



**Annual General Meeting
October 27, 2015**

Agenda

4:30 Registration

5:15 Welcome to the Territory – *Bradley Dick*

Opening Prayer – *Alex Nelson*

Introduction by Chair – *Ron Rice*

1. Opening Remarks and Welcome from SCCFS President – *Nella Nelson*

5:30

2. Call meeting to order

3. Establish Quorum

4. Motion to Accept Agenda for October 27, 2015

5. Approval of Minutes from October 28, 2014

6. Business arising from minutes

7. Report of the Treasurer – *BDO Canada & Della Preston*

8. Appointment of Auditor

9. Report of the President – *Nella Nelson*

- **Board Acknowledgements**

10. Report of the Executive Director – *Riley McKenzie*

11. Board Elections

12. Adjournment

6:30 Honouring our Graduates

Master of Ceremony – *Alex Nelson and Nella Nelson*

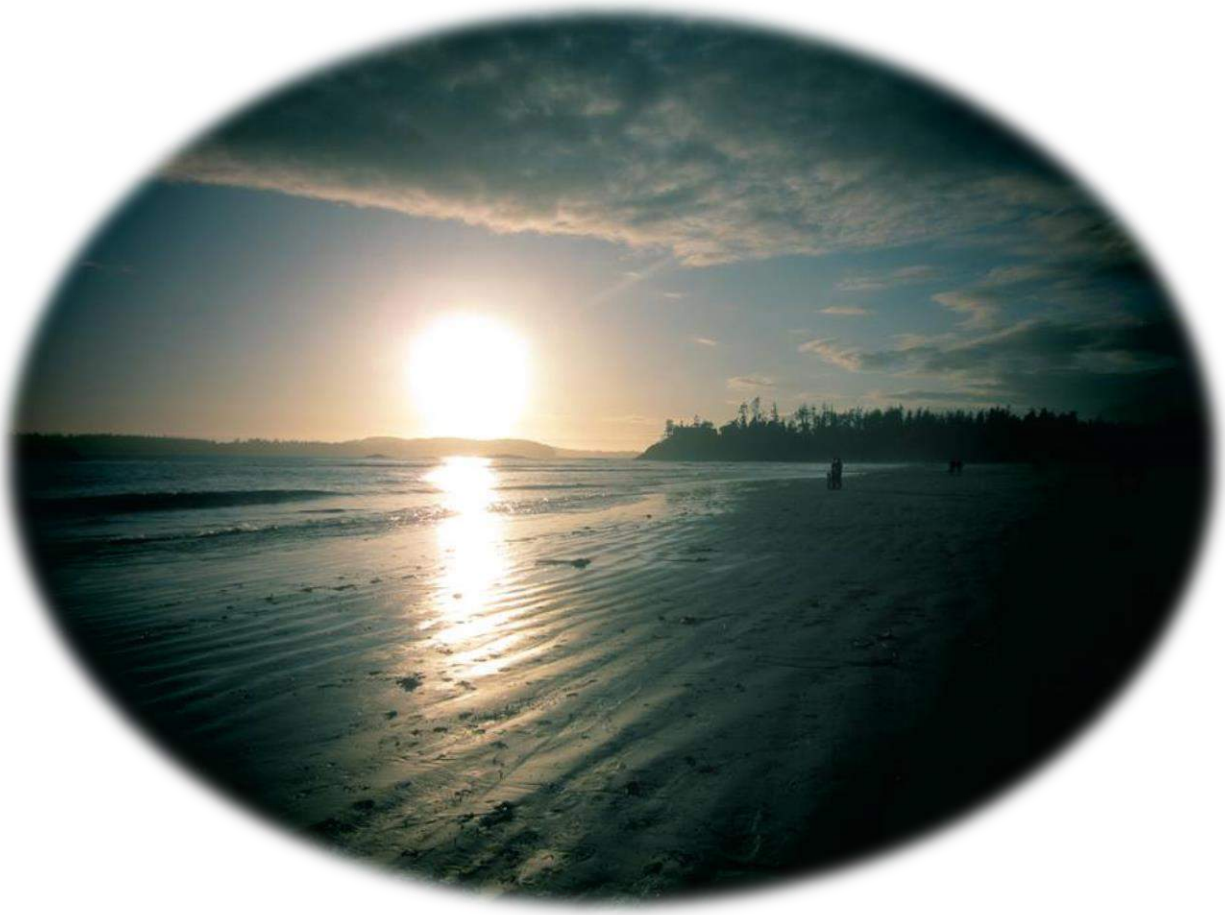
6:45 Prayer and Dinner

Dinner Prayer – *Alex Nelson*

Dinner provided by – *Toque Catering*

Closing

Our Mission, Our Vision



Our Mission Statement

Surrounded by Cedar Child & Family Services will provide child and family services rooted in cultural values and beliefs to restore and enhance the strength and resiliency in the urban Aboriginal community.

Our Vision Statement

Our vision is of healthy children who will grow up connected to their families, communities, and culture. We will work together toward the day all children and families have skills, knowledge, education and support to ensure their children and their children's children will not enter the child welfare or justice system.

Our Values

Respect

Treat every person from the smallest child to the oldest elder with respect at all times. Respect is the most basic law of life that allows a feeling and show of honor for all creations; all cultures, all ways and all paths.

Strength Based

SCCFS believes in empowering people to trust that they have both the capacity and mastery to take responsibility for their own healing. By carrying the teachings of our ancestors and incorporating Aboriginal cultural customs within our social work practice, we can facilitate opportunities to heal and share in the success of Aboriginal children, families and the community.

Humility

Humility is putting others first by giving up what you think you deserve; Mother Earth for she provides for our every need and loves us even when we do not listen to her; a newborn baby coming into this world with nothing but their small presence asking only to be loved and cared for; recognizing what we give in our lives and being thankful for each new day.

Honesty

Be truthful at all times, under all conditions.

Integrity

Being honest, truthful and accurate in your actions, expectations and outcomes for yourself and others.

Belonging

The yearning to be part of something larger than ourselves, to be accepted and loved by others with all of our gifts and limitations. Belonging does for human beings what soil does for plants: it nurtures us, and enables us to grow and to blossom.

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New Staff

**The Board of Directors as of the
2014 Annual General Meeting**

Nella Nelson	President
Suzanne Wilkinson	Vice-President
Warren Clarmont	Treasurer
Della Preston	Director
Ellen Newman	Director
Bradley Dick	Director
Jessie Jim	Director
Freda Shaughnessy	Elder



Gilakasla:

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone to our AGM and to acknowledge the amazing traditional lands of the Lkwungen people, in the land of the smoked herring. The month of October highlights the feeling of gratitude and acknowledgement and we know that we live on an amazing territory that continues to provide support and connection in the urban setting for children and families.

As we travel through another year of the Surrounded by Cedar journey, I am reflecting on the many personal, social and work experiences that have occurred. I would like to acknowledge our Elder, our friend and our mentor Freda Shaughnessy who passed into the spirit world. Freda has given so much to our community. She was committed to volunteering and participating in the activities of Many Generous Hands and Surrounded by Cedar for many years. She took great pride in the fact that her home was always open and that she cared for her grandchildren and great-grandchildren with no support from MCFD. She would say, "I know what it was like from my residential school experiences to not have a place to go during the holidays," she said "I made myself a promise that I would always leave my door open to anyone who needed it." Freda sat as an Elder on our SCCFS Board for a number of years, we loved her comments, her humour and her direct questions that would cause us to pause, think and reflect. She believed that children belonged with their families and their communities. The light from the candle that Freda burned continues to shed light on the work that we continue to do at Surrounded by Cedar. (Gilakasla Eyah)

Surrounded by Cedar continues to travel on their journey by continuing to organize rituals and ceremonies that provide youth with an opportunity to understand their ancestral roots and to be aware of where they fit in this world. We know that ceremony realigns and provides balance to individuals, and as an organization we have a responsibility to support our youth to experience and acknowledge this as part of their personal journeys. The Youth and Elders Dinners and Circles have provided me with an opportunity to witness the youth share their stories and relate to the Elders who are present while sharing the virtues as it relates to their personal lives. The Welcoming Ceremony is a moment of acknowledged transition for the youth as they formally enter the arms of Surrounded by Cedar, standing them up and acknowledging them by name, announcing their formal place and roots with Surrounded by Cedar. The Nest to Wings ceremony in the big house provided the youth with an opportunity to sit with Elders who offered sage teachings in the circle and then a formal dinner and blanketing was held for the youth. Cultural singing and dancing ended the evening of acknowledgement. It was a reminder that they now have wings to fly but they can still return to the nest of SCCFS if they need to, as the door will always be open.

I raise my hands up to Ron Rice who has once again done an amazing job with his team of volunteers to pull off our largest Back to School Picnic yet, my understanding is that the Lt. Governor was thrilled to have all of the children and families on the grounds and they look forward to our return.

We also held a Staff and Board Strategic Planning session at the Blue Heron House which provided the staff and Board of Directors an opportunity to connect with each other and to plan for the future. These sessions were critical in hearing the voices of the front line staff who work so hard to implement the plans

for our youth and families and for the Board to participate in these discussions, and then plan for the future. There are a number of initiatives that have evolved out of these discussions and are continuing to be refined by our amazing staff, they gave us a strong message to move forward in the areas of adoption and child protection.

In addition there was also a community meeting hosted by the agency to discuss the future direction of Surrounded by Cedar, it was once again a great opportunity to hear the community perspectives and the support for the agency to move forward to managing Child Protection and Adoption. The goal is to provide comprehensive service and support for our families in the urban community. As we continue to move forward in this journey we are reminded to continue to paddle with the children, the families, the staff and our community. It is a journey we have never travelled on before so we know there will be challenges along the way, and it may appear overwhelming at times but the work will be done.

As my father George Cook often states “Put the children and the families in the middle of the circle in all the work that you do, and leave your ego at the door” and his advice continues to guide me in my work and in my volunteering. We are grateful for the many volunteers that come forward at different times for the agency, as our teachings talk about being of service to your community.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Riley as the Executive Director and the wonderful and amazing staff of Surrounded by Cedar. This work can be challenging, tiring and exhausting while being exhilarating and exciting. The hugs and smiles that our children and youth share with you is awesome to witness, while also recognizing that you continue to work with youth that still struggle to feel connected. It is a recognition that it is a journey and there are many more miles to travel. Gilakasla staff for all of your hard work and dedication.

At this point I would also like to acknowledge and raise my hand to our former board members Ellen Newman and Bradley Dick who have put many hours in at the board table and at community events. We would like to thank you for knowing how important it is to give back to community, you have walked that talk and we are very grateful for the time you have committed to the agency and to the children of Surrounded By Cedar. We will miss you at the table but know that you will be involved in other areas.

Gilakasla

I would like to acknowledge and thank the Coast Salish people for allowing me to live and work on their traditional territories. It is a privilege and an honour to be of service to the community.

In the past year, Surrounded by Cedar has truly begun to transform itself. We began this year developing a solid work plan for the agency to move the agency to full child protective services to serve the urban Aboriginal community in Victoria. The agency, with the help of Betty Kao-Lin, have developed an aggressive time line to begin to provide the much needed structure and services that will serve the community in a more culturally appropriate manner when it comes to working with children and families who are facing difficulty in the urban community. The programs that were developed and instituted last year are beginning to flourish and become very effective in working with our community members.

With the development of the child protection services, we have also been able to improve upon our Guardianship and Resource programs. Guardianship and permanency has been the main focus for the social workers and the agency. With the help of the Permanency Planning Coordinator and the Life Long Connections worker, the social workers have been able to work with families and communities to search out and find family and lifelong connections for many of the children we have in care. This piece of work takes lots of time, energy and commitment to not only the children and youth but also to family and to community to ensure that no stone is left unturned to make certain a child has a solid place to lay their head at night.

While the year has brought many successes from the programs the agency has experienced another loss. Our long time Board member and Elder, Freda Shaughnessy passed unexpectedly last November. Her support and contributions to the Board of Directors, the Youth and Elders group and to the community T-Birds is a great loss. Freda is missed greatly.

The Back to School Picnic, this year was held at Government House. The new venue provided a unique experience for the picnic and for our families. All together in partnership with M'akola, the picnics up and down the island and the mainland were again hugely successful. The BTSP provided school supplies to over 2000 children and youth. Thank you to our community partners for continuing to support the picnic and the community.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors and the staff for the past year of dedication to the agency and the children and community we serve.

Nia:wen

Hello Good People!! My name is Jennifer Chuckry. I have been in the role as Team Leader for the Guardianship (now permanency planning) Team since 2011. Over the course of the last year, there has been tremendous effort made to ensure that permanency planning happens for our children and youth in care in a timely manner. This has been a big learning curve for our team, but as of September 2015, we have completed 5 permanency plans. This is due largely to the amazing work of our social workers, who have devoted countless hours searching for family, identifying plans, and ensuring all processes have been thorough and complete. Our goal is to establish permanency for each child and youth within our agency. With that said, I continue to be so honoured to work with Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services, alongside an amazing team of committed, like-minded people, who are so incredibly passionate about making a difference in the lives of our children and families in our urban Aboriginal community. I am forever grateful to the Lkwungen people who share their beautiful territories with all of us each day.

There have been no staffing changes on the Permanency Planning Team over the course of the last year. We have a team of five incredibly dedicated social workers: Tanille Johnston, Lee Smith, Wes Haase, Alison Stark and Alysha Brown. We also have one Permanency Planning Coordinator: Connie Martin, and one amazing Team Assistant: Alana Lukenbill-Williams.

As of September 30, 2015, Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services was providing services to 90 urban Aboriginal children and youth in the continuing care of the Director. This number has increased since our last AGM, when we were servicing approximately 82 children and youth in care. We strive each day to provide services rooted in culture and connectedness, working with children and youth from Nations stretching right across Canada. Although the work is incredibly challenging, emotional, and complex, it is also equally as rewarding and heart-filling.

From January – September 30, 2015, a total of 5 youth left care on their 19th birthdays. Many of these youth continue to engage with our agency in some capacity, well beyond their 19th birthdays, and we are also so grateful to have them come back and connect. Another 4 youth will leave care before the end of this calendar year. A ceremony took place in May of this year to recognize and honour this transition for our youth leaving care this year, and for our youth who left care in 2014.

We saw five youth graduate from high school this year! Some of our youth have plans for post-secondary, while others are employed and taking some time to decide where they will go next. What an incredible accomplishment for these young people. We are so incredibly proud of each of these youth and look forward to where their paths will take them next.

Our agency took two youth and one child in care this year to participate in the Hobiye Celebrations (Nisga'a New Year) in Vancouver in February, 2015. We had 4 youth participate in the Gathering Our Voices Youth Conference in Prince George in March, 2015. In August, 2015, four of our youth in care travelled with staff to take part in the Kamloopa Pow-Wow in Kamloops BC.

Connecting children and youth to their home territories remains a priority for Surrounded by Cedar. We had the fortune of participating with one of our children in care in his family's potlatch. One of our young children in care traveled with her social worker and caregivers to her home territory of Morricetown, and a wonderful meeting took place. Two of our youth are scheduled to travel to Northern Saskatchewan in October, 2015. We are also working on traveling with one youth to his home community of Piapot, SK, and with two children to their home territories of Simpcw. These experiences continue to be incredibly powerful for the children and youth that Surrounded by Cedar serves. Families have been reunited, stories have been shared, and hearts have been filled. All children have a right to visit their home territories, and Surrounded by Cedar will continue to provide these opportunities as often as possible.

I look forward to the challenges and rewards that the next year will bring. The amazing commitment of the entire Surrounded by Cedar team fills my heart, and their devotion and dedication keeps me so grounded. Each day we plant seeds in the lives of our children, youth and families, and I am confident in saying that we are making a difference.

Kinanaskomitinawaw.

I am the Team Leader for Family Preservation and Resources with Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services. I have had the honour and privilege of being a part of the Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services Team since January 2012. I originally came here to cover the Resources caseload. When the Resource worker position was filled, I stayed on to cover a Guardianship caseload. In July 2012, I took a permanent Guardianship position with the agency. I have been Team Leader for Family Preservation and Resources since October of 2013 and am incredibly amazed each and every day by my colleagues, their passion for and dedication to the work they do.

Over the past year there have been some changes within the Family Preservation Team and Resources. Danielle Wilson remains as a full time Resource worker. Wes Haase is no longer with the Resource team and has taken on a full Guardianship caseload. Sylvia Jones has joined the Resource team and is currently carrying a case load that consists of Resource files and Family Service files. Two practicum students also joined the team this year for 5 months in total. One was a 4th year BSW student from the University of Northern BC and the other was from the Indigenous Family Support Worker program at Camosun College. It is always a pleasure to mentor and supervise practicum students.

Within the Family Preservation Team there are 4 positions; Lifelong Connections, Intensive Youth Support Worker, Family Safety Worker and Cultural Program. The Lifelong Connections Worker position is filled by Seneca Ambers. Her role is to perform extensive searches for family members. The Intensive Youth Support Worker position was created in March 2014 and is filled by Bel Manson. Her role is to provide support to youth 12 years and older. These supports include but are not limited to connecting youth with cultural resources within the community, assistance with finding shelter, accessing basic needs or developing independent living skills through appropriate means. Both of these positions provide service to Surrounded by Cedar and the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

The Family Safety Worker position is also a new one that was created in May 2014. This position was filled by Sylvia Jones whose role is to help implement culturally relevant Voluntary Support services for urban Aboriginal families and their children with the long term goal being to provide preventative support services to decrease the potential for involvement by the Ministry of Children and Family Development and Child Protection Services.

Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services currently has a total of 39 foster homes as compared to 37 last year. In addition approximately 5 SAFE home studies have been completed in the past year. The recruitment of new caregivers is ongoing, and our plan is to recruit more caregivers over the upcoming year. The South Island Region as a whole is in need of skilled caregivers who are willing to open their hearts and homes to some of our most vulnerable children and youth. Our agency continues to work closely with the Ministry of Children and Family Development in recruiting and sharing care givers. We are getting prepared to accept 9 new resource file transfers from the Ministry.

There have been a total of 32 referrals to the Intensive Youth Support program since March 2014. The services provided are varied and based around the needs of the youth at the time. Referrals to this

program come from Surrounded by Cedar and the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Bel is actively involved with all of the youth, their care givers and their social workers on a daily basis.

There have been a total of 19 referrals to the Lifelong Connections Worker program this year. These referrals come from Surrounded by Cedar social workers as well as the Ministry for Children and Family Development workers. Genealogy has been added and Seneca has been working on genograms for our children as well as the children referred by the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Hosting family meetings/reunions have also been added to Seneca's role.

There have been 20 referrals to the Family Safety worker, 14 of these were held and supported by the Family Safety worker. Another 6 were transferred to other community agencies such as South Island Wellness Society, Victoria Native Friendship Centre, and Together against Poverty Society. Four referrals became involved with Child Protection and were closed due to Child Protection concerns and the agency not being delegated to carry these types of files. Two other files were closed due to the fact that the clients relocated with support, onto their respective home Reserves into permanent housing.

The Cultural program led by Sabrina Williams continues to grow and provide integral cultural teachings and programs for our youth, Elders, community and families. The work that is done with our youth creates a strong sense of belonging and identity. It is amazing to see how many of them have grown over the past year and how much they have learned. This year we were fortunate to have a youth through the Aboriginal Youth Internship Program assist Sabrina with the cultural programming for three months. This year our youth participated in project Heart, an arts and culture program for Indigenous youth interested in new art opportunities and emerging Aboriginal artists who want to expand their knowledge. Part of this project involved creating beautiful tile Mosaics.

Last year brought many changes and challenges for me personally as well as the Surrounded by Cedar Team. Without the acknowledgement, respect and support of each other the work we do becomes more difficult. Every day I see the passion, dedication and commitment to each other, our children, families and communities and am so proud of the team, the agency and the work we all do.

With Thanks

Surrounded by Cedar Strategic Planning

In early September of 2014, Surrounded by Cedar held a community visioning session with Elders, youth, caregivers, staff and community partners. The evening was spent discussing thoughts on how the community envisions the agency moving forward with full delegation to provide child safety and adoption services or to maintain its current status providing Guardianship, Resource and support services. At the end of the evening it was determined that the community felt it was the right time for Surrounded by Cedar to venture forward and begin servicing the urban Aboriginal community in the area of child safety and adoptions. Both of these journeys' are long and with challenges. However, it was felt that in order for the agency to fulfil its mandate of helping to keep children and families together, this was the right step and the right time to pursue the full level of delegation.

In mid-November of 2014, Surrounded by Cedar held a Strategic Visioning session at the Blue Heron House with the Board of Directors and staff. The two day session was spent remembering the roots of Surrounded by Cedar and celebrating the strengths and assets that the agency and the individuals within the agency possess. Much of the time was also spent on how the Board and staff vision the agency moving forward with Child Safety and looking at Adoptions. Both of these areas are bold steps for Surrounded by Cedar and the agency and Board of Directors understand the impacts that such a move will have on the community. It is with much thought and consultation that the agency takes its next steps into providing the full range of delegated services to the Urban Aboriginal community in Victoria.

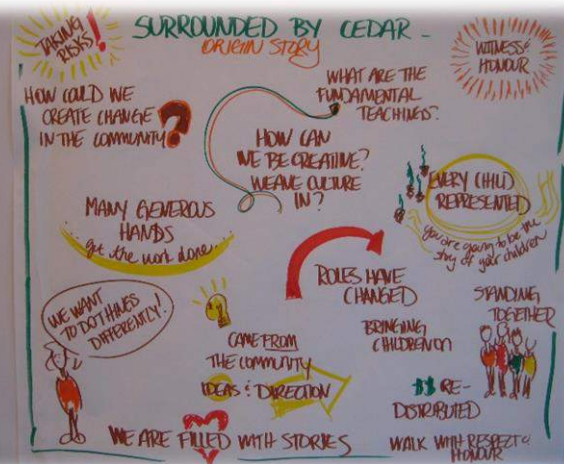
Additionally, through the consultation process with the community, the Board of Directors and staff, the agency came up with some ideas in which to enable the agency to better communicate its movement forward as well as continued transparency and development with community involvement. Communication will be key to ensuring the community that the agency serves is aware and has a voice in the ongoing development of child safety services as well as supporting the staff in the continued growth of the agency. To date, Surrounded by Cedar has begun external communication through the use of its newsletter to its members regarding the ongoing development of child safety services and is in the initial stages of community sessions to bring information and discussions to the urban Aboriginal community. The agency will also be utilizing some of its internal programs such as the Youth and Elders dinners and youth groups to share information and receive feedback regarding the implementation of services.

The agency also committed to organizing at least one fundraiser per year with all staff. It will be important for the agency to ensure that any existing funding sources not be jeopardized with its fundraising efforts but to ensure that any efforts are done in a coordinated fashion to secure funding for additional programs beyond the delegated programs.

One of the major topic areas for the staff was to ensure that individuals are taking care of themselves. The work that is done during the day is often stressful and high demand. Staff are encouraged to take breaks, not hide in their offices over the lunch hour and get to know each other. Since the strategic planning session, the agency has reconfigured staff meetings to ensure that the ongoing business of the agency is clearly conducted at the beginning of the month and that regular staff get-togethers to talk about and to create space for staff to "download" or talk about how they are feeling in a supportive environment.

The other area that the staff and Board as well as the community commented on was the creation of more cultural practices for the not only the children, youth and families that we serve but also the staff. Rites of passage celebrations, connections with other nations and cultural celebration of other nations was deemed as being of importance. The staff implemented this initiative by first hosting a pipe ceremony and honoring some of the cultural practices of our Cree sisters and brothers. In order to carry out the pipe ceremony, the agency approached the two local neighbouring Chiefs that the agency sits between as well as a local Elder and we gifted them acknowledge the local territory and to let them know the work that the agency would be conducting. This was received by the Chiefs in a good way and the agency was able to conduct its ceremony. In the future, the agency will be looking to celebrate the other Aboriginal cultures that the agency represents and we hope to open this up to the community to come and celebrate with us.

Surrounded by Cedar will continue to move forward on several of the already implemented strategies as well as several other recommendations that came forward, in order to continue to develop and strengthen not only the agency but staff members, families and the community.



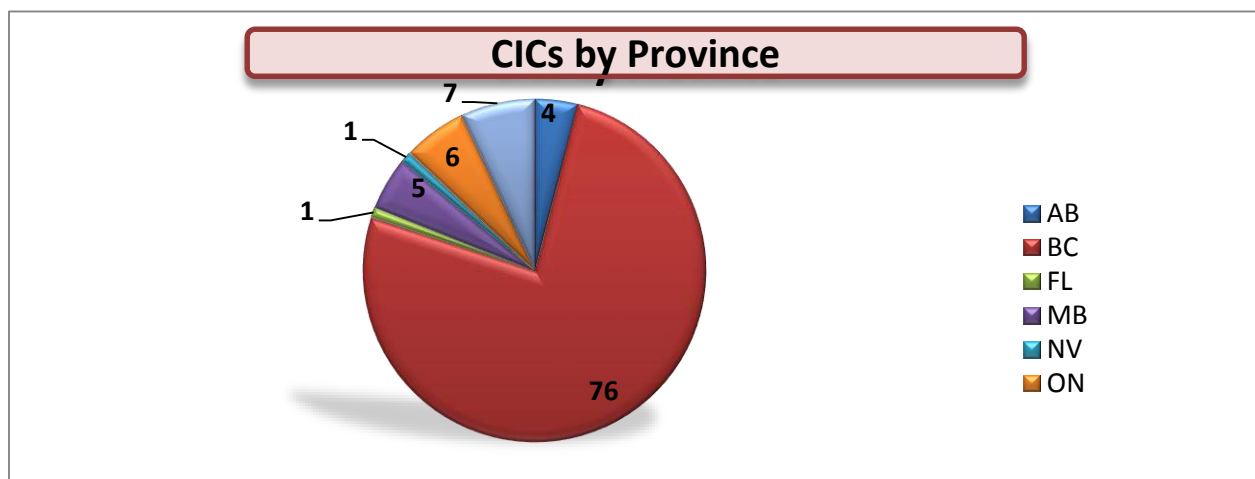
SCCFS Services

SCCFS provides delegated (statutory) services, cultural programs and reconnection / counseling support to urban Aboriginal children, youth and families in the Victoria capital region.

We work in partnership with other urban and on-reserve agencies, educational / health institutions and communities to provide co-coordinated preventative and early intervention (voluntary support and foster care) and guardianship services to urban Aboriginal children and families.

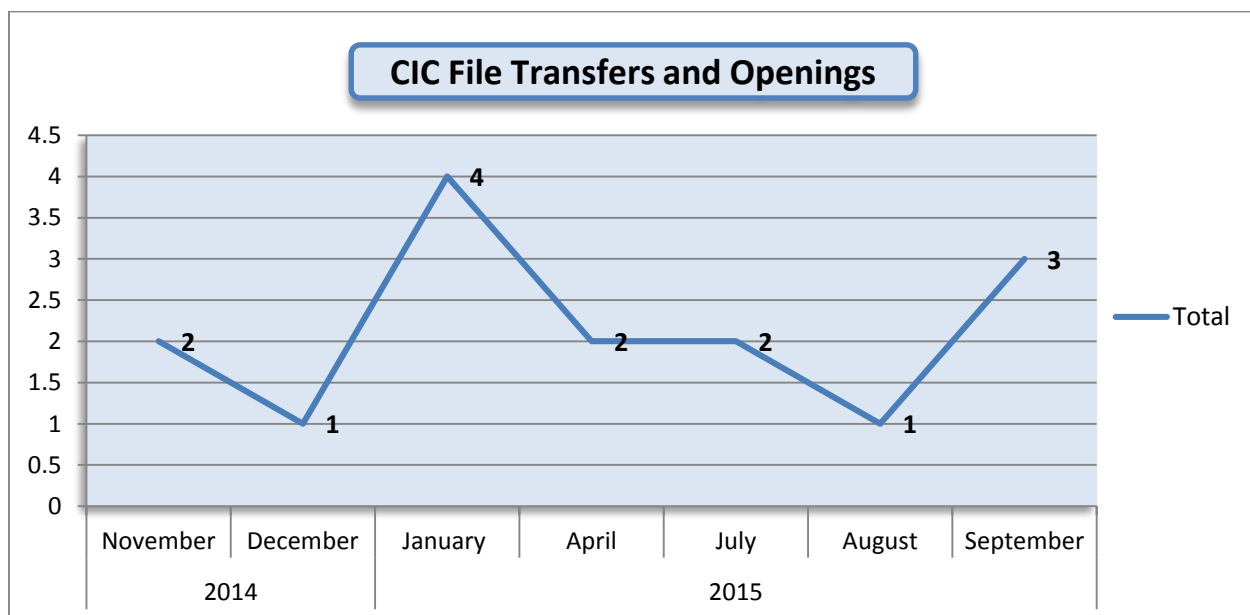
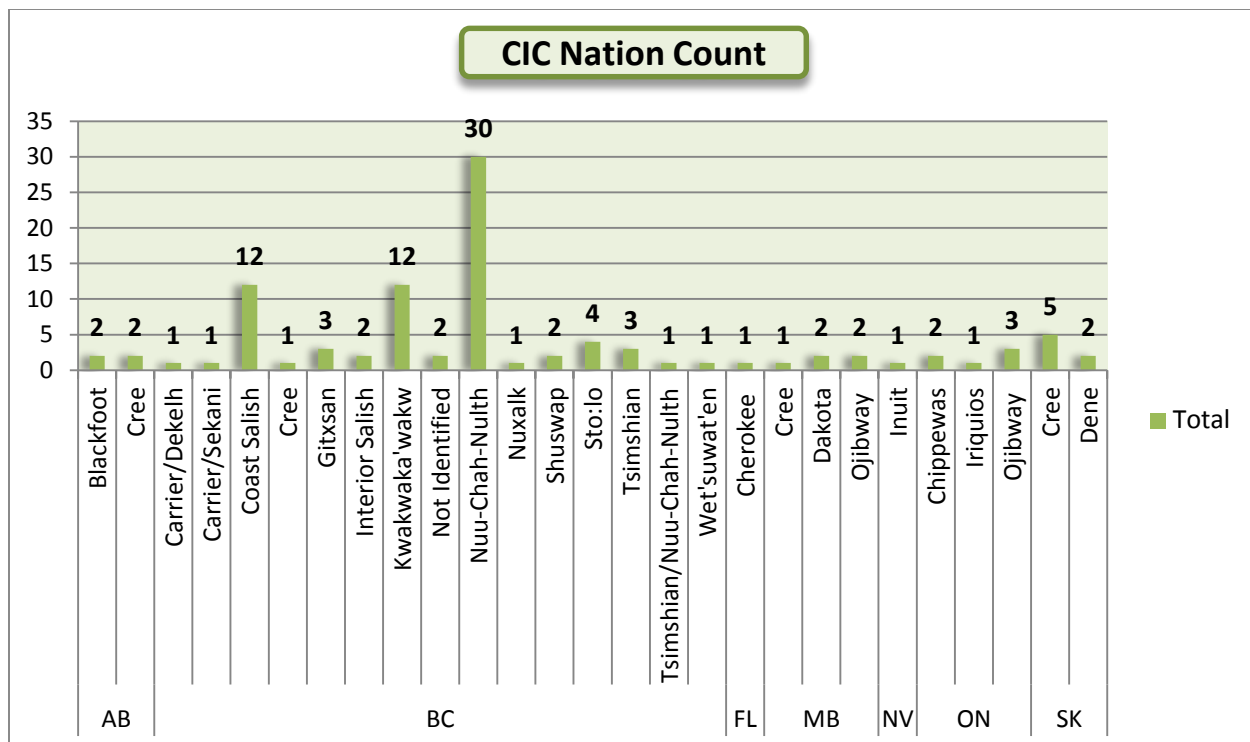
Guardianship

The vision of Surrounded by Cedar is that urban Aboriginal children grow up connected to family, community and culture. The Guardianship program at the agency is responsible to ensure that each child or youth, who comes into our care, receives the best possible services that we can offer and that culturally appropriate planning for these children and youth occurs. All Aboriginal children and youth who come into the care of the agency are informed of their rights as children in care, as per Section 70 of the *Child, Family and Community Services Act* and meet with their social workers at least once a month.

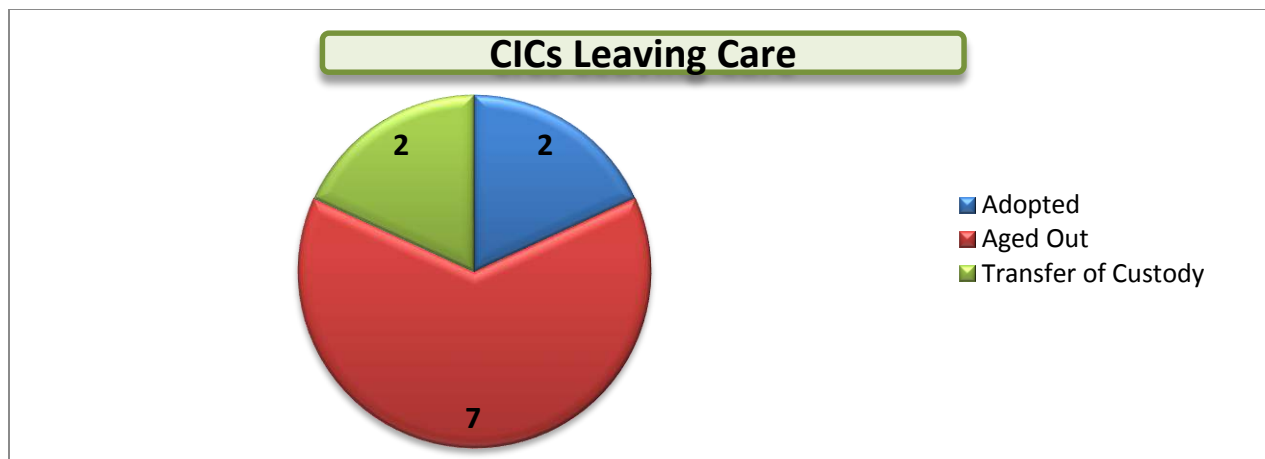


Note: Compared to 2014 – 7 provinces are represented in 2015 vs. 5 in 2014 Cut-off date of Sep 30, 2015.

The overall goal of the agency is to reduce the number of children coming into its care. However, it is important to recognize that currently, Surrounded by Cedar does not currently hold the level of delegation to impact the number of children coming into care. Currently, the majority of the children in the agency's care are transferred from the Ministry of Children and Family, while others have been transferred from other delegated agencies in the Province. As noted in the chart below, the number of transfers coming to the agency in the past number of years has reduced significantly as the agency already holds the majority of urban Aboriginal children in permanent care.

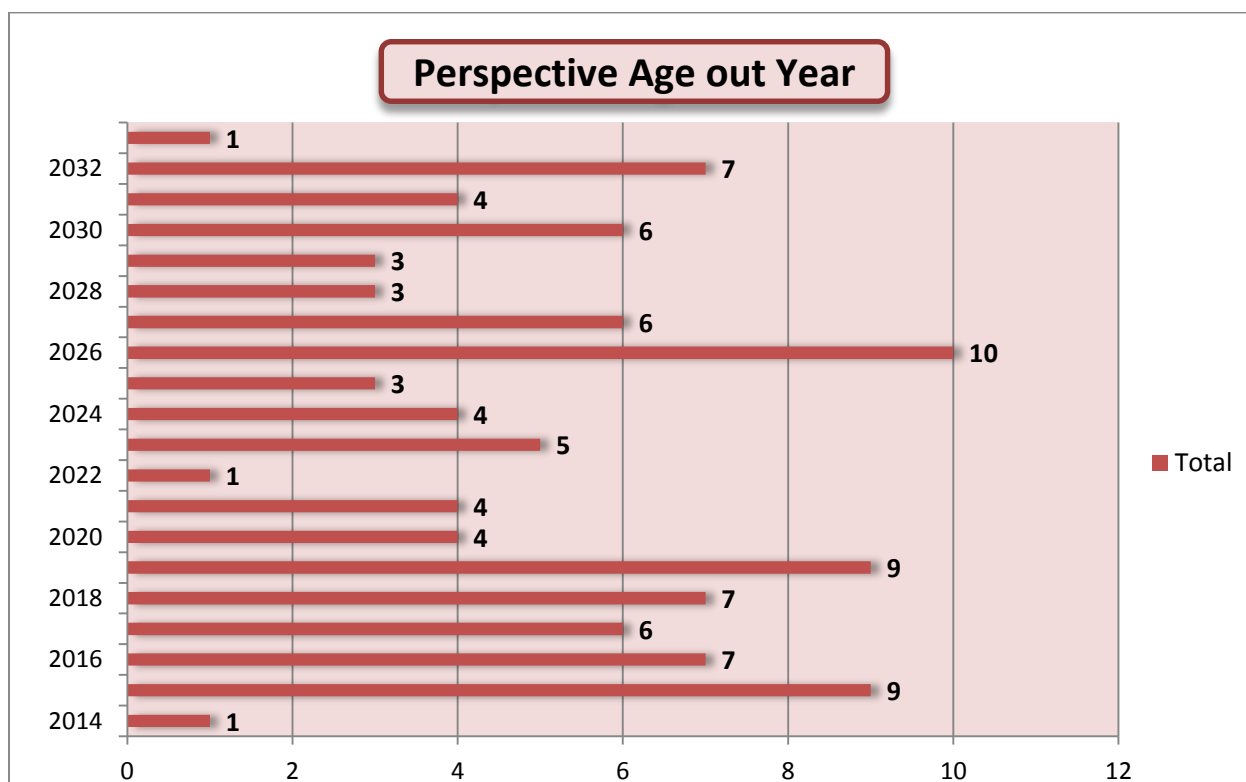


The agency has had several children and youth leave its care since 2009 when we started receiving Continuing Care files from the Ministry of Children and Families. Over the next several years, the agency will be working hard to create a better form of permanency for children and youth that we serve so we have less number of children “ageing out” of the system and more children finding permanent placement either with family, community or significant people in the children’s life.

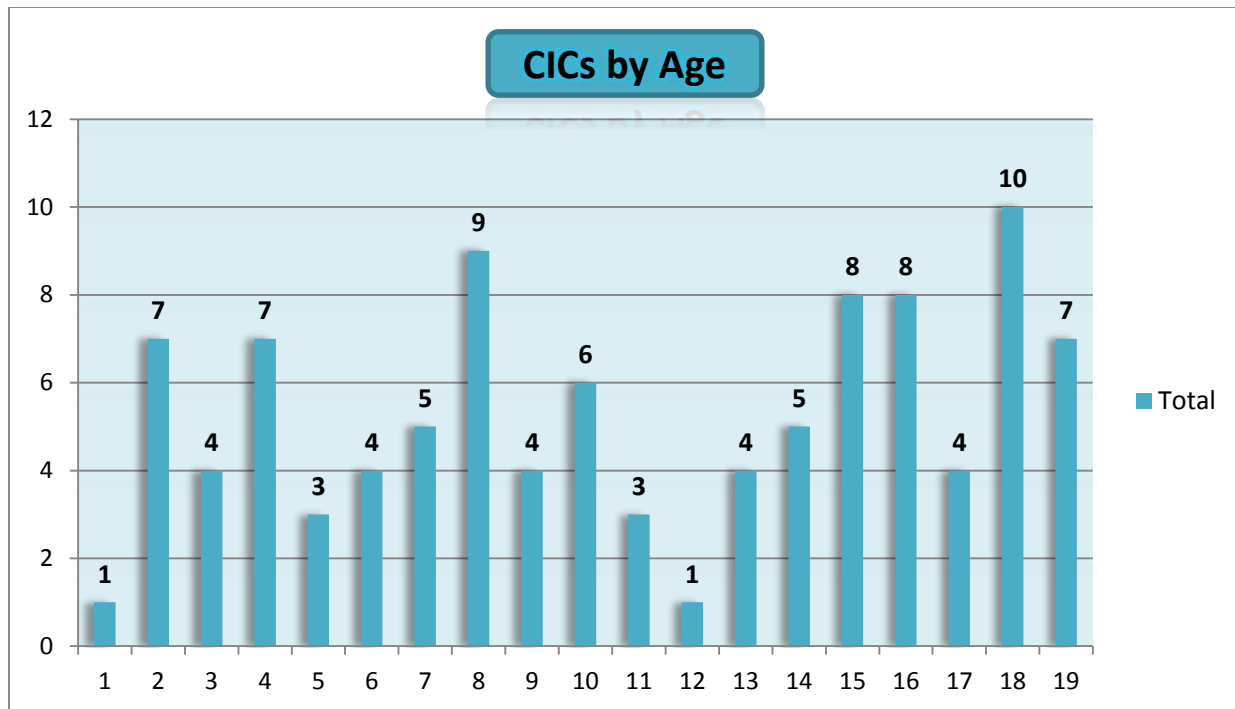


of children and youth who have left SCCFS care 2015

Below illustrates the projected number of children to “age out” or turn 19 while still in the care of the agency if permanency options are not nurtured and developed.



As evidenced below, the agency has a large number of youth who are preparing to graduate high school and to leave the care of the agency in 2016.



Guardianship involves the parental duties and responsibilities for our children's physical care and decision making responsibility concerning areas such as education, health, placement, and emotional and behavioural development.

The team of five delegated Guardianship Social Workers, under the supervision of one Team Leader support and care for 100 children and youth. Over the last year we have had fewer children move from resource to resource. One of the primary focuses of the workers has been to ensure that children and youth are in stable resources. Surrounded by Cedar continues to work closely with caregivers and our children to ensure that placements are constant and are well supported to meet the needs of the children we serve. To this end, our Resource department has grown considerable in the past year.

All of our Social Workers and Administrative staff recognize that it is privilege and honour to serve in the capacity to provide care and services for children and youth in our care. We rely heavily on cultural teachings to provide us with direction, problem solving and bridging our differences.

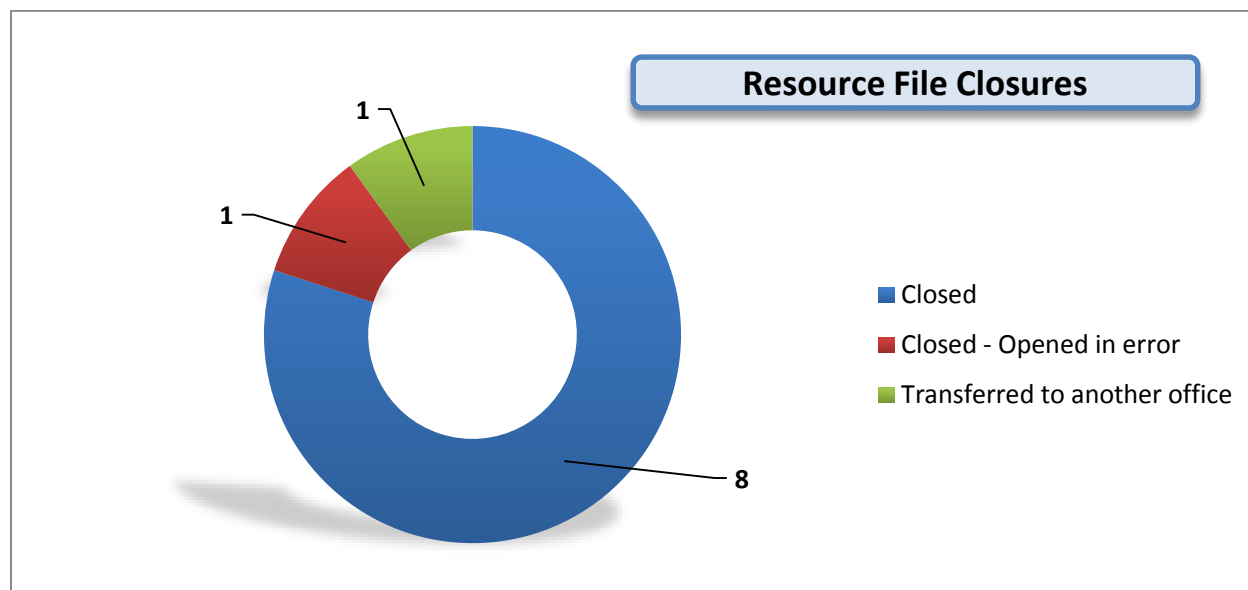
Residential Resources

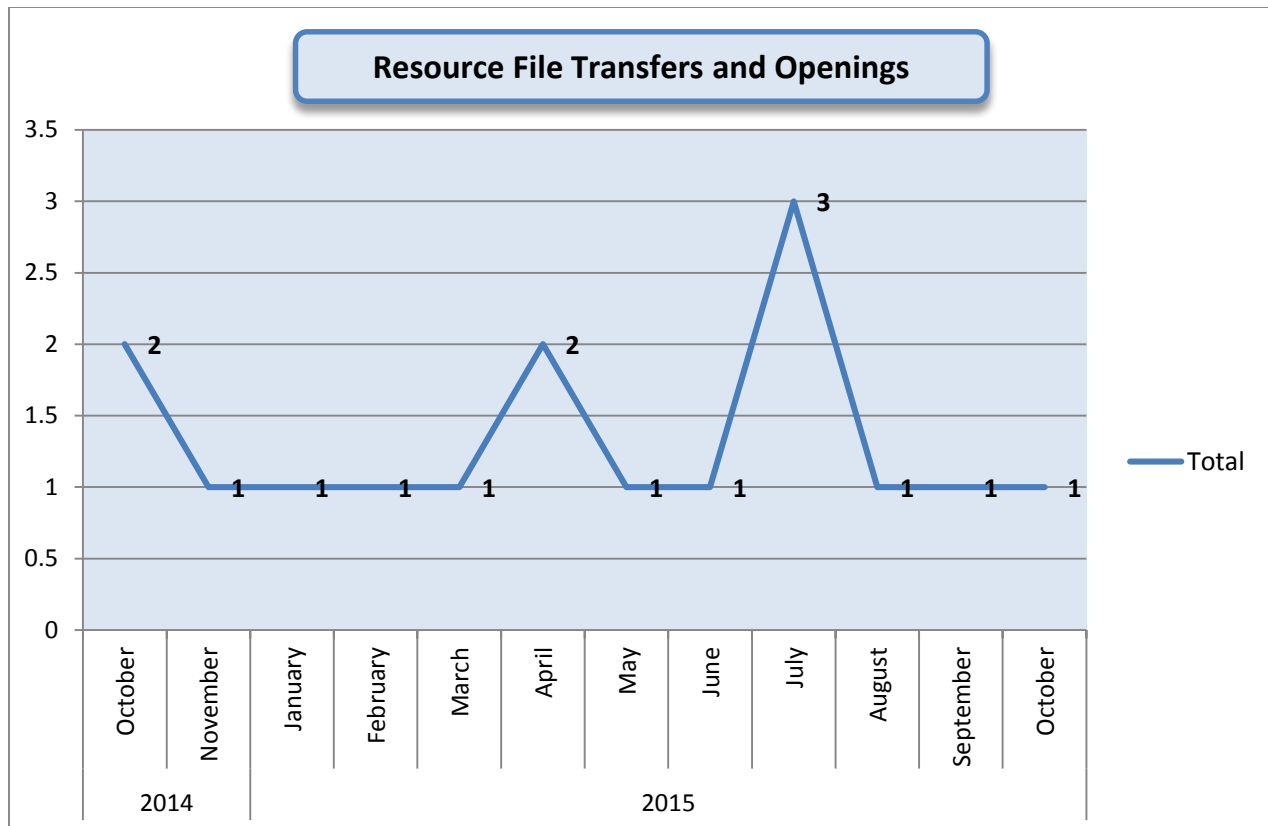
The program has responsibility for the administration and management of child care resources such as foster homes and family care homes for children served by the Surrounded by Cedar Guardianship team as well as for other Aboriginal children coming into care through MCFD child protection services.

The Aboriginal Resource Social Worker's role is to not only provide voluntary services, but to also recruit, study and provide ongoing support to caregivers of urban Aboriginal children in care. In addition the Resource Social Worker currently acts as a liaison between Surrounded by Cedar and MCFD around placement issues and residential resource evaluations.

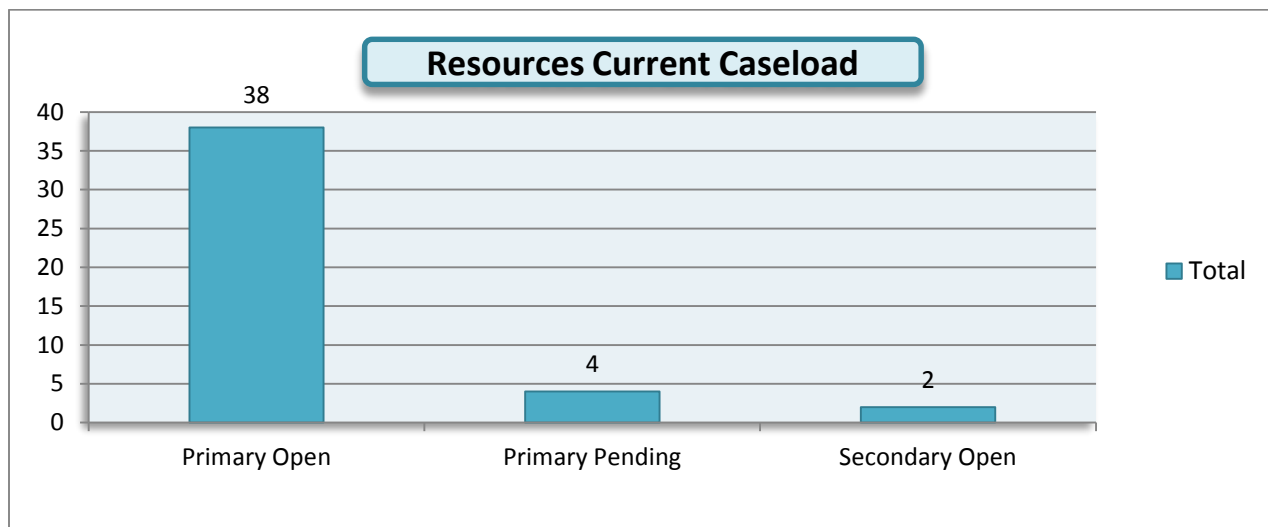
Surrounded by Cedar continues to manage care homes and we continue to work with MCFD in implementing the inclusive foster care policy. This policy is based on the belief that it takes a "village to raise a child" and that children truly feel safe and cared for if they feel loved and have a connection to family and community.

Surrounded by Cedar believes that the foster care system is not a destination for children but a service to the biological family and community with culture and the child placed at the center of the service. The caregivers are valuable partners with the biological parents and extended family and social workers who work together and learn from each other to provide the best possible care for a child.





Please note this graph does not reflect total Caseload per month

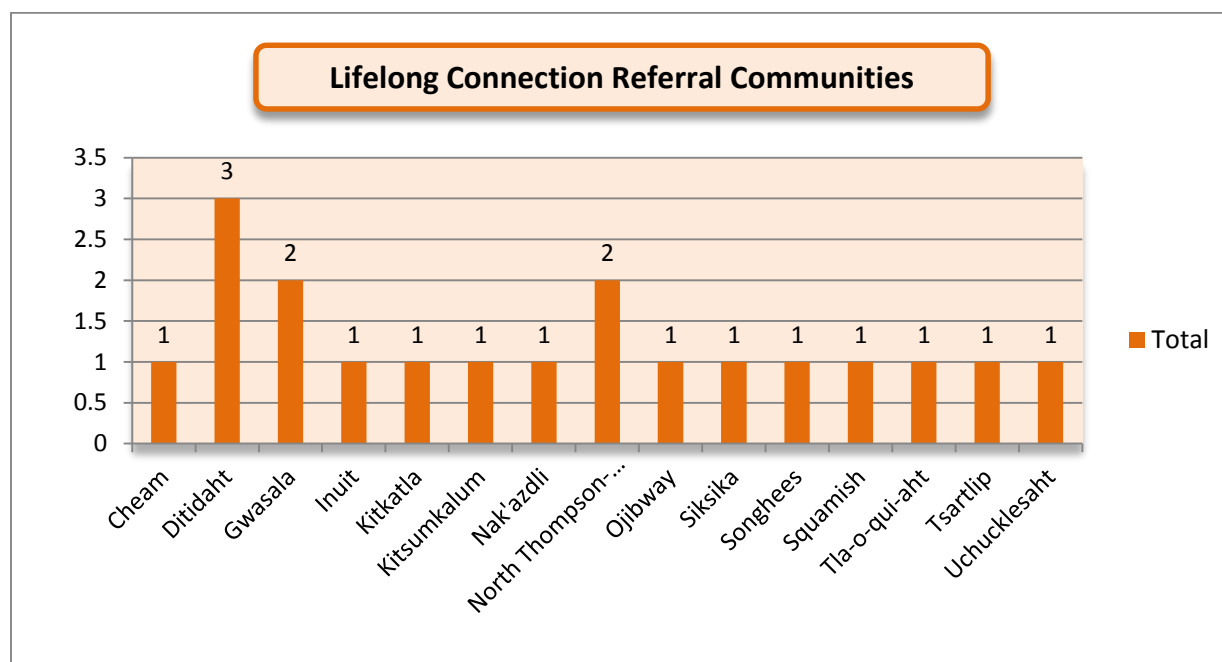


While it has been challenging to recruit new caregivers given that we have seen a reduction in our resource budget, we have been successful in recruiting over ten new homes this past year. The struggle we are encountering at this time is to ensure that all of the caregivers receive the best possible support for the children in their homes as well as being able to continue to recruit and develop new homes. We were successful this past year in receiving some funding through the Permanency Planning fund to hire a resource worker for a short contract in order to home study several of our new caregivers. We are hopeful in the New Year that we will be able to continue this avenue of growth for our own caregivers.

Life Long Connections

This year flew by so quickly. Since last year I have been working on many projects. I have completed 2 SAFE studies and 1 update since being trained on SAFE. I have also completed 15 genealogies this year.

As the Life Long Connections Worker I spend a lot of time calling communities to enquire about familial ties that Surrounded by Cedar children might have with people in the community. I spend time searching online as well for contact information that may lead me to connecting with a child's community and family. As the Life Long Connections Worker a lot of time is spent calling communities to inquire about familial ties that Surrounded by Cedar children might have with people in the community. A lot of time searching online as well for contact information that may lead to connecting with a child's community and family.



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Highlights from the past year:

- Finding family ties for a young man so that he could travel home to meet his great uncle.
- Family located with the hope that we can unite this family with 2 young girls. The grandmother, mother and the children were disconnected from family. The hope is that these 2 young girls will know who they are and where they come from.
- Siblings were found in the United States for one of our youth. This worker is still waiting to hear the outcome of the information provided.
- Meeting and networking with other people working in the Family Finding field at the Best Practice Forum in Vancouver.
- Signing a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with a First Nation that we work with to obtain family tree information when needed.

Challenges:

- Communication with communities is still a barrier that I am trying to overcome.
- Waiting for people to get back to me is always an issue. There is no real resolve for this issue.
- Not meeting people in person can be a barrier. I am an anonymous person on the other end of a phone. Many communities are more responsive to face to face contact. This is a barrier for many reasons. Cost, distance and time are some factors in not being able to meet face to face.

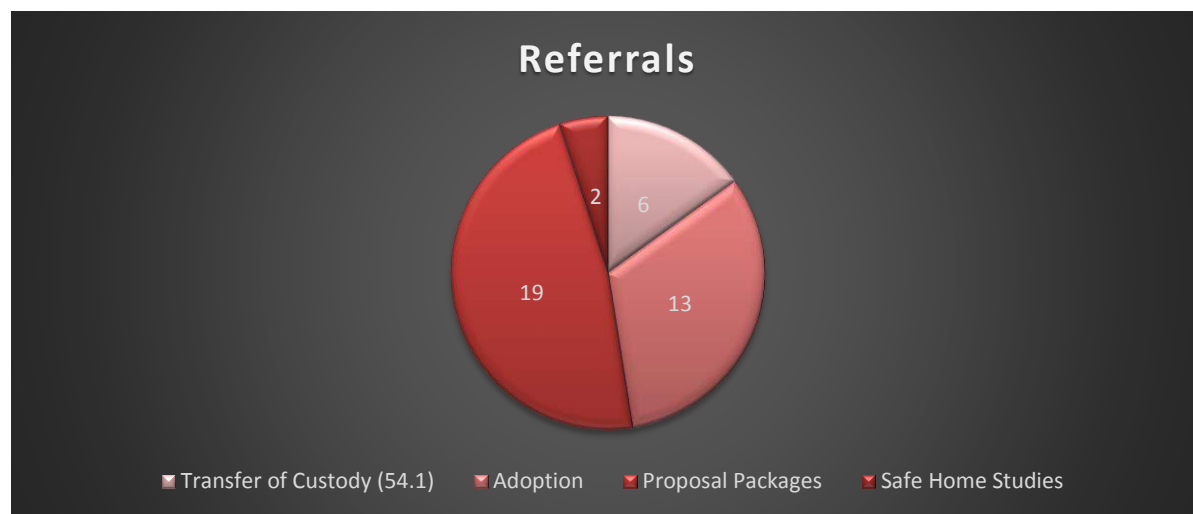
Statistics

- Total referrals (opened and closed)
 - The total number of referrals for this program since September 2012 is 72.
 - The total number of referrals for this year is 19.
 - Total of closed files for this year is 26.
 - Current caseload is 25.
- Total direct service hours (encompasses emails, phone calls etc.)
 - Total direct service hours for the year totals 832.13 hours.
 - Approximately 504.6 minutes were spent conversing on the telephone.
 - There were approximately 1239 emails.
- Communities contacted
 - There were approximately 24 separate communities contacted this year.

Submitted by: Seneca Ambers

Permanency Planning Services

Permanency planning for children and youth in care is imperative. Not only does it facilitate healing and represent reconciliation, it also greatly improves outcomes for our First Nations children, youth, and their families. Traditionally, First Nations people cared for their children within community, made agreements with family members, and thrived utilizing complex social networks to care for one another. Colonization and child welfare systems have impacted these traditional caring systems significantly. Surrounded by Cedar Child & Family Services is working with First Nations families to facilitate the best possible outcomes in the lives of children and youth who have been brought into care. We understand that children thrive when being raised in culturally appropriate, long term, and healthy environments.



The role of the Permanency Planning Coordinator is to assist our Guardianship Social Workers and our families to develop permanency planning options for children in care. The permanency planning options for children in continuing care include: adoption, transfer of custody (54.1), and rescindment of a continuing custody order.

The Permanency Planning Coordinator's position began in May 2014. The focus for this program has been to eliminate barriers for moving permanency plans forward and to assist with the requirements of completing the guardianship responsibilities for adoption or transfer of custody (54.1) under the *Child, Family and Community Services Act*. A large portion of the work to date has been working on SAFE Home Assessments as required components for both adoption and transfer of custody (54.1) plans.

This work is very exciting for our staff, families, and children in care. Through the assistance of the Permanency Planning Coordinator, one child in care was officially placed for adoption with family in September, 2014. With this position's ongoing involvement, the development and finalization of permanent placements will increase as will positive outcomes for the children and youth in care.

Submitted by: Connie Martin

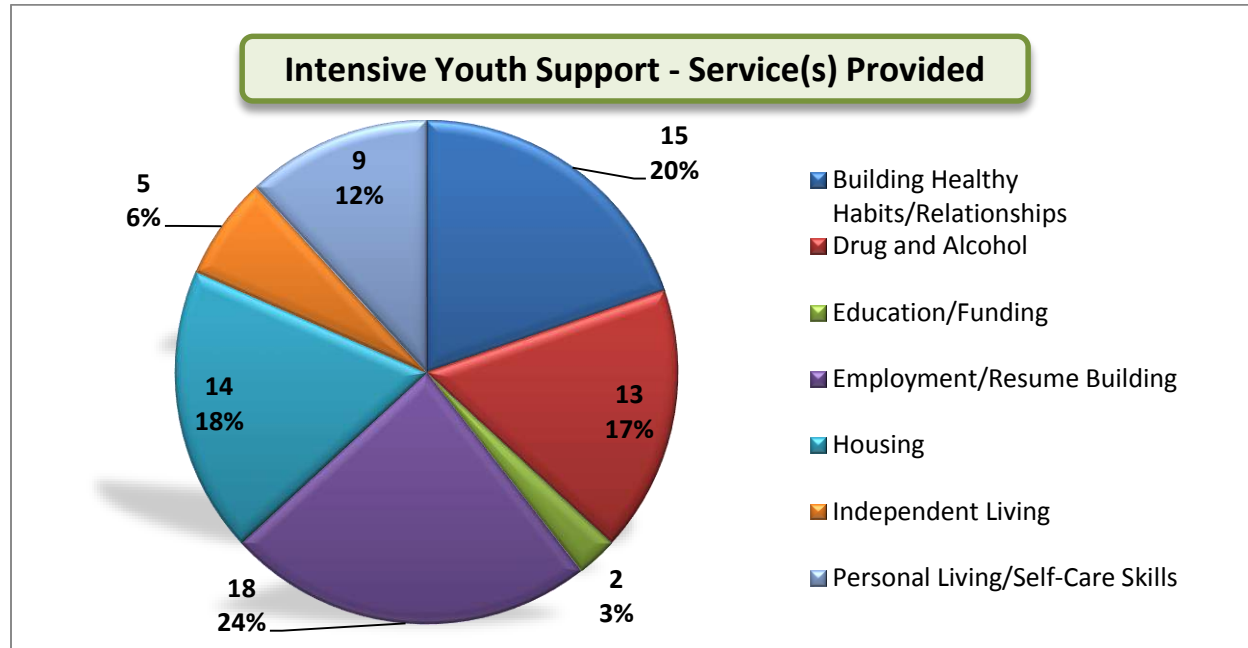
Intensive Youth Support Services

The Intensive Youth Support Services position is in its second full year. Its focus is to help support the continued capacity and skill development of either high risk youth or youth in need of additional supports outside of the traditional guardianship responsibilities. The youth worker is responsible for a variety of duties as it pertains to youth between the ages of twelve to nineteen. In addition, the youth worker could potentially be available to support youth who are post majority, however, only for a specified time while the youth child in care file is still open with the social worker responsible.

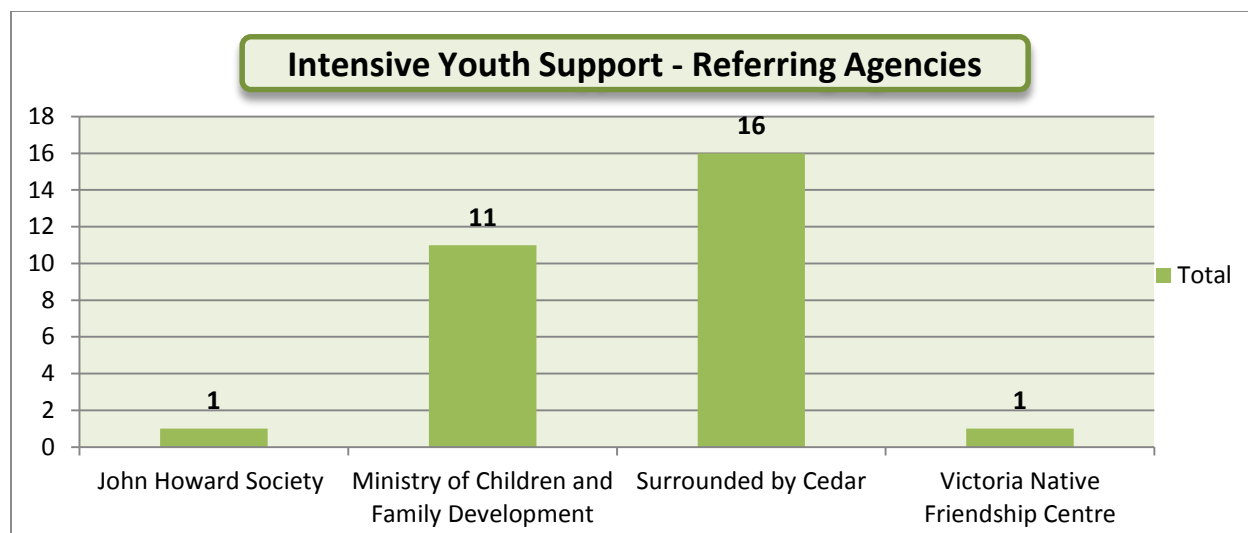
The relationship between the youth worker and the youth should be one of honesty, transparency and trust. This relationship is obviously built over time and the expectation of the IYSW is to engage with the youth on a weekly basis. This will establish a good relationship with each youth referred to the program and give ample opportunity for the IYSW to engage youth in healthy, supportive relationships.

Referrals to the program generally come from social workers from the Ministry of Children and Families or from Surrounded by Cedar. The agency will accept referrals from other ancillary agencies that are working with urban Aboriginal families and youth as well.

Since the creation of IYSW position in March of 2014, there has been 32 files opened and youth accepted, encompassing a variety of goals for each youth. The amount of time each file stays open is based entirely on the youth and his or her participation and engagement with the ISW as well as what each youth requires.



The Intensive Youth Support Worker has provided services to youth in the above areas. This graph reflects the most predominant services requested.



It is an absolute honour being able to meet and connect with these dynamic and resilient young people. They are willing, capable and wise beyond their vulnerable years. With patience, guidance and commitment from the IYSW, these youth have been able to fight addiction, connect with family, return to school and age out with a plan and a promising future.

The ability of the IYSW to build a relationship with the youth is imperative to the success of this program and the success of the youth. Humour, trust, understanding and suspending judgement are just a few of the qualities that are imperative to employ in this position. It's important to know that any small effort or achievement is a reason to celebrate, and understand any mistake or slip is not a failure but just a reason to try again.

These young people can, and many have, become happy, healthy and successful contributors to our communities. They just need a chance and the support to make it happen. I am learning, every day, about the youth that I serve and even more about myself and how I can assist them in becoming who and where they want to be. I look forward to each and every referral.

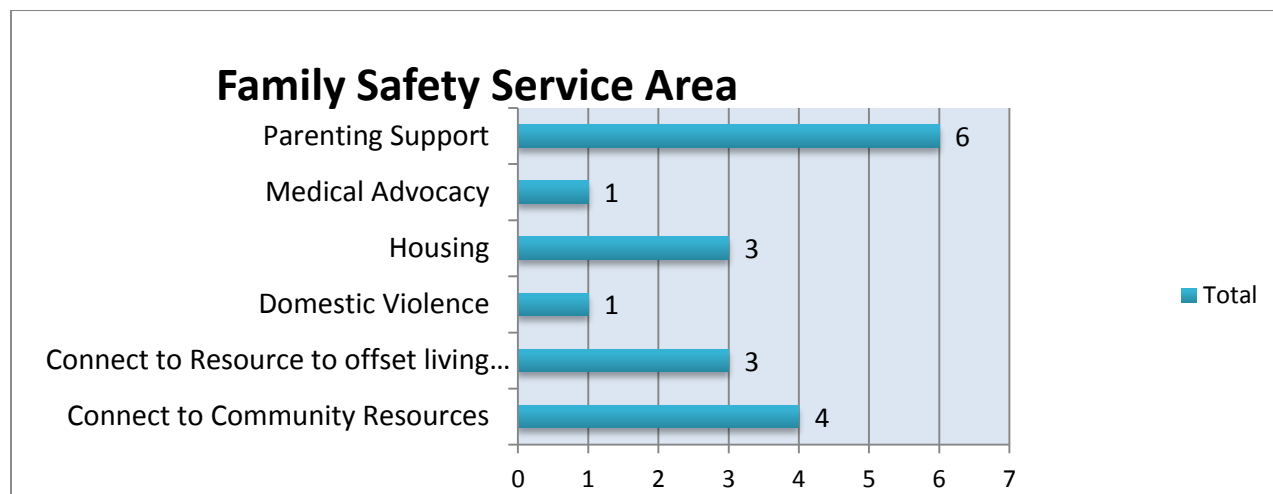
Submitted by: Bel Manson

Family Safety Services

The role of the Family Safety Worker is to provide support to urban Aboriginal families who are struggling. I work with family members, including extended family, on a voluntary basis to connect them with services through Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services, the Ministry of Child and Family Development, and sister agencies as well as other community resources. I help family members establish and achieve goals that relate to healthy parenting as well as providing guidance and advocacy while they work through their individual circumstances.

This has been a challenging year as I have taken on a role that has not been a facet of SCCFS's general services prior to this particular positions inception. I began my job in May of 2014 and it has been somewhat difficult to lay the foundation for my program as well as to establish guidelines, recording

practices and file management systems, while attempting to achieve realistic perceivable outcomes for my particular form of service. There was much to learn about this job and the mechanism of service delivery. I would like to thank the team for their ongoing support and encouragement.



The beginning of the program was slow to start, and this report covers the period from October 2014, until now. During this period I received 20 referrals, 14 of which were turned into Service Request files, and 6 were transferred to other community agencies such as South Island Wellness Society, Victoria Native Friendship Centre, and Together Against Poverty Society. Four referrals became involved with Child Protection and my role was eliminated due primarily to the fact that there is no current mechanism whereby one can carry a Voluntary Family Service file and an active Child Protection file concurrently. Two other files were closed due to the fact that the clients relocated with support, onto their respective home Reserves into permanent housing.

The most exciting part about my job is when I help a family meet a goal, or when I connect them to a resource in the community and it corresponds with their specific needs and/or situation. Helping a young mother find permanent stable housing, or supporting a teen mom in gaining the skills she needs to parent successfully are the rewards that resonate with me. It is all about asking, exploring, advocating and supporting the families I serve as they navigate the choppy waters of the various systems. I believe in this work and am thrilled that I get to be the one to do it.

It is my hope that I will be able to continue connecting with more families and to keep developing and maintaining a solid relationship with our working partners so that the referrals can continue and a greater network of natural support can be developed in partnership with the families we serve.

Submitted by: Sylvia Jones

Cultural Program

The Cultural program had a very successful year again. The program facilitated Professional Development Days (Pro-D Days) for youth 7-11 throughout the year and had a large response from not only caregivers but also the community. The Pro-D Day program partnered with Tsawout First Nations at the beginning of the year to host a career day at Tsawout. There were presenters from the VNFC, the Aboriginal Youth Internship Program, Toque Catering, the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Saanich Police and the University of Victoria. Over 60 youth between the ages of twelve and twenty four attended the event.

The Earthwalker camps were also a great success as we hosted a group of 7-11 year olds for a one week spring break camp in March. The kids enjoyed exploring science, technology and nature in learning about sea going mammals, habitats and species needing protection and also discovering the Pacific Northwest Raptors and Shaw Ocean Discovery center. The kids also attended dream catcher making workshops, and a sweatlodge.



Xe'Xu T'uluts'thut Leadership

The Xe'Xu T'uluts'thut Leadership provides a safe and welcoming environment for youth to gather once per week to learn about a wide variety of topics designed to develop safety and support networks, cultural identity and leadership development based on both western and Indigenous perspectives. For example; workshops include substance abuse prevention, stress management, virtues training, environmental awareness and stewardship to name a few. These activities provide participants with opportunities to experience success in developing social skills and forming healthy relationships across community with healthy role models (older youth, Elders, and caring adults). A guiding tenet of XXTT is that that youth who are taught to build and strengthen support networks in adolescence will continue to seek out a healthy adult and access community supports later in life. Having a support system significantly reduces risk taking behaviours associated with lack of support systems, isolation lack of life knowledge to navigate young adulthood.

XXTT programming has four components which run seasonally:

- Weekly Leadership workshops and cultural activities
- Certificates, employment preparation and community volunteer experiences
- Monthly youth and elder gatherings
- Adventure and outdoor cultural education opportunities in the summer

Each program component complements the other and operate in a seasonal context, all working together to create a culturally significant prevention program. Based on Indigenous ways of being and knowing, we work together to build the resiliency of our youth by promoting a strong sense of identity and belonging; providing opportunities for skill building and mastery, cross generational sharing and responsibility. We strive to provide cultural learning opportunities within the project framework; we engage our diverse group of healthy knowledge keepers (Elders and cultural technicians in community) in teaching workshops and leading talking circles.

Child and Youth Counselling

Individual Counselling Services

A total of twenty-six children and youth and eight families participated in individual and group counselling programs from October 2014-September 2015. The primary reasons for referral include: historic abuse/neglect, family conflict, behavioral concerns and emotional dysregulation, traumatic grief and transition stress. The secondary reasons for referral include: suicidality, physical and relational violence, attention and learning concerns, identity development. Referrals were provided by MCFD (4), Delegated Aboriginal Agencies (2), Aboriginal Community Service Agencies (7), School Districts (2), and SCCFS (22). A total of 448 individual hours of counselling were provided to clients, with 92 hours of family counselling support. During this time, 10 individual files were closed as client's completed their treatments goals (7), were referred on to other wellness resources (1), or withdrew from counselling services (2).

2014/2015	Open	Closed	Current Waitlist
Clients & Families	26	10	4

Areas of Clinical Service	
<i>Trauma Services:</i>	<i>Developmental Services:</i>
Sexual abuse	Cultural Identity Development
Physical abuse	Life Story Continuity
Emotional abuse	Social Skills
Neglect	Emotional and Behavioral Regulation
Traumatic grief	Family Conflict Resolution and Relational Skill Development
Transition trauma	Community Connection

Referrals	
MCFD	4
Delegated Aboriginal Agencies	2
Aboriginal Community Service Agencies	4
School Districts	2
SCCFS	22

Program Highlights

Program Development

This year, the SCCFS Child & Youth Counselling Program moved away from Group Counselling Services to introduce Family Counselling Support Services to complement the existing Individual Counselling Services. This move came in response to increasing requests for family therapy services and declining participation in community group counselling services. This has been a positive change to the program as several of the children and youth participating in the Individual Counselling Services program have expressed interest in family therapy work and have self-referred themselves and their families for this service.

This work has also been recognized by community members and families as consistent with traditional Indigenous values of healing, and addresses a service gap for families involved in the child welfare system seeking cultural based family therapy work.

In addition to program changes, in early 2015 the CYC Department developed and implemented a new Waitlist Management System to better connect families to mental health and wellness resources while waiting for individual and family support services. In consultation with local Aboriginal Community Service Agencies, and MCFD Aboriginal Child and Youth Mental Health, a new screening and intake process has been designed that is culturally inclusive, and will engage families in community wellness resources immediately upon referral. The new Waitlist Management System also provides regular check-ins with families to ensure that child advocacy/liaison work begins immediately (i.e.: in schools, family conferences, etc), necessary complementary referrals are submitted, and changes in mental health can be monitored. These changes have been informed by the MCFD changes to CYMH Policy B1 (Referral and Intake) and B2 (Waitlist Management Policy), which came into effect in 2014.

Elder in Residence

Alex Nelson (Kasala) is the Resident Elder for Surrounded by Cedar and is in his third year at SCCFS. He is a proud member of the Musgamaqw-Dzawada'enuwx First Nation located in Kingcome Inlet, Wakeman, Hopetown and Gilford Island. In the past 43 years he has resided in Victoria with his wife Nella, daughter Tasha, and grandsons Avery (Gigalis) and Braden (Komonaquala). He remains most active in his traditional lifestyle. Nella is an educator and they have proudly home cared for 29 students/relatives from their homelands. Both are University of Victoria Graduates!

Alex is a seven year survivor of the infamous Indian Residential School system, as well as a survivor of his son's suicide. He offers workshops in Suicide Intervention and Prevention, as well as Stories of Survival and Intergenerational Effects of Indian Residential Schools.

Alex has a passion in sports, especially soccer, and allows him to organize and coach youth soccer, and still compete. He was very fortunate to administrate the delivery of the 1997 North American Indigenous Games, hosted in Victoria. Alex is also the Senior Advisor to the current North American Indigenous Games Council.

As a First Nations person, Alex believes that his experience, knowledge and passion for life must be shared and passed onto the next generation, in pursuit of holistic wellness and health, while honouring traditional practices and lifestyles. Alex sincerely looks forward to each day, especially in coming to Surrounded by Cedar, for he truly believes in its purpose. "I witness the true dedication and integrity of the workers committed to care and safety of all those who enter these doors. This commitment will result in a healthier today and tomorrow for our families, youth and community".

Practicum Students

Over the past year, Surrounded by Cedar was pleased to host a number of students in various practicum placements.

Nicole Lodge joined the Guardianship Team from January to April 2015 for her 4th year BSW practicum placement. Nicole also assisted the agency in the Cultural Program as an SCCFS chaperone for the Gathering Our Voices Youth Conference. She has since graduated with her BSW from the University of Northern British Columbia.

Howie Kolson also joined the Guardianship Team from January to April 2015 for his 4th year BSW practicum placement. Howie has since graduated from the University of Victoria with a Bachelor of Social Work with an Indigenous Child Welfare Specialization.

Surrounded by Cedar also hosted Samantha Leggeat from the Indigenous Family Support Program at Camosun College.

Aboriginal Youth Internship Program

In June of this year, the agency hosted two Interns from the Aboriginal Youth Internship Program.



Chelsea Kelly

Chelsea Kelly is a member of the Sto:lo Nation and a recent graduate from the University of Victoria, where she has been studying social worker with an Indigenous Child Welfare Specialization. This summer, Chelsea joined the Guardianship team and was mentored by Alysha Brown. Chelsea has the opportunity to participate in all aspects of the Guardianship work including carrying a small caseload of her own. Chelsea was an absolute pleasure to have in the agency and her strong work ethic and values will make her a terrific social worker.



Nathan Michaluk

Nathan joined the agency and assisted in the Cultural summer programming. Nathan is from the Skin Tyee Nation within the Wet'suwet'en First Nation family which is located in the Burns Lake area. Nathan has an extensive background in leading summer camps and mission trips and these opportunities led him to travel to Haiti, Dominican Republic and throughout the US. This summer, Nathan assisted the Cultural program in delivering the Earthwalkers summer camps as well as the Xe'Xu T'uluts'thut Leadership camp where they spend a week in the Quw'ustun' territory. Nathan loves the outdoors and really thrived and connected with the youth on the land.

The Aboriginal Back to School Picnic 2015(BTSP)

A Surrounded by Cedar Child & Family Services program, and delivery partner M'akola Housing Group



The annual Aboriginal Back to School Picnic (BTSP) initiative began in Victoria in 2003 as a small community celebration for a few children. One urban Aboriginal community based organization, Surrounded by Cedar sought financial and volunteer support from four sister agencies, the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centers, Hulitan Family and Community Services and M'akola Housing and First Nations Education Division of School District 61 (Victoria) to develop and implement the first BTSP.



This initiative resulted in over 100 attendees and 45 backpacks of school supplies offered to urban Aboriginal children. This year our community gathered at Government House to celebrate the return to school. The founding agencies, joined by Chief Thomas, Chief Sam, Chief Underwood and the Lt. Governor of BC Judith Guichon and the Unity Drummers and Singers. The new venue was welcoming and the weather cooperative. Smiling children with backpacks filled with school supplies wandered with their families around the beautiful grounds, enjoying all of the fun activities and food offerings. This wonderful event served 2,106 students in eight communities Victoria, Duncan, Campbell River, Courtenay, Port Alberni, Nanaimo, Mission and Surrey. In Victoria we distributed supplies and support to 1232 students; pre-K to post-secondary.



In every community there were volunteers. To give their time and lend a hand. To lift and stack and set and clear, paint and doodle. 146 Volunteers in eight communities gave 946 hours. That's \$15,888.75 worth of time and energy.

A special thank you to our sponsors and investors; RBC Royal Eagles, Vancity, Rina M Bidin Foundation, Scotiabank, Monk Office, Out of the Blue Designs, Unitarian Church and MNP.



New Staff

Katie Jacobs

Greetings. My name is Kathryn (Katie) Jacobs. It's hard to believe that 6 months have passed since I joined the incredible Surrounded by Cedar Team. I hold dual supporting roles; one to the Guardianship Team Assistant and, the second to Administrative Front Office Team.

My education background is from SFU in the physical sciences, Uvic French Diploma Program and Uvic and Thompson Rivers University Indigenous Literature and History Studies. I chose to follow an Administrative role as I enjoy interaction with people as well as offering support and resolution with challenges.

My paternal ancestry is Mi'kmaq/ Acadian, from a First Nations band indigenous to Canada's Atlantic Provinces and the Gaspésie Restigouche River region Peninsula of Quebec. I enjoy music, camping, paddling, cycling, and martial arts and I welcome opportunities to try to maintain my French language skills.

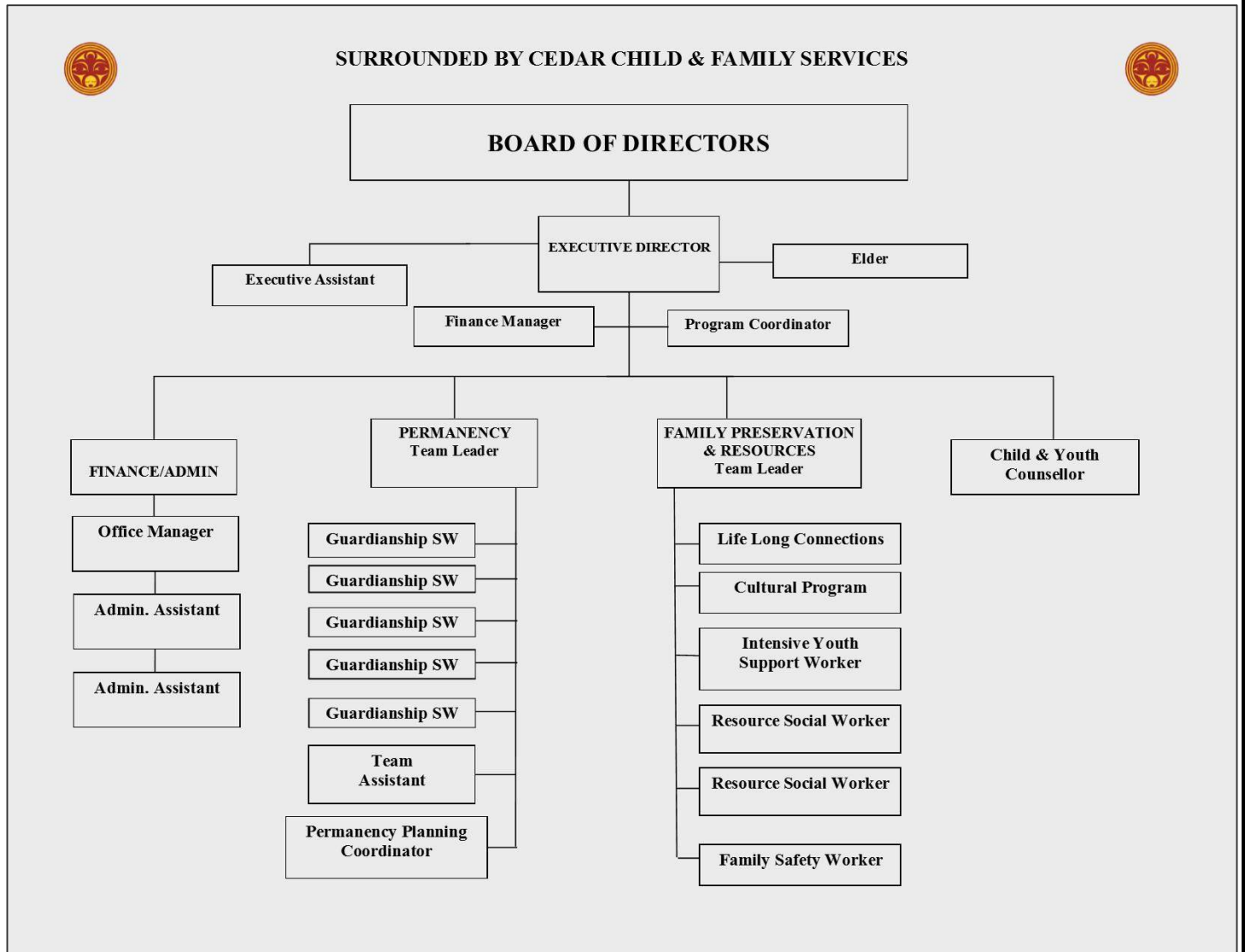


**Surrounded by Cedar
Staff and Board**

Strategic Planning Session

November 21 and 22, 2014

Surrounded by Cedar Organizational Chart



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