

Caring for our Children newsletter

BC Aboriginal
Child Care Society

www.acc-society.bc.ca

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“Since ancient times, drums, drumming, singing and dancing have been a part of Indigenous life. From before we are born, in our mother’s womb, to the day we die, we hear the drumbeat of the heart. Rhythm is all around us and in everything we do.”¹

New Curriculum Kits Unveiled at the BCACCS Resource Centre by Rowena Koh

BCACCS has long been committed to ensuring that culturally informed and age-appropriate curriculum resources are made available to Indigenous children and their families, educators, and caregivers.

With recent funding from the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), the Resource Centre was able to develop new cultural curriculum kits to support the development of quality Indigenous early learning and child care (IELCC) programming.

Currently, nine kits have been created on themes of significance to Indigenous communities across the province – salmon, bear, eagle, raven, coyote, owl, canoe, drum, and cedar.

In developing the kits, we chose to include a mix of resources to support the teaching of Indigenous knowledges, values, and cultural practices, highlighting in particular our important relationship to land and place.



Continued on page two...

¹ Carlton University. (2005). Native Drums. Retrieved from <http://native-drums.ca/en/music/introduction>



Resources include:

- Traditional stories and contemporary books produced by Indigenous writers, illustrators, publishers, and communities
- Accompanying felt stories, puppets, and templates that support storytelling in ways that respect cultural protocols and processes
- Playscapes, open-ended materials, dramatic play items, and manipulatives made of felted textiles, wood, and other natural and high quality materials
- Resource sheets that describe the theme's significance to Indigenous communities, cultural protocols, and suggestions to encourage storytelling, learning from land, Elder involvement, and the teaching of Indigenous languages.

The kits were kept small in size and theme to promote both portability and inspire imagination!

It is important to adapt the content and stories to the needs of the children in your program and your local environment.

Individual kits can also be combined with each other to create Indigenous-oriented, place-based curriculum that shows how land, water, people, animals, and all living things are interconnected. For example, combine the salmon, bear, and cedar kits to show how bears connect land and water by nourishing the forests with marine nutrients from the salmon carcasses they leave behind after feeding.

The kits also act as a travelling, knowledge sharing resource. Educa-

tors are encouraged to share activity ideas or local resources relevant to the kit's theme in the notebook or folder included in each kit. Write down your ideas or include photos, and feel free to leave the name of your centre so we can share where our kits are travelling to and how they are being used.

Our most recently released kits are available for loan from the BCACCS Resource Centre and the lending libraries of Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) sites across the province.

To borrow a kit please contact us for information and availability at 604-913-9128 or library@acc-society.bc.ca.

A more detailed description of the kits can be found on our website acc-society.bc.ca. New kits will be uploaded as they become available.



“The Life Source, the Salmon is the provider of food for all animals and humans. The Salmon represents abundance and fertility. The Salmon are usually depicted in circular pairs, symbolizing the cycle of life.”

Alvin Adkins, Haida artist

Progress with an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework

In December 2017, the Assembly of First Nations Chiefs-in-Assembly passed a resolution endorsing a First Nations National Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) framework, as the First Nations component of the National Indigenous ELCC framework. Co-developed with the federal government but based in an Assembly of First Nations (AFN)-mandated regional First Nations engagement processes, the framework provides clear pathways to First Nations control, governance and future development of First Nations ELCC programs and services.

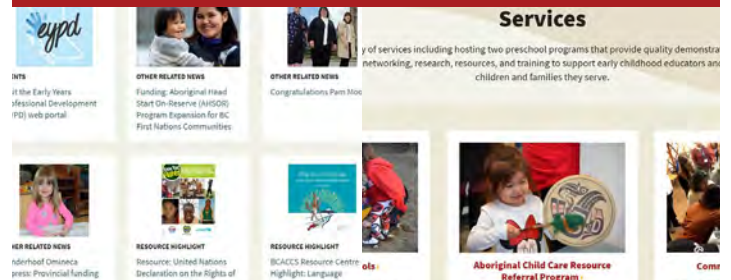
BCACCS is now working on the regional and national implementation of the National Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (IELCC) framework by continuing to bring forward the “advice, guidance and direction” obtained in regional First Nations ELCC regional engagement (with communities, practitioners, regional leaders, institutional partners, Elders as well as communities with no services).

As the framework moves through the federal cabinet approval process to become federal policy, in its own recognition of Indigenous rights the province of BC is already partnering with First Nations leadership (the organizations of the First Nations Leadership Council) to support the regional implementation of the framework. A regionally-based National IELCC framework will transform systems and structures to better work for the distinct cultures, aspirations and needs of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children, families, communities and Nations in self-determination.

BCACCS is honoured to be moving forward the co-development and Indigenous-led implementation of the framework as mandated by regional First Nations leadership, and with regional partners and the government of Canada. Most important however, BCACCS is honoured to bring its longstanding commitments to Indigenous ELCC into new possibilities like the IELCC framework, for and with First Nations families and the social systems that contribute to and help sustain them in a good way, as they determine.

Website Redesign Launch

Since January 2018, BCACCS has been working on the redesign of the organization website with Affinity Bridge. This was undertaken in order to ensure the website shared information in a more audience centred way. The website was officially launched on June 21, 2018 at the Trout Lake National Indigenous Peoples Day celebration. We currently have a feedback link on the home page to gather input from users. This will be active for three weeks and feedback will be taken into account to evaluate the initial impact of the website. We invite you to visit the newly redesigned website and let us know what you think! www.acc-society.bc.ca.



Celebrating National Indigenous Peoples Day with Wellness

At events across Canada, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people gather on June 21 each year to share their spirit, experiences, stories, songs, art and dance with each other and the general community – with a whole day of entertainment, activities, and fun planned for the whole family. Events showcase and celebrate the diversity of Indigenous people across Canada.

Thanks to the First Nation Health Authority (FNHA), this year we celebrated National Indigenous Day at Trout Lake as one of their 145 Day of Wellness events throughout BC on June 21.

The Day of Wellness events are part of an annual wellness movement for First Nations peoples in BC. This is an opportunity to shine light on the strength of community, to bring people together, connect with health care professionals and wellness champions in an environment of cultural pride and celebration.

Part of the grant from FNHA allowed us to celebrate and promote wellness by sharing food.

We began the event with a welcome to the territory and a blessing of the food we had ready to hand out.



People walking by stopped what they were doing to watch as our Elder spoke the blessing and sang a song accompanied by passing families and event participants.

Having our Elder open the day with a blessing helped to strengthen relationships and nurture spirits and pride. Our Elder commented that he had many, many people who came to ask him for a smudge. He felt that he was able to help

heal many community members.

BCACCS staff and members of Vancouver Aboriginal Early Years Network (VAEYN) handed out lunches, created by Potluck catering, and shared information on Indigenous early learning and child care.

The crowd was really excited and moved by the free lunch giveaway. Many people commented.

“This is so great! My family doesn’t have much money right now. You are providing dinner for all my children. I’m so thankful.”

National Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration participant



“Food is a celebration. Thank you for celebrating this way.”

National Indigenous Peoples Day
Celebration Elder



We provided “face-painting” for children at the VAEYN/BCACCS table. The designer created some amazing designs and it was great to see children so excited.

BCACCS and the VAEYN attended the Trout Lake celebration event to share the message of wellness, in the spirit of reconciliation, and to support #itstartswithme “Creating a culture of change for better health services for First Nations and Aboriginal peoples”.

VAEYN is coordinated by BCACCS and was created in response to dialogue with local Indigenous leaders involved with early childhood education, and the City of Vancouver’s formal commitments to reconciliation. It is designed to implement a focused consultation process to discuss the potential for developing a collaborative model to support the sector’s capacity to continue to provide

high quality, culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal children and their caregivers.

VAEYN is a working group that addresses the broader strategic planning needs and collaborates on the development and implementation of a Vancouver-based Aboriginal Early Years recruitment and retention strategy, to address the ongoing challenge of staffing shortages.

Members of VAEYN present at the Trout Lake celebration include: Phil Bouvier Family Centre, Singing Frog Aboriginal Head Start, Eagle’s Nest Aboriginal Head Start, Aboriginal Mother’s Centre, Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre, Musqueam First Nation Child Care, and BCACCS.

Thank you to FNHA for their support.



“Oh, that is so sweet. Good food is so important. Thank you for sharing it.”

National Indigenous Peoples Day
Celebration participant



Reminder: Mary Thomas Memorial Scholarship is Closing



Each year, the Mary Thomas Memorial early childhood education (ECE) Scholarship is awarded in honour and fond memory of a highly respected Neskonalith Elder, Mary Thomas.

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 (2015/2016), celebrate by applying for the Mary Thomas Memorial ECE Scholarship.

Closing date for entries is **July 31, 2018**. Application forms are available on our website <http://www.acc-society.bc.ca> or by calling 604-913-9128.

BCACCS CONFERENCE SAVE THE DATE: *Our Time, Our Stories, Our Children*

BCACCS is hosting our 21st Annual Provincial Training Conference in Richmond at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel. The event will take place between November 1 – 3, 2018 (Thursday, Friday, and Saturday).

Registration will open in early August so be ready and register as soon as possible to ensure you get your first choice of workshops.

Workshops strive to encourage respectful connection, collaboration, and communication in our practice; honouring traditional ways of educating children; at the same time as being innovative in order to design quality, culturally relevant experiences and rich, nurturing environments for young children.

Updates will be shared through our weekly E-News, social media, and website <http://www.acc-society.bc.ca>.

The BCACCS Annual Conference brings together hundreds of delegates from across the province. It is a vibrant gathering of highly-skilled and rigorously-trained early childhood professionals, dedicated to providing quality care to young children and supporting parents and families in Aboriginal and First Nations communities.



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

Canada Summer Jobs Grant: An Amazing Opportunity

Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) is an initiative of the Summer Work Experience program. It provides wage subsidies to employers to create employment for secondary and post-secondary students.

BCACCS was successful in their application this year and has been able to hire a student, Andrey Goryelov, to coordinate our Information Management Project. This is helping to create a more efficient work flow and consistent data recording for efficiency and evaluative purposes.

He is setting up an information management system that collects, stores, and relates information for all department needs. Andrey also plans to organize our records management system, enabling staff to find saved items and access necessary information quickly. For evaluation purposes he is migrating surveys from a redundant system onto a new collection system in order for staff to be able to collate and report on results in a timely fashion.

As Andrey undertakes these tasks he is getting first hand experience with information management system software as well as being mentored on project management and records management best practices. BCACCS is thrilled to have been able to offer this opportunity to a student so that they can learn and gather career experience.

This opportunity was made possible through the Government of Canada's Canada Summer Jobs program.

The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.

More info available at <https://bit.ly/2By8Mh0>



Nominate Someone for a Child Care Recognition Award

Nominations are now open!

Do you know someone who is an exceptional role model and is working in the Aboriginal early childhood education field in BC? Celebrate the amazing work that they do by nominating them for a BCACCS Child Care Recognition Award.

These inspiring individuals are the champions of our communities. Traditional First Nations and/or Métis language, culture, and practice are celebrated through their passion, dedication, and hard work.

These are the people making a difference in the lives of young Aboriginal children and who show their dedication to early childhood education on a daily basis. Show them you appreciate all their hard work.

The deadline for nominations is **September 21, 2018**.

Awards are presented at an award ceremony during the annual BCACCS training conference. The date for the celebration this year is November 3, 2018.

Nomination forms and info can be found on our website www.acc-society.bc.ca or by calling 604-913-9128.



Singing Frog AHS Preschool Outdoor Play Space Renewal



In March of 2018 the team at Dirks Landscape Design Build, led by Paul Dirks, broke ground on the reimagined play space for Singing Frog Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) preschool. This project was possible thanks to funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada and came to fruition through the initiative of Karen Isaac and imagination of Leona Antoine.

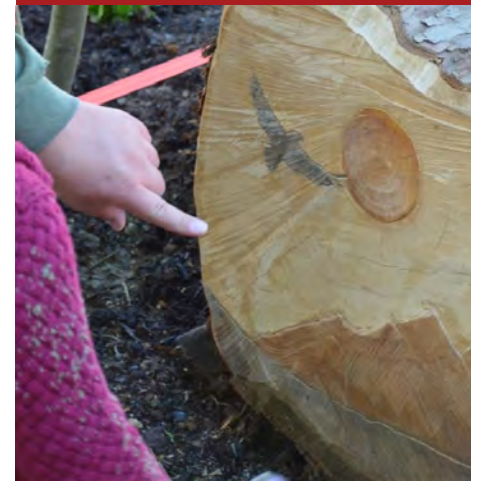


"I felt how nurturing and enriching this new play space will be for the children while sitting under a tree and taking in the the beauty of the space that fills and comforts all of the senses."

Anne Tomlinson, Enhancement Worker, VASCD



The exciting, new, professionally designed and landscaped play space was completed mid-June. The official opening occurred on June 15 and it is now ready for Singing Frog children to go explore. Included are "time lapse" pictures from the start to the end of the project as well as images of unique elements integrated in the design and photos from the opening celebration.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Collaborative Action: A National Symposium for Child Well-being in the Middle Years

August 20 – 21, 2018
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, BC

This special, two day HELP event – hosted at the University of British Columbia – is designed to inspire, motivate and strengthen participant's leadership skills by focusing on child well-being through a systems-thinking lens.

The 22nd British Columbia Association of Pregnancy Outreach Programs (BCAPOP) Conference Exploring Mental Health: Well-being for Infants, Parents and Support Workers

October 4 – 6, 2018
Westin Vancouver Airport Hotel,
Richmond, BC

The British Columbia Association of Pregnancy Outreach Programs conference is designed to offer delegates training sessions that provide practical information and a deeper understanding of issues faced by marginalized women living in conditions of risk. Delegates will be taught strategies to support daily work and have an opportunity to network with other professionals.

Pedagogical Collaborations: Encounters with a Pedagogista

October 19 – 20, 2018
Coast Coal Harbour Hotel, Vancouver,
BC

This two-day conference will provide opportunities to consider questions such as: What does it mean to be a learning community? How might a pedagogy of relationship serve us to reconsider every day practice? What does it mean to engage with pedagogical collaborations?

BCACCS Annual Provincial Training Conference: Our Time, Our Stories, Our Children

November 1 – 3, 2018
Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel,
Richmond, BC

The 21st BCACCS Annual Provincial Training Conference. At BCACCS, a primary focus of our training and professional development events is to translate our culturally rich traditions into effective early childhood education and care (ECEC) programs and services. We are finally in a place and time where early learning and child care is at the forefront of political and funding agendas across BC and Canada. The sector's strong commitment to lifting up communities, families and children has led us here.

Strong connections and lively collaborations are at the heart of providing rich, culturally relevant programs for children, and families, and in empowering early years professional development opportunities for educators. Our stories are shaping the future of Indigenous early learning and child care. They shape our view of the world, help us experience the richness of our culture and language, teach us about our history and through them deepen our relationships. In Indigenous early childhood settings we recognise the value of immersing children in culture and language, and in sharing narratives—big, small, powerful, and playful—in order to grow, teach, and learn.

Workshops this year will encourage educators to explore what it means to support the children and families that are the heart of our communities. To assist the little ones who are our future leaders and will be, the carriers of our stories.

BC Aboriginal Child Care Society

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

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CHILD CARE
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À L'ENFANCE

Nos enfants : notre richesse