



BC Aboriginal
Child Care Society

www.acc-society.bc.ca

Caring for our Children newsletter

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From the Quality Statement on Aboriginal Child Care, *"Quality Aboriginal child care programs teach children to respect our Elders. Quality Aboriginal child care programs ask for guidance from Elders. The views of Elders are invited and heard and valued and acted upon. Elders are an essential part of the curriculum."*

Winner of the 2020 Champion of Child and Youth Rights Award



Each year at the First Call Fundraising Gala, First Call recognizes someone with the Champion of Child and Youth Rights Award for their inspiring and important advocacy for BC children and youth rights.

Recent past recipients include Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, Raffi, and Katie Hyslop.

This year, we are excited to announce that BCACCS Executive Director, Karen Isaac, was honoured with this award.

Thank you to the First Call Coalition for a wonderful gala event and award ceremony.

Thank you to everyone who reached out to let us know how happy you are for Karen.

Your support means so much to us!

New Staff at BCACCS

We would like to introduce you to our newest employees.

Administration Team



Robin Nahanee is Coast Salish, originally from Mill Bay/Cowichan on Vancouver Island. She married into Squamish Nation. She recently graduated from Capilano University with Bachelor of Business Administration with a double concentration in Human Resources and International Business and hold an Accounting Admin Assistant Certificate. Robin has nine years' experience with office/administrative duties and in-depth experience holding the position of receptionist/administration working in a HR department with the recruitment and orientation team. In addition to providing admin support, Robin knowledgeable in the Coast Salish tradition and has experience with organizing large cultural ceremonies, fundraisers and Elders groups.

Robin is the Reception/Administration/Accounts Payable Clerk at the BCACCS provincial office in West Vancouver.

Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Initiative (IELCC) Team



The team working on the IELCC Framework implementation is busy getting things ready for the next series of funding rollouts. They have been hard at work communicating with communities and supporting leadership to apply.

Mary Disney's ancestors are Haida. She has been working with children and families for over 12 years. She holds an ECE certification as well as a Business Administration Certificate. Mary brings her experience and education to the communities in the northern region of BC. In addition to working in child care and early learning settings, Mary has experience working closely with families and community, in schools, as an Indigenous resource worker and a Strong Start facilitator.

Mary believes that family is an important foundation and connection to place and culture is the strength within all of us. She continues to make it her goal to gain experience and learn about the needs of northern communities and families.

Mary is the Regional Community Facilitator (North)
Jeanne Leeson is originally from Nova Scotia, a descendant



of Scottish settlers. She completed her Early Childhood Education training in 1998 and has more than 20 years' experience working in the child care sector. This has included child care, family support and outreach, and program coordination. Jeanne brings her experience and education to the communities of Vancouver Coastal and Fraser regions.

In addition to working in child care and early learning settings, Jeanne has experience in community capacity development and the creation of Early Learning and Child Care Programs. Jeanne believes that communities know best how to nurture their children, and that children thrive in environments that reflect their community's values.

Jeanne is the Regional Community Facilitator (Vancouver Coastal/Fraser).

Aboriginal Child Care Resource and Referral (ACCRR) Team



The ACCRR team has been working hard to update and create new training opportunities. They have been traveling around BC to give workshops and support programs.

Jennie Roberts is Ojibway but, identifies as Stó:lō Xwelxwelmexw and resides on Tzeachten First Nation. She has been working with children and families for over 35 years. In addition to working in child care and early learning settings, Jennie has experience as a parent, foster parent and adoptive parent. Being a multi-parent of 10 children has provided new experiences and expertise with children have experienced trauma and anxiety. As well as raising children with different abilities, Jennie received an Adoptive Parent Certification in 2018. Jennie's philosophy is that children are reminders to us that we only live once, so make sure you take time to see the world through the eyes of the child you are engaging with. Jennie brings a multitude of knowledge and wide range of skill sets that makes learning fun and thought provoking.

Jennie is the Provincial Aboriginal Child Care Advisor.



Angie Maitland was an Early Childhood Education Coordinator for Haisla Nation Council. She received her Early Childhood Education certificate from Northern Lights College. Angie demonstrates strong leaderships skills and works with many stakeholders and community partners to benefit the children and families of the Haisla Nation. She works hard to develop an atmosphere that embraces Haisla Culture. Angie has been an integral part of the planning team that has received funding from the provincial government's New Spaces Fund to expand child care spaces in her community. Her colleagues say that Angie puts her heart into everything she does.

Angie is the Regional Child Care Advisor (Northern).

Moe National Project Team



Klara Schoenfeld is of Eastern European Jewish and Scottish settler descent. She grew up between the Kootenays and Galiano Island and has lived in many places including Vancouver Island, Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, England and California.

Klara has a broad background and diverse experience including many years working with children in childcare centers, forest schools, continuation schools, youth correctional facilities and homes for street youth.

Klara is a life learner, who has studied early childhood education, outdoor education, cultural anthropology, international development, yoga, nutrition and compassionate communication. She is currently working towards her provincial instructor diploma and learning to play the ukulele.

Klara is the BCACCS as project coordinator for Moe the Mouse™ Regional Adaptation Project.

2019 Mary Thomas Memorial ECE Scholarship Winners



Each year, the Mary Thomas Memorial ECE Scholarship is awarded to Aboriginal early childhood education (ECE) stu-

dents for highest overall achievement including; academic standing (at an approved educational institution and ECE program within BC), outstanding accomplishments, volunteer work, community involvement, references, history of the applicant, as well as their ongoing commitment to childcare.

We are always inspired by the many achievements and dedication of the students who apply for the scholarship. This year we are honoured to award three Post Basic ECE Scholarships to Rena Joe, Christopher Jack and Skylene Patrick. You are all an inspiration to your community and to the early childhood education field. We wish you all the best.

Post Basic ECE Award

Rena Joe

Lower Nicola, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology.

Rena is a single mother of three and also looks after her granddaughter and nephew. While taking her studies, Rena continued to work at Nzen'man Child and Family Development Centre as an Aboriginal Infant Development Worker. She is actively involved in community and is involved in the cultural program Feel the Beat. She was the catalyst for starting a language program in her community and is actively participating in making language board books for children in her local language. She

is currently participating in the second series to be released in the Fall. Her educational journey includes becoming an elementary school teacher for her Nation.

Post Basic ECE Award

Christopher Jack

from Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nations, North Island College.

Christopher worked hard on his studies and was selected for the Dean's List. He began the program very shy but built his confidence and was consistently supportive of his classmates. He showed a lot of his own initiative and brought his culture, language into his assignments as well into his practicums. He was described by his employer as "the future of this daycare, this community. He sees the vision for this Centre." Christopher is active in his community and leads a raffle every year to fundraise and send a family to the annual Fall Fair. Currently, he runs a multi-age program on his own and in the future, he would like to continue to upgrade his education and take his Infant/Toddler and Special Needs training.

Post Basic ECE Award

Skylene Patrick

Ucluelet First Nations, North Island College.

Skylene is a dedicated mother of two children. Her drive to finish the ece program was because she "loves her people and wanted to help her community." She worked hard on her studies and was selected for the Dean's List. She is active in her commu-

nity, represented at potlatches and organized a sports team. In class, she was vocal in her message that "it's up to us as the teachers of young children to know the language and bring in Elders. It's a responsibility and a privilege." Skylene has been actively involved in community planning sessions for a new daycare and her Nation "supports her to join their team at the new facility when it opens." Her future plans include managing a daycare or she aspires to operate her own licensed home daycare.

The 2020 Scholarship will open soon!

Check our website for more details <https://www.acc-society.bc.ca/services/scholarship-awards/how-to-apply-for-a-mary-thomas-memorial-ece-scholarship/>

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 (2019/2020), celebrate by applying, in honour and fond memory of a highly respected Neskonalith Elder, Mary Thomas.

Closing date for submissions is July 31, 2020.

BCACCS Conference Update

The BCACCS conference is scheduled to take place November 5-7, 2020 in Richmond at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel.

Since the news of the COVID-19 pandemic and the emergency measures that have been put into place, including the ban of events larger than 50 people, BCACCS may have to postpone this conference until later this year.

We know that many programs count on our event each year. If the conference is postponed or cancelled BCACCS will attempt to create some online training to help support early childhood educators as we wait to find out what the outcome of this pandemic will be.

Many thanks for your understanding during this unprecedented time.

As always, should you have any suggestions for training please get in touch. Email kirsten@acc-society.bc.ca.

May is Child Care Month!



Many thanks to the early childhood educators and support staff who work year round to help children thrive.

This year, we have something extra big to celebrate; the amazing resilience, creativity, innovation, and caring shown by early childhood educators throughout this pandemic.

This unprecedented time has showcased

the importance of early childhood education and the very real difference that programs, educators and support staff make to children, families and communities.

Remember to take care of yourselves. Be kind. Be gentle. These difficult times will pass.

“Child Care Provider Appreciation Day” is on May 21, 2020 this year. Help staff get through this difficult time. Send them a message from the Family. Text, video message, or share a photo to let them know how much you appreciate everything they do. Let them know how much you miss them.

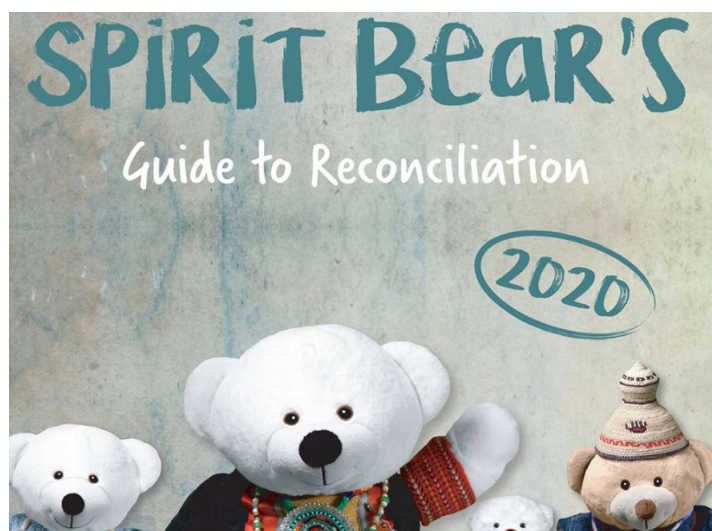


The First Nations Child & Family Caring Society has kindly donated several Spirit Bear calendars to BCACCS to share.

Spirit Bear's calendar guides supporters through 12 months of fun and meaningful reconciliation activities in support of equity for First Nations children.

Activities are free and can be done by people of any age - as individuals, families, schools, communities or in the workplace.

We still have a few to give out. Please let Robin at reception@acc-society.bc.ca know if you are interested in receiving some. We will send them to you as soon as possible once the emergency measures due to COVID-19 are relaxed.



Facing the Pandemic with Love, Hope, Strength, and Resilience

Facing challenges such as coronavirus (COVID-19) is not new to Indigenous communities. We have responded to many different emergencies for many years. However, this will take all of us working together to keep us strong, safe and healthy.

Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (IELCC) program educators and support staff are resilient and valuable community assets, as well as essential workers.

Under safe conditions and with leadership support, they are uniquely positioned to collaborate with leadership, health partners, and community stakeholders in child and family services and education to ensure pandemic preparedness and response plans prioritize the safety, health, and well-being of young children, their families, and especially our Elders.

IELCC programs, educators and staff are vital to community well-being and are uniquely positioned to support COVID-19 response plans.

BCACCS is taking proactive measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and community

The BCACCS West Vancouver Office will remain closed until further notice. Employees will continue to work remotely.

Please bare with us. We are attempting to reply to all inquiries as fast as possible.

Both Aboriginal Head Start pre-schools (Singing Frog and Eagle's Nest) remain closed in alignment with the Vancouver School Board closures. They will remain closed until further notice.



IMPORTANT COVID-19 HEALTH INFORMATION

It can seem like an overwhelming amount of information is available about COVID-19. We are providing a selection of important sites with COVID-19 health information.

During the pandemic, it is critical that you refer to and keep up-to-date with health authority guidelines relevant to you.

Below we have listed Health Authorities and other credible COVID-19 information sites.

Federal:

- Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)
- Infection Prevention and Control Canada
- Indigenous Services Canada

Provincial:

- First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)
- Office of Provincial Health Officer
- BC Centre for Disease Control
- HealthLink BC

Regional:

- Interior Health Authority
- Northern Health Authority
- Island Health Authority
- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
- Fraser Health Authority

If you have questions call 1-888-COVID19 (268-4319) to find out more information about the virus.

Many thanks to the BCACCS COVID-19 Response Team for sharing their experiences, knowledge and expertise.

Members: Mena Duncan, Pam Lewis, Jessica Frank, Dawne Persson, Karen Isaac, Mary Disney, Kirsten Bevelander, Klara Schoenfeld, Angie Maitland, Jennie Roberts, Cathy Balatti, Fionn Yaxley, and Bahar Sadeghieh.

Remember that the best way to stop the spread of COVID-19 is to follow the health regulations. Do your part to #FlattenTheCurve by:

- Washing your hands often for 20 seconds.
- Washing common area touch surfaces with disinfectant.
- Avoiding touching your face.
- Sneezing into a tissue or your elbow.
- Physically distancing (stay two meters apart) and avoiding gatherings.
- Staying home if you are sick.
- Self-isolating for 14 days if you return from travelling outside Canada or have been in contact with someone who is sick.

ECE INFORMATION

Below are a collection of documents that might help support programs as they prepare for this difficult time.

- COVID 19: Public Health Guidance for Childcare Settings
The Ministry of Health and the BC Centre for Disease Control have created an information sheet COVID 19: Public Health Guidance for Childcare Settings that has some guidelines about

hand washing, cleaning and ideas about social distancing for you to consider in your childcare setting.

- Child Care Response to COVID-19
Childcare BC is committed to keeping parents, childcare providers and partners informed about steps government is taking to address the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Questions and Answers on COVID-19 and Childcare Settings
The Ministry of Health and the BC Centre for Disease Control have created FAQ for child care settings.

• Childcare & Schools

As child care owners and/or operators, you and your staff play a key role in protecting children from, and minimizing the impact of infection and illness. This website provides information about hand washing, cleaning and ideas about physical distancing for you to consider in your childcare setting.

BCACCS is also working on creation a “Considerations for Continuity of Safe Care During COVID-19 Pandemic Conditions” document. An announcement will be made once it is available.

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Here are some resources with ideas of what you can do with children at home.

- Providing Activities for Children during a time of Crisis

BCACCS is planning to launch a COVID-19 Resource and Information webpage soon.

Check our website [www. acc-society.bc.ca](http://www.acc-society.bc.ca) or sign up for enews to get regular updates.

Email communications@acc-society.bc.ca for more information.

- 10 Nature Activities to Help Get Your Family Through the Coronavirus

- Stay ‘N’ Play Daily Schedule of Activities from Mothers Matter Centre

- Love is Medicine with Monique Gray-Smith

Monique and her daughter have taken the time to do recordings of her children’s books, like “My Heart Fills with Happiness” and her newest “When We Are Kind”.

COMMUNITIES COMING TOGETHER

Haida Gwaii residents share Window art to offset fear, loneliness and strengthen sense of community during COVID-19 pandemic. (Julia Breese/



Caring for Our Children is published by the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS). 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 Indigenous early childhood education and care.

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 (CCCC). BCACCS membership also means membership with the CCCC, including automatic subscription to the CCCC *Interaction* magazine.

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**Funded by the Province
of British Columbia**

BECOME A MEMBER

Membership at BCACCS provides a provincial forum to network and share ideas regarding Aboriginal child care and child development issues. Direct benefits and privileges of membership include:

- Free annual subscription to the Society's quarterly newsletter "Caring for Our Children"
- Resource Library borrowing privileges, with access to more than 1400 child-focused books, articles and videos, as well as BCACCS ECE curriculum boxes (including Moe the Mouse®)
- Discounted rate on BCACCS publications
- Discounted rate on registration for the BCACCS Annual Provincial Training Conference
- The ability to participate and vote on the business of the Society
- Membership with the Canadian Child Care Federation which includes receipt of their quarterly magazine, "Interaction"
- A voice in a professional Aboriginal organization dedicated to quality child care
- Opportunity to support, shape and influence Aboriginal child care policy, research and practice, both provincially and nationally

To learn more visit our website <https://www.acc-society.bc.ca/about/become-a-member/> or contact library@acc-society.bc.ca 604-913-9128 ext. 229.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Normally we would list all the upcoming events here. Since the COVID-19 pandemic has struck we are removing the listings temporarily.

BC Aboriginal Child Care Society

Karen Isaac,
Executive Director

Eugene Harry (XiQuelem),
Cultural Advisor

Robin Nahanee,
Reception/Accounts Payables

Kirsten Bevelander,
Child Care Advisor/Program
Manager

Jennie Roberts,
Provincial Aboriginal Child Care
Advisor

Cathy Balatti,
Regional Aboriginal Child Care
Advisor (Interior)

Angie Maitland
Regional Child Care Advisor (North)

Rowena Koh,
Library Consultant

Bahar Sadeghieh,
Library Assistant

Fionn Yaxley,
Communications Officer

Barbara Stroud,
IELCC Project Coordinator

Mary Disney,
IELCC Regional Facilitator (Northern)

Lisa Fenton,
IELCC Regional Facilitator
(Vancouver Island)

Jeanne Leeson,
IELCC Regional Facilitator
(Vancouver Coastal/Fraser)

Klara Schoenfeld,
Project Coordinator

Charmayne Nikal,
Regional Community Capacity
Developer

Rachel West,
Regional Community Capacity
Developer

Leona Antoine,
Coordinator Singing Frog AHS
Preschool

Dawn Westlands,
Coordinator Eagle's Nest AHS
Preschool

Writer/Editor: Fionn Yaxley

We Value Children

Proud to be
an Affiliate
Fière d'être affiliée



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

Nos enfants : notre richesse