



# Dream Speaker

Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services  
Winter 2018-2019 Edition



## *Winter feast 2018*

This year's Winter Feast celebration was full of love, respect, and grounding thanks to the cultural sharing's of the three Island Nations: The Coast Salish of the South, the Nuu-chah-nulth of the Coast, and the Kwakwaka'wakw of Northern of Vancouver Island. We were happy to be joined this year by the local all women's drum group, ANSWER. ANSWER is a group of Indigenous women that share their various cultures from across Turtle Island, and bring forth many teachings that they enjoy sharing with children and youth. These four groups each shared a bit of their own cultures with the staff, children & youth, caregivers, and community members in attendance.

It was important to us that cultural sharing be prominent in this year's Winter Feast as SCCFS wanted to make sure that our young ones understood what Winter solstice and the change of seasons means for them. Culturally, for most of Vancouver Island, the winter is the marker for new beginnings and it's when our winter ceremonies begin.

Winter brings in the beginning of Potlatches in the *Gukwdzi* (big house) along the North and Coast of Vancouver Island, and it also marks the start of winter ceremonies for our Coast Salish relatives in their Longhouses. Each tribe has its own teachings, ways of being and own set of protocols.

This year we shared gifts such as regalia teddy bears to all of the drum groups that performed. Each group received a personalized bear specific to their Nation. The children were also gifted bears and snowmen (though not as extravagant!) but they were a big hit nonetheless!

We had many fun activities for the kids: Button blanket dolls, gratitude cards, cookie decorating (baked by the lovely SCCFS staff!), and everyone's favourite the popcorn machine! Mr. and Mrs. Cedar Claus also stopped by for a visit with all of our families.

We received a lot of positive feedback from our community members this year, and the Winter Feast committee would like to thank everyone that was able to make it! Huy tseep q'u siem!



# STAFFING CORNER

## New Faces Around the Office:

**Lee Smith** re-joined Surrounded by Cedar on a temporary basis as a Guardianship Social Worker. Lee is Cree Dene and worked with SCCFS from 2012-2016 before relocating to Vancouver BC to work for Vancouver Aboriginal Child & Family Services. Lee brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience and we are thrilled to have her back!

**Marina King** is grateful for the chance to be completing her fourth year Social Work practicum with the Surrounded by Cedar resource team. Her biological family comes from the Lac La Biche Kikino Metis Settlement. Marina was not raised within culture, but is excited and honoured to be able to be a part of more cultural activities such as drumming and singing in the morning. She is looking forward to her upcoming graduation in June 2019 and would like to acknowledge and thank everyone from the Surrounded by Cedar agency who has contributed to her learning thus far.

## Farewells:

On February 12th, **Kristy Potskin** gave birth to a beautiful baby boy named Everett! Kristy has been the Life Long Connection Worker with SCCFS since July 2018 and she recently embarked on her new journey into Motherhood. We are wishing Kristy, her husband, baby Everett and of course, dog Charlie, a big congratulations and looking forward to her return next year!

On February 15<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated and sent best wishes to our Cultural Continuity Worker, **Meagan Saulnier**, as she left to embark on her transition into Motherhood! Meagan, or more known as Meags, Mogolie or Moges, brought her strengths to work each day by sharing in song and laughter. During her time with the agency she supported a number of children and youth travelling to their home territories, reconnecting with families, attending community events and ceremonies and sharing many of her teachings with not only the children and youth but with each one of us. We look forward to meeting her wee one soon and to her return in January 2020!

## Staff in New Roles:

Congratulations to **Amy Whitney**, who is filling in as the new Life Long Connections Worker! Amy has been the Intensive Youth Support Worker with SCCFS since April 2018 and brings a ton of passion and enthusiasm to this program. We look forward to watching Amy thrive in this new role and help facilitate familial connections for our children and youth.

The Surrounded by Cedar staff would like to say a special happy birthday to our wonderfully kind Executive Director, Jennifer Chuckry!  
(she has a great sense of humour, too!)



# CULTURAL PROGRAMS UPDATE

SARAH AND BRANDI

Cultural Programming has been busy the last little while! In between planning the Winter feast for December there was all sorts of programming put forward in between.

**Building our Bundles** (formerly called Tea and Bannock) nights is once a month on the first Tuesday of every month. It is centered on a new teaching each month. December is a stressful month and B.O.B's focused on self-care and how to decolonize self-care practices through things like ceremony, smudging, and traditional medicines.

In January we made Elk hide drums with children and their caregivers. They learned traditional drum teachings from Mohawk Knowledge keeper Glenn Patterson, and SCCFS Cultural Programs Coordinator Sarah Underdown. On February 23<sup>rd</sup> hosted another drum workshop, this time with buffalo hide. We are excited to support more of our young ones as they learn the teachings of the drum and the importance of the history the songs hold.



February was a night dedicated to beading where Sarah and Brandi delved into their gifts with beads. Both are excellent beaders!

## **Xe'Xu T'uluts'thut Youth Leadership**

Leadership continues to meet twice a month in the evenings. We engage our young ones with activities and teachings focused on nurturing their gifts and providing them with learning opportunities, building on their ability to be leaders in their communities. We have held vision board sessions, art nights, beading and self-care teachings. Our next few sessions will be the youth taking turns facilitating an evening on a leadership topic of their choice. To be able to witness their growth has truly been a gift.

We are looking forward to both the Spring Break camp and the Summer camp with this vibrant group of true leaders.



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# A JOURNEY FOR PARENTS

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Shelley Lafrance

On January 17, 2019, Surrounded by Cedar Child & Family Services cancelled the Continuing Custody Order for two sisters who belong to Namgis Nation. These two little girls were returned home to their birth father.

This journey includes being with their father, step-mother and youngest sister.

This family's journey is like many Indigenous families within colonial systems in the lands known as Canada. Through the systems of oppression, forced assimilation, residential schools, related impacts of trauma and through the western systems of child protection, continuing custody orders were granted in 2010 and 2011.

Recognizing that these two little girls are urban Indigenous children, with a right to receive culturally safer services, these children were transferred to Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services (SCCFS). SCCFS worked diligently for the children's cultural, family and community connections. For the past several years these sisters were in a Restricted family placement with their grandparents, uncle and big brother.

The mother and father stayed connected with their daughters and in 2014 and 2015 their visits and connections increased, however very sadly their mother passed away in the spring of 2015. Following this, their father continued to demonstrate his resilience and ability to parent. Then eventually visits were extended and his goals with his partner in 2017 further developed leading to this full and legal return.

Family members were invited to participate through a cultural process in the court room honoring the family and cultural identity. This process included Namgis community members traditional drumming, dance and the family were blanketed. Then the judge addressed the family, gifting the children with an eagle feather. The judge congratulated the parents and recognized their hard work and perseverance. The judge also spoke to the children including acknowledging how everyone there loves them so much.

In closing the legal process, many SCCFS staff members drummed and sang for the family, honoring the significance of what had taken place. This journey was supported by all that know the family.



## **Kwagu'l Ladies Dance (Abaya):**

The dance performed at the Reunification ceremony belonged to **Abaya**, her husband was George Hunt. Community member and young Knowledge keeper Matthew Ambers, who is a Hunt family descendant, along with SCCFS Cultural Support Worker Brandi Lancaster, performed Abaya's Ladies dance to cleanse the courtroom of any emotions that may have been lingering within the courtroom walls. It was a nice way to incorporate the culture specific to where the young ones come from. It is important that they grow up knowing who they are and where they come from.

## *Moose Hide Provincial Gathering and Day of Fasting*



The Moose Hide Campaign is a grassroots movement, founded by Paul and Raven Lacerte, with a mission to end violence towards women and children. You can check out their website at [www.moosehidecampaign.ca](http://www.moosehidecampaign.ca). The annual Moose Hide Gathering took place this year on Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019, at the Victoria Conference Centre, with a march from Thunderbird Park to the legislature just before noon. Surrounded by Cedar closed its doors for the day to participate in this important gathering and to stand in solidarity with our men who are fighting for such an important cause. Following traditional territorial protocol, key note speakers from varying fields spoke to the prevalence of violence towards women and children and how necessary it is to have men stand up and speak out and to hold each other accountable. An exciting announcement of the Moose Hide Campaign Learning Platform for K-12 students was announced, which will provide students with opportunities to explore alternative values and perspectives that respect and honour women and children. For the afternoon, conference participants engaged in circle dialogue and heartfelt workshops. A Fast-Breaking Ceremony saw hundreds of men and women end their daily fast before a beautiful dinner was served. If you don't already have your moose hide pin, several are available here at the office. You can also contact the Moose Hide Campaign directly to learn more about the work they are involved in and to get your moose hide.

## *Surrounded by Cedar Open House*

On January 31st we hosted our second annual open house here at our Surrounded by Cedar office. This year we were pleased to welcome over eighty community members into our space to share food, songs and laughter. We were also happy to have a number of local Indigenous artists participate in a craft market which showcased some of the amazing talent we have in our community. A big thank you to everyone who was able to join us and experience a little bit of our family and home!



### **PINK SHIRT DAY 2019**

On Wednesday, February 27th Surrounded by Cedar staff wore pink shirts to symbolize that we do not tolerate bullying. We were happy to welcome some small visitors from Maple Tree Preschool who dropped by with a card and flower as they spread kindness throughout the neighbourhood.



## *Stolen Sisters Memorial March 2019*



The Stolen Sisters Memorial March is on its 12<sup>th</sup> year now and this year it began outside of Our Place Society. Matriarchs, womxn, Indigenous femmes, children and youth, men, 2-spirited, and allies gathered to remember the staggering amount of missing and murdered Indigenous womxn in Canada. The government says it's over 1,000, however, other organizations have said that that number is close to 4,000 not including young boys and men. The march was led by the Indigenous women within Victoria to remind the Canadian government that enough is enough, and we don't want any more sisters to go missing. Even just one sister missing is *too* many.

### *Hobiye, The Nisga'a New Year— Mia Yule*

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Hobiye, the Nisga'a New Year, took place at the PNE in Vancouver and I was lucky enough to go with two youth. As folks arrived, they were greeted by Indigenous food trucks selling pulled pork bannock, and bannock eclairs- a dream come true! Once inside the building, a sprawling market place filled a warehouse sized room, with tables selling drums, intricate beadwork, hand made smudge bowls, moccasins, canned goods, and Coast Salish art printed on clothes. In the next room countless rows were packed with people watching singers, drummers and dancers as they made their way around the room, drum beats echoing against the walls, eagle down floating in a gentle stream behind them, and incredible regalia made of cedar, wool, hides, and buttons. The youngest dancer at 5 years old amazed everyone, performing by herself, spinning multiple hoops on her arms and rearranging them into different shapes as she danced.

We left in awe and very inspired to do some drumming ourselves!



## Surrounded by Cedar Swag available for purchase

All proceeds go directly towards agency programming



Hoodies

\$40.00



Sweatpants

\$30.00



Lunch Kits

\$5.00



Tote bags \$5.00

Water bottles

\$10.00

**Available at SCCFS Cash or Cheque only**

## Family Care Homes

There are many different ways you can provide support and care to the children and youth who need either long term or short term placements, emergency or relief or even potentially adoptive homes.

Becoming a Foster parent or Caregiver is a way to extend our hearts and homes to other Aboriginal children in the community. As a caregiver, you and the child in your home will receive supports.

You can provide a safe and loving

placement for a youth or child while they are away from their parents.

For more information, please contact our Resource Social Worker at

[becomeacaregiver@sccfs.com](mailto:becomeacaregiver@sccfs.com)



## *Traditional Storytime for Families — Cheryl St. Amour*

To date, we have hosted three guests, Elisha Elliot from the Tsartlip nation who taught us about the moons and sang songs with us; Gordy Bear a Cree/Metis from Sandy Bay, Saskatchewan who recited a story about Creation and taught us the song with his drum called: “Fly Like An Eagle”; and Robert Budd co-publisher of Roy Vickers’s Gitksan story Cloud Walker. Robert was a talented orator who had the children’s eyes mesmerized with his visual and physical way of describing elements of this story. Our children have really begun to flourish from being very shy and reserved, to feeling comfortable enough to sit on our laps, dance and sit much closer to the speaker now that they are familiar with the group routine. The children have grown to be much more securely attached to their family members that they are either visiting regularly or are reunifying with. For any one interested in joining, traditional storytime is held on the second Saturday of every month, please contact Cheryl at [counselling@sccfs.com](mailto:counselling@sccfs.com) for more information.

## **KWAKWAKA’WAKW CULTURE NIGHTS**

This is for all Kwakwaka’wakw. We have acquired some space to practice our song/dance/language/culture and whatever we decide to do with the time we have together. We welcome children and their caregivers to join us. If you have any questions please contact Seneca at 250-508-8173 or [senecaambers@hotmail.com](mailto:senecaambers@hotmail.com)

### **Upcoming dates for 2019:**

June 29

July 13 and 27

August 10 and 24

**Time:** 5:45 –8:00 pm

**Location:** 950 Kings Rd, Victoria BC



## ***"Walking Together" Forum—Richmond, BC***

In January, Alysha Brown and Wes Haase, members of Surrounded by Cedar's Leadership team, attended the MCFD "Walking Together" forum in Richmond where they did a workshop sharing a bit about the important work being done here at the agency.

We received some wonderful feedback from those at the presentation,

*"Jennifer, I wanted to let you know that Alysha and Wes did a tremendous job of their workshop at the Walking Together gathering along with Alana and Sarah. I cannot tell you how many people I heard mention that theirs was the best workshop they went to. I agree!! You and the agency should be incredibly proud of the work you do!!"*



*"I have been attending the MCFD "Walking Together" conference and wanted to connect with you to pass along a huge BRAVO on the amazing job the Surrounded by Cedar team did on their session. It was fantastic! I really want to express my appreciation for the actual examples they provided, the honesty, and the song. For the first time I heard of the changes you were able to make to a court proceeding in December 2017. What a huge accomplishment. This is an example that shows how important it is to bring culture into all of the work done in child wellness and your organization achieving what seems to be the "impossible", culture in a court room."*

***Great job Alysha and Wes, and a shout out to Alana and Sarah for singing and drumming!***



## **Life Books**

*Working together to record the memories and histories of our children and families*

**"Creating a Path" Lifebook** (for Aboriginal children)

**"My Journey" Lifebook** (for non-Aboriginal children)



**\$55.00 each + s/h**

**Phone: 250-383-2990**

**Email: [info@sccfs.com](mailto:info@sccfs.com)**

## UPCOMING SCCFS EVENTS

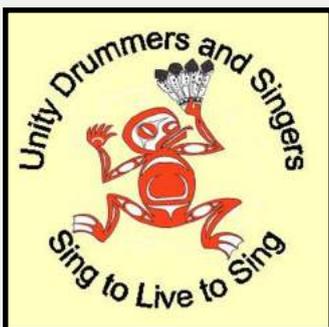
<b>Xe'Xu T'uluts'thut Leadership Camp</b>	<b>March 18 - 22nd</b>
<b>Gathering Our Voices Youth Conference</b>	<b>March 19—22nd</b>
<b>Earth Walkers Spring Break Camp</b>	<b>March 25 - 29th</b>
<b>Building Our Bundles</b>	<b>April 2nd</b>
<b>Traditional Storytime</b>	<b>April 13th</b>

### **Unity Drummers and Singers**

Unity Drummers and Singers are an urban Aboriginal group of community members who come together to drum and sing, while providing a safe and culturally sensitive space for family and community to gather.

Drum practices are open to anyone who may have an interest in spending time with community, while drumming until your heart is content.

Practices take place weekly. If you don't have a drum, no worries! Several our members bring extra drums to share.



**Date:** Every Friday Night

**Location:** Victoria Native Friendship Centre

**Time:** 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.

## Surrounded by Cedar Board of Directors

*Bruce Underwood*

*Suzanne Wilkinson*

*Jacquie Green*

*Jessie Jim*

*Jeanine Cooper*

*Lonnie Gosek*

*Della Preston*

*Guy Louie, Sr*

### ***Interested in becoming a Member of Surrounded by Cedar Child & Family Services?***

Memberships are available for an annual cost of \$1.00 per year, expiring one day prior to the Annual General Meeting. Your membership purchase grants voting privileges at our Annual General Meeting as well as our quarterly newsletter 'Dream Speaker'.

*As per SCCFS Bylaws no employee of the Society or any person receiving remuneration from the Society in any form (other than for reimbursement of expenses) is eligible to become a voting member of the Society.*



**2018 - 2019**

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred method of contact      Email:       Mail:

***Please note (per our constitution and by laws) memberships expire the day before the SCCFS AGM. This means a new membership card will be required to entitle you to vote at the meeting.***

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

MEMBERSHIP FEE RECEIVED:

SIGNED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATED: \_\_\_\_\_