### Wikimanej Kikmanaq Staff and Special Events:

- The Wikimanej Kikmanaq team welcomed 2 new coordinators this year. Connie Gould joined the Eskasoni Team in October of 2020

and Billy Gloade joined the Dartmouth team in August 2021.

- Presently our teams consist of FGC Coordinators Cassandra Hillier, and Billy Gloade who work in the Mainland communities from Yarmouth to Paqtnkek. The program has hired the third coordinator in the Mainland and she will join the program in June/2022. John Denny Sylliboy, Connie Gould, Melissa Young and Jane Francis are the FGC Coordinators who work in the Cape Breton Area. Tracey Basque is the administrative assistant for both the Eskasoni office and Indian Brook office.
- Our Wikimanej Kikmanaq Coordinator Sophie Young took a 1-year educational leave to complete her Master's in Social Work. We would like to wish Sophie the best of luck and we hope to work with her very soon.
- The Eskasoni Office held a (1) one day training session which was held on Nov. 17. 2022. The training was delivered in person at the Eskasoni Office and approximately 12 staff attended this session. Dartmouth Office will offer (2) one day Wikimanej Kikmanaq Training sessions on April 12th and April 27th for staff. The training will be delivered in person and both days have fifteen participants enrolled.
- Several Wikimanej Kikmanaq staff attended a three-day "Using Trauma Informed Approaches in our work: From Understanding to Practice Training" program sponsored by Thunderbird Partnership Foundation in February/2022. Other staff attended a three-day Indigenous Mental Wellness and Addiction Virtual Training conference in February/2022.



## Wikimanej Kikmanaq continued...

- The Wikimanej Kikmanaq team continues to work collaboratively with the Intake team for IRC and ensuring all families involved with our agency are informed about the Wikimanej Kikmanej program at the initial involvement. Coordinators contact ALL families transferred to the long-term protection to explain the program using our Mi'kmaw lens. This process is working well. We would like to thank the intake, long-term, TCC, PCC, foster care, and Adoption teams for their on-going collaborations with the Wikimanej Kikmanaq program.

### Challenges and Solutions:

- The Wikimanej Kikmanaq teams have had a very busy year navigating through yet another year of the global pandemic and are continuing to adapt to new ways of delivering services to our families as well as old way of in person contact. There were months when our teams would be back to delivering our programs in person and then on a whim would swiftly have to switch back to delivering our program virtually again.
- This year our administrative assistant Tracey Basque was able to get a laptop to be able to work from home and on the road when needed.
- This year our teams were able to keep in regular contact with our families throughout the waves and restrictions to provide emotional support to our families through teleconferencing, email, text messaging and phone calls now that all team members have laptops.
- The covid management team has worked very hard to keep us all safe this past year adjusting, updating, removing, and adding to our current covid guidelines to ensure our programs are delivered safely and efficiently. We want to take this time to thank them for there hard work and dedication.



January, 2022 we collaborated with the intake team in launching the expectant parent circles (EPC) program which will be delivered by the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Team – The EPC program will help expectant parent(s) connect to resources and services within their communities to help them make plans for their expectant child(ren).

MFCS is committed to providing supportive and preventative services to expectant parents. When a referral (intake) is received by Intake and investigation department and accepted regarding an expectant parent, service will be offered and provided through Wikimanej Kikmanaq Program to ensure that the prenatal service is consistent with what will likely be in the best interests of a Mi'kmaw child. This will be on a voluntary basis; expectant parents must agree to participate in the expectant parent circle. The level of involvement will be determined by the family based on the level of need required to support the expectant parent and family.

Expectant parents will engage in a circle with family and community supports in developing a prenatal plan, birth plan and post-natal self-care plan. Similar to the Immediate Response Circles (IRC), the Expectant Parent Circles will

## Wikimanej Kikmanaq continued...

have an 8-week timeline to complete involvement. The services are voluntary and preventative in hopes that there will be no further involvement with child welfare. Circles would include family, identified supports, health centers, prenatal services available in community and any other person, stakeholder necessary to support the expectant parents.

### Goals for the upcoming year:

- The Wikimanej Kikmanaq program goals for the upcoming year are to continue to work with families and communities in a positive respectful and meaningful way.
- To continue to update and develop a resource manual for each community to help us utilize each community's supports and services both on and off reserve.
- Promote and inform communities about the services offered by the Wikimanej Kikmanaq program which include IRC, MAK, FGC & EPC
- Develop a one-page Rack Card to promote and explain the programs we offer.
- Develop a list of Elders we can utilize within the Wikimanej Kikmanaq Program.
- Continue to try and improve the overall program to insure we are meeting the needs of our families and communities we serve.
- The Wikimanej Kikmanaq team will administer a program evaluation to all families at the end of involvement with the circle process to help us ensure we are serving our families the best we can. Information collected will be used to enhance the Wikimanej Kikmanaq program.

### Statistics of the Wikimanej Kikmanaq program for April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022:

Total number of new referrals received by the Wikimanej Kikmanaq program was: 102

Total number of circles completed by the Wikimanej Kikmanaq program was: 148

The Indian Brook Wikimanej Kikmanaq team received 55 new referrals:

FGC: 43

IRC: 6

MAAK: 3

DCS: 3

The Indian Brook Wikimanej Kikmanaq team completed 98 circles:

FGC: 86

IRC: 7

MAAK: 2

DCS: 3

The Eskasoni Wikimanej Kikmanaq team received 47 New referrals:

FGC: 23

IRC: 9

MAKK: 6

DCS: 5

EPC: 4

The Eskasoni Wikimanej Kikmanaq team completed 50 circles:

FGC: 34

IRC: 8

MAAK: 6

DCS: 0

EPC: 2



# Communications Department

## Nutewistog

Submitted by: Communications Officer –  
George Paul (aka) PR George  
George.paul@novascotia.ca  
902-577-0073

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

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

### Key Messages:

1. Mi'kmaw Family & Children's Services of Nova Scotia empowers Mi'kmaw families. We support parents and caregivers in raising children who have a strong sense of worth.
2. MFCS recognizes and respects the importance of traditional teachings. Children are gifts from the creator.

3. We strive to ensure the safety and well-being of First Nations children, young people and families by facilitating the transfer of traditional knowledge to guide and support families.

### Key Challenges:

Knowledge and perception. There is a stigma attached to social services, especially more towards aboriginal social services. With sustained communication be it educational, multi-media campaign, social media, community events, and so on. In due time that public perception will gradually change but will never be completely eliminated. In some cases, this will involve informing new people, organizations, and others about specific work it does and issues it faces. In other cases, it will involve reinforcing key messages or altering perceptions.

### 2020-2021 Communications Strategies Applied or Ongoing:

#### Continue to brand MFCSNS Logo:

Using our logo in all multi-media platforms like advertising, publications, videos, social media and job posting.

#### Special Publications:

2021 AGA booklet.

#### Advertising:

Christmas Ad in the MMNN December 2021 issue.



## Communications Department continued...

### Special Events:

Helped organize retirement party for Gloria Gould, Karen Denny and Wilma Simon. Took pictures and created the invitation.

We also held our own special Orange shirt day ceremony outside our Eskasoni MFCSNS building. We had a special memorial tree planting ceremony in memory of residential school children who never returned home. Took pictures of the event and took a group picture of our Eskasoni staff.

Covered the annual Foster Appreciation Day event hosted by MFCSNS in May 2021.

Took pictures at Sydney court for a special adoption ceremony in November 2021.

Our Christmas Social committee helped organized events and activities for our annual Christmas social in Membertou.

### Creating communication packages/publications/speeches:

Created after hours info magnets for MFCSNS. Created social workers profiles in May of 2021. Made our one of kind 2021 Christmas cards and created our Christmas ad for MMNN. Created our annual 2021 AGA publication report. Created a one of kind seven sacred teaching smudge prayer card and has been a very popular item.

### Video/Virtual Communications:

Video recorded one of our famous children in care, Emma Stevens on November 2021.

Emma was asked by the Outstanding Youth Award organizers if she could address the recipients and she also promoted her new music video.

Made a video virtual tour of MFCSNS building in Eskasoni for DCS communications in September 2021. The video can also be found on our youtube channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rmc5KodrGo>

### Emergency Management Team:

A special committee was formed in response to Covid. As part of my communication responsibilities we had to keep our staff updated on our next steps. We created an Emergency Management Committee



and we held meetings every two weeks and I was responsible in sending out Emergency Management updates to the entire staff of MFCSNS. Our last EMC update was in May 2021. We are hoping for a back to normal status for this fiscal year, with no more EMC notices.

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, 2022**

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

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## Independent Auditor's Report

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**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, 2022, 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, 2022, and its results of operations 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  
June 22, 2022

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**AS AT MARCH 31, 2022**

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Bank	1,854,363	5,810,972
Short term investments (Note 2)	4,193,442	4,181,106
Restricted cash (Note 3)	14,795	31,370
Receivables (Note 4)	4,200,335	918,486
Prepaid expenses	112,397	87,887
	<u>10,375,332</u>	<u>11,029,821</u>
TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 5)	7,290,023	8,754,479
	<u>17,665,355</u>	<u>19,784,300</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Payables and accruals (Note 6)	1,798,147	1,989,178
Trust liability	14,795	31,370
Deferred revenue (Note 7)	1,459,737	2,087,606
Current portion of capital lease obligation (Note 8)	151,850	145,649
	<u>3,424,529</u>	<u>4,253,803</u>
<b>LONG TERM</b>		
Capital lease obligation (Note 8)	5,551,480	5,703,331
	<u>8,976,009</u>	<u>9,957,134</u>
<b>NET ASSETS (Page 6)</b>		
Unrestricted	4,102,653	3,921,667
Internally restricted		
Operating contingency reserve	2,000,000	2,000,000
Replacement reserve	1,000,000	1,000,000
Investment in tangible capital assets	1,586,693	2,905,499
	<u>8,689,346</u>	<u>9,827,166</u>
	<u>17,665,355</u>	<u>19,784,300</u>

Commitments (Note 12)

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, 2022**

		2022	2022	2021
	Budget (Unaudited)			
	\$	\$	\$	
<b>REVENUE</b>				
Indigenous Services Canada (Note 7)		24,525,639	26,008,810	22,785,584
Province of Nova Scotia		1,430,000	1,807,021	1,170,525
Government of Canada - Child Tax Benefits		575,000	561,150	566,419
HST rebates		350,000	362,640	243,038
Interest, donations and other		98,000	110,545	158,673
		<b>26,978,639</b>	<b>28,850,166</b>	<b>24,924,239</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Operating	Pg 8	13,511,000	14,138,887	12,367,425
Family Healing Centers	Pg 9	1,517,000	1,377,223	1,154,473
Family Violence and Prevention	Pg 10	290,000	216,551	128,171
Prevention	Pg 11	5,179,500	4,844,871	4,052,901
Maintenance	Pg 12	8,294,000	7,924,470	6,287,072
Provincial Settlement	Pg 13	1,255,000	1,485,984	987,803
		<b>30,046,500</b>	<b>29,987,986</b>	<b>24,977,845</b>
<b>DEFICIENCY OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>		<b>(3,067,861)</b>	<b>(1,137,820)</b>	<b>(53,606)</b>
<b>ALLOCATION:</b>				
Operating	Pg 8		(1,156,586)	(3,350,124)
Family Healing Centers	Pg 9		18,766	11,362
Family Violence and Prevention	Pg 10		-	-
Prevention	Pg 11		-	2,299,609
Maintenance	Pg 12		-	985,547
			<b>(1,137,820)</b>	<b>(53,606)</b>

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



**MI'IKMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA**  
**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

	Unrestricted Net Assets	Internally Restricted Operating Contingency Reserve	Internally Restricted Replacement Reserve	Invested In Tangible Capital Assets	2022	2021
NET ASSETS - beginning of year	\$ 3,921,667	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 2,905,499	\$ 9,827,166	\$ 9,880,772
(Deficiency) surplus of revenue over expenses	536,800	-	-	(1,674,620)	(1,137,820)	(53,606)
Tangible capital asset additions	(210,164)	-	-	210,164	-	-
Repayments on capital lease obligation	(145,650)	-	-	145,650	-	-
<b>NET ASSETS - end of year</b>	<b>4,102,653</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>	<b>1,586,693</b>	<b>8,689,346</b>	<b>9,827,166</b>

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, 2022**

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM:</b>		
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(1,137,820)	(53,606)
Items not involving cash:		
Amortization	535,204	537,744
Loss on Sipekne'katik building due to relocation (Note 13)	1,139,416	-
	<u>536,800</u>	484,138
Changes in non-cash working capital items:		
Receivables	(3,281,849)	7,923
Prepaid expenses	(24,510)	(93)
Payables and accruals	(191,031)	291,515
Trust liability	(16,575)	845
Deferred revenue	(627,869)	340,567
	<u>(3,605,034)</u>	1,124,895
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Purchase of tangible capital assets	(210,164)	(127,369)
Purchase of short term investments	(12,336)	(17,465)
	<u>(222,500)</u>	(144,834)
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITY</b>		
Repayments on capital lease obligation	(145,650)	(139,169)
<b>(DECREASE) INCREASE IN CASH DURING THE YEAR</b>	<b>(3,973,184)</b>	<b>840,892</b>
CASH - beginning of year	5,842,342	5,001,450
CASH - end of year	<u>1,869,158</u>	<u>5,842,342</u>
<b>CASH CONSISTS OF:</b>		
Bank	1,854,363	5,810,972
Restricted cash	14,795	31,370
	<u>1,869,158</u>	<u>5,842,342</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, 2022**

	2022	2022	2021
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Indigenous Services Canada	10,518,351	12,190,806	8,504,776
Province of Nova Scotia	230,000	392,023	216,685
HST rebates	350,000	362,640	243,038
Interest, donations and other	55,000	36,832	52,802
	<u>11,153,351</u>	<u>12,982,301</u>	<u>9,017,301</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Advertising and promotion	50,000	27,092	17,173
Amortization	550,000	522,996	528,526
Conferences and training	60,000	6,252	5,858
COVID-19 response	35,000	13,320	100,644
Electricity	100,000	77,276	88,878
Employee assistance program	12,000	22,980	7,625
Foster Family Support	20,000	8,547	10,388
General	1,000	161	138
Insurance	105,000	113,153	101,911
Interest and bank charges	9,000	5,264	7,814
Interest on capital lease obligation	265,000	263,747	270,227
Library and resources materials	5,000	117	1,934
Membership dues and subscriptions	70,000	67,117	66,148
Office supplies and stationery	100,000	78,533	84,752
Postage and delivery	15,000	12,668	13,059
Professional fees	42,000	43,623	32,416
Repairs and maintenance	160,000	248,518	147,447
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	11,015,000	10,445,914	10,350,037
Telephone and communication	70,000	59,601	62,684
Travel	727,000	583,526	432,577
Travel and honorarium - Board	100,000	102,386	37,189
	<u>13,511,000</u>	<u>12,702,791</u>	<u>12,367,425</u>
<b>ADDITIONAL EXPENSES (Note 13)</b>			
Office relocation expenses - Sipekne'katik building	-	296,680	-
Loss on Sipekne'katik building due to relocation	-	1,139,416	-
	<u>13,511,000</u>	<u>14,138,887</u>	<u>12,367,425</u>
<b>DEFICIENCY OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<u>(2,357,649)</u>	<u>(1,156,586)</u>	<u>(3,350,124)</u>

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

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA**  
**STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**  
**FAMILY HEALING CENTERS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

	2022	2022	2021
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Indigenous Services Canada			
COVID-19	285,147	28,278	63,713
Project Haven	1,725,489	1,172,596	863,810
Pension	122,847	126,715	127,165
Province of Nova Scotia - Gender Responsive Program	-	-	5,275
Family Violence & Prevention administration fee	33,000	33,000	33,000
Donations and other	10,000	35,400	72,872
	<b>2,176,483</b>	<b>1,395,989</b>	<b>1,165,835</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Advertising and promotion	5,000	10,791	1,250
Amortization	12,000	12,208	9,218
Conferences and training	16,000	5,461	5,707
COVID-19 response	25,000	4,326	40,382
Employee assistance program	2,000	929	665
Gender Responsive Program expenses	-	-	5,275
Household supplies	24,000	30,477	19,923
Insurance	15,000	14,142	12,960
Library and resource materials	1,000	3,554	87
Membership dues and subscriptions	1,000	400	400
Office supplies and stationery	13,000	12,345	8,170
Repairs and maintenance	41,000	39,817	26,049
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	1,265,000	1,144,489	967,770
Telephone and communications	16,000	14,528	12,131
Travel	61,000	65,624	27,809
Utilities	20,000	18,132	16,677
	<b>1,517,000</b>	<b>1,377,223</b>	<b>1,154,473</b>
<b>SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>659,483</b>	<b>18,766</b>	<b>11,362</b>

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, 2022**

	2022	2022	2021
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Indigenous Services Canada	290,000	216,551	128,171
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Administration costs	33,000	33,000	33,000
Conferences and training	4,000	-	344
Public education and workshops	12,000	3,938	1,133
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	213,000	161,021	86,333
Travel	28,000	18,592	7,361
	290,000	216,551	128,171
<b>SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	-	-	-

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA**  
**STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**  
**PREVENTION**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

	2022	2022	2021
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Indigenous Services Canada	4,669,373	4,839,558	6,345,410
Province of Nova Scotia	-	-	7,100
Donations and other	-	5,313	-
	<b>4,669,373</b>	<b>4,844,871</b>	<b>6,352,510</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Family Services			
Court-Ordered Supervision (Page 25)	1,722,000	1,736,948	1,238,857
Early Intervention (Page 25)	280,000	252,489	179,446
Programs			
Family & Community Resource (Page 26)	676,500	613,676	614,813
Family Support & Case Aid (Page 26)	1,429,000	1,273,225	1,169,281
Wikimanej Kikmanaq & Immediate Response Circles (Page 26)	1,072,000	968,533	850,504
	<b>5,179,500</b>	<b>4,844,871</b>	<b>4,052,901</b>
<b>(DEFICIENCY) SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>(510,127)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,299,609</b>

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, 2022**

	2022	2022	2021
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Indigenous Services Canada	6,914,432	7,434,306	6,752,539
Government of Canada - Child Tax Benefits	520,000	490,164	514,780
Province of Nova Scotia	-	-	5,300
	<u>7,434,432</u>	<u>7,924,470</u>	<u>7,272,619</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Permanent Care (Page 27)	5,890,000	5,475,493	4,295,345
Subsidized Adoptions (Page 27)	1,477,000	1,339,785	1,351,813
Temporary Care (Page 27)	927,000	1,109,192	639,914
	<u>8,294,000</u>	<u>7,924,470</u>	<u>6,287,072</u>
<b>(DEFICIENCY) SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<u>(859,568)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>985,547</u>

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

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA**  
**STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**  
**PROVINCIAL SETTLEMENT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

	2022	2022	2021
	Budget (Unaudited) \$	\$	\$
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Province of Nova Scotia	1,200,000	1,414,998	936,164
Government of Canada -Child Tax Benefits	55,000	70,986	51,639
	<u>1,255,000</u>	<u>1,485,984</u>	<u>987,803</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Access	192,000	303,001	83,107
Alternative Family Care program payments	21,000	12,582	14,250
Baby needs	3,000	11,437	2,623
Board including competency and special rates	220,000	284,591	215,526
Clothing	19,500	21,000	17,671
COVID-19 response	14,000	21,754	33,718
Cultural development	12,000	10,009	11,413
Daycare	30,000	31,566	24,030
Discretionary expenses	6,000	2,421	796
Drug testing	18,000	30,476	11,082
Education supplies and other costs	33,000	30,415	27,824
Facility and place of safety	370,000	381,795	357,130
Family conferencing	9,000	5,394	1,092
Holidays, special occasions, vacation	10,500	7,851	4,969
Independent living	12,000	2,110	3,023
Legal fees	12,000	7,695	4,843
Medical and dental	10,500	5,609	4,274
Mentorship	80,000	127,806	56,807
Miscellaneous	1,500	3,461	3,935
Non-prescription personal needs	4,500	5,209	3,804
Other - inventory	4,500	8,546	3,351
Personal development	10,500	2,083	6,966
Professional fees	120,000	115,065	61,580
Recreation	10,500	16,479	9,889
Registration - births	1,500	279	239
Respite	18,000	22,207	13,220
Spending	7,500	9,043	7,091
Travel autopayment	4,000	6,100	3,350
	<u>1,255,000</u>	<u>1,485,984</u>	<u>987,803</u>
<b>SURPLUS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	-	-	-

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, 2022**

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**1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

Status and Nature of Activities

The Mi'kmaq Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia (the Agency) 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 under Section 149(l)(i) of the *Income Tax Act* 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.

Tangible Capital Assets

Purchased tangible capital assets are stated at cost less accumulated amortization. Contributed tangible 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	lease term
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 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, 2022**

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**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 Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) 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, 2022**

**2. SHORT TERM INVESTMENTS**

Short term investments consist of the following:

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Premium Investment Savings Account	3,140,185	3,131,529
High Interest Notice Account	1,053,257	1,049,577
	4,193,442	4,181,106

**3. RESTRICTED CASH**

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

**4. RECEIVABLES**

Receivables consists of the following:

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Indigenous Services Canada	2,503,105	290,316
Province of Nova Scotia	1,344,396	414,626
HST recoverable	321,668	188,177
Other	31,166	25,367
	4,200,335	918,486

**5. TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS**

	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	2022 Net	2021 Net
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Buildings	950,336	114,059	836,277	2,070,684
Building under capital lease	6,207,706	744,925	5,462,781	5,711,089
Furniture and fixtures	943,169	297,731	645,438	698,269
Computer	555,676	275,051	280,625	240,029
Leasehold improvements	73,960	9,058	64,902	34,409
	8,730,847	1,440,824	7,290,023	8,754,479

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, 2022**

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**6. PAYABLES AND ACCRUALS**

Payables and accruals consist of the following:

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Operating	184,146	141,754
Maintenance	724,949	757,780
Accrued salaries and benefits	641,596	960,911
Government Remittances Payable	183,095	70,677
Accrued travel reimbursements	64,361	58,056
	<u>1,798,147</u>	<u>1,989,178</u>

**7. DEFERRED REVENUE**

Deferred revenue consists of the following:

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Indigenous Services Canada		
Family Violence & Prevention	187,975	184,526
Healing Centers	1,271,762	790,232
Maintenance	-	369,432
Prevention	-	743,416
	<u>1,459,737</u>	<u>2,087,606</u>

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

**7. DEFERRED REVENUE (continued)**

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

A reconciliation of deferred revenue is as follows:

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Current fiscal year funding received from ISC	23,168,152	22,866,602
Prior year ISC COVID-19 claims submitted (received)	(199,352)	290,316
Current year operating and prevention deficits - ISC claim	1,847,267	-
Current year maintenance deficit - ISC based on actual	564,874	-
Prior year ISC deferred revenue	2,087,606	1,716,272
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total ISC funding available	27,468,547	24,873,190
Other Agency revenues other than Provincial Settlement	1,355,372	1,150,852
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Total revenues available to the Agency</b>	<b>28,823,919</b>	<b>26,024,042</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total expenses per statement of operations	29,987,986	24,977,845
Less: Loss on Sipekne'katik building from relocation (Note 13)	(1,139,416)	-
Less: Provincial Settlement expenses billed to Province of Nova Scotia	(1,485,984)	(987,803)
Add: Tangible capital asset purchases funded by ISC	210,164	127,369
Less: Amortization of tangible capital asset purchases already funded by ISC	(208,568)	(180,975)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Total expenses funded by ISC and other Agency revenues</b>	<b>27,364,182</b>	<b>23,936,436</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Indigenous Services Canada deferred revenue</b>	<b>1,459,737</b>	<b>2,087,606</b>

Indigenous Services Canada revenue recognized on the statement of operations:

Current year funding received from ISC	23,168,152	22,866,602
Prior year ISC COVID-19 claims submitted (received)	(199,352)	290,316
ISC claims - operating and prevention deficits	1,847,267	-
ISC reimbursed based on actual - maintenance deficit	564,874	-
Add: Prior year ISC deferred revenue	2,087,606	1,716,272
Less: Current year ISC deferred revenue	(1,459,737)	(2,087,606)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Total ISC revenue recognized on the statement of operations</b>	<b>26,008,810</b>	<b>22,785,584</b>

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

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**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.

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Capital lease, bearing interest at 4.56%, amortized over 25 years, with monthly principal and interest payments of \$34,116.	5,703,331	5,848,980
Less: Current portion due within one year	<u>(151,850)</u>	<u>(145,649)</u>
	<u><b>5,551,480</b></u>	<u><b>5,703,331</b></u>

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

	\$
2023	151,850
2024	160,090
2025	166,957
2026	174,731
2027	<u>182,358</u>
	<u><b>835,986</b></u>

**9. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE**

The Agency 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 \$706,343 (2021 - \$695,451).

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

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**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, 2022.

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.

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.

There have not been any significant changes in the above risks since prior year.

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

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**12. COMMITMENTS**

During the year, the Agency entered into lease agreement to rent office space in Shubenacadie and Dartmouth.

Minimum lease payments over the next six fiscal years due to these leases are as follows:

	\$
2023	285,983
2024	328,810
2025	276,453
2026	278,833
2027	278,833
2028	69,708
	1,518,620
	1,518,620

**13. LOSS ON SIPEKNE'KATIK BUILDING DUE TO RELOCATION AND OTHER EXPENSES**

On October 12, 2021, the Agency received a letter from Sipekne'katik First Nation advising that its Chief and Council passed a motion rescinding any permission the Agency had to occupy the building located in the Community at 520 Church Street, Sipekne'katik. This letter was official notice to vacate the building by 4pm on November 30, 2021 under the understanding that Agency services provided to the Sipekne'katik Community will continue. As a result of this notice to vacate, the Agency incurred unexpected expenses such as moving, professional fees, rent, travel and various expenses associated to moving to three temporary office locations. These expenses are expected to continue until a permanent location with a new building is established. The loss on relocation from Sipekne'katik building in the amount of \$1,139,416 is the loss on disposal of our building that was recorded in the fixed asset listing. The amount represents the net undepreciated cost of the building and had to be removed from the asset listing as the Agency no longer occupies the building and has no control over the asset. The loss related to the relocation, including the value of the building, is currently under legal claim.



**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

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**14. SALARIES AND BENEFITS**

**OPERATING:**

	Budget (Unaudited)	2022	2021
	\$	\$	\$
Management & Administration	2,530,000	<b>2,381,728</b>	2,371,751
Social Work Departments	6,485,000	<b>6,309,594</b>	6,211,249
Standby/duty	192,000	<b>193,284</b>	189,286
Janitorial	175,000	<b>101,440</b>	175,334
	<b>9,382,000</b>	<b>8,986,046</b>	8,947,620
Employment Insurance	154,000	<b>124,302</b>	126,446
Canada Pension	403,000	<b>376,003</b>	354,759
Group pension	595,000	<b>536,313</b>	539,270
Group benefits	316,000	<b>295,037</b>	276,036
Workers compensation	165,000	<b>128,213</b>	105,906
	<b>1,633,000</b>	<b>1,459,868</b>	1,402,417
	<b>11,015,000</b>	<b>10,445,914</b>	10,350,037

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

**14. SALARIES AND BENEFITS (continued)**

**FAMILY HEALING CENTERS:**

	Budget (Unaudited)	2022	2021
	\$	\$	\$
Management & Administration	240,000	<b>286,670</b>	226,088
Outreach	203,000	<b>170,582</b>	148,381
Program Counsellors	413,000	<b>311,874</b>	258,813
Night Support	214,000	<b>209,380</b>	208,508
Standby/duty	18,000	<b>20,129</b>	-
	<u>1,088,000</u>	<u><b>998,635</b></u>	<u>841,790</u>
Employment Insurance	24,000	<b>16,147</b>	14,714
Canada Pension	51,500	<b>45,350</b>	39,289
Group pension	50,500	<b>38,213</b>	33,524
Group benefits	30,000	<b>30,028</b>	27,429
Workers compensation	21,000	<b>16,116</b>	11,024
	<u>177,000</u>	<u><b>145,854</b></u>	<u>125,980</u>
	<u><b>1,265,000</b></u>	<u><b>1,144,489</b></u>	<u>967,770</u>

**FAMILY VIOLENCE AND PREVENTION:**

	Budget (Unaudited)	2022	2021
	\$	\$	\$
Program Counsellors	181,000	<b>141,597</b>	75,619
Employment Insurance	4,000	<b>2,580</b>	1,252
Canada Pension	9,500	<b>5,575</b>	3,603
Group pension	10,500	<b>5,952</b>	3,336
Group benefits	8,000	<b>5,317</b>	2,523
	<u>32,000</u>	<u><b>19,424</b></u>	<u>10,714</u>
	<u><b>213,000</b></u>	<u><b>161,021</b></u>	<u>86,333</u>

**MIKMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

**14. SALARIES AND BENEFITS (continued)**

**PREVENTION PROGRAMS:**

	Family & Community Resource	Family Support & Case Aid	Wikimanej Kikmanaq	Budget (Unaudited)	2022	2021
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Management & Administration	161,836	218,849	321,309	717,000	701,994	595,577
Case Aids	-	277,745	-	305,000	277,745	229,130
Family & Community Workers	352,845	-	-	361,000	352,845	353,846
Family Support Workers	-	539,170	-	593,000	539,170	521,933
Program Counsellors	-	-	472,772	542,000	472,772	494,815
	514,681	1,035,764	794,081	2,518,000	2,344,526	2,195,301
Employment Insurance	7,877	17,983	10,956	49,500	36,816	36,124
Canada Pension	23,893	47,956	33,550	122,000	105,399	97,273
Group pension	28,976	47,592	49,297	157,500	125,865	119,321
Group benefits	13,417	37,701	26,780	91,000	77,898	69,857
	74,163	151,232	120,583	420,000	345,978	322,575
	588,844	1,186,996	914,664	2,938,000	2,690,504	2,517,876

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

**MI'KMAW FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF NOVA SCOTIA  
SCHEDULE OF PREVENTION EXPENSES - FAMILY SERVICES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

	Court-Ordered Supervision		2022	2022	2021
	Early Intervention				
			Budget (Unaudited)		
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Access	461,726	-	460,000	461,726	317,432
Alternative Family Care	244,037	3,000	305,000	247,037	283,249
Baby needs	103	-	3,000	103	241
COVID-19 response	6,414	1,247	19,000	7,661	27,893
Cultural development	45	-	6,000	45	89
Daycare	31,475	-	30,000	31,475	10,001
Discretionary	1,852	397	9,000	2,249	3,719
Drug testing	283,328	4,578	286,000	287,906	219,716
Educational supports	1,681	-	9,000	1,681	1,408
Family conferencing	9,998	3,488	27,000	13,486	6,485
Legal	152,848	2,357	123,000	155,205	79,615
Medical and dental	3,144	147	33,000	3,291	6,021
Miscellaneous	2,091	380	6,000	2,471	1,838
Mentorship and family support	215,453	164,629	310,000	380,082	175,899
Personal development	890	-	6,000	890	77
Professional fees	318,079	55,479	340,000	373,558	271,583
Recreation	922	-	9,000	922	831
Registration - births	2,217	40	3,000	2,257	2,457
Respite	645	-	6,000	645	560
Youth support (16+)	-	16,747	12,000	16,747	9,189
	1,736,948	252,489	2,002,000	1,989,437	1,418,303

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, 2022**

	Family and Community Resource Program	Family Support & Case Aid	Wikimanej Kikmanaq & Immediate Response Circles	2022	2022	2021
				Budget (Unaudited)		
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
Advertising and community support	-	-	-	2,000	-	218
Community workshops	2,813	-	-	16,000	2,813	1,648
Conferences and training	740	1,171	477	23,000	2,388	7,045
Immediate Response Circle meetings	-	-	1,098	3,000	1,098	490
Office and program supplies	1,802	600	-	4,500	2,402	1,730
Salaries and benefits (Note 14)	588,844	1,186,996	914,664	2,938,000	2,690,504	2,517,876
Telephone	1,953	-	-	2,000	1,953	2,369
Travel	17,524	84,458	52,294	189,000	154,276	103,222
	<b>613,676</b>	<b>1,273,225</b>	<b>968,533</b>	<b>3,177,500</b>	<b>2,855,434</b>	<b>2,634,598</b>

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, 2022**

	Permanent Care	Subsidized Adoption	Temporary Care	2022	2022	2021
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
				Budget (Unaudited)		
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
Access	160,027	-	154,223	288,000	314,250	164,651
Baby needs	4,134	-	2,345	18,000	6,479	3,994
Board	760,870	1,088,033	44,679	1,930,000	1,893,582	1,867,604
Clothing	65,659	95,015	6,506	215,000	167,180	173,215
COVID-19 response	9,729	-	1,535	66,000	11,264	96,263
Cultural development	3,164	62,921	821	97,000	66,906	67,300
Daycare	53,171	14,614	5,030	78,000	72,815	30,365
Discretionary	6,458	-	1,033	15,000	7,491	8,967
Drug testing	-	-	17,846	12,000	17,846	11,224
Education supplies and other costs	88,121	-	601	148,000	88,722	100,854
Facility and place of safety	3,535,363	-	705,504	3,800,000	4,240,867	2,711,899
Family conferencing	3,110	37	1,217	30,000	4,364	4,286
Holidays, special occasions, vacation	43,105	-	4,518	105,000	47,623	50,605
Independent living	38,975	-	-	100,000	38,975	89,814
Inventory/Other	21,411	-	2,195	42,000	23,606	26,539
Legal fees	6,335	8,767	51,112	72,000	66,214	41,681
Medical and dental	65,242	4,091	7,157	126,000	76,490	84,053
Mentorship	322,884	25,500	33,128	447,000	381,512	302,736
Miscellaneous	3,956	1,258	2,932	15,000	8,146	4,823
Non-prescription personal needs	23,177	-	2,025	39,000	25,202	26,936
Personal development	23,294	-	823	45,000	24,117	33,360
Professional fees	43,287	3,426	49,543	160,000	96,256	109,260
Recreation	68,945	35,923	3,247	184,000	108,115	108,301
Registration - births	475	200	160	6,000	835	1,175
Respite	55,459	-	4,412	144,000	59,871	87,488
Spending	45,842	-	4,750	74,000	50,592	52,769
Training	-	-	-	2,000	-	-
Travel autopayment	23,300	-	1,850	36,000	25,150	26,910
	5,475,493	1,339,785	1,109,192	8,294,000	7,924,470	6,287,072

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

## **Elapultimk Elmi'knik**

L'nuve'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 and  
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

[www.mfcsns.ca](http://www.mfcsns.ca)



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

### **Shubie Office**

Box 179, Shubenacadie  
Hants County, Nova Scotia, B0N 2H0  
Tel: (902) 758-3553/(800) 263-8686  
Fax: (902) 758-2390

### **Eskasoni Office**

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

### **Bear River Office**

89 Reservation Road  
Bear River, Nova Scotia, B0S 1B0  
Tel: (902) 376-3553  
Fax: (902) 376-2128

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

