

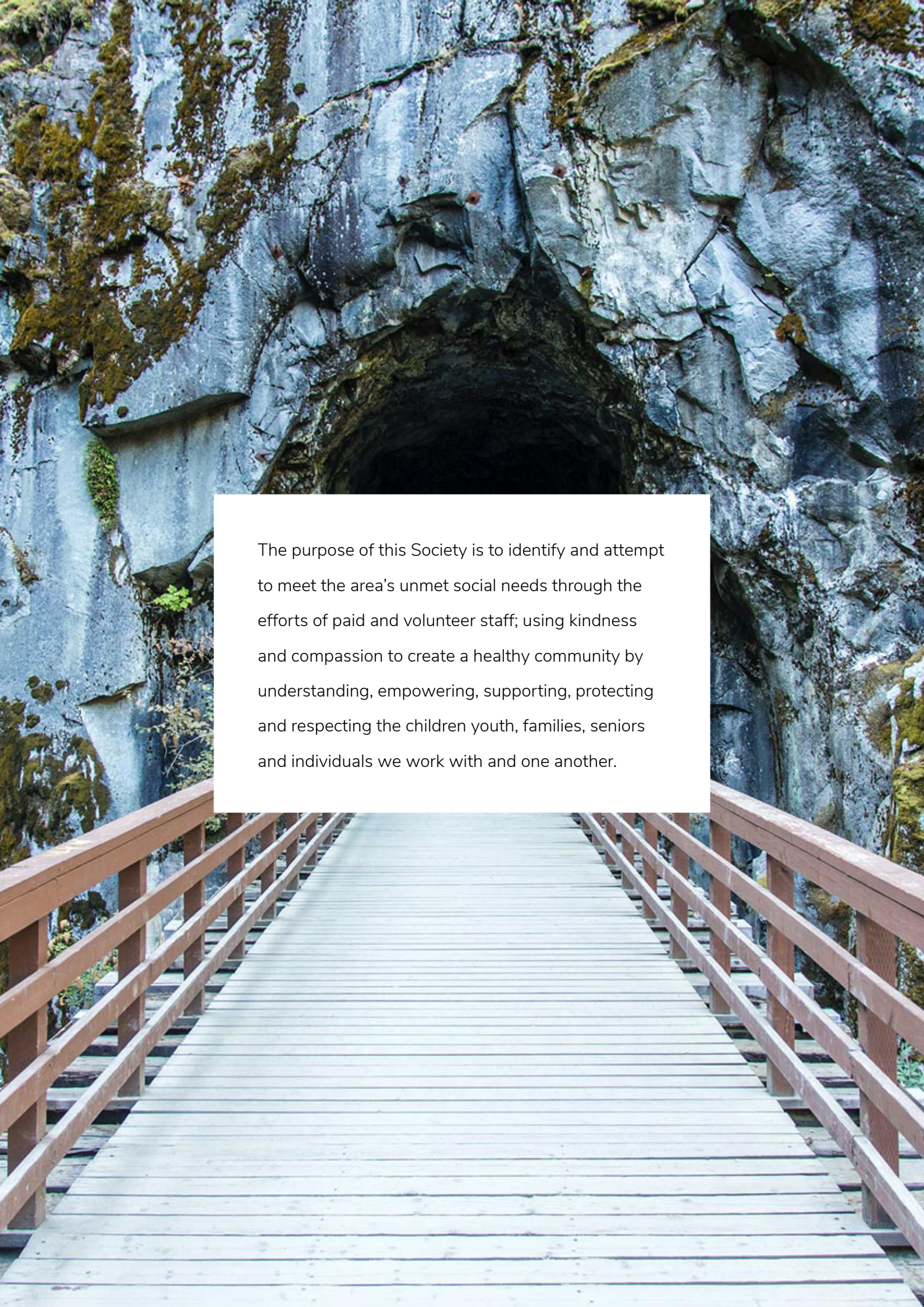


Hope Community Services

2018 - 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



SHARING HOPE HELPING OTHERS STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

A photograph of a wooden boardwalk with railings leading towards a dark cave entrance in a rocky, moss-covered landscape. The boardwalk is made of light-colored wooden planks and has reddish-brown wooden railings on both sides. The cave entrance is a dark, arched opening in the center of the image, surrounded by grey, textured rock walls. The rock walls are covered in patches of green moss and small plants. The lighting is natural, suggesting an outdoor setting. The overall scene is a mix of natural rock formations and man-made wooden structures.

The purpose of this Society is to identify and attempt to meet the area's unmet social needs through the efforts of paid and volunteer staff; using kindness and compassion to create a healthy community by understanding, empowering, supporting, protecting and respecting the children youth, families, seniors and individuals we work with and one another.

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President's Report

This past year continues to be a year of growth for Hope Community Services Society. As President I continue to learn as much as I can about the role of governance and how I can best support the Society. The Board of Directors is very pleased with the direction and leadership, Michele Thornhill, Executive Director, is providing, and we are happy about the future of Hope Community Services. The Board continues to be cognizant of how the agency is doing and the direction it is going.

Our major initiative this past year was the development of the Food Recovery Project as part of the Food Bank & Drop-In program. With the successful grant application through Food Banks BC, which enabled us to purchase a refrigerated van and walk-in cooler, and in partnership with Save-On Foods, we have been picking up in excess of 100 pounds of produce daily, 4 days per week since the Fall of 2018. This has been a great contribution to the Food Bank program. The challenge for us is securing on-going funds to sustain the Food Bank & Food Recovery Project. The Food Bank and Food Recovery Programs does not receive any core government funding and relies almost exclusively on community donations to pay for things like vehicle costs, rent, utilities, staff wages and so on. As a Board we will continue to discuss and implement various fund-raising initiatives to support these services.

Our Early Years and Family programs continue to grow. In the Spring, we were the successful applicants for the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) Early Childhood Development/Family Navigation services. The Outdoor Learning and Play Space is near completion and we continue to make additions and improvements such as adding the raised vegetable gardens with a grant made possible through Food Banks Canada.

Hope Community Services Society continues to provide many programs for the community, and we look forward to continuing to enhance services and programs over the coming year.

Denise Desorcy, Board President
Hope Community Services

Executive Director's Report

Hope Community Services continues to evolve and change with the times since its inception in 1979 and this past year was no exception. This past year brought many accomplishments and new opportunities, along with some challenges. We are developing a robust food resource sector, along with continuing to enhance our Family & Early Years programs. This is a testament of all the hard work of both staff and volunteers.

Our main focus this past year was the development of the Food Recovery Project as part of the Food Bank & Drop-In program. With the successful grant application through Food Banks BC, which enabled us to purchase a refrigerated van and walk-in cooler, and in partnership with Save-On Foods, we have been picking up in excess of 100 pounds of produce daily, 4 days per week since the Fall of 2018. This has been a great contribution to the Food Bank program and will continue to grow over the next several months and years. We will continue to look at ways to increase our complimentary programming such as developing community kitchens, family friendly drop-ins, food skills programs, and a fair food market. We continue to be excited to see what the future will bring and how we can be a leader in the food justice movement!

Our Early Years and Family programs continue to grow. In the Spring, we were the successful applicants for the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) Early Childhood Development/Family Navigation services. Programming is now offered 4 - 5 days per week, depending on the schedule. Last Fall, we partnered with the Fraser Valley Child Development Center to offer a specialized drop-in program for families with children with special needs on alternating Thursdays. This was quite successful and are looking forward to continuing that partnership this Fall.

We offered a second term for the Fostering Literacy project, where high school students tutored grade 3 students at Coquihalla Elementary School. This was again very successful and we have recently learned that we have been awarded a third term for this worthwhile project set to be implemented for the 2019-2020 school year.

Hope Community Services should be proud of its accomplishments over the past year, despite some of our challenges. I want to thank all the dedicated volunteers, staff and board members for their commitment to providing the best possible services to the community and without whom many of these services would not be possible. My hope is that we will continue to grow and develop with all the opportunities available to us. As we go forward, we will continue developing and refining our strategic plan, with a focus on becoming a leader in Food Resource initiatives as well as Family, Early and Middle years programming and Literacy Support. I look forward to continuing to serve the society and community in new and enhanced ways over the coming year.

Sincerely,

Michele Thornhill
Executive Director



Community Gardens continues to provide a valuable service to the community and support to the Food Pantry and Drop-in program.

2018-2019 BOARD

Voting Board Members

President	Denise DeSorcy
Vice-President	Lora Lei Kynar
Treasurer	Donna McAllister
Director	Patricia Knapp
Director	Peter Bailey



The ECD coordinator organizes community events for families such as Earth Day Children's Festival, Story Time in the Park, plus Early Years Halloween and Christmas parties.

Current Staff List

The following is a list of present employees, and some of their various duties.

Michele Thornhill	Executive Director
Debbie Rogers	Administrative Assistant, Accounting Clerk Board Secretary
Dianne McDonnell	Financial Supervisor Payroll Clerk Food Bank Programs Coordinator
Kim Paolini	Community Programs Coordinator Volunteer Programming <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Holly Days/Food Bank- Meals on Wheels- Lunch with the Bunch- Income Tax Early Years Programs Coordinator Program Coordinator Child Care Resource and Referral worker Community Food Resource Programs Coordinator Early Childhood Programs Supervisor
Irais Guerrero	Better Beginnings Facilitator Child Care Resource and Referral worker Early Childhood Programs Facilitator
Acacia Martin	Literacy Programs Coordinator Early Years Programs Coordinator Early Years Family Navigator



We offer several literacy programs within the community funded through Decoda Literacy Solutions and Raise-a-Reader fund-raising efforts.

Volunteer Programming

HOPE VOLUNTEER BUREAU The Hope Volunteer Centre accepts volunteer applications and attempts to place the applicants in the various programs within the agency. These programs include, Meals on Wheels, Lunch with the Bunch, Food Bank, Office, Income Tax, Community Response Network, and Hope Family Resource Center Programs.

The Centre currently has approximately 65 volunteers participating.

VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX PROGRAM

Volunteers took the on-line training that Revenue Canada offered for the Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) for the Hope area.

By May 17th 2018, 423 income tax returns had been prepared and \$2,247.30 was received in donations, while volunteers donated 187 volunteer hours performing this service.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE NETWORK

The CRN focuses on Elder Abuse Prevention and our role is educating the community about abuse and neglect. There is a small committee of volunteers that meet 3-4 times a year and plan events to educate the public. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is June 15th and the volunteers are busy at the local grocery stores handing out purple flashlights and information. We are also part of the Purple Light Nights of Hope, a public awareness initiative about domestic violence during the month of October.



The Hope Volunteer Centre currently has approximately 65 volunteers participating.

Community Food Resource Programs

FOOD PANTRY & DROP IN

With a philosophy of making food a basic right, our vision is to reduce the stigma and shame associated with food insecurity as well as creating a community space where we share food in a dignified way. Our main focus this past year was the development and implementation of the Food Recovery Project. In partnership with Save-On Foods, we are picking up produce 4 days per week, usually in excess of 100 pounds per pick up. This is in addition to bread products from the bakery as well as non-perishable donated items. We've also been picking up perishable food items (mostly meat) from Ruth & Naomi's Mission in Chilliwack. We have arranged with the local shelter to pick up the excess produce on the weekends. We also share the produce with other organizations such as The Joshua Project (Soup Kitchen), Hope and Area Transition Society, Read Right Society, Coquihalla Elementary School, along with volunteers, Bill & Brenda, who deliver to various low-income neighborhoods, particularly those with seniors. We hope to increase our complimentary programming by offering community kitchens, family friendly drop-ins, food skills programs, and a fair food market. We will be offering a Food Explorers program for kids 9 to 11 years.

Our challenge is securing enough funds to not only sustain the Food Recovery Project, but also the Food Bank & Drop-In program. Many people don't realize that we rely almost entirely on community donations to fund the Food Recovery and Food Bank programs. Rent, insurance, utilities, vehicle costs, staff wages, etc. are just some of the costs we incur to support these worthwhile programs.

April 1st 2018 – March 31, 2019, 995 applications were received, feeding 1734 people.

Between October of 2018 and March 31st, 2019 we recovered in excess of 10,000 lbs. of produce and more than 4000 pounds of baked goods.

HOLLY DAYS

This is Hope Community Services' largest yearly fund-raising event which happens in November/December with our Holly Days Campaign put on in conjunction with Star FM Radio and The Hope Standard.

Grade 6 & 7 students from Silver Creek School and the grade 5 class from Coquihalla Elementary, set up the toy room and bagged the produce for the applicants. We received a generous donation of toys for families from the Lower Mainland Christmas Bureau and Abbotsford Christmas Toy run. This year we plan on sharing toys with one of our out-lying communities to share in this generosity.

Food Bank, Food Recovery and Holly Days are funded through generous community donations and a small BC Community Gaming Grant.

Although donations in December 2018 were down from the previous year, we were thrilled to receive community donations in the amount of \$23,845. The number of hampers given out was 248 providing food to 601 people, including children and seniors, in our community.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Meals on Wheels is a program aimed at providing hot nutritious meals to seniors who may have difficulty preparing their own meals. Lunch is prepared by Rolly's Restaurant or Sharon's Deli and delivered by community volunteers (through churches and service clubs) on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. We successfully negotiated with Fraser Health to increase our funding by \$1000 to better meet the needs of the community.

The Continuing Care Division of the Fraser Health Authority subsidizes part of the costs of operating this program, along with small meal charge per participant.

A total of 619 meals were prepared and delivered to in 2018-2019.

LUNCH WITH THE BUNCH (Wheels to Meals)

This program is for seniors who live independently and would like to gather for a communal meal once a week, every Tuesday. Lunch with the Bunch provides seniors with a chance to socialize, participate in activities, receive education/information on senior's issues and resources, plus have a nutritious hot meal (prepared by Rolly's Restaurant).

The group enjoyed guest speakers from various clubs and organizations, playing games, and doing crafts.

Lunch With the Bunch started in October 1996 and has grown to an average 24 participants per week. Volunteers help coordinate and run the Lunch with the Bunch program.

Last year 629 meals were served.

Fraser Health subsidizes this program, along with a small grant from BC Community Gaming.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community Gardens continues to provide a valuable service to the community and support to the Food Pantry and Drop-in program. With the relocation complete, the Community Gardens continues to grow and develop.

One volunteer has created a large production garden to support the Food Bank and Meal drop-in program.

Funding for this program is through plot fees and a small BC Gaming Grant.



Our vision is to reduce the stigma and shame associated with food insecurity as well as creating a community space where we share food in a dignified way.

Early Years & Family Programming

Located at 436 Wallace Street, Hope Family Resource Programs are made up of the core services listed in the column on the left.

The combined early years program saw visits from 417 adults and 554 children during the past fiscal year.

HOPE FAMILY PLACE

Hope Family Place is a drop-in program for parents and children 0 – 6 years. Activities, crafts, outings, resources and support are provided at no charge to participants. One on one support is also offered to participants who may need extra support. We offer 2 – 3 drop-ins per week at our Family Resource Center. This program is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

CHILD CARE RESOURCE & REFERRAL (CCRR)

We successfully assisted Hope and Area Transition society to renegotiate the funding for the Child Care Resource and Referral program to nearly triple the previous amount. This allowed us to have a full-time position and offer more services and support to the community of Hope as well as to outlying communities such as Boston Bar. The program provides services to families looking for childcare, assistance with childcare subsidy, recruitment, education and resources for care providers and community education about the importance of quality childcare. This service is funded through the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

HEALTHY FAMILIES DROP-IN PROGRAM

Every Wednesday from 3:00 till 4:30. The program is for parents and children over 30 months of age, to learn together with a focus on health literacy, self-help skills, independence, socialization, numeracy, crafts and more, along with fostering social-emotional-behavioral development, physical development and to enhance overall family wellness.

BETTER BEGINNINGS PRENATAL NUTRITION PROGRAM

Better Beginnings operates once a week on Tuesday afternoons. It is a prenatal-post natal nutrition and support program for moms. The participants attending have a healthy lunch and an educational piece is added in. Participants also receive healthy food vouchers.

Fraser Health, Dental Hygienists, Mental Health Workers, breast feeding support professionals visit the program on a regular basis to offer support, prenatal information and referrals as needed to participants.

This program is funded through the Public Health Agency of Canada/ Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program.

FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMS

We offer several literacy programs within the community funded through Decoda Literacy Solutions and Raise-a-Reader fund-raising efforts.

Our Literacy Outreach Coordinator ensures that the community is aware of the various literacy initiatives, whether it's provided through Hope Community Services or through other organizations.

One of our most popular literacy programs is Story Time in the Park, a fun literacy-based program offered during the month of July at Memorial Park.

The Literacy Coordinator also oversees the Fostering Literacy project, where high school students tutor grade 3 students at Coquihalla Elementary, helping these students improve their reading levels.

EARLY YEARS FAMILY NAVIGATION SERVICES

This is the newest service we offer. Funded by MCFD, this service is designed to not only enhance our already existing Early Years programs.

The service aligns with MCFD's Early Years Services framework by providing family navigation and support, with a focus on promoting community belonging, supporting indigenous culture, language and cultural competency, and non-childcare early learning, low barrier drop-in sessions (Healthy Families).



The combined early years program saw visits from 417 adults and 554 children during the past fiscal year.



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