



Caring for our Children newsletter

BC Aboriginal
Child Care Society

www.acc-society.bc.ca

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“Addressing ECD means creating the conditions for children – from gestation to 8 years of age – to thrive in their physical, socio-emotional, and language/cognitive development.” From the World Health Organization website - 10 facts about early child development as a social determinant of health

Congratulations Preschool Graduates

Some of our Eagle's Nest and Singing Frog Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) Preschool children are graduating!

BCACCS staff and board wish our preschool graduates the best. It's hard to believe that the time has come for some of our children to move on to Kindergarten. We hope that your children's kindergarten experiences are as fun and interesting as preschool. At Singing Frog and Eagle's Nest staff built relationships with families and children and together created teams with one shared goal: providing children with what they need to develop and grow as preschoolers. We hope that all the growing, learning, and skill foundation building will help your children excel in all their future endeavours.

“We will miss your children more than you know and we are grateful to have been part of their lives and your family during this time.” Preschool Staff

BCACCS also thanks our dedicated early childhood educators for packing their knowledge gathering journey with fun

continued on page 2...

Photo: Interior Singing Frog AHS Preschool

and lasting memories. Thank you for your thoughtful planning and time invested in the lives of each and every one of these amazing children!

In December 2014 we celebrated finishing the much needed emergency repairs at Singing Frog Aboriginal Head Start Preschool. BCACCS thanks the parents, children, early childhood educators, and all the generous donors who made it possible to re-open our doors. We are especially grateful to the Central City Foundation. Their support allowed us to complete this project and get students back into the classroom.



BCACCS Welcomes Krista Alec from the Aboriginal Youth Internship Program

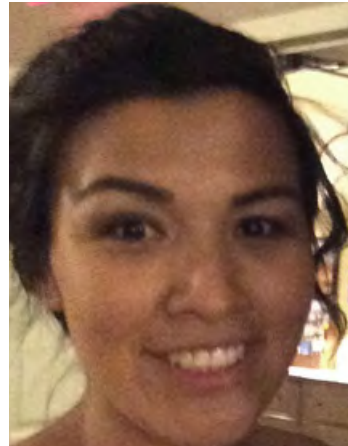


Photo credit: Krista Alec

Every year, this program provides a 12-month paid internship for up to 25 young Aboriginal British Columbians, ages 19-29. The goal in providing this opportunity is to help Aboriginal youth build professional skills and networks, get a taste for pursuing a career in government, and above all, awaken their capacity for leadership.

We want to support our young people who want to make a difference and empower them to lead their communities and our province into the future.

Created by the BC Public Service Agency in partnership with the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, Aboriginal leaders, and Aboriginal youth organizations as part of government's commitment to the New Relationship with First Nations and Aboriginal People, the program received the Deputy Ministers Award of Excellence in Innovation in 2009 and then the Premier's Award for Partnership in 2010/11 and is now recruiting for its ninth year. So far there are 146 Alumni!

Program Goals

- Encourage Aboriginal youth to consider the BC Public Service or Aboriginal organizations as a place to pursue a rewarding career.
- Support Aboriginal youth to develop their leadership skills.
- Provide opportunities for Aboriginal youth to contribute and improve relationship building between Aboriginal communities/organizations and the provincial government.
- Contribute to closing the social and economic gaps that exist between Aboriginal people and other British Columbians.

How it works

- The program mirrors the school year and runs annually from September to the following August. It provides professional experience, leadership development, cultural



Photo credit: Eagle's Nest AHS Preschool

Since then we've had some great feedback about the new space. Here is what one family had to say:

"Our family was incredibly impressed with the new improvements that occurred at Singing Frog. There seems to be a new energy instilled within the building; a new sense of vigor. As always we are very appreciative of the staff here at Singing Frog. My nephew always looks forward to seeing them every day. And we are very proud and privileged to have the staff initiate our nephews imagination and education."

– Kai Bighorn

Some of the parents' favourite things:

What I liked best about the past year: (2014-2015)

1. Christmas Party – lots of attendees
2. Hike to dam and seeing the waterfall, Nature Trail and seeing some salmon in the Capilano River
3. Bowling with the kids
4. Parent participation
5. New paint job and new layout at Singing Frog after new roof



Photo credit: Eagle's Nest AHS Preschool

support and a professional, cultural, and social network through the intern cohort.

- Interns are placed with a government ministry for nine months, then with an Aboriginal organization for three months, doing important work such as engaging communities, developing policies and programs, managing projects, promoting healthy lifestyles, participating in adjudications and negotiations and conducting research.
- Interns are mentored through the year and have opportunities to attend workshops and conferences, take courses, and receive career coaching.



Photo credit: Krista Alec

Meet our Intern: Krista Alec

We want to introduce our newest team member Krista Alec. BCACCS is privileged to have her with us over the summer from June 1st - August 31st.

Krista is from the Nak'azdli Band Council in Fort Saint James, British Columbia. She belongs to the Lht'sumusyoo Clan (Beaver clan). Her grandmothers are June Moise and Emma Prince.

Krista graduated from Esquimalt High School in 2006, as one of School District 61's Aboriginal valedictorians. In 2007 she traveled to Melbourne, Australia to attend La Trobe University at the Bundoora campus where she did her first year of a Bachelor of Business in Tourism and Hospitality Management. Australia ended up being very expensive so after finishing the year she decided to move home and work in the hospitality industry.

In 2010 Krista was selected to participate in the Indigenous Youth Gathering as an Aboriginal welcome cast dancer for

the Vancouver Winter Olympics opening ceremony. She was also selected as a National Aboriginal Role Model in 2010 and has presented throughout Canada on subjects such as: suicide prevention, education, sports and the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

In 2012 she graduated from Vancouver Community College with a Hospitality Management Diploma. In 2013 she finished an accelerated learning program at Royal Roads University and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in International Hotel Management. Krista completed her work experience portion of the program with Spirit Ridge Vineyard Resort and Spa in Osoyoos, BC.

Over the summer she will also be studying for the GMAT and LSAT tests in preparation to attend the dual MBA/JD Program at the University of Victoria or the University of British Columbia.

While she is with BCACCS Krista will support the agency's training resource marketing, community stakeholder outreach as well as our emerging evaluation strategy. The staff and board are excited to have such an enthusiastic, skilled, and energetic intern to work with. We are eager to have the opportunity to support and encourage Krista as she pursues a rewarding career.



Photo credit: Singing frog AHS Preschool

FNHA Day of Wellness

The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) offers grants to organizations or health agencies who deliver services to BC First Nations and/or Aboriginal people to host "Day of Wellness Events" in celebration of National Aboriginal Day. Last year 99 Aboriginal Day of Wellness events brought together over 20,000 people.

Focus is placed on community-based, partnership-focused, participant-driven events like a run, walk, or traditional activity that highlight health and wellness.

Check <http://www.fnha.ca/about/news-and-events/events/day-of-wellness> to find out where events are being held.

We were lucky to receive a grant this year. Sign up for their newsletter if you want to learn about future opportunities <http://www.fnha.ca/>.

Early Years Acknowledged in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action

BCACCS Calls for Action on the Aboriginal Early Childhood Education TRC Recommendation

BCACCS wants to see the 12th recommendation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) calling for culturally appropriate Aboriginal Early Childhood Education implemented immediately.

Mary Teegee, BCCACS Board President said, “We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and First Nations governments to make young Aboriginal children and early childhood development, education and care a priority in any reconciliation agenda. The destructive impacts of residential schools have been felt through generations and contribute to the gap in well-being and quality of life between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians. By providing high quality, culturally relevant early childhood education for our children we can help to limit the impacts

of Canada’s Residential School legacy in the youngest generation.”

Read the full BCACCS news release online.

http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_2/documents/NR_BCACCSEDjoinsthecallforactionontheTRCrecommendations.pdf

Read the **Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada** for a more detailed account of the TRC. The full document will be released later this year.

http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Exec_Summary_2015_05_31_web_o.pdf

Read the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action** to find out what all 94 recommendations are.

<http://aptn.ca/news/2015/06/02/read-94-recommendations/>

Aboriginal Head Start – The Next Generation – Then and Now

Join the National Celebration of the 20th Anniversary of AHSUNC (1995–2015) to be held at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, BC July 7- 9, 2015.

Community members from Head Start programs in every province and territory will gather together to honour the AHS Alumni and mark this milestone anniversary.

The BCACCS Eagle’s Nest AHS Preschool has an Alumni that was chosen to take part in the celebration. We are so proud of all of our graduates and their hard work!

There are still spaces available for Friends of AHS to attend the 20th Anniversary Feast and Celebration at the Musqueam Cultural Centre, 4000 Musqueam Avenue, Vancouver, BC on Wed. July 8, 2015 from 6 - 9 pm. Tickets are \$100 per person.

<http://www.ahsabc.com/index.php/ahsunc/20th-anniversary-celebration>



Photo credit: <http://www.ahsabc.com/>

From Seed to Cedar

Thank you for your support!



Thank you to everyone who took the time to view our videos, wear a green ribbon, share us on social media - like us, retweet us, follow us - and who became champions by signing the declaration on our website!

The From Seed to Cedar Aboriginal Early Childhood Development and Care (AECDC) Awareness Campaign garnered lots of interest and renewed our belief that quality care is important for everyone and living wages are important for providing quality care.

With the right conditions the smallest seeds can become the tallest cedars. Like seeds, our children hold incredible potential. AECDC programs play a central role in creating the conditions that nurture the potential of our children and unlock the spirit of our communities.

If you haven't had a chance to join the campaign, don't worry, you still can. Join us on social media:

- Like us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/SeedtoCedar>
- Follow us on Twitter <https://twitter.com/SeedtoCedar>



Traditional Harvesting and Food use



Unhealthy diets and physical inactivity have been identified as two of the three most important modifiable risk factors for the development of chronic disease.¹

Traditional Aboriginal foods offer a cultural, social and nutritional holistic diet with health benefits that contribute to the well-ness of Aboriginal communities.

Many communities have their own traditional seasonal schedule for hunting game, gathering roots and berries, tending to aqua culture and preserving those foods for use throughout the year.

For those who fish, a large part of the summer is spent by the river. Salmon is one of the staple foods of many communities. Families work together to provide and preserve enough to feed everyone. Salmon are cut and cleaned in a way that honours the fish and helps preserve it; such as wind drying on racks, curing, canning or freezing.

¹ WHO (2005). Preventing Chronic Diseases: A Vital Investment: Who Global Report. Geneva: World Health Organization.



Photo credit: BCACCS staff

Bring Traditional Food into the classroom:

http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_2/documents/Traditional-FoodsInfoSheetFINALCOPY_reduce.pdf

More Traditional Food resources:

<http://www.indigenousfoodsystems.org/>

http://www.fnhc.ca/pdf/Traditional_Food_Facts_Sheets.pdf

<http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/57/Search.nccah?&q=traditional%20food>

http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/265/Traditional_Aboriginal_Diets_and_Health.nccah

<http://www.phsa.ca/Documents/healthyeatingfoodsecurity-forurbanaboriginalpeoples.pdf>

Don't forget to search our AECDC Knowledge Portal » Health & Well-Being » Nutrition & Traditional Foods <http://portal.acc-society.bc.ca/index.php>

Aboriginal Day

June 21st is National Aboriginal Day!

Having a day of celebration is part of the wider recognition of Aboriginal Peoples' important place within the fabric of Canada and their ongoing contributions as First Peoples. Where will you celebrate the cultures and contributions to Canada from the First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples?

Here are some ideas:

Aboriginal Cultural Festival: Friday, June 19-Sunday, June 21. <https://www.aboriginalbc.com/events/aboriginal-cultural-festival/>

Kootenays Aboriginal Day Festival: Saturday, June 20. <https://www.aboriginalbc.com/events/aboriginal-day-festival/>

First Peoples' Festival: Sunday, June 21. <https://www.aboriginalbc.com/events/first-peoples-festival/>

National Aboriginal Day at Trout Lake: Sunday, June 21. <http://www.bcnationalaboriginalday.com/>



Photo credit: <http://www.bcnationalaboriginalday.com/>

Theme announced for the 18th BCACCS conference

Footsteps toward a Brighter Future: Encouraging Healthy Living Practices

An important teaching passed on to us from our Elders is “Children are a gift from the Creator”.

While planning curriculum, we do our best to include practices that allow our young children to participate in stimulating, healthy, and safe learning activities. Although research tells us that the childcare environment is an ideal venue to promote physical activity in young children many of the daily activities chosen are sedentary. As child care providers it is important to remember our vital role in supporting and facilitating participation in physical activity.

Our conference theme this year will focus on healthy living practices that help our young children develop to their full potential. We will look to the responsibilities left to us by our ancestors: maintenance of our traditional languages, stewardship of our lands and resources, and preparation of our children to live healthy productive lives. Speakers and presenters will tell us stories and promote ways to create experiences that help children appreciate and view with wonder the gifts provided by Mother Earth.

We hope you will join us in walking the talk as healthy role models and guides for the young children who follow in our footsteps.

Save the date! The 2015 conference will be hosted at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel (7551 Westminster Highway, Richmond, BC). November 5-7 (Thursday, Friday, Saturday), 2015.

Registration will open in **August** so check our website http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_2/annual-conference.php or like us on <https://www.facebook.com/aboriginal.childcare> to get updates.



Photo credit: <http://www.sheratonvancouverairport.com/gallery>

REMINDER! Mary Thomas Memorial ECE Scholarships

Closing date for entries is July 31, 2015.

This scholarship is in honour and fond memory of a highly respected Neskonlith Elder, Mary Thomas. It is awarded after you complete your Basic or Post-Basic ECE certificate or diploma program (including all practicum requirements). BCACCS offers one \$1000 scholarship for eligible Basic ECE students and one \$1500 scholarship for eligible Post-Basic ECE students.

If you or someone you know has completed (or is about to complete) a Basic Early Childhood Education program or a Post-Basic Early Childhood Education program this school year, celebrate by applying for the Mary Thomas Memorial ECE Scholarship.

Application forms are available on our website http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_2/ece-scholarship.php or by calling 604-913-9128 ext. 227.



Child Care Recognition Awards open in August!

Remember to honour your valuable colleagues by nominating them for the BCACCS Child Care Recognition Awards!

The BC Aboriginal Child Care Society recognizes and appreciates the determined work of all Aboriginal early childhood educators. We value those who strive to provide high quality education and care that reflects the culture, history and traditions of our children. We respect the strong commitments and steady perseverance of those who advocate for the rights of Aboriginal children and families in British Columbia.

Our Aboriginal Child Care Recognition Awards aim to honour early childhood educators acting as exceptional role models. These award recipients are the champions of our communities. Traditional First Nations and/or Métis language, culture, and practice are maintained through their hard work in child care environments around the province. Their passion inspires others to strive for excellence.

Each year, people are asked to nominate early childhood educators who are deserving of this special recognition. Contact lan@acc-society.bc.ca or call 604-913-9128 ext. 227.

For more information visit: http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_2/childcare-recognition-award.php.

NEW BCACCS Resource

Summary Report: Occupational Standards and Fair Wages for BC First Nations Early Childhood Educators 2014

In the summer of 2013, the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS) undertook work for the First Nations Early Childhood Development Council (FNECDC) to develop fair wage principles, a wage grid, and occupational standards for First Nation early childhood educators in the province of British Columbia. BCACCS contracted with Linda McDonnell, Early Childhood Research and Consulting, to work with them on the project.

To work within the resources allocated for the project it was decided that the development of occupational standards would be streamlined by identifying standards already developed for the early childhood sector. After a literature scan that initially produced 25 documents describing professional standards, the Project Advisory Committee decided that standards developed by the Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCF) and the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (CCHRSC) reflected most closely the needs of Canadian early childhood educators. These Canadian documents represent the work of several researchers over at least a decade and reflect comprehensive data collection and analysis.

Although there were First Nation

participants involved in the CCCF and CCHRSC research, there was not a First Nations focus and both organizations expressed an interest in the BCACCS research and felt it would be of great value when they made revisions to the standards they had developed.

With permission from the two organizations, BCACCS used the CCHRSC Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators (2011) as a framework for the discussion and the first step in the development of First Nation standards.

This project focuses on the knowledge and skills required for early childhood practice in BC First Nations communities however, the longer-term plan is to propose the development of national First Nations/Aboriginal standards.

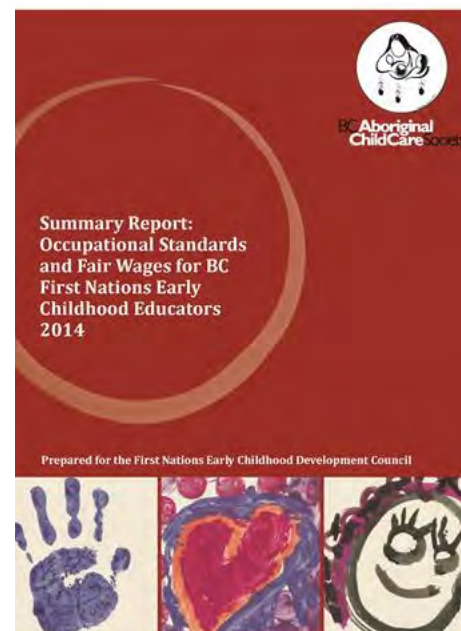
As time was limited for the facilitated group discussions, the scope of discussions was narrowed to key areas. In this way, participants could respond in a more complete way within the time allocated.

BC Aboriginal Child Care Society would like to acknowledge the First Nations Early Childhood Development Council for funding this important work.

Without guidance and advice from the Project Advisory Committee this project would not have been possible:

Alice Baker
Mary Burgaretta
Bonnie LaBounty
Pamela Lee Lewis
Ada Mawson
Liz Williams

Please download our newest resource online: http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_2/accs-publications.php



Resources:

http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_2/documents/BringingTraditionHome-TOCandIntro.pdf

<http://www.bccf.ca/changing-fathers-evolving-practices-training>

http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/92/father_forever_EN_web.pdf

Father's Day



Father's Day (Sunday, June 21st) is a celebration honouring fathers and celebrating fatherhood, paternal bonds, and the influence of fathers in society.

"Aboriginal men who have the courage to be positively involved throughout a child's life can make a huge difference, whether you are that child's biological father, grandfather, uncle, older brother, foster father or father figure." Jessica Ball, Professor, School of Child and Youth Care (UVIC).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Literacy in the Early to Primary Years Conference

July 11 – 12, 2015
TBA, Vancouver, BC

This is a 2-day (12 hour) in-depth conference for educators working with children in the early to primary years. It will cover the developmental continuum of early literacy – from infancy to middle childhood. Rather than “push the curriculum down” from upper grades to younger children, we’ll explore how educators can “support up” by celebrating early literacy and language development in the present moment of each stage of childhood development. Through play, inquiry, exploration, and guidance, teachers will learn how to better support development across the early to primary years.

Friend 2 Friend – Integrated Play Group® Conference

September 26 – 27, 2015
TBA, Vancouver, BC

This introductory specialized two-day seminar brings together the Integrated Play Groups® and Friend 2 Friend Autism Demystification® models to address the unique social, play and friendship needs of children and teens representing diverse ages and abilities on the autism spectrum. Drawing on evidence-based practices, these complementary models enhance socialization, communication, play and imagination in children with autism while building meaningful relationships with typical peers and siblings in inclusive school, home, community and therapy settings.



Funded by the Province
of British Columbia

Claiming Full Citizenship: Self Determination, Personalization and Individualized Funding 2015 International Conference

October 15 – 17, 2015
The Hyatt Regency, Vancouver, BC

The conference is intended to bring together a broad range of people from around the world and from different constituencies and sectors to share experiences and dialogue to support the effective implementation of self-determination, personalization and individualized funding and ultimately to promote the full and effective citizenship of those who rely on formal and informal supports to participate to their full capacity.

BCACCS 18th Annual Provincial Training Conference - Footsteps toward a Brighter Future: Encouraging Healthy Living Practices

November 5 – 7, 2015
Sheraton Hotel, Richmond, BC

While planning curriculum, we do our best to include practices that allow our young children to participate in stimulating, healthy, and safe learning activities. Although research tells us that the childcare environment is an ideal venue to promote physical activity in young children many of the daily activities chosen are sedentary. As child care providers it is important to remember our vital role in supporting and facilitating participation in physical activity. Our conference theme this year will focus on healthy living practices that help our young children develop to their full potential. We will look to the responsibilities left to us by our ancestors: maintenance of our traditional languages, stewardship of our lands and resources, and preparation of our children to live healthy productive lives.

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Caring for Our Children is published by the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society. It is distributed to BCACCS members, on and off reserve child care centres, Head Start programs, Bands and Tribal Councils in BC and individuals interested in early childhood education and care from a First Nations perspective.

Readers are invited to reprint articles provided proper credit is given. We welcome the submission of articles, book reviews, artwork, photos, letters and poetry.

We acknowledge current funding support from The BC Ministry of Children and Family Development. BCACCS is a proud affiliate of the Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCCF). BCACCS membership also means membership with the CCCC, including automatic subscription to the CCCC *Interaction* magazine.

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We Value Children

Proud to be
an Affiliate

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CANADIAN
CHILD CARE
FEDERATION
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CANADIENNE DES
SERVICES DE GARDE
À L'ENFANCE

Nos enfants : notre richesse