

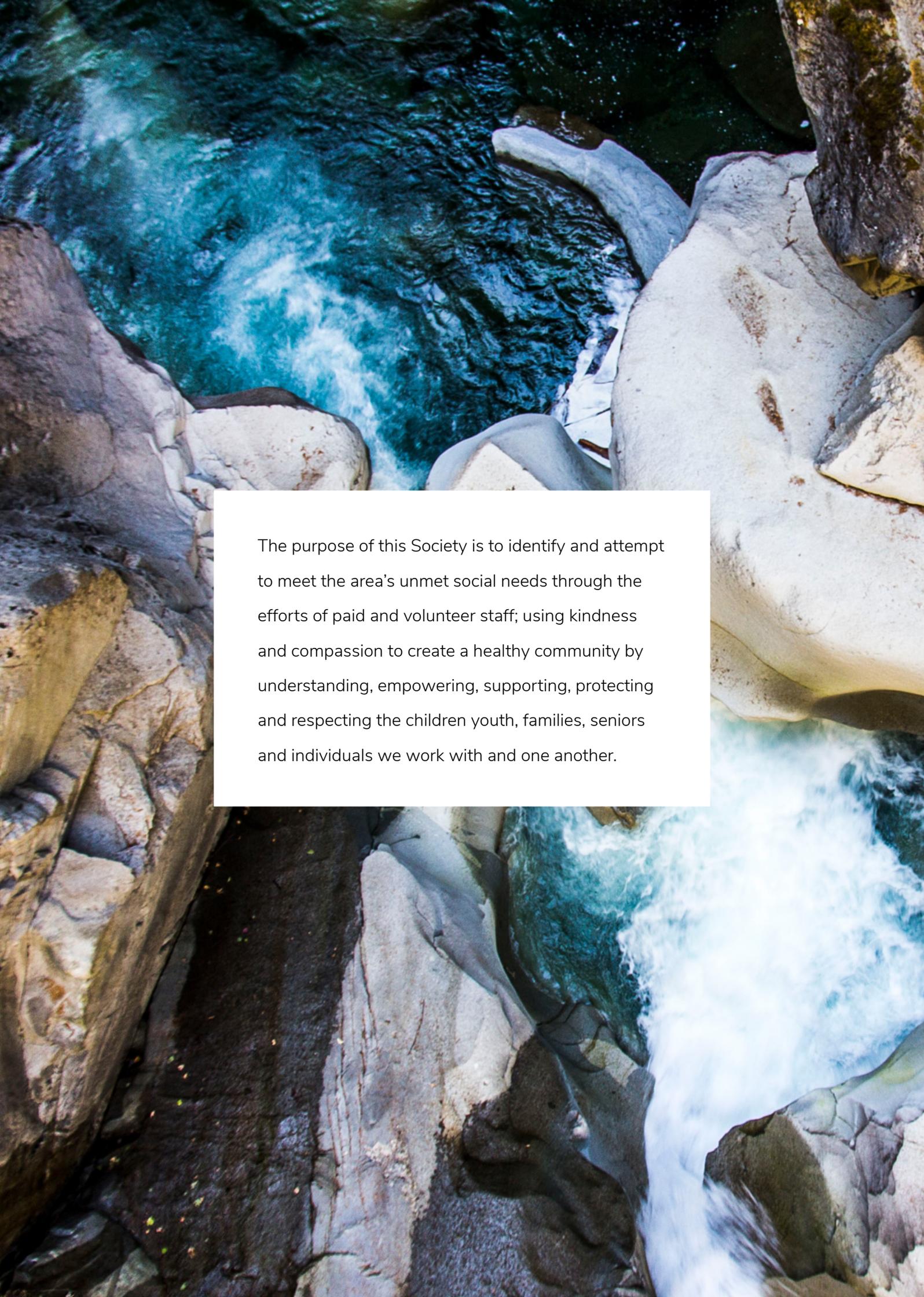


# Hope Community Services

2019 - 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



**SHARING HOPE**  
**HELPING OTHERS**  
**STRENGTHENING**  
**COMMUNITY**



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 has been one of growth and unprecedented events.

Hope Community Services continues to grow with new grants for many of our programs

Food bank continues to provide food for many families, children and individuals in Hope and we will continue to provide this service with the continuing support of our wonderful community.

With the COVID-19 outbreak, starting in March 2020, the generosity of this community was unbelievable. Donations from businesses and individuals were beyond our expectations and were very much appreciated. As Food Banks do not receive any core funding from the government, to provide this service, we greatly rely on the generosity of the community. We received donations through Food Banks Canada to support our Community during the COVID-19 lockdown. Registration for the use of the Hope Community Food Bank rose about 30% from previous years. The Food Bank Recovery Project from Save-On Foods, Buy Low and Starbucks continues to supplement the food and meals we provide. We were also successful in acquiring a grant for a walk-in freezer to increase the storage capacity.

I want to thank everyone who has donated to the Hope Community Food Bank and look forward to the continued support from our wonderful community.

Early Years programs were running at full tilt until the pandemic. Hope Community Services closed its doors for a few weeks but were able to provide education and video meetings for the young families in the community. Small meetings have begun with young moms and their children at Hope Community Services twice a week.

The outdoor learning and play space was used this summer for the families, as well as the small garden which provides some fresh produce for meals and for the families.

The Volunteer Tax Program is a non-funded program provided for people with low income. Donations are much appreciated. Volunteers are given a 15 minute online training session to do basic tax returns.

Hope Community Services will continue to provide many services to our community over the coming years. I want to thank all the staff and volunteers for their ongoing commitment and dedication, and I look forward to a great year ahead and am happy to continue to serve our Community.

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, especially in light of Covid-19. Staff and volunteers have had to develop creative, flexible and resourceful ways to continue to deliver services, and they've done remarkably well. This is a testament to the commitment and dedication of both staff and volunteers.

We continue to develop a robust food resource sector with an eye to creating a Community Food Centre and Hub in the community, with various types of cooking, gardening and advocacy programs for children, families, seniors and community members. This past year saw the re-design of our space at the Northwest Harvest Church to create a shopping style setting along with dedicated office space and the accommodation of a new walk-in freezer, thanks to a grant made possible through the Walmart Foundation via Food Banks Canada, and the Infrastructure grant through Agriculture Canada. We also received funding from United Way to support a food hub, which included Boston Bar, until the end of October. This year also saw the creation of a Family Food Bank day on the fourth Monday of each month. This drop-in includes meals, hampers, children's activity and literacy kits, as well as access to various professionals from the community who set up tables during the drop-in. During the summer our incredible summer students offered a smoothie station for kids to create their own delicious, healthy, customized smoothies. As a result of Covid, we received funding for the first time from the federal and provincial governments. To date, we've received \$81,853.01 in grants and \$69,410.31 in donations for a total of \$151,263.32 in the past 6 months alone! 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 evolve. Staff have had to become very creative and flexible in developing ways to deliver our Family & Early Years programs. In the early Spring we closed programs initially and moved as much as possible to on-line and Facebook connections. More recently we have once again opened our drop-in programs with a maximum of 10 participants, including staff, in attendance. So far this seems to be working well. Over the summer we hosted outdoor activities at Memorial Park and Kawkawa Lake.

We received funding for a third term for the Fostering Literacy project, where high school students tutor grade 3 students. It will look different this year in terms of delivery and we are brainstorming ways to make this happen for this coming school year.

Hope Community Services should be proud of its accomplishments over the past year, despite the challenges, particularly Covid-19. 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



Holly Days Donations in 2019 were up from the previous year, and we were thrilled to give out 250 hampers providing food to 410 people in our community.

2019-2020 BOARD

# Voting Board Members

President	Denise Desorcy
Vice-President	Peter Bailey
Treasurer	Donna McAllister
Director	Patricia Knapp
Director	Reiza Belzilr



This past year brought many accomplishments and new opportunities, along with some challenges, especially in light of Covid-19. Staff and volunteers have had to develop creative, flexible and resourceful ways to continue to deliver services, and they've done remarkably well.

# Current Staff List

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

<b>Michele Thornhill</b>	Executive Director
<b>Dianne McDonnell</b>	Financial Supervisor Community Food Resource Programs Coordinator
<b>Kim Paolini</b>	Early Years Programs Coordinator Community Food Resource Programs Coordinator Child Care Resource and Referral worker Volunteer Coordinator
<b>Irais Guerrero</b>	Better Beginnings Facilitator Child Care Resource and Referral worker Healthy Families Drop-In Facilitator
<b>Acacia Martin</b>	Literacy Programs Coordinator Early Years Programs Coordinator Early Years Family Navigator
<b>Beth McLeod</b>	Family Place Drop-In Facilitator
<b>Liz Flinn</b>	Food Recovery Coordinator



With the COVID-19 outbreak the generosity of this community was unbelievable as registration for the Community Food Bank rose about 30% from previous years.

# 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.

Over 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

## COMMUNITY FOOD HUB & 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 and where people can come together to cook, grow, share and learn, as well as to connect around issues that matter to them. Our main focus this past year was the development and implementation of a Families Only Drop-In program. With a desire to move beyond a one way transaction (giving food), to engaging families and children in more meaningful ways, we invited other professionals as well as our own early years team to be part of the drop-ins. As a result of Covid-19 we had to make some adjustments by only having parents/caregivers attend. Over the summer we were able to once again, include children in the drop-ins and we are exploring other ways to engage families and children in learning and connecting. We also ran the After the Bell program with approximately 25 children benefitting from the healthy food packs each week over the summer.

We would like to thank the staff at Hope and Area Transition Society for all their support over the past many months. Their staff have assisted with cooking and preparing hampers and providing deliveries for families. We'd also like to thank Inge and Gord from the Mormon Church for delivering to some of more vulnerable seniors, and for going above and beyond the call of duty. They have helped our seniors with basic household chores, gardening and some basic care in addition to delivering hampers and meals.

Our challenge, as always, is securing enough funds to sustain the Community Food Hub & Drop-In programs. We rely almost entirely on community donations to fund these valuable services. My goal over the coming year is to help community members, stakeholders and funders to see that these services and programs should not be the responsibility of the charitable sector and should become part of a healthy community, properly resourced, including money for staffing, building costs, program supplies, insurance and more

**April 1st 2019 – March 31, 2020, 1217 applications were received, up from the 995 the previous year, feeding 1856 people up from 1734 the year previous.**

**Between April 2020 - August 31/2020 we've handed out 682 hampers and fed over 1100 people.**

## 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.

We usually have 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, but we're not sure how it will look this coming year. 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.

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

**Donations in December 2019 were up from the previous year, and we were thrilled to receive community donations in the amount of \$34,711.17. The number of hampers given out was 250 providing food to 410 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. Unfortunately we could not retain a meal provider and had to discontinue our contract at the fiscal year end, March 31, 2020.

**A total of 194 meals were prepared, down significantly from the 619 the year before.**

## **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 464 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.



*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 create a community space where we share food in a dignified way and where people can come together to cook, grow, share and learn, as well as to connect around issues that matter to them.*

# 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 1015 adults and 1018 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 1015 adults and 1018 children during the past fiscal year.



**Hope**  
*Community*  
*Services*