



2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT

(April 1ST, 2020 through March 31ST, 2021)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Presented by:

Dan Malone, Executive Director

Compiled by:

Eva Vowles, Recruitment Coordinator

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FPSS Foster Parent Support Services Society
VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

The FPSS VISION STATEMENT

A recognized and respected organization
supporting well educated/knowledgeable
foster parent community finally respected
and fully appreciated by all of society

The FPSS Foster Parent Support Services Society is a Grass Roots organization committed to providing meaningful and accessible "support" education and networking services which will continually enhance the skills and abilities of foster parents to deliver the best care possible to the children in their homes.

** (trickle down as to who we serve)*

Notes:

In December 2020, Lisa Johnston stepped down as the Cowichan Valley Local Coordinator and Central Island Safe Baby Coordinator. Sandra Beagley is filling in as the Acting Cowichan Valley Coordinator in addition to her duties as the Central Island (Nanaimo/Ladysmith) Coordinator. FPSS posted the job of the Central Island Safe Baby Coordinator but has not filled the position.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to bring changes and challenges to FPSS's service delivery. The Regional Office staff members worked from home from March 16th, 2020, to early Fall. The office forwarded phone lines to personal cell numbers to ensure continuity of services. MCFD, FPSS, and other community organizations cancelled or postponed numerous events, meetings, and training opportunities due to the Provincial Health Officer's order to restrict public gatherings. In early 2021, most Regional office staff members returned to working from home. Two staff members continued to work in the office. FPSS's coordinators delivered support and training via phone, email, and video conferencing (Zoom) formats. Online Regional training continued throughout the year.

FPSS continued to monitor its Facebook Group pages and post announcements, information, training reminders, and ministry updates. The Regional Office holds daily *team huddles* to plan, coordinate, and share resources. Local area coordinators attended when they had questions or concerns to bring forward. Staff meetings continued to take place every two weeks. The organization provided caregivers with up-to-date information on COVID-19 and ministry practice bulletins through email distribution lists and Facebook Groups.

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CHAIRPERSON'S ANNUAL REPORT

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Respectfully submitted by Diane Daigle

I am honoured to serve the foster parents of Vancouver Island as Chair of the Board of Directors, FPSSS. I am truly grateful for each member of our Board and the skills, talents, and commitment you bring to the work we do together!

We are so fortunate to have such competent and dedicated Executive Director and staff whose expertise and flexibility meant quality service, support, and education to foster families continued unwaveringly throughout the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19!! This meant continued flexibility of our Pandemic response plan: virtual meetings, work from home and in office, distancing, masks, sanitizing....our staff managed incredibly well.

Direct support and education to foster parents continued in a very big way.

Almost all events transitioned to virtual training. In fact, there was so much high-quality training offered to foster parents that it was difficult to pick and choose which events to attend! The majority of this training was also offered to kinship homes to support them with the same access and opportunities for support education and networking.

Island wide Safe Babies training was offered virtually in the fall of 2020.

Foster parents were offered regular zoom trainings to assist them with necessary meetings and schooling of the children, and FPSSS offered a *Books for Caregivers* program where the organization would ship books and resources to caregivers to use and return to our library!

All of this offered 4,523 people across Vancouver Island workshops training networking support planning relationship building and information sharing.

The completion of BCFCE meant the beginning of our Foster Parent Recruitment program. It was a successful year; 285 people attended fostering information sessions island-wide!

And finally, our team came together in preparation for a virtual CARF accreditation!

As we all are beginning to see the light to the other side of this pandemic I am reminded of the words of Dr. Bruce Perry
"Relationships are the agents of change"

I am looking forward to watching the work of the FPSSS happen in relationship.... and seeing the beautiful faces of the children, foster families, and all of you again!

And finally in the words of Dr. Bonnie Henry

"We are all in this together"

Thank you to the Board, Executive Director, Staff, and Volunteers of Foster Parent Support Services Society!!

Diane Daigle

Chair

TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Respectfully submitted by Jo Axe

Report to follow.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Respectfully submitted by Dan Malone

In 2020-2021, despite the restriction on in-person meetings, FPSS Society continued to support, educate, and network Vancouver Island foster parents at a Regional and community level. As a team, the FPSS Society staff and Board met most goals and targets the Organization set for the 2020-2021 year. In March 2020, we stopped almost all in-person events due to Covid 19.

Highlights of the support, training, and more FPSS Society provided in 2020-2021 include:

- Transitioned to virtual training and networking for almost all events in the wake of COVID -19
- Transitioned to a *work at home* model for Regional Office staff during COVID -19

- Provided opportunities for 4,523 people across Vancouver Island to attend workshops, training, networking, support, planning, relationship building and information sharing events – almost all virtually!
- Provided Virtual Safe Babies Training Island-wide – Fall 2020
- Offered Kinship homes access to a majority of FPSS Society Workshops and Training – working towards having Kinship homes to have the same access and opportunities to receive support, education, and networking.
- Expanded Social Media Presence – Private Facebook Groups in all communities on Vancouver Island – 280 Foster Parents are members
- Started the Foster Hope Recruitment Program Island-wide in all communities. Advertising tailored to each community's needs. Fostering Information sessions hosted Island-wide, bi-weekly. 285 people attended.
- Initiated *Books for Caregivers* program during COVID. (Caregivers identify books they feel would be helpful resources and FPSS Society has the book shipped to their home.)
- Prepared for CARF Accreditation
- Hired new Regional Mentor Coordinator and created a new Facebook Page for Mentors to connect
- Conducted a research scan to investigate ways to train/educate foster parents to *Transition Children and Youth* in a culturally safe and trauma informed way.

The entire team of FPSS Society Staff members, Directors, and volunteers continually come together to uphold the Mission and Vision of the society. I appreciate all those involved with the FPSS Society for being there for Vancouver Island foster parents, to provide support, resources, information, training, and opportunities to connect with one another virtually. Thank you for all you do to improve the abilities of foster parents to deliver the best care possible to the children in your homes.

Staff worked hard to engage in their local communities during COVID, and respond to the needs, finding creative solutions to support, network, and educate Foster Parents. This collaborative effort of each and every one is what makes FPSS Society such a great organisation to work for. You all go above and beyond on a regular basis.

This year even our volunteers worked remotely, supporting foster parents from their home through investigations and mentoring. Foster Parent Locals creating innovative networking opportunities with fun family packages, using a drive-by collection. We could not do this work without the volunteers of Investigation and Resolution Support Team, Mentors, Foster Parent Locals, and community of foster parents that continually support one another to do this loving and caring work.

Thank you to the FPSS Society Board for the commitment, direction, leadership, and motivation. The constant advice, knowledge, wisdom, and valuable time you give to Foster Parent Support Services Society is fully appreciated.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. It is indeed the only thing that ever has." (Margaret Mead)

SUMMARY OF SERVICES PROVIDED IN 2020-2021

Peer Support Groups

Peer Support Groups continue to be a source of communication, networking, and support services for foster parents throughout the Region. Some areas prefer to use a 'workshop' format rather than a 'coffee party' format, while other areas employ both. FPSS Society works with local groups in all areas of the Vancouver Island Region and provides assistance to enable them to host meetings. Currently, this takes the form of Zoom meetings. Caregivers who are uncomfortable with the video format can join by phone. The relationships formed and fostered in peer support opportunities are essential for the retention of caregivers through challenging times.

Beginning in early March of 2020, FPSS Society cancelled in-person support meetings due to recommendations from provincial and federal health officers. Coordinators continued to make support available through email, text, and phone. Facebook groups are running in most communities to give caregivers another way to connect and maintain relationships.

Partnership, Education, Advisory and/or Retention Committees

Local Councils and foster parent groups continue to meet with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) for joint discussion around foster parenting; ongoing training; ministry changes and policies; and issues and concerns. These meetings bear different appellations in each area such as Advisory Committee, Partnership Meetings, Joint Training/Planning meetings, etc., but perform the same function – allowing foster parents to communicate with each other, and with MCFD and other Community Agencies.

FPSS Society Regional Partnership Meetings

These meetings afford foster parents from each Area and/or Local Council an opportunity to meet with one another to discuss current issues, new policies, and trends specific to their community. Each area reports on which activities are most successful in

their area and which are less successful. Foster parents explore and share ideas and suggestions. Currently, these meetings take place virtually.

Regional Newsletter

The Island Connection newsletter continues to be a vital source of communication and information to the foster parents and MCFD in this Region. It is a cost effective, efficient way of sharing news and information with our fostering community. FPSS distributes digital copies of *The Island Connection* to foster homes and MCFD offices, posts it on our website at <https://fpsss.com/>, and makes it available through our offices. FPSS mails over 400 hard copies to caregivers and offices who prefer the hard copy format.

Social Media

FPSS Society recognizes the value of social media and uses various forms to communicate with stakeholders locally, provincially, and beyond. Regular updates to our website ensure the information is current and provides calendars of events for each region. Foster parents can download these calendars to their mobile devices or home computers. We regularly communicate with foster parents regarding news and upcoming events using the web-based service *Constant Contact*. FPSS Society makes regular updates to its Facebook. Social Media and online platforms will continue to be key tools as FPSS Society expands its delivery of online training.

CASL Compliance

FPSS Society implemented the guidelines and procedures required to comply with the Canadian Anti-Spam legislation that came into effect on July 1st, 2014. CASL procedures include ensuring that foster parents providing their email are aware of who is making the request, what types of emails they can expect to receive from the FPSS Society, and that they may unsubscribe from an email distribution list at any time (at no cost).

Brochures, Posters, and Flyers

The FPSS Society circulates information through email, surface mail, our offices, in information/welcome packages, on our website, and on social media pages. We distribute copies of our brochures to MCFD offices for display and distribution to caregivers. These publications illustrate our services and provide conference/forum/workshop details and registration information. We have an FPSS Society Information Kit available which summarize the services and programs available to foster parents throughout the Vancouver Island Region. New caregivers receive a Welcome Package which provides an overview of the services and supports FPSS Society provides. Designing and printing these documents in-house allows FPSS to reduce costs.

Foster Hope Recruitment Campaign

FPSS Society is committed to assisting MCFD and Delegated Agencies increase the number of foster caregivers on Vancouver Island. FPSS and MCFD collaborate to host Foster Hope Information Sessions twice a month using the Zoom platform. These sessions present an introduction to fostering in BC. Following each session, FPSS sends an email to attendees asking if they would like to receive a foster parent application package. The Recruitment Coordinator forwards the requests to the appropriate MCFD office.

FPSS posts/boosts ads on Facebook pages throughout the Region, highlighting the need for various types of caregiving homes including homes for Teens, Children and Youth with Support Needs, Sibling Groups, Safe Babies, Infants, and school-age children. FPSS uses posters and print ads as well. See *Annual Foster Hope Recruitment Report* for details.

Safe Babies Program

FPSS Society provides training and support to Safe Babies Caregivers throughout the Vancouver Island region in Victoria, Duncan, Nanaimo, Campbell River, Courtenay, and Port Hardy. Our Safe Baby Coordinators are Dianne Thompson (Acting) in South Island, and Catherine McCauley in Upper Island. Lisa Johnston left the position of Central Island Safe Babies Coordinator in December 2020, and Mary Catherine Williams retired from the Upper Island position in February 2021.

Please see individual *Safe Baby Area Coordinator* reports for more details.

First Aid Training

FPSS Society arranged Basic Level First Aid Training (with Infant CPR) in several communities in the region. Alert First Aid deliver the training in-person with safety precautions in place. Foster parents who successfully complete the program receive a partial reimbursement from FPSS Society.

FPSS Society Health and Safety Committee

The committee meets monthly with local area coordinators, with Eva Vowles as Chairperson. The committee provides monthly training exercises, drills, and bulletin board displays with Health and Safety information of interest to staff and foster parents. Please see *Health and Safety Annual Report* for more details.

REVIEW OF OUTCOMES FOR 2020-2021

REVIEW OF TARGETS FOR 2020-2021	OUTCOMES
<i>Provide support and ongoing training to foster parents in South, Central, and Upper Vancouver Island.</i>	Complete and ongoing. FPSS Society has Local Area Coordinators in the following communities: Victoria –Dianne Thompson; Port Alberni –Juanita Currie; Cowichan Valley –Lisa Johnston/Sandra Beagley; Nanaimo/Ladysmith Sandra Beagley; Comox Valley – Lisa Bowie; Campbell River – Judy Hollywood Bonnett; Port Hardy – Jackie Kervin. Local coordinators provide caregivers with support, resources, ongoing training, and updates to MCFD policy and procedure as well as alerting caregivers to changes to the Foster Family Handbooks, Standards for Foster Homes, and other relevant documents.
<i>Promote Investigation and Resolution Support Program for Foster Parents.</i>	Ongoing. FPSS Society has trained Investigation and Resolution Support Team volunteers in communities across the region. Investigation and Resolution support workers are available throughout Vancouver Island to support foster parents undergoing an investigation. Foster parents can select a support person in their area or one from outside their local community. This program reduces the anxiety associated with this stressful process and increases retention.
<i>Expand and Promote Mentor Program for Foster Parents.</i>	FPSS Society continued to provide Mentor support for new caregivers. Having a pool of mentors available to guide foster parents aids in the retention of caregivers and prevents the problems that arise when caregivers foster in isolation. The Organization continues to look for innovative ways to encourage more foster parents to take part in the Mentor Program and to increase the frequency of contacts between Mentor and Mentee. Part of this is ensuring new and current Resource Workers and Team Leaders understand the importance of connecting new caregivers with a mentor early in their fostering journey.
<i>Recruit and retain skilled personnel.</i>	FPSS Society encourages and supports staff members in educational/training opportunities that enhance their skill levels. Flexible work schedules allow Local Area Coordinators staff members to pursue education/training that will increase their skills and expand their toolkits. This opportunity for growth increases the retention of staff and improves the overall ability of the organization to provide high quality service to all stakeholders. Two FPSS Society staff left to pursue other passions. Lisa Johnston stepped down from her Central Island Coordinator/Safe Baby Coordinator role. Sandra Beagley is currently covering the Central Island Coordinator position. Long-time Upper Island Safe Baby Coordinator Mary Catherine Williams retired her position and will be greatly missed. FPSS is excited to welcome Catherine McCauley in this role. FPSS team will also be welcoming Colleen Yrjana as the new Regional Mentor Coordinator.
<i>Increase the number of foster parents in the Vancouver Island Region through enhanced and increased Retention efforts.</i>	The Annual Satisfaction Survey allows FPSS Society to gather information regarding which services and training foster parents need in their communities. Continued peer support opportunities provide foster parents with networking opportunities that connect them to local resources. Appreciation events and social events build stronger relationships among foster parents and between foster parents and resource workers. These activities increase the retention of well-educated, actively engaged, and supported foster parents. Foster caregivers reported their appreciation for the wide range of online support and training offered by FPSS Society during COVID-19. Retention is an on-going concern as existing caregivers reach retirement age and the cost of housing in BC increases. FPSS Society, other support agencies, and various provincial government ministries will need to work together to find solutions to the challenge of housing cost/availability and its direct effect on fostering
<i>Continue to meet CARF Standards.</i>	Completed and on-going. FPSS Society remains an accredited agency and continues to provide quality service and support to all stakeholders. The FPSS Society updated its Organization Manual and Staff Handbook to meet current CARF Standards.
<i>Continue to Advocate for and increase in payment rates for caregivers that, at minimum, meets cost of living</i>	MCFD provided an increase to caregiver Maintenance Payments in July of 2020. FPSS Society continues to advocate for an increase to Service Payments.
<i>Use Website and Social Media to communicate with stakeholders.</i>	FPSS Society continues to update its website on a regular basis to provide current information regarding ongoing training and support opportunities for foster parents across Vancouver Island. Calendars of events are available for download on various media devices including Smartphones and tablets.

REVIEW OF TARGETS FOR 2020-2021	OUTCOMES
	The Annual Satisfaction Survey 2020 indicated that 76.5% (15.6% increase from last year) of respondents accessed fpsss.com on a daily to monthly basis; 27.5% (11.4% increase) of respondents accessed the organization's social media pages. Most foster parents who visited the website (68.9%) (4.5% increase) did so to access <i>The Island Connection</i> newsletter.
<i>Gather and use foster parent input in planning training, services, and supports.</i>	The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the delay of the 2020 Annual Satisfaction Survey. See Satisfaction Survey Report for details. FPSS uses this information to plan upcoming training and support activities.
TARGETS FOR 2021-2022	OUTCOMES
<i>Train and Support new Coordinators.</i>	New Regional Mentor Program Coordinator and Upper Island Safe Baby Coordinator will need time and support to become comfortable in their positions.
<i>Implement updated CARF Standards.</i>	FPSS Society has made revisions to the Organization Manual and Staff Handbook to meet or exceed CARF standards. FPSS Society will incorporate new or revised policies/procedures into daily practice through the year.
<i>Build capacity for online learning platform.</i>	FPSS Society will have an increased ability to offer online webinars including presentations in various formats such as videos, PowerPoint, audio files, and livestreaming. This is now especially important as physical distancing recommendations continue. FPSS will find effective, ethical ways to compensate workshop facilitators so that webinars can be recorded and made available to caregivers unable to attend live sessions.
<i>Out of Care Options.</i>	FPSS Society received permission to include a wider range of caregivers in their service population. Out-of-care caregivers can receive some of the training and supports that we have not been able to provide. FPSS will be looking for the most respectful and appropriate ways to include these caregivers. As the number of Out of Care homes increases, it is essential that these caregivers receive the same level of support and training available to in care caregivers as the children and youth involved have similar needs and rights.
<i>Recruitment</i>	FPSS Society will continue to work with local communities throughout Vancouver Island to publicize the need for foster homes. The Organization will focus on targeted advertising to increase the number of potential caregivers requesting information about becoming foster parents. The success of turning the increase in the number of applicants into an increase in the number of foster homes depends primarily on the commitment of time and other resource on behalf of the ministry.

WORKSHOPS PROVIDED IN 2020-2021**SOUTH ISLAND AREA**Summary of Workshops provided April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

(See Appendix for full list)

TOTAL	SOUTH ISLAND WORKSHOPS	FACILITATOR	TOPIC ADDRESSED	ATTENDANCE
3	Communication	White Hatter Sandra Beagley, Dianne Thompson	Understanding the challenges of staying safe and private online. Zoom Fun Time.	23
5	Cultural Agility	Eddie Charlie, Kristin Spray, Avis O'Brien, Tammy Myles	Effects of Residential School on Indigenous Communities, Cultural connection and the role culture plays in supporting Indigenous children/youth in care.	124
13	Empowered to Connect	Vicki Bridge	Interactive learning experience designed for parents and caregivers whose children have experienced adverse childhood experiences.	88
1	FASD	Myles Himmelreich	Personal insight into the challenges of living with FASD.	116
2	Grief, Attachment, and Loss	Vicki Bridge	Attachment Principles and practical applications for caregivers.	38
3	Health and Safety	First Aid Training	Standard First-Aid and CPR Level C re-certification.	30
4	MCFD Standards, Policies, and Practices	Ros Pringle	Specialized training for caregivers in Investigation and Resolution Support and Mentor Support.	24
3	Mental Health (Including Suicide)	Mary Catherine Williams David Beagley	Current research on Resilience. Regulation.	134
5	Safe Babies	Mary Catherine Williams	Training for caregivers specifically caring for substance-exposed infants.	51
1	Transitions (Permanency, Return Home, Aging Out)	Andrea Chatwin	Understanding the needs of children and caregivers during the transition process, guiding principles.	76
9	Trauma Informed Care	Vicki Bridge, Dr. Vanessa Lapointe	Anger and brain development, emotional pathways, building resilience, strategies to support children/youth impacted by trauma.	63

CENTRAL ISLAND AREASummary of Workshops provided April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

(See Appendix for full list)

TOTAL	CENTRAL ISLAND WORKSHOPS	FACILITATOR	TOPIC ADDRESSED	ATTENDANCE
5	Communication	Dianne Thompson, Sandra Beagley, Julie Carter	Zoom Platform, Practiced current online platforms like Zoom. Library Resources.	20
10	Cultural Agility	Avis O'Brien, Eddy Charlie, Kristin Spray, Erma Robinson, Usma Health and Wellness Team, John Swift of MAKWAG Consulting, Anna Allen	Traditional cooking, the role culture plays in buffering trauma, Story sharing, Racism, Gifting.	249
16	Empowered to Connect	Ros Pringle, Dianne Thompson, Daren Jones, Dan and Terri Coley, Mark and Tona Ottinger, Amanda Purvis, Sarah Mercado, Mari Smith, Cindy Lee, Sandra Beagley	Parenting children from hard places, empowering caregivers, tools and strategies, TBRI, Attachment styles, Correcting principles to help children feel heard and disarming fear-based behaviors, Trauma, Building trust, Helping the child heal and grow.	185
3	FASD/ASD	Katherine Paxton, Myles Himmelreich	How the brain works in children and youth on the spectrum, Emotional regulation for people with ASD and other challenges.	86

TOTAL	CENTRAL ISLAND WORKSHOPS	FACILITATOR	TOPIC ADDRESSED	ATTENDANCE
			Personal insight into the challenges of living with FASD.	
5	Health and Safety	Alert First Aid, Kerri Isham	Basic First Aid and CPR Level C certification, Sexual Health.	11
1	MCFD Standards, Policies, and Practices	Dan Malone, Sandra Beagley	MCFD Updates, information sharing.	17
5	Mental Health (Including suicide)	Vancouver Island Crisis Society, Lindsay Wells, Lori Nichols	Connection between trauma and suicide, how to be alert to suicidal thinking and how to respond, Self injury, Supportive strategies, ADHD.	66
2	Safe Babies Training	Megan Bourns, Mary Catherine Williams	Understanding typical development and development in children with other special needs, Autism, Understanding and promoting sleep.	13
3	Self-Care	Dr. Bruce Perry, Brene Brown, Sandra Beagley, Lisa Johnston, David Beagley, Sean Boulet	Peer support, Networking, Rebuilding trust, Inspirational message to Foster Parents, appreciation, Self care, Grounding oneself, Tools, and Strategies.	103
15	Trauma Informed Care; Managing Disruptive Behaviour, Anxiety	National Child Traumatic Stress Network, Vanessa Lapointe, Anna Allen, Jef Nichols, Dr. Bruce Perry, Sean Boulet	Anger and brain development, Understanding anger and a child's needs, emotional pathways that lead to angry explosions, Developmental trauma, How trauma flows to adulthood, Depression, How physical and mental states affect brain function, Anxiety pros and cons, strategies, variations of ADHA, How medication works.	259
14	TBRI Network and TBRI Next Level	Ros Pringle, Sandra Beagley, Lisa Johnston	TBRI tools and practices, Adverse childhood experiences, Balance nurture with structure, Empowering students, Physiological strategies, Mindfulness strategies, Re-thinking the classroom environment, Taking play seriously, TBRI/ETC principles and practice, Trauma and the brain, Meeting physical needs, Creating relationships, Correcting behavior.	186
2	Gender Diversity/Sexuality	Kerri Isham	Gender diversity, Sexual orientation, Sexual health and safety, How to talk with children and youth about sex.	44

UPPER ISLAND AREA

Summary of Workshops provided April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

(See Appendix for full list)

TOTAL	UPPER ISLAND WORKSHOPS	FACILITATOR	TOPIC ADDRESSED	ATTENDANCE
1	Communication	Victoria Morton	Communication	7
	Cultural Agility			
4	Empowered to Connect	Judy Hollywood Bonnett	TBRI, trauma, connecting, correcting while connecting.	22
	FASD/ASD			
1	Health and Safety	Daryl Laur	Online sexual predation and exploitation.	18
	MCFD Standards, Policies, and Practices			
1	Mental Health (Including suicide)	Victoria Morton	Regulation	15
17	Safe Babies Caregivers Topics	Catherine McCauley, Mary-Catherine Williams	Working with dads, SB program modules 1-7, infant sleep, infant nutrition, self care, Infant summer prep, peer support.	148
23	Self-Care	Victoria Morton, Elisha Almeida	Emotional intelligence, choosing joy, coping, vicarious trauma, decision fatigue, resiliency, emotional contagion, stress, and your brain.	136
5	Trauma Informed Care; Managing Disruptive Behaviours	Dr. Vanessa Lapointe, Mary-Catherine Williams, Elisha Almeida.	Attachment, anger, emotional pathways, brain development, current research.	17

TOTAL	UPPER ISLAND WORKSHOPS	FACILITATOR	TOPIC ADDRESSED	ATTENDANCE
16	Media Fest	Elisha Almeida, Dr. Kristin Weinzier, Sheena Campbell, JoAnne Restoule, Nicole Burgess,	ACES, executive functioning, ETC, attachment, substance use, child nurturing, grief, and loss.	67

PERSONNEL COMPLEMENT FOR 2020-2021

FPSS FOSTER PARENT SUPPORT SERVICES SOCIETY PERSONNEL COMPLEMENT APRIL 1 ST , 2020 TO MARCH 31 ST , 2021			
POSITION	NAME	HOURS / WEEK	START DATE
MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL			
Executive Director	Dan Malone	35.0	2007-2021
REGIONAL STAFF POSITIONS			
Administrative Assistant	Krista Shelkey	32.5	2011-2021
Recruitment Coordinator	Eva Vowles	32.5	2005-2021
Administrative Support	Elisa Morrison	20.0	2020-2021
Investigation and Resolution Support Team Leader	Janet Christie (on leave)		2012-2019
Acting Investigation and Resolution Support Team Leader	Dianne Thompson	6.0	2018-2021
Office Custodian	Ruth Smith	4.0	2003-2021
COORDINATORS:			
South Island	Janet Christie (on leave)		2012-2021
Acting South Island	Dianne Thompson	28.0	2018-2021
Cowichan Valley	Lisa Johnston (to December 2020)	10.0	2018-2020
Acting Cowichan Valley	Sandra Beagley (January 2021)		2020-2021
Nanaimo-Ladysmith	Sandra Beagley	10 to 15	2020-2021
Port Alberni	Juanita Currie	6.0 to 8.0	2017-2021
Comox Valley	Lisa Bowie	10.0	2013-2021
Campbell River	Judy Hollywood Bonnett	10.0	2009-2021
Local – Port Hardy	Jackie Kervin	4.0 (as needed)	2009-2021
SAFE BABIES COORDINATORS:			
South Island	Janet Christie (on leave)		2012-2021
Acting South Island	Dianne Thompson		2018-2021
Central Island	Lisa Johnston (to December 2020)	4.0	2003-2020
Upper Island	Mary Catherine Williams	4.0	2008-2021
INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS (IC), STAFF (S)			
BOOKKEEPER:			
Regional Office	Denise Salmon	Regional 3.0+	2010-2021

VANCOUVER ISLAND REGION AREA REPORTS

SOUTH ISLAND AREA ANNUAL REPORT

Summary of the Meetings and Training Events in the South Island:
(See Appendix for full list)

TOTAL	MEETING	TOPIC ADDRESSED	OUTCOME	ATTENDANCE
5	Advisory Meeting	Foster parent supports, issues and concerns, and MCFD Policy updates.	Networking, support, planning, and information sharing.	44
3	Peer Support* Peer Support also takes place at social events	Support surrounding local fostering issues to bring forward to MCFD partnership meetings.	Networking, addressing issues, support, and information sharing.	13
6	South Island Recruitment and Retention	Recruitment and Retention.	Networking, updates, support, planning, and information sharing.	53
2	Foster Parent/Partnership (Other than MCFD)	Planning upcoming workshops. Collaboration with community agencies.	Information sharing and planning.	9
2	Appreciation Events	Foster Care Appreciation (magnets) and Social Worker Week Baskets.	Relationship building, retention, and communication.	5 baskets 900 magnets
1	Regional Partnership	Regional meeting with reports from each area of Vancouver Island. Hosted by FPSS.	Networking, support, planning, and information sharing regionally.	
5	Foster Parent/Partnership (MCFD)	Open meeting for foster parents and resource social workers.	Networking, support, planning, and information sharing locally.	51
22	Caregiver Check-In	Open discussion on general topics and concerns for foster parents.	Information sharing, support, and networking, MCFD Bulletin sharing and questions.	98
13	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking.	Support, networking, and information sharing.	69
21	Foster Hope Information Sessions	Hosted by MCFD and FPSS.	Recruitment, sharing information to potential foster caregivers.	285

South Island Area Coordinator Annual Report

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Dianne Thompson Acting South Island Coordinator

It has been a busy and exciting year. Due to COVID-19, we expanded our online presence, hosting numerous virtual workshops and trainings. FPSS offered the majority of these Regionally, providing an opportunity for caregivers in all areas of Vancouver Island to participate. This result facilitated networking opportunities and fostered positive connections among caregivers, community partners, and social workers. We continue to have enriching relationships and conversations with foster parents and Resource Social Workers at the Advisory and Retention Committee meetings.

Our email distribution list is a great way to stay connected with foster parents and inform them of upcoming events such as workshops and training in the community. We are connecting with caregivers via the monthly Caregiver Check-In, meetings, and phone calls. We have private Facebook groups for each area which we monitor daily. Two *Empowered to Connect/Hope for the Journey Facebook* groups to continue to share information and to support the participants. Our Mentoring Facebook group allows our IRS volunteers to connect. We monitor all groups on a regular basis with updates of information and online educational training/workshops.

FPSS was unable to host their annual Holiday Tea for foster parents and social workers this year. We look forward to celebrating the holiday season again in December 2021. We look forward to working with the South Island Foster Parent Association (SIFPA). Events that were cancelled due to Provincial Health orders will resume once deemed safe, hopefully by the fall of this year. SIFPA did however host a 2020 Foster Family Christmas Party - COVID Style. This was a drive-by event where families received gifts, craft kits, sweet treats and yummy pizza! It was attended by 45 families and 180 children.

Partnership Meetings

We continue to collaborate in Planning and Partnership meetings with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and our South Island Foster Parent Association. These meetings include the Foster Parent Advisory meetings, Retention and Recruitment Committee meetings, Foster Parent/MCFD Resource Partnership meetings, Brunch and Brainstorm gatherings, Caregiver Check-In, and Executive planning meetings. FPSS Society Area Coordinators, foster parents, and social workers attended a virtual Regional Partnership.

Networking Opportunities

Caregiver Wellness Night and Fostering 101 are on hold due to Covid-19 but we are looking at resuming this fall. SIFPA and FPSS Society's *Annual Foster Parents You DO Make a Difference* conference in Nanaimo was postponed for 2020 and 2021 and will be rescheduled. SIFPA's *Christmas in July Toy Shoppe* take-out in July and the Christmas Party 2020 COVID Style were very well attended.

FPSS created Caregiver Check-in to offer support and networking opportunities in this difficult period. We hosted a Regional Zoom Fun Time events, an opportunity to network and engage with foster caregivers, Kinship caregivers, Adoptive homes, Ministry staff, and other agencies.

FPSS Mentoring Program

When foster parents complete a mentor request form, the FPSS Mentor Coordinator matches them to an appropriate Mentor. We have a team of nine trained Mentors on South Vancouver Island. Mentors receive a *Mentor Manual* which includes pertinent reference materials. Most communities on Vancouver Island have now received mentor training. We held a virtual Mentoring training on Zoom, facilitated by Ros Pringle with six participants.

Investigation and Resolution Support Program (formerly Protocol Support Worker)

We have a team of 10 volunteer workers on Vancouver Island who support caregivers with casual assistance to full investigations. We held an IRS virtual training (to reflect the new Resource Work Policies) for six approved caregivers, facilitated by Ros Pringle. The new IRS Workers will join the existing support team.

Safe Baby Support Group

The Safe Babies Support Group continues to follow the government guidelines to postpone in-person meetings until further notice. The group connects via phone when support is required.

At their regular meetings they discuss information pertaining to issues and the care of vulnerable infants. We partnered with MCFD to hold a three-day Island Wide Safe Babies training facilitated by Mary Catherine Williams. Seventeen participants received this valuable training.

Ongoing Training

FPSS held Regional virtual workshops this past year as we continued to focus on trauma-informed care.

Training opportunities included:

- Show Hope's Empowered to Connect TBR!*[®]
- Attachment Informed Care*
- Online and Technology Information*
- Sexual Health for Teens and Tweens*
- Cultural Lunch and Learn
- First Aid
- FASD Awareness Day
- Transitioning Children: Best Practices*
- Zones? Engines? Regulated? What?*
- Zoom support
- Building Resilience in Foster Care*
- Orange shirt day with Eddy Charlie

See FPSS Society *Appendix to the Annual Report* for full details.

Facebook

Our foster parent Facebook groups are going well. With the ever-changing times and in keeping with technology it is an additional way for us to connect with our caregivers, share information on trainings, meetings, events, and to keep them updated.

Recruitment on Facebook

We advertised Foster Hope Information Sessions with several ads on Facebook and placed print ads in Black Press newspapers to further expand our reach. We had numerous interests in further information on the sessions with multiple exchanges with each on Facebook. This led to several phone calls and email conversations dealing with detailed information and assistance with registration. All were positive engagements with a high percentage registering for upcoming information sessions. We continually monitor the comments and questions on the recruitment ads daily.

There were 51 recruitment posts and 415,564 hits on the recruitment ads on Facebook this period. Lots of positive engagements with a high percentage registering for upcoming information sessions.

See *Foster Hope Recruitment Program Annual Report* for further details.

Email Distribution List

Our e-mail distribution list includes approximately 212 caregivers. We are gathering updated information for our list. This is a great way to connect with caregivers and inform them of last-minute changes and provide relevant community-based workshop and training events. In addition to *The Island Connection* newsletter, foster parents now have access to training events, meetings, and workshops on our website calendars and our private Facebook groups.

Completed May 2021

Investigation and Resolution Support Team Annual Report

April 1st, 2020, to March 31st, 2021

Dianne Thompson Acting South Island Investigations and Resolutions Coordinator

FPSS has a team of experienced, trained foster caregivers who volunteer their time to support other caregivers who are undergoing an investigation by MCFD or a DAA related to the children and youth in their home. FPSS provided a two-day training course for Investigation and Resolution Support Team members this year. Caregivers can request a support worker from within their community or from another community. The numbers reported here reflect the community in which the support is provided rather than the community the support worker resides in.

The numbers reported in this document represent only the investigations where the caregivers approached FPSS Society for support. FPSS Society has no knowledge of investigations beyond this. Due to confidentiality, the ministry does not inform FPSS Society when they initiate an investigation (due to confidentiality) against a caregiver. Some caregivers are unaware they have access to this support or that they need to contact FPSS to request it. FPSS introduces the support program in caregiver welcome packages, on its website, and through its newsletter.

South Island Activity

Quality of Care Review – 2

Family Care Home Investigations - 8

Dispute Resolution for Caregivers - 0

Number of cases where children were removed during process - 4

Number of cases where homes closed - 3

Total Formal Support Hours - 53

Total Informal Support Hours - 83

Central Island Activity Summary

Quality of Care Review – 5

Family Care Home Investigations – 7

Dispute Resolution for Caregivers - 1

Number of cases where children were removed during process - 3

Number of cases where homes closed – 3

Total Formal Support Hours - 200

Total Informal Support Hours - 163

Upper Island Activity Summary

Quality of Care Review - 0

Family Care Home Investigations - 6

Dispute Resolution for Caregivers - 0

Number of cases where children were removed during process - 2

Number of cases where homes closed – 0

Total Formal Support Hours -16

Total Informal Support Hours 22.5

Total Support Hours (Formal and Informal) provided by support team – 537.5

Total Hours Investigation and Resolution Support Team Coordinator Total Hours: 113

Trends:

The Central Island is the most active area of the region for investigations. This area covers a wide range and includes the greatest number of open homes. South Island support team members have stepped in to provide additional support when Central Island team members were working on multiple investigations.

Adherence to timelines continues to be an issue. Lengthy delays increase caregivers' anxiety and uncertainty around their future in fostering.

Investigation and Resolution Support Team members received calls regarding issues of isolation and having children on a 24/7 basis. Caregivers often just needed someone there to listen. There were concerns around general Dispute Resolution issues

regarding the Resource Social worker and the child's Guardianship Worker. Team members heard concerns about visits and transitions throughout COVID-19. Another concern was with the Ministry practice of placing children in a Level 1 or 2 home (that already had five to seven children) who should be in a Level 3 home. General issues involved policy, contracts, Respite/Relief, and dealing with Guardianship Workers and Resource Social workers when a caregiver has an issue or concern with the child and the feels they are not being heard by the workers.

South Island Safe Babies Coordinator Annual Report

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Dianne Thompson Acting South Island Safe Babies Coordinator

Safe Babies foster caregivers are those who look after infants prenatally exposed to alcohol and other drugs. Special training and prior approval are required before caregivers can welcome these vulnerable children into their homes. FPSS provides regular support for Safe Babies caregivers and these gatherings (in-person, phone, or virtual) include an educational component.

FPSS offers the Safe Babies Caregiver Training Program as need and budget allow. This is a four-day program with three days of instruction and discussion and a Basic Level First Aid with Infant CPR. Completion of the program does not guarantee MCFD will designate caregivers a Safe Baby Home as there are other criteria.

COVID has require FPSS Society to change how it trains and supports Safe Baby caregivers. Previously, Angela Hatch hosted monthly in-person meetings at her home. Angela now stays in contact with caregivers primarily through phone.

Events, Training and Support Relevant for Safe Babies Caregivers:

DATE	EVENT	TOPIC ADDRESS	OUTCOME	ATTENDANCE
April 9	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of safe Babies caregivers.	Support, networking, and information sharing.	3 (phone)
May 7	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Support, networking, and information sharing.	4 (phone)
June 4	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.		4 (phone)
July 9	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Support, networking, and information sharing.	9 At private home outside.
Aug 6	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Support, networking, and information sharing.	10 At private home outside.
Sept 4	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Support, networking, and information sharing.	10 At private home outside.
Sept 10	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Support, networking, and information sharing.	10 At private home outside.
Oct 8	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Support, networking, and information sharing. (In-person with physical distancing)	9
Nov 5	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Support, networking, and information sharing.	10
Nov 6	Regional Safe Babies Caregiver Training Curriculum	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	To train highly skilled caregivers specifically in meeting the special needs of substance-exposed infants.	17
Nov 20	Safe Babies Caregiver Training Curriculum	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	To train highly skilled caregivers in meeting the special needs of substance-exposed infants.	Postponed due to facilitator illness
Nov 27	Safe Babies Caregiver Training Curriculum	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	To train highly skilled caregivers in meeting the special needs of substance-exposed infants.	Postponed due to facilitator illness
Dec 10	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Support, networking, and information sharing.	Cancelled due to COVID
Jan 14	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, planning, information sharing, MCFD updates.	Cancelled

DATE	EVENT	TOPIC ADDRESS	OUTCOME	ATTENDANCE
Feb 11	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, planning, information sharing, MCFD updates.	Cancelled
Feb 19	Safe Babies Caregiver Training Curriculum	Train approved Foster Parents to become highly skilled caregivers who can potentially meet the special needs of infants prenatally exposed to alcohol and other drugs.	Networking, support, planning, information sharing, MCFD updates.	17
Feb 26	Safe Babies Caregiver Training Curriculum	Train approved Foster Parents to become highly skilled caregivers who can potentially meet the special needs of infants prenatally exposed to alcohol and other drugs.	Networking, support, planning, information sharing, MCFD updates.	17
March 11	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, planning, information sharing, MCFD updates.	Cancelled

CENTRAL ISLAND AREA ANNUAL REPORTS

*Summary of the Meetings and Training Events in the Central Island:
(See Appendix for full list)*

TOTAL	MEETING	TOPIC ADDRESSED	OUTCOME	ATTENDANCE
13	Social Events	Painting, holiday planning, summer plans.	Peer support, connection, networking, retention,	142
27	Peer Support	Covid updates, support, school, visits.	Communication, support, retention, identification of common issues.	77
29	Foster Parent/Partnership (Other than MCFD)	Updates from community agencies, workshop planning.	Task division, community relationships, networking, resources.	112
3	Appreciation Events	Foster Parent Appreciation and Social Worker week.	Relationship building, retention, and communication.	40
3	Regional Partnership	Reviewed and discussed a variety of fostering issues.	Networking, support, planning, and information sharing regionally.	25
19	Foster Parent/Partnership (MCFD)	How to increase attendance, Gender awareness, training needs, MCFD updates.	Retention, networking, support, planning, and information sharing locally.	139

Cowichan Valley Area Coordinator Annual Report

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Sandra Beagley, Acting Cowichan Valley Coordinator

Cowichan Valley Area Coordinator Lisa Johnston resigned from her Cowichan Valley Area Coordinator position in December 2020. Sandra Beagley stepped in as Acting Cowichan Valley Area Coordinator for the last quarter of the fiscal year. This annual report reflects the consolidation of work done by Lisa for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd quarters and by Sandra for 4th quarter. Cowichan Valley MCFD, foster parents, and the Cowichan Valley Foster Parent Local expressed gratitude to FPSS for ensuring their area had support after Lisa Johnston resigned. Social workers, the Local, and foster parents in the area miss Lisa greatly. They expressed gratitude for her services, bubbly personality, compassion, and commitment to foster parents and children and youth in care. Foster parents and social workers valued the variety and quality of trainings FPSS offered.

Enhanced Communications among Caregivers

Lisa and Sandra distributed 14,169 information emails. They provided 1,086 individual contacts. Sandra continued the pursuit of updating the Area Open Homes List. FPSS manages the Cowichan Valley Foster Parent private Facebook group that had 1,693 views of FPSS posts.

Area coordinators offered 39 support meeting opportunities to foster parents and they participated in seven partnership, education, and committee meetings. Sandra distributed six hard copies of FPSS's *The Island Connection* newsletter, two to foster parents and four to social workers.

Provision of ongoing Training Opportunities

FPSS provided 15 training opportunities in Central Island. Trainings included topics of trauma informed practices, attachment, mental health, collaborative problem solving, cultural agility, sexual health, autism, and self care. FPSS sought participant feedback and suggestions for future training via confidential, anonymous, online evaluation surveys. Sandra continued to

promote FPSS and continued to provide therapeutic books to foster parents upon request. Lisa and Sandra provided foster parents and social workers with relevant information and links to community resources, training, and webinars.

Caregiver Peer Support Services

FPSS continued to manage the private Cowichan Valley Foster Parent Facebook group. FPSS Society consistently posted resources, updates, and both FPSS and community training opportunities.

Lisa offered free gently-used and new clothing for children and youth. FPSS invited foster parents to take whatever items they needed. FPSS adapted events to conform to Provincial and Federal PHO restrictions and guidelines.

FPSS offered 30 peer support opportunities and coordinators supported caregivers with varied issues, concerns, or challenges on 237 occasions through email, socially distanced in-person, Zoom meetings, or by phone.

Identification, Presentation and Management of Common Issues for Caregivers

There were 2,155 contacts with caregivers and 369 contacts with social workers regarding foster parent support, retention, information, and referral. Sandra continued to encourage input and welcome ideas of how FPSS Society can support caregivers. There were 248 contacts with Community Agencies and members of the public. Sandra continues to develop contacts with area agencies and resources. Coordinators had 134 contacts with the Cowichan Valley Foster Parent Local to share information and support their social events, AGM, and fundraisers. Coordinators provided foster parents with 25 referrals including referrals to MCFD, Office of the Representative for Children and Youth, BC Medical Benefits Program, Canadian Mental Health Association, and Adoption BC.

Foster parent/MCFD partnership meetings

At Partnership Meetings, foster parents, social workers, and coordinators discussed MCFD updates, Covid 19 information, self care, and other relevant fostering topics. Coordinators booked Zoom events, created, and distributed email invitations, collected and asked questions on behalf of foster parents, and hosted meetings.

Foster Parent Appreciation

Lisa Johnston collaborated with Central Island Coordinator to offer two special foster parent video events. Lisa helped create a foster parent self care event with contactless delivery of supplies to Cowichan Valley foster parents. Lisa reviewed and gave feedback around the inspirational magnets that FPSS designed and mailed out to foster parents island-wide.

Recruitment and New Family Caregivers

There were ten inquiries about becoming foster caregivers. Coordinators directed those interested in fostering to our Foster Hope website and Foster Hope Information Sessions. They also gave contact information for social workers in charge of recruitment for Cowichan MCFD and DAA.

Continuous quality improvement

- Participated in FPSS staff meetings and AGM.
- Worked with other Local Area Coordinators.
- Continued to build rapport with Cowichan Valley Foster Parent Local.
- Connected with new Kw'umut Lelum Family Services Duncan branch office (extension from DAA KL Nanaimo).
- Provided newsletter submissions.
- Completed time sheets and staff summaries.
- Attended staff meetings.
- Participated in Regional Partnership Meetings.
- Reviewed monthly health and safety modules. Did module quizzes.
- Supplied Quarterly statistics, tables, and reports.
- Supplied Annual statistics, tables, and report.

Cowichan Valley Area goals for 2021-2022 include

- Support MCFD with their *Giving and Receiving Healing* Training Series.
- Arrange quarterly workshops about Autism.
- Update Open Homes list.
- Secure FPSS Area Coordinator for Cowichan Valley.

Nanaimo/Ladysmith Local Area Coordinator Annual Report

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Sandra Beagley, Central Island Coordinator

The central island area continued to be affected by Covid 19.

Sandra received positive feedback from caregivers about the quality and quantity of FPSS trainings. They have expressed appreciation of FPSS's one-to-one technology support and the Zoom Fun Time training sessions. Some caregivers have credited FPSS with helping them shift from Zoom 'haters' to Zoom 'lovers' through participating in online workshops, meetings, and trainings.

FPSS offered over 33 Island Wide trainings (many of them multi session), providing caregivers with increased training opportunities.

Many caregivers have asked that the option of Zoom participation in meetings and trainings continue when restrictions end.

Enhanced Communications among Caregivers

Sandra continued the pursuit of updating Area Open Homes List, contacting caregivers with an invitation to subscribe to FPSS distribution lists and building relationship with caregivers. She distributed 17,665 information emails and had 1,644 individual contacts to share information including COVID-19 health and safety, education and training opportunities, community resources, and MCFD updates. Nanaimo has a private foster parent Facebook group with 4,787 views of FPSS posts.

Sandra organized three Foster Parent Fun Challenges where foster parents submitted strategies, ideas, or inspirational thoughts on different topics. Foster parents then voted for their top response. Winners received a prize from FPSS.

Sandra engaged in 51 support, planning, and collaborative meetings including 17 support meeting opportunities to foster parents and 16 partnership, education, and committee meetings. Sandra accepted and quarantined donated luggage and duffle bags then passed them on to foster families. Sandra distributed 15 hard copies of FPSS's *The Island Connection Newsletter*, 13 to foster parents and two to social workers.

Provision of ongoing Training Opportunities

Sandra planned 58 training opportunities. Sandra cancelled or postponed four trainings due to ongoing Covid 19 health and safety concerns and one due low registration. Trainings included topics of trauma informed practices, attachment, challenging behaviours, harm reduction, mental health, collaborative problem solving, cultural agility, sexual health, gender diversity, suicide prevention, and self care. FPSS sought participant feedback and suggestions for future trainings via confidential, anonymous, online evaluation surveys. Sandra continued to promote FPSS's ongoing offer to have therapeutic books delivered to foster parents' doorsteps at no cost. She submitted book requests to the Regional Office. In addition, Sandra provided foster parents and social workers with relevant information and links to community resources, trainings, and webinars.

Caregiver Peer Support Services

Nanaimo caregivers have their own private Facebook page to which FPSS Society, and the Area Coordinator contribute. Sandra answered general topic questions from caregivers.

Fourteen newcomers to fostering received FPSS Welcome packages.

Sandra offered nine peer support gathering opportunities. She arranged six social events including foster family paint-in events. Over the year, there were 33 gifts cards/gift baskets (door prizes, participation prizes, appreciation gifts) given to foster parents including those gifted as part of Foster Parent Appreciation Month.

Sandra supported caregivers with varied issues, concerns, or challenges on 840 occasions through email, socially distanced in-person or Zoom meetings, or by phone.

Identification, Presentation and Management of Common Issues for Caregivers

There were 20,951 contacts with caregivers including 4,685 views of FPSS Facebook posts. Sandra had 2,614 contacts with social workers regarding foster parent support, retention, information, and referral. Sandra continued to encourage input and welcome ideas of how she and FPSS Society can help support caregivers. There were 718 contacts with Community Agencies and public. Sandra continues to develop contacts with area agencies and resources. She has been able to access various training using community resources. Also, Altrusa International Nanaimo Service Club donated 19 "Bus & Park It" kits for foster families caring for youth. Each kit had hand sanitizer, two washable reusable masks, Nanaimo park information, and a sheet of bus tickets.

Sandra provided foster parents with 30 referrals to agencies including MCFD, Office of the Representative for Children and Youth, Office of Ombudsperson, Canadian Mental Health Association, and Adoption BC.

Foster parent/MCFD partnership meetings Nanaimo

At partnership meetings, foster parents, social workers, and Sandra discussed retention, MCFD updates, health and safety concerns, and other relevant fostering topics. Sandra booked Zoom meetings, sought questions/topic submissions, created agenda, hosted meetings, and took meeting notes, and distributed notes to Nanaimo foster parents.

Foster Parent Appreciation

FPSS handed out gift baskets and prizes to foster parents throughout October.

Sandra collaborated with the Cowichan Valley Area Coordinator Lisa Johnston to offer two special foster parent video events.

Sandra also participated in foster parent self care event with supplies and instruction provided to make lavender eye masks.

Sandra supported MCFD Nanaimo Resources with their foster parent appreciation online event by promoting and hosting

event, and by contributing games, music, and prizes. FPSS Regional Office distributed magnets with inspirational quotes to caregivers on Vancouver Island.

Social Worker Appreciation

On behalf of FPSS and caregivers, Sandra put together and delivered appreciation gift baskets to social workers at MCFD Nanaimo and Parksville offices, and the Kwumut Lelum office in Nanaimo. Social workers expressed delight and appreciation of these baskets.

Recruitment and New Family Caregivers

There were eight inquiries from the public about becoming foster caregivers. Sandra provided information and links to Foster Hope Orientation sessions and contact information for social workers in charge of recruitment for Nanaimo MCFD and DAA.

Continuous quality improvement

Reviewed FPSS Organization Manual and Coordinator Reference Guide.

Participated in FPSS staff meetings and AGM.

Connected with FPSS Society Regional Office staff and other Local Area Coordinators as needed for information, advice, and tutelage.

Collaborated with other Local Area Coordinators to plan, offer, and co-host various trainings.

Submitted activity reports, expense reports, event summaries, and newsletter submissions as required.

Submitted time sheets and staff summaries as required.

Participated in Regional Partnership Meetings.

Reviewed monthly health and safety modules. Completed and submitted quizzes.

Set up Nanaimo FPSS office to comply with Covid 19 Health and Safety Standards.

Reviewed Nanaimo FPSS office first aid kits and 72-hour survival kit. Replaced expired or missing items.

Arranged fire extinguisher maintenance. New fire extinguisher needed and put into office.

Completed Workplace Inspection Checklist.

Reviewed CARF material, prepared for possible CARF questions, and participated in CARF orientation and exit meetings.

Continued training to increase knowledge and skills for area coordinator role.

Completed First-Aid training and sent certificate to Regional office for employee file.

Shredded outdated material of sensitive or confidential nature.

Central Island Area Coordinator goals for Central Island 2021-2022 includes

Co-host the *Hope for the Journey* Conference Training series.

Arrange further Sexuality and Gender Diversity Trainings for fall 2021.

Explore the Vancouver Island Crisis Society COPE program for probable future training series.

Gain proficiency in navigation and creation of events and emails within Constant Contact program.

Gain proficiency with using Teams.

Central Island Safe Baby Coordinator Annual Report

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Eva Vowles, Recruitment Coordinator

Nota Bene: Due to the retirement of FPSS Society's Central Island Safe Baby Coordinator in December 2020, no 4th Quarter or Annual Report was submitted. The Recruitment Coordinator compiled this section of the report based on submissions from Lisa Johnston in the first three quarters.

Safe Babies Education and Support Gatherings

COVID-19 and the associated Provincial Health Restrictions on in-person meetings impacted Safe Babies Caregiver Gatherings. These meetings are meant to provide Safe Baby caregivers with a safe space in which to meet, share resources, learn latest information and strategies, and support one another. Topics included: *Safe Sleep* and *Autism and other developmental conditions*.

The Central Island Safe Baby Coordinator stayed in touch with caregivers through phone, email, and text. The coordinator invited Safe Baby caregivers to the Central Island Open House Clothing Exchange. Safe Baby caregivers were also able to participate in the Island-wide Safe Baby Caregiver Training Program curriculum that took place over the third and fourth quarters.

1st Quarter: Three Safe Baby Gatherings

2nd Quarter: No Safe Baby Gatherings

3rd Quarter: Two Safe Baby Gatherings. Part one of Safe Baby Caregiver Training Program.

4th Quarter: No Safe Baby Gatherings. Part two of Safe Baby Caregiver Training Program.

Port Alberni Coordinator Annual Report

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Juanita Currie, Port Alberni Coordinator

March 2020 was when COVID 19 impacted the world and changed our ability to meet in person for workshops, training, and social events. Thanks to technology, we adapted to online training and so much more education was available island-wide to foster parents.

Partnership Meetings

Local, Regional and Annual partnership meetings were held online and, while missing the in-person part, we were able to stay on top of events and updates and connect. Locally, we had three partnership meetings; the next one is scheduled for September 2021.

Networking

Due to COVID, our last in-person peer support coffee meeting was held April 9th before all in person events were put on hold. We stayed connected through social media, Foster Parent Facebook page, phone, and texts. I held three physically distant coffee meetings in my driveway with no more than four people in attendance. With vaccines rolling out, we hope to start meeting in the park over the summer if permitted. It has been one of the biggest challenges staying connected despite the difficulties of the past year. Our LAT (Local Action Team) decided to meet (virtually) every two weeks from April to December 2020 to stay on top of the fast-changing rules around COVID. It helped to stay connected and in the loop with community agencies. We went back to regularly monthly meetings in January 2021.

Cultural Education

In-person Cultural Education events were on hold for a couple of months. We did start meeting in socially distanced groups of six or fewer. Erma Robinson, Usma Wellness Team, started offering education two days a month to allow more foster parents to attend. I have worked for many months, with help from Sandra Beagley the Central Island Coordinator, and we will be presenting an Island Wide Cultural Series quarterly. Erma will be facilitating, and our first event is June 16th, 2021. By offering this series online we can reach so many more foster parents, staffed resource homes, social workers, and other community interested in participating.

Events

In the absence of in-person events, we got creative at Christmas and assembled special packages for foster parents and children and youth. We delivered them to caregivers' homes a week before Christmas.

For Social Worker Appreciation Week, I made up individually wrapped coffee mugs filled with goodies and delivered them to MCFD and Usma.

Workshops

Most online trainings were open to all areas so foster parents were able to choose from an amazing variety of topics. Locally we did less and it was wonderful to join larger groups. In Port Alberni, we presented ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) with Anna Allen from Usma presenting. It was a three-part series and well attended. Port Alberni also hosted a workshop in April on Cultural Capacity in partnership with Usma and presented by Avis O'Brien. Due to stormy weather, many participants lost internet service, but 35 attended. We did a second workshop with Avis in February 2021 when 99 participants attended.

UPPER ISLAND ANNUAL REPORT

Summary of the Meetings and Training Events in the Upper Island:

(See Appendix for full list)

TOTAL	MEETING	TOPIC	OUTCOME	ATTENDANCE
5	Social Events	Summer planning, baby honouring.	Retention, communication, networking, planning, information sharing.	32
23	Peer Support	Safe Babies gatherings, peer support, common issues.	Retention, skill sharing, stress relief.	187
29	Foster Parent/Partnership (Other than MCFD)	Food literacy, food prep, community training, supports for youth, transitioning, fostering stressors.	Education, communication, networking, information sharing, cultural agility, community connection.	174
3	Appreciation Events	Appreciation.	Retention, recognition.	24

TOTAL	MEETING	TOPIC	OUTCOME	ATTENDANCE
2	Regional Partnership	Updates.	Communication, common issues, networking.	25
	Foster Parent/Partnership (MCFD)	FP concerns, updates, open meeting for FP's and SWs.	Networking, support, planning, and information sharing locally.	297
39	Individual Support Meetings	Communication, resources, peer support.	Retention, connection, clarity.	91

Comox Valley Local Coordinator Annual Report

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Lisa Bowie, Comox Valley Local Coordinator

Goal: "To create a Comox Valley foster parent's network through support and learning events that lead to connectedness, satisfaction and engagement that, in turn, will result in improving outcomes for children in care." This goal is still on-going, though how we proceed has changed from year to year as the needs or dynamics of the community change.

It was a vastly different year with the pandemic upon us. With in-person events, meetings and workshops cancelled, it took about a year for us to adjust to the new way of thinking, doing, and connecting. When and where we could, we hosted "Social Distancing Coffee" following Covid rules. Participants practiced physical distancing in outdoor spaces. There were no indoor coffee sessions. Often connection was through glass doors or in our cars with windows down.

Foster families living outside the community provided placements for Comox Valley children and youth. Staying connected under this situation was a challenge.

Investigation and Resolution

When Comox Valley foster parents needed investigation support, they often contacted me. I directed them to one of our amazing Investigations and Resolution Support Team members. I continued to support foster parents behind the scenes, which they reported they appreciated. The investigations left foster parents feeling isolated, so I listened, stayed positive, and encouraged them going forward.

Appreciation Activities

In June 2020, Children and Youth In-Care Week, the Courtenay Ministry office provided each child and youth in care with a goodie bag full of stuffed critters, arts and crafts, gift-card (for youth), candy, and a personalized card for each child from their social worker. Challenging work was involved, and it showed in the quality and care that went into the goodie bags and delivery.

During Foster Parent Appreciation month (October 2020), the Resource Team once again made a big effort in their appreciation of the foster parents in this community. The Resource Team personally delivered a basket with a personalized card for each family. The baskets included a roll of toilet paper, personalized card, little trinkets, and gift cards for local donut shop and local book shop.

Caregiver Support

New foster families joined our community. Our lone mentor provided hours of support for these new families. Our mentor and I met regularly to debrief. Together, we provided support to our community using various strategies and techniques. We both drew on our fostering and cultural diversity experiences to assist our community members, so they felt cared for and appreciated. We were fortunate to have a group of foster parents who are constantly supporting each other.

Our Behavioural Consultant to Caregivers, Elisha Almeida, brought a unique skill set and background in Psychology and Vocational Rehabilitation to her position. Foster parents connected to the Behavioural Consultant program appreciated her passionate approach to understanding human behaviour, relationship building, and community development. Elisha checked in regularly with me and foster parents. A big part of her job is supporting Out-of-Care Families as well. Elisha believes in Self-Care and much of her approach focused on managing or accepting our children's' existing behaviours as well as teaching or encouraging new behaviours.

At every Media Fest, there was a check-in time for foster parents to debrief challenging behaviours, receive advice and support from peers and support workers. Participants often contact me for support or questions after Media Fest has ended. All education sessions were hosted virtually through Zoom. Many of our educational sessions drew on *Dr. Karyn Purvis' Attachment: Why It Matters* then we moved onto *The ABCs of Child Nurturing*. The monthly mini workshops held for the Comox Valley were: *Behaviours 101*, facilitated by Dr. Kristin Weinzier, Children and Youth Mental Health; *Early Intervention Substance Use*, facilitated by Sheena Campbell of the John Howard Society; *Story Telling* with JoAnn Restoule, Elder, who told the story of "The Journey of Little Jumping Mouse" and asked what this story meant to us; *Grief and Loss* workshop facilitated by Nicole Burgess, Counsellor.

Elisha worked relentlessly at keeping Foster Parents connected. During our summer months, Elisha had seven sessions of "Nature's Tool Kit". We met at different parks every week and explored our interconnectedness with nature through a five-sense body awareness exercise, conversation, and connection. With Elisha's positive approach to life, she met Caregivers through Zoom, email, phone call or texting and attended meetings as asked or required. Here also, I supported foster parents after the sessions are over.

Our Comox Valley Education Committee has only met a couple of times through Zoom (or email) since the start of the Pandemic. Together we agreed to send seven foster parents to the Dr Gordon Neufeld virtual workshop *The Alarm Spectrum* in September. Sadly, the committee has put its idea for a *Food Literacy Program* on hold indefinitely. This program was to offer nutritional education, and supply food for one dish to be prepared by the foster families with the help of their children or youth. The ministry believes this was the work of their community partners. Our committee decided to work more on network connection considering the opportunities for online training hosted by various organizations.

Our Comox Valley Social Committee took our Education Committee ideas and discussed through email. This took a few days and allowed everyone's voice to be heard. We hosted monthly "30 Minutes of Fun!" which entailed playing virtual games for 30 minutes. The committee copied the *TBRI Love Connectors* model at the month sessions to introduce easy crafts which parents could do with their children. Through this planning we also created our Easter Bunny Drive-Thru Event for Easter Day in April.

Meetings

We had seven Comox Valley Partnership meetings. We discussed concerns, updates, events, education, and committee meetings. At each meeting we highlighted one Foster Parent Standard and how it impacted fostering. At our November meeting, we had a presentation from Caren van Der Mark (Director of Practice for MCFD) about Caregiver implementing COVID Protocols in their home with 30 people in attendance.

The Behavioural Consultant, the Resource Worker for Recruitment and I worked in collaboration for improved or more-up-to-date education through PRIDE In-Service. This is a lengthy process that is on-going. We will be using survey and one-on-one contact to collect information from our foster parents, new and experienced. This group is also working on Community Development which just comes naturally when we are discussing education and what our community of Foster Parents need.

I also participated on the Comox Indigenous Advisory Committee (new name.) This committee continued the slow process of establishing itself. We have just had the RCMP join in our monthly meetings. The Ministry of Children and Family Development and Comox Valley community embarked on a strategic planning meeting to discover ways to work together and vision a path forward. I believe our focus will be on providing and documenting meaningful cultural experiences for Aboriginal/Indigenous/First Nations Children in Care, leading to the best outcomes for our children.

The Pandemic in mid-March 2020 impacted our community and foster homes. In compliance with Provincial Health Office's safe distancing guidelines, MCFD suspended in person network meetings and foster child family visits. This was a relief for our area's aging foster parent population for the short term.

The Comox Valley Coordinator facilitated and participated in

- Comox Valley Advisory Council two meetings.
- Comox Valley Collaboration and Community Development two meetings.
- Comox Valley Foster Parent Education Committee two meetings.
- Comox Valley Foster Parent Social Planning Committee one meetings.
- Comox Valley Foster Family Social one event.
- Comox Valley Children and Youth in Care Week two events.
- Partnership seven meetings.
- Comox Valley Education Committee two workshops.
- "Social Distancing Coffee" sessions with Caregivers.

The coordinator participated in and represented FPSS at

- Comox Valley Film Fest 18 weekly sessions.
 - Comox Valley Aboriginal Early Years Council four meetings.
 - Comox Valley Safe Baby Gatherings eight meetings.
- In addition, the coordinator attended workshops offered by Community Agencies, MCFD, and FPSS Society. Lisa participated as a foster parent and attended ten meetings of the Comox Indigenous Advisory Committee.

Comox Valley Coordinator's Continuous Quality Improvement

- Participated in FPSS Society staff meetings as schedule allowed.
- Submitted activity reports, expense reports, event summaries, and Upper Island newsletter submissions as required.
- Participated in Health and Safety committee meetings and safety trainings/drills and inspections.

Participated in FPSS virtual AGM.

Participated in Vancouver Island Regional Partnership virtual meeting.

Other virtual event: viewed December 17th MCFD Townhall with Dr. Behn Smith: In-person visitation during current Public Health Office orders.

Other virtual event: viewed March 9th MCFD Townhall re: BC Housing new program, Housing Benefit for Youth from Care.

Upper Island Coordinator Annual Report

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Judy Hollywood Bonnett, Upper Island Area Coordinator

Campbell River Report

Identification, Presentation and Management of Common Issues for Caregivers

Campbell River Foster Parent Association (CRFPA) Executive Committee Foster Family and Network Events

The CRFPA executive members met virtually on November 16th. While not able to arrange an in-person holiday event, the Association, in partnership with FPSS, sent seasonal greeting cards to 60 local foster families acknowledging their outstanding commitment to the children and youth in their care and included, as a token of appreciation, a \$10 pizza gift card for each family. The CRFPA executive also purchased a gift basket for Victoria Morton to show its gratitude for her extraordinary work with our foster families this year.

The CRFPA executive members arranged COVID-19 mitigated BC Social Worker's Week festivities the week of March 14th. The celebration treated social workers and staff at the two MCFD offices to treat baskets filled with rainbow-colored gifts bags packed with a mixture of wrapped candies and decorated with a floral "Thank you" sticker on the front. Helium balloons, a thank you card signed by a CRFPA executive, and a sentimental poem finished off the simple appreciation gift. Four foster parents donated door prizes won by workers and staff.

Foster Parent-MCFD Partnership Meetings

The Partnership met May, June, and November 2020 and monthly January, February, and March 2021. Partnership meetings provided a virtual venue for discussions of local trends in foster care, MCFD staffing updates, and reports from Resource Enhancement Counselors and FPSS Society coordinator. Campbell River Foster Parent Association raised discussion topics forwarded by individual foster parents and alternated chairing duties with MCFD's Resource Team members. The FPSS Society coordinator served as recorder and circulated meeting's minutes through the distribution list.

Collaborative Meetings

The local FPSS Society coordinator contacted MCFD Resources Team workers and other Ministry staff, CRFS Resource Enhancement Counselors, and Community Support Agencies frequently over the year. Given the need to plan events, services, and supports in compliance with COVID-19 restrictions, our collaboration took on a crucial role when synchronizing our services to the fostering community.

FPSS Society Peer Mentorship Program

The FPSS Society coordinator hosted a mentor meeting on February 10th, with three mentors, and two Resource Enhancement Counsellors in attendance. The discussion focused on methods to improve mentee involvement in the program. The coordinator revised local mentor files because of this meeting; three mentors updated their profiles, and two mentors requested to go on hold. Our active mentors consented to sharing their profiles with the MCFD recruitment worker and the Resource Enhancement Counsellor who promoted the mentorship program to new foster parents. The coordinator sent local updates to the Regional Team.

Joint Education Planning Committee

Caregiver Trainings and Peer Support Monthly Meetings

After a lengthy hiatus due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Foster Parent-MCFD Joint Education Committee started virtual monthly meetings in January 2021. The committee suspected that pandemic-stress reduced the willingness of foster caregivers to participate in ongoing training. In response the committee developed an online survey asking respondents to identify topics, scheduling, and barriers for workshop attendance. Twenty-seven out of 70 possible foster caregivers participated. Other news from the committee included the decision of MCFD committee members to step back from active planning. As a result, the FPSS coordinator and CRFS Resource Enhancement Counsellor collaborated with a focus on learning sessions for our Youth Home Foster Parents.

Provision of Ongoing Training Opportunities

Webinars and Peer Support with Victoria Morton

During the school year, Victoria Morton, MCFC Child and Youth Mental Health clinician, hosted monthly caregiver virtual sessions promoting mental health and self-care skills. Sessions featured well-researched presentations followed by questions and answers and a caregiver check-in. A core group of caregivers regularly attended the sessions and appreciated both the information and the connection offered.

Safe Babies Monthly Gatherings

In January, FPSS Society welcomed Catherine McCauley to the Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator position. Catherine is an Infant Development Consultant with expertise in infant and toddler development and attachment models and experience working with primary caregivers. She sat on the Northern Attachment Network Advisory Committee, Alberta, and holds a Child and Youth Care Degree from the University of the Fraser Valley. We send fond farewells to Mary Catherine Williams who served our Upper Island Safe Babies Caregivers communities so diligently over the years.

Safe Babies Program

Mary Catherine Williams facilitated the online Safe Babies Caregiver Program Training for Vancouver Island participants split into two series in November 2020 and February 2021. Seventeen participants completed all but the First Aid-Infant CPR module.

Empowered to Connect Weekly Upper Island Group Sessions (Tuesdays, April 28th to May 21st).

Weekly meetings began with reflecting on the session's "Guiding Thought" then the group would review and debrief that week's videos and learnings guided by the presenters' slides and ETC Rewind supplemental resources. Most Upper Island participants were familiar with the ETC/Purvis model and shared their learnings from viewing the videos and applying the action steps and activities in their homes. The weekly sessions clarified and refined their approaches.

After the four group sessions, each of the six Version 1 caregivers received the ETC question and answer evaluation as a means of documenting their learning. Upper Island participants received FPSS Group Participation and ETC Video Tracking certificates. The final group session had a book draw for copies of *The Whole Brain Child*, *The Connected Child*, and *The Out-of-Sync Child*. Overall, group participants reported satisfaction with their ETC training experience and were interested in follow-up sessions.

Child and Youth in Care Week

The week of June 1st to 7th, 2020 Sasamans Society Youth Navigators guided the planning committee who hosted our virtual CYIC Week celebrations. Activities included daily virtual events such as making caramel apples or cedar roses or participating in the Federation of Youth in Care Networks virtual hangout and talent show. The FPSS coordinator was pleased to partner in arranging, promoting, and funding these events.

Enhanced Communication Among Caregivers

Our email distribution list grew to over 65 foster and staffed resource caregivers contacts. Campbell River area foster parents received local event notices and network updates through the FPSS Society Area Coordinator's distribution list and personal contacts. The coordinator communicated with 7,455 contacts on the distribution list including foster parents, MCFD staff and Community Agencies. The Campbell River Foster Parent Facebook group's 29 members viewed seventy posts from the FPSS UI Coordinator.

The coordinator provided one-to-one support, information, or referrals to network members through personal contacts on twenty-five occasions. Referrals included to Resource Social Workers for PRIDE registration, VIC Youth Program COVID-19 Information for caregivers of teens, links to Adoptions BC, and BCFPA Insurance Rider. In addition, the coordinator phoned new foster parents and emailed welcome letters that outlined FPSS Society support services and the FPSS Mentorship program and requested caregiver consent to include contact details on to FPSS Society distribution lists. The Regional Office mailed welcome packages.

Coordinator's Professional Development, Webinars, Conference Calls and Special Projects:

Audited 50 - 55 hours PRIDE In-Service from June 16th to November 24th. The Upper Island coordinator completed all modules and forwarded certificate to Regional office.

Participating in FPSS virtual workshops

September 15th, *Anxiety Workshop*, presenter Sean Boulet, O.T.

September 24th, *Building Resilience in Foster Care: A Caregiver's Toolkit*, presenter Mary Catherine Williams, Child Development Consultant.

October 13th, 20th, and 27th, three-part series, *Adverse Childhood Experiences*, presenter Anna Allen, Usma Nu-chah-nulth Family and Child Services.

November 13th, *Emotional Regulation for People with ASD and Other Special Needs*, presenter Katherine Paxton, Canadian Certified Counsellor.

November 25th, *Transitioning Children: Best Practices* presenter Andrea Chatwin, founder *A Child's Song*.

December 1st, *Living with Depression* Workshop presenters Lori Nichols, RN, MS, and Jef Nichols.

December 17th, viewed MCFD Townhall with Dr. Behn Smith: In-person visitation during current Provincial Health Office orders.

January 22nd, *Understanding the ASD Brain and Neurophysiology*, presented by Katherine Paxton, Canadian Certified Counsellor.

Community Forums provided FPSS Representation:

The Upper Island coordinator represented the FPSS Society at five provincial collaboration opportunities.

April 15th, *Keeping Youth Safe*, conference call hosted by Federation of Community Social Services with MCFD and provincial Foster Care Service Providers.

September 23rd, 2020 (morning and evening sessions) and March 24th, 2021 (morning session) MCFD PRIDE Pre-service BC Service Providers teleconferences. Skype sessions hosted by the MCFD PRIDE Pre-Service Program instructors informed perspective foster caregivers of BC foster support agencies and described their services.

September 25th, *Improving Services and Supports for Young People Transitioning Out of Care / Connected to Young People* Representative for Children and Youth's report stakeholder feedback session.

The Upper Island Coordinator Continuous Quality Improvement

Participated in FPSS Society staff meetings.

Submitted activity reports, expense reports, event summaries, quarterly and annual reports, and Upper Island newsletter submissions as required.

Participated in Health and Safety committee meetings and safety trainings/drills and inspections.

Acted as recorder at V. I. Regional Partnership meetings on September 17th, 2020 and February 25th, 2021.

Participated in Annual Staff Review March 25th, 2021 with Dan Malone, FPSS Society Executive Director, by phone.

Prepared FPSS Society Trauma Informed Transitions website review and summary. Participated in Upper Island Focus group hosted by Jo Axe, Royal Roads.

On the Horizon - Workshop planning

April 20th, Vancouver Island Crisis Society *Trauma Informed Suicide Preparedness* with Lyndsay Wells Community Education Program Coordinator.

Weekly May 5th to 26th, *Hope for the Journey* four evening sessions hosted with FPSS coordinators.

May 11th, Campbell River Youth Homes – VIAIDS community education *Street Drugs*.

June 10th, Jordan's Principle Information Session with Lisa Bowie, Comox Valley coordinator.

Port Hardy Coordinator Annual Report

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Jackie Kervin, Port Hardy Area Coordinator

Enhanced Communication among Caregivers

Jackie Kervin, Port Hardy Area FPSS Society Coordinator, provided one-to-one support, referral, or information on nineteen occasions to North Island foster parents. Trending topics included FCH contracting questions, in-person family visits for children in care concerns, relief provision, and caregiver support needs in respond to managing challenging behaviours. Judy Hollywood had conversations with two North Island caregivers focused on FPSS Society services and relief service provision.

Jackie had other personal contacts with caregivers when she attended virtual Partnership meetings and in her role as volunteer Investigation and Resolution worker. Jackie worked closely with NICCS Resource Enhancement Worker, Cheryl Jorgensen, to engage with and support North Island foster parents. Foster parents accessed information through the FPSS Society Regional contact list, the North Island Foster Family Facebook Page, and local MCFD contacts.

The North Island team shared input for newsletters with the Upper Island coordinator. The Upper Island Coordinator sent Vancouver Island virtual workshop notices via the North Island foster community distribution list including foster parents, MCFD staff and Community Agencies.

North Island Foster Family Facebook

Jackie also linked with foster parents by posting on the North Island Foster Family Facebook Group. The 29 members of this private group received posts from local MCFD, Foster Support agencies, and Upper Island and Regional FPSS Society. The posts included links on a variety of topics from children's colouring pages to caregiver training and webinars to MCFD practice bulletins and virtual presentations.

Identification, Presentation and Management of Common Issues for Caregivers

Partnership Meetings

After a significant break, Port Hardy Foster Parent-MCFD Partnership meetings restarted in November 2020. Nine participants attended each of the three virtual meetings. MCFD distributed meeting minutes to community members which highlighted MCFD staffing updates, policy, and practice information, and notices about upcoming virtual events.

Other Joint Meetings

Jackie and Cheryl Jorgenson, NICSS Foster Enhancement, worked closely and met frequently to discuss and coordinate their ongoing foster parent support.

The Upper Island Coordinator had multiple contacts with Jackie, Cheryl Jorgenson, and the MCFD Resource Team members. Each contact provided opportunities to collaborate and assist those supporting North Island Foster Parents facing placement disruptions and other stressors related to fostering. The North Island team shared input for newsletters and reviewed and updated the North Island Foster Home distribution list. Twelve North Island foster parents new to FPSS Society's distribution list received welcome packages from Regional office.

Investigation and Resolution Support

Jackie and two North Island foster parents completed the Investigation and Resolution Support Worker Training offered by FPSS Society on January 11th and 18th. They were immediately put to work supporting two foster families involved in the FCH investigation process.

Provision of Ongoing Training Opportunities

The application of COVID-19 mitigation practices resulted in no in-person local peer support or workshops. Jackie and Cheryl promoted the FPSS Society online workshops to community members. On occasion, Cheryl offered socially distanced meeting spaces in her Port McNeill office so foster parents could participate in virtual workshops.

Caregiver Peer Support Services and Opportunities

Peer Support Events

This has been a challenging year for North Island caregivers. Jackie and Cheryl provided one-on-one peer support and network building services to foster parents as required.

Foster Family and Network Events

Child and Youth in Care Week

On June 3rd, the Port Hardy Fire Rescue crew and engine and local MCFD staff visited foster families in Port Hardy, Port McNeill, Hyde Creek, and Sointula to celebrate Child and Youth in Care Week in British Columbia. Local families were thrilled by the driveway visits and received goodie bags for each child and youth.

October Foster Parent Appreciation

On October 29th, MCFD staff and Cheryl Jorgenson arranged a Virtual Foster Parent Appreciation event which eight foster parents including Jackie attended. As well as visiting and catching up, MCFD hosted a raffle with local businesses who donated lovely prizes for foster parents.

Foster Family Holiday

The North Island coordinator and foster parent Heather Walkus, while unable to arrange the annual Santa Skate holiday event, partnered with FPSS to send seasonal greetings to foster families, recognizing their outstanding contributions while delivering treat-filled goodies bags for every child and youth in care. On December 12th, MCFD workers personally delivered the goody bags with a gift from each social worker to their child in care.

Continuous Quality Improvement

Jackie provided North Island foster activities statistics and details for quarterly reports and newsletter submissions.

Jackie completed January 11th and 18th FPSS Society Investigation and Resolution Support Worker Training.

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Mary Catherine Williams, Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator

Catherine McCauley, Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator

Upper Island Safe Babies Report

In January 2021, FPSS Society welcomed Catherine McCauley as our new Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator. Catherine served on the Northern Attachment Network Advisory Committee, Alberta, and holds a Child and Youth Care Degree from the University of the Fraser Valley. She has experience as an Infant Development Consultant and has supported primary caregivers. Mary Catherine Williams stepped away from Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator to devote more time to her role as Executive Director of Campbell River Volunteer Society. We send fond farewells to Mary Catherine Williams and thank her for her years of tireless service to our Safe Babies communities.

Upper Island Safe Babies Caregiver Contacts

The FPSS Society Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator reported 20 contacts with Campbell River and 17 contacts with Comox Valley Safe Babies Caregivers for support and retention through telephone or email conversations.

Caregiver Peer Support Services and On-going Training Opportunities

The Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator cancelled in-person gatherings in compliance with the Provincial Health Officer's COVID-19 guidelines. Each month, she offered virtual peer support, network development, or training meetings in Campbell River and Courtenay. Participants appreciated the on-going training discussions coupled with the support and experienced-informed tips and strategies offered by their peer foster parents. MCFD Resource Social Workers and the Caregiver support staff (REC and BC) also attended the meetings. The Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator did not host support group events in July or August but was available for one-one support as needed.

Catherine rescheduled the monthly online support gatherings to Fridays for both communities to meet the availability needs of our contributors.

In December, the Upper Island Coordinator updated the CR Safe Babies Placement Budget Guidelines September 2019 to reflect the April 2020 foster care rate increase. The revised document was forwarded to the CRFPA chair, Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator, MCFD Resource worker and the Safe Babies caregiver who led the document development team.

Safe Babies Caregiver Training Program

FPSS Society provided online Safe Babies Program Training with facilitator Mary Catherine Williams for Vancouver Island participants in two series in November 2020 and February 2021.

ADDITIONAL REPORTS

Foster Hope Recruitment Program Annual Report

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Eva Vowles, Recruitment Coordinator and Dianne Thompson South Island Coordinator

Foster Hope Recruitment Program

In April 2020, FPSS Society began working with the Ministry of Child and Family Development to increase the number of foster homes on Vancouver Island. The Recruitment Coordinator began by creating the *Foster Hope 2020/2021 Communication Plan*. “The purpose of the Foster Hope 2021 Communication Plan is to increase the number foster homes on Vancouver Island by:

Increasing awareness of the need for foster homes

Providing information on the process of applying to be a foster parent

Increasing the number of people attending Foster Parent Information Sessions.”

The plan included background research into the Health, Political, Economic, Social, Cultural, and Technological Environments and how they affect foster care, Communication Objectives, AMO (Audience, Message, Objective), Strategies, SWOT Analysis, Action, and Evaluation. (see also FPSS *Foster Hope 2021 Communication Plan*).

Audience: Community members 19 years of age and older (potential foster caregivers); those with specific skills applicable to fostering (medical, criminal justice, behaviour management)

Message: There is a need for all types of foster homes on Vancouver Island; You do not have to be extraordinary to be a foster parent; You can make a difference in a child’s life

Objective: receive registrations for Foster Hope Information Sessions, receive requests for foster parent application packages

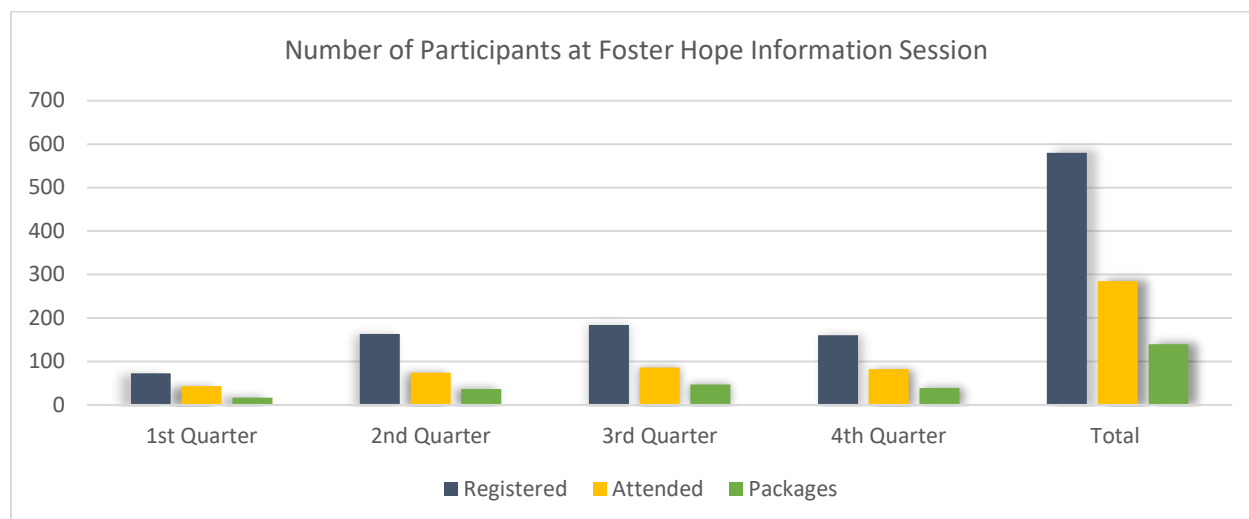
Foster Hope Information Sessions

FPSS and MCFD collaborated to provide 21 Foster Hope Information Sessions between May 20th, 2020 and March 31st, 2021. FPSS hosts the sessions on the Zoom platform and manages registrations through Constant Contact. The sessions are approximately one hour in duration and consist of a PowerPoint presentation and an invitation to ask questions at any time. FPSS revised the presentation as necessary to increase clarity and based on participants’ questions. Speakers at the sessions include FPSS staff members, MCFD staff members, and long-time foster parents. Each brings a unique perspective and shares knowledge and personal reflection on fostering.

Over 285 participants have attended these sessions and have requested 140 application packages.

Following each session, FPSS sends an email to those who attended asking if they would like to take the next step. Participants indicate their preference for either a single or couple application package and if they would like to receive a hard copy or digital copy. FPSS also sends an email to those who did not attend, thanking them for registering and providing links to upcoming sessions. The Recruitment Coordinator forwards requests for application packages to the participant’s local MCFD office. Participants at the information sessions come from all areas of Vancouver Island as well as Vancouver, Burnaby, Sechelt, and Kyle Saskatchewan. Participants from the mainland or other provinces are usually planning a move to Vancouver Island and are interested in starting the process upon their arrival. Others have been unable to find a similar information opportunity in their area.

Number of participants at Foster Hope Information Session					
	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	Total
Registered	73	163	184	160	580
Attended	43	74	86	82	285
Number of Foster Parent Application Packages Requested	17	37	47	39	140



FPSS Society tracks the number of participants registering and attending Foster Hope Information Sessions and the number of applications requested (including the breakdown between 1-person and 2-person packages). FPSS is not able to track the number of packages completed and returned to MCFD nor the number that go on to become approved foster homes.

Social and Print Media Advertising

FPSS has used a combination of social media and print ads to raise awareness of the need for foster caregivers on Vancouver Island. The Recruitment Coordinator has created ads to address the need for specific types of homes for children and youth in care, including: General fostering, Teens, Sibling Groups, Infants, Children and Youth with Support (formerly *Special*) Needs, and Indigenous homes.

Facebook

The Administrative Assistant adapts recruitment ads as needed to fit within Facebook guidelines. FPSS has posted and/or boosted recruitment ads on Facebook pages in ten communities on Vancouver Island. FPSS has posted over 40 unique Facebook ads since summer 2020.

Communities Reached

- South Island (Sidney, Sooke, Victoria, Saanich, Langford [Goldstream])
- Cowichan Valley (Duncan, Cowichan, Lake Cowichan)
- Port Alberni (MCFD, Usma)
- Central Island (Nanaimo, Parksville, Ladysmith)
- Comox Valley
- Campbell River (Sayward)
- North Island (Port Hardy)

Black Press and Island Parent Magazine

FPSS Society has placed over 30 ads in Blackpress newspapers in 13 communities on Vancouver Island from Sidney to Port Hardy. Another ad ran in the Annual Island Parent Resource Guide.

Brochures

The Recruitment Coordinator created three Foster Hope Brochures for Teen Homes, Safe Babies, and General Fostering.

Posters

The Recruitment worker in the Nanaimo MCFD office requested and received a digital version of a poster-size version of a recruitment ad that she could put up around town. In Spring 2021, FPSS began printing posters in the Regional office and mailing them to MCFD recruitment workers in Central and Upper Island.

Health and Safety Annual Report

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Eva Vowles, Recruitment Coordinator

FPSS Society has continued to provide a safe environment for staff and visitors. Public Health restrictions have prevented the use of offices for training, meetings, or social events. Most Regional Office staff members have been working from home for much of the past year. This has made implementing unannounced drills a challenge. The Organization will work harder to maintain the required schedule of drills.

FPSS Society created a COVID-19 Safety Plan and posted it on fpsss.com and made it available near the front door of the Regional Office. Staff members in the Regional Office review a Safety Checklist prior to beginning their shift. Regional staff sanitizes the office daily, with frequently used items (pens for Sign-in Log) being cleaned after use.

The Island Connection

The Health and Safety Committee provides submission for The Island Connection newsletter. FPSS publishes *The Island Connection* newsletter five times a year and distributes it to foster caregivers, ministry offices, and community agencies.

The Island Connection

March-April	Spring Safety
May-August	Self-care; Finding Serenity; BCCDC; COVID-19
September-October	Caregiver Incidents Form; Healing Families, Helping Systems; Aging Gracefully
November-December	Awesome Words to Build Your Vocabulary; Four Things I Wished I Had Known about Fostering
January-February	Remember Your Value; Safer Sleep
March-April	How to Have Hard Conversations

FPSS Bulletin Board Presentations

FPSS has bulletin boards in its Regional and Nanaimo offices. The Health and Safety Committee creates monthly presentations with information of interest to staff members.

Monthly Training

The Health and Safety Committee provides staff members with a monthly Health and Safety Presentation and quiz. Staff members complete the quiz and submit it to the Regional Office. See chart below for details.

Month	Training	Update
April	Hazardous Materials	72-Hour kits, Universal Precaution Kit, Blood Spill Kit, First Aid Kit, Fire Extinguishers, Emergency Desktop Kits, Internal Inspections, Emergency Lighting, Accessibility Review, Naloxone Kit, Flashlights
May	Reducing Physical Risks	
June	Violent and Threatening Situations	
July	Critical Incidents	
August	Medical Emergencies	
September	CARF	
October	Natural Disasters	
November	Substance Misuse	
December	Utility Failure	
January	Mental Health	
February	Fire and Bomb Threats	
March	Communicable Diseases	

Inspection

FPSS Society staff in the Regional Office perform Internal Inspections twice a year. FPSS addresses areas of concern as appropriate. The Organization includes an Accessibility Review as part of these inspections.

Fire/Safety Equipment

FPSS Society has a company attend the Regional Office annually to test fire extinguishers and emergency lighting. The committee addresses health and safety problems upon becoming aware of them. Regional Office staff have replaced bulbs in the Emergency Light sign over the rear office door.

There are five 72-hour kits in the Regional Office. The Health and Safety Committee reviews these annually and replaces any missing or expired items.

Staff in the Regional Office have an Emergency Desktop Kit under their desk. These kits are inspected annually. Staff members add personal items they require (e.g. prescription medications) or find comforting.

The Property Managers for the Regional Office bring in a company to test fire alarms and heat/smoke detectors. There were no deficiencies.

Regional Office staff inspect the First Aid kit, Blood Spill Kit, and Universal Precautions Kits quarterly and replace any missing or expired items. The chair of the Health and Safety committee replaced the Naloxone Kit in July 2020.

Critical Incidents

The COVID-19 pandemic was recorded as a Critical Incident as it had an emotional and physical impact on staff members and the caregivers they work with. There were no other Critical Incidents.

Incidents:

The Regional Office reported one incident this year. On February 1st, 2021, a man called the office to ask questions about fostering. The questions were aggressive and provocative in nature. The man would not provide a name or contact information and mentioned that he could come down to the office.

First Aid Reports:

There were no first aid reports between April 1st, 2020, and March 31st, 2021.

Other

The Annual Review of Health and Safety Policies 2020 was deferred as FPSS updated the Organization Manual (which contains the Health and Safety Policies) in its entirety in preparation for a CARF survey. FPSS updated its Health and Safety Manual at the same time.

The Annual Review of Requested for Accommodation revealed there were no requests for accommodation in the past year.

Accessibility Plan Review

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Eva Vowles, Recruitment Coordinator

In addition to its Annual Satisfaction Survey, FPSS Society's uses Accessibility Review Checklist to identify factors that present barriers to foster parents accessing services. This checklist looks at a variety of barrier types, including: Attitudinal, Environmental, Architectural, Financial, Employment, Communication, Technology, Transportation, and Other. Regional staff members complete the checklist as part its twice a year Internal Inspections. The last review took place in November 2020. In addition to the information noted in the Internal Inspection, identification of barriers may come from staff meetings, conversations with foster parents, and workshop evaluations. FPSS Society's Annual Satisfaction Survey contains a question that identifies barriers foster experience when accessing services.

Example of real or potential barriers identified, and action taken to reduce or elimination them.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN REVIEW

BARRIER	ACTION
<i>Media coverage creates negative attitudes towards fostering. (Attitudinal)</i>	FPSS Society staff and Board members speak positively about fostering and address misconceptions in the community where appropriate.
<i>Media coverage creates negative attitudes towards fostering. (Attitudinal)</i>	FPSS has received calls over the past year with offers of donated luggage. Calls are often the result of Social Media stories announcing that children in care move their belongings in garbage bags. The organization accepted these items with gratitude and used the opportunity to emphasize that caregivers in our area are educated and committed to ensuring the children and youth in their care move their belongings in a respectful manner (i.e. not in trash bags). NB: The organization is not currently accepting luggage donations due to COVID.
<i>Media coverage creates negative attitudes towards fostering. (Attitudinal)</i>	Visitors to FPSS websites occasionally post comments that contain foul language, misinformation, and/or inappropriate content. FPSS monitors comments posted on fpsss.com and fosterhope.ca.
<i>Media coverage creates negative attitudes towards fostering. (Attitudinal)</i>	FPSS Society developed a disclaimer for its main Facebook page. <i>FPSS Society fosters a supportive, positive, and welcoming environment on its Facebook pages. Comments and/or posts that use foul language, include inappropriate content, or contain misinformation will not be tolerated, and will be removed from the page. Repeat offenders will be blocked.</i>
<i>Media coverage creates negative attitudes towards fostering. (Attitudinal)</i>	FPSS Society is working with a Social Media expert to gain insight into how best to manage posts, comments, and information distribution through Facebook and other social media platforms.
<i>Cost of childcare/travel for foster parents wanting to attend training. (Financial)</i>	As current training occurs online, this has not been an issue in the last year.
<i>Inclusivity. (Attitudinal, Communication)</i>	FPSS Society strives to use person-first language in all its publications (brochures, newsletters, website, social media, emails

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN REVIEW

BARRIER	ACTION
	etc.) FPSS Society reviews these documents annually and at other intervals.
(Transportation)	In Fall 2020, FPSS hosted a practicum student from the Nursing Program and UVic. She reviewed our documents and brochures and found no examples of inappropriate wording that required revision.
Multiculturalism. (Attitudinal, Communication)	Not currently a barrier due to Covid.
(Communication)	FPSS Society has joined the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria. FPSS encourages staff members to take part in training offered.
Payments for foster parents does not cover actual costs incurred. (Financial)	fpsss.com features Google Translate. FPSS Society also uses Coblis (Colour Blindness Simulator) on its website to ensure pages are readable by those with various forms of colour blindness.
Unique needs of individuals (Environmental, Architectural, Technology)	On July 1 st , 2020, MCFD increased the Maintenance Payment for foster caregivers. FPSS Society will continue to advocate for an increase in Service Payments.
Cultural Agility (Attitudinal, Communication)	FPSS Society provides a Request for Accommodation form foster parents can complete if there is an action the organization should take to accommodate their specific needs. There have been no requests in the past year.
Cultural Agility (Attitudinal, Communication)	The Regional office displays Indigenous artwork and posters to foster a welcoming environment. FPS Society deliberately chooses photos that reflect the multi-cultural make-up of Canada for brochures, posters, websites, and newsletters. All areas provide workshops on Cultural Agility throughout the year. Staff members have a Territory Acknowledgement in their email signature block.
Cultural Agility (Attitudinal, Communication)	FPSS has provided staff members with instructions on how to customize Grammar Settings in Word documents to flag biased language including: Age Bias, Cultural Bias, Ethnic Slurs, Gender Bias, Gender Neutral Pronouns, Gender Specific Language, Racial Bias, Sexual Orientation Bias
Cultural Agility (Attitudinal, Communication)	FPSS Society encourages staff members to include a territory acknowledgement in their email signature. They are also welcomed to include their preferred pronouns. These are options rather than directives and FPSS respects the right of staff members to make choices they are comfortable with.
Cultural Agility (Environmental) Language (Communication)	The Regional Office posted a sign acknowledging the territory on which we live and work.
Visual or Auditory Limitations (Technology, Environmental)	Posters in the Regional office are currently in English only. If there is a need for posters in other languages, staff will locate and post information in the requested language whenever possible. The organization uses Google Translate on its websites.
Availability and comfort with technology (Technology, Communication)	ASL is not currently available at meetings or workshops. If this becomes a need, FPSS will collaborate with the individual to find a solution that does not place an unreasonable financial burden on the organization. FPSS uses a colour blindness simulator to ensure material on its websites have sufficient contrast and are easily read.
	For the past year, FPSS delivered training and support events virtually. The Organization uses Zoom and Microsoft Teams for training and meetings. South and Central Island Coordinators offer regular Zoom Fun Time sessions for those who want to become more proficient using this platform.

Technology Plan Review

April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

Eva Vowles, Recruitment Coordinator

Cell Phones

The FPSS Society continues to optimize the use of technology to provide support, information, and other services to the foster parents of Vancouver Island. Local Area Coordinators use FPSS Society owned cellular phones or use their personal cell phones and receive payment to cover the cost of the additional services required. This keeps costs down while allowing coordinators to be available to support caregivers. The ability to connect with caregivers in real time has become vital when in-person contact is not possible.

Computers

The organization provides Local Areas Coordinators with laptop computers that allow them to connect with the caregivers in their area while keeping data secure. The Regional office uses primarily laptop computers. This proved highly productive when Regional Office staff began working from home due to Provincial Health Guidelines. It also allowed staff members to transport what they needed on days when they worked from the office.

Regional office staff are available by phone to trouble shoot computer issues for coordinators in Central and Upper Island. This is usually for new staff members who are unfamiliar with Microsoft Office programs. FPSS Society is currently researching options for affordable, reliable programs that will backup the organization's data and operate on Canadian soil. Computers are password protected and staff protect files with sensitive data (Master data base) with a second password. Computers have up-to-date anti-virus and anti-spam software. Computers are set to perform automatic updates to frequently used files. Staff members have received instruction on how to block suspicious emails and/or forwarded them to the Regional office for follow-up.

FPSS Society replaces computers proactively, before they fail. The units are wiped clean (physically and digitally) and sent to other staff members as their computers age.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Committee continues to provide its training through electronic means, such as PowerPoint Presentations. Having staff members who work from home and live across a large geographic area makes monthly in-person training impractical. Local area coordinators and administration staff forward important Health and Safety related information to foster parents using email distribution lists.

Websites

The FPSS Society updates its fpsss.com website regularly to ensure calendars, newsletters, and other resources are current. This website provides up-to-date information on upcoming events, training, and meetings foster parents can take part in. The Organization is updating the fosterhope.ca website to match the new branding used on fpsss.com. The dates and times for Foster Hope Information Sessions (as well as the registration links) are on fosterhope.ca.

Budgeting

The FPSS Society has been able to stay within its Technology Budget. When appropriate, the organization replaces equipment proactively rather than waiting for the device (computer, phone, printer) to fail. This reduces the potential for data becoming lost or corrupted and the need for costly repairs.

Online Learning

FPSS continues to increase its use of technology to deliver support and training to caregivers. FPSS has delivered over 30 Regional Training workshops, many of them multi-session events. The Organization uses Constant Contact to manage registrations for most training and support events.

FPSS offers Zoom Fun time for caregivers, staff, and social workers who want to learn more about using this platform. One-on-one assistance is available as well.

FPSS Society is working to find a way to record workshops and make them available to caregivers who are unable to attend the live delivery. The Organization acknowledges the importance of doing this in a way that respects the time and intellectual property of workshop facilitators.

Social Media

The FPSS Society uses social media (Facebook and Twitter) as additional methods for getting information out to caregivers, social workers, and the public. We often receive communications via Facebook from people who are inquiring about becoming a foster parent, and other organizations reach out to us on Facebook regarding promotion of events they are hosting that they feel may be beneficial to foster parents or children in care.

FPSS has developed a disclaimer for its general Facebook page that clarifies what is acceptable behaviour for those leaving comments and the consequences of breaching these guidelines.

Publishing

FPSS leases a professional quality printer. This allows the Organization to do in-housing publishing for its brochures, posters, and newsletters, thereby reducing costs.

SWOT Analysis Review
 April 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021
 Eva Vowles

SWOT ANALYSIS REVIEW	
Component	Outcome
Strength	
<i>Experienced staff</i>	Experienced staff and Board members are passionate about their work. There is low staff turnover, suggesting a high level of job satisfaction. Staff members have a combined total of over 100 years of experience with FPSS Society
<i>FPSS Society staff work as a team</i>	FPSS staff members work together to cover for fellow staff members to ensure there is no disruption to services or support for foster parents. Experienced coordinators are available by phone or in person to answer questions and provide guidance for new coordinators.
<i>Positive feedback from stakeholders</i>	The 2020 Satisfaction Survey indicated that FPSS is meeting the needs (Support-90.6%, Education-87.5%, Communication 98.4%) of caregivers. See Satisfaction Survey Report 2020 for full analysis.
<i>CARF accredited</i>	COVID-19 led to the delay of the CARF survey scheduled for November 2020. FPSS will retain its accreditation until a new date can be arranged. CARF has accredited FPSS since 2008.
<i>Flexibility in providing services</i>	FPSS has been able to avoid service interruption by delivering support, communication, and going training through its use of phone, emails, and virtual platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams®. Small, private Facebook pages allow foster parents to meet in a safe space to share challenges and successes.
<i>Website and social media</i>	FPSS Society updates its website and Facebooks pages on a regular basis. FPSS monitors pages for inappropriate comments or comments requiring a response due to misinformation.
<i>Collaboration with other agencies</i>	FPSS Society continues to work with support/service agencies to provide coordinated, cohesive, and informed support for foster parents across BC.
<i>Mentorship Program</i>	Mentorship training continues to expand across the Vancouver Island Region.
<i>Grass Roots Organization</i>	FPSS is knowledgeable about service population and regularly collects feedback that drives training, support, and other services. Many Board/staff members are or were foster parents.
<i>Communication</i>	FPSS maintains open communication with foster parents, ministry staff, and other stakeholders. The Organization's strong website and social media presence allows it to reach an even wider audience. FPSS issues five issues per year (soft and hard copies).
<i>Executive Director</i>	Executive Director builds positive working relationships with other organizations.
<i>Flexible Scheduling</i>	The Organization's flexible schedules allow it to tailor services to fit the needs of the caregivers in each community. FPSS is proactive and innovative in its delivery of services. Local coordinators are available to host both daytime and evening events.
<i>Accessible Services</i>	Training is free whenever possible and subsidies are available for foster parents who experience financial barriers.
<i>Health and Safety</i>	Excellent health and safety practices ensure staff and visitors are safe.
<i>Ability to Adjust to Shifting Politics</i>	FPSS staff and Board members have the skills and desire to adapt to a constantly shifting political system using flexibility, tolerance, and openness. Relationships between FPSS and MCFD/DAA's work best when there is trust and shared knowledge. These can be difficult to establish and maintain when there is constant turnover of workers.
Weakness	
<i>Need to increase profile</i>	Some foster parents and MCFD/Agency staff members are unaware of the range of services and supports FPSS provides. Local coordinators contact new foster parents to introduce FPSS and its role.
<i>Lack of Diversity</i>	There is limited diversity within the Board and staff. Board is actively seeking members with a wider range of age, gender, cultural background, and home community. The limited number of hours for some staff positions often means there few qualified applicants. FPSS selects diverse applicants when appropriate.

SWOT ANALYSIS REVIEW	
Component	Outcome
<i>Ministry Changes</i>	FPSS must be prepared to adapt to changing MCFD policies and practices. Frequent changes to MCFD and Agency staff and shifts in job positions create challenges in maintaining consistencies in processes such as foster parent updates.
<i>Retention</i>	Retention of foster homes is becoming increasingly difficult due to the aging foster parent population.
<i>Limited Funding</i>	Limited funding means limited hours for staff to complete their work. Limited funding prevents FPSS from having a staffed office in each area that could serve as a community space for foster parents to gather.
<i>Communication</i>	The flow of information at the provincial level is not always smooth. Support agencies, caregivers, and local ministry offices do not always receive timely information regarding changes to policy and/or practice. FPSS plays a key role in the dissemination of information.
Opportunity	
<i>Partnerships</i>	FPSS Society continues to partner and work with other groups with similar interests. This may include: MCFD Offices, Aboriginal Agencies (Delegated and non-Delegated), Community Groups (FASD, Autism, Adoptions, John Howard, Public Health, School Districts), and other Support Agencies throughout the province.
<i>Satisfaction surveys</i>	The Annual Satisfaction Survey assists FPSS in planning training events and activities over the next year.
<i>Adjusting to new Mandatory Foster Parent Training Program (PRIDE)</i>	FPSS Society continues to seek ways to meet the needs of foster parents as MCFD implements the new online mandatory training. FPSS recognizes the value of face-to-face interaction and is working to provide this essential component. This is on hold due to COVID-19.
<i>In-house publishing</i>	FPSS Society continues to produce newsletters, posters, brochures, and advertisements that promote fostering, training opportunities, and social events relevant to community members and foster caregivers. CARF surveyors cited <i>The Island Connection</i> as being of professional quality.
<i>Recruitment</i>	FPSS has received funding to assist with the recruitment of new foster caregivers. An increase to the number of open homes aids in the retention of current caregivers and provides better outcomes for children and youth in care.
<i>Local Coordinators</i>	Having Local Coordinators in communities across the region allows FPSS to be aware of and address challenges and needs quickly.
Threat	
<i>COVID-19</i>	The pandemic has changed the way FPSS delivers its services. The organization has been successful in adapting its services to ensure foster parents feel supported, connected, informed, and trained.
<i>Conflicting goals/roles between ministry personnel and caregivers</i>	When foster parents encounter challenges in working with local ministry offices, FPSS Society refers them to relevant documents such as Resource Work Policies, Standards for Foster Homes, or The Foster Family Handbook. FPSS Society provides mentors and Investigation and Resolution Support Workers for foster parents. Positive, respectful, and trusting relationships between workers and foster parents are essential to provide the best care available to children and youth in care.
<i>Negative media attention</i>	Public perception of foster parents and fostering in general continues to vary widely. Opinions range from viewing foster parents as caring people doing incredibly challenging work to cold-hearted abusers only in it for the money. News stories implying a cause-and-effect relationship between being in care and homelessness, criminality, and addiction only make the situation worse. FPSS Society continues to look for ways to provide unbiased, fact-based information to counter inaccuracies and misunderstandings. These misconceptions discourage people from becoming foster parents.
<i>Decreasing number of foster homes</i>	As the average age of foster parents increases, the number of foster homes decreases. FPSS is increasing efforts to recruit new foster parents, especially those with specific skills in working with special needs children, children who have experienced multiple traumas, and at-risk youth.

SWOT ANALYSIS REVIEW

Component	Outcome
<i>Increased cost of living</i>	FPSS Society continues to seek opportunities to advocate for the need for an increase to foster parent payments. Despite recent increases to Maintenance payments, foster parents continue to encounter financial challenges in providing everything the children in their care need.
<i>Role confusion</i>	There is confusion amongst the public, MCFD staff, and caregivers regarding the roles of MCFD, BCFFPA, FPSS, and local foster parent groups. FPSS provided clarification in <i>The Island Connection</i> , on its website, and at Foster Hope Information Sessions. Foster parents having an issue with MCFD may be reluctant to contact FPSS for support when they believe the two agencies act as one. Foster parents need to understand that they can speak to FPSS in confidence (with the usual exceptions).
<i>Reliance on outside agencies</i>	FPSS depends on other agencies when collaborating on projects, for up-to-date information (staffing changes, practice bulletins), and the distribution of foster parent application packages following Foster Hope Information Sessions.
<i>Frequent changes to foster parent data base</i>	FPSS Society relies on MCFD and Delegated Agency staff for notification as foster homes open/close. Due to frequent staffing/role changes within the ministry, Resource Workers are often unaware of this and assume that FPSS Society receives the information from another source. FPSS Society sends update forms to MCFD/DAA offices to assist staff members in sharing this information.
<i>Large geographical area with vast differences in population demographics</i>	The Vancouver Island Region is composed of communities that differ dramatically in their demographics. FPSS Society has local area coordinators in each area who are aware of the individual strengths and needs of their communities. They can provide or adapt training and peer support delivery to best fit the needs of foster parents.

SATISFACTION SURVEY SUMMARY

Foster Parent Support Services Society
Annual Satisfaction Survey Results Summary 2020
(See Satisfaction Survey Report for full details)

Thank you to the foster parents who took the time to complete and return the recent Satisfaction Survey. FPSS Society will use the results of this survey to plan workshops, networking opportunities, and peer support activities throughout the next year. Below is a summary of the survey results. See *Satisfaction Survey Report 2020* for full details.

Do you feel the support services offered by FPSS Society meet your needs?

Yes 90.6% No 7.8% No Response 1.5%

Do you feel the education/training offered by FPSS Society meet your needs?

Yes 87.5% No 12.5% No Response 0%

Do you feel the communication with FPSS Society (email, newsletter, return of messages etc.) meets your needs?

Yes 98.4% No 1.5% No Response 0%

Is there a Support Service that you feel you need that is not currently offered?

Workshops/Ongoing training 22.9% Social Activities 16.6% Other 14.5% Mentoring 10.4% Network/Support 4.1%
Information/Resources 4.1% Investigation and Resolution Support 0%

In your role as a foster parent or caregiver, is there an issue or area of concern that you would like to see addressed at the Provincial level?

Yes 39% No 50% No Response 10.9%

Are you aware of the recent changes to the mandatory foster parent training program?

Yes 62.5% No 35.9% No Response 1.5%

What workshops or events have you attended during the last year?

Workshops/Ongoing training 59.3% Social Activities 51.5% Network/Support meetings 43.7% Community Training 26.5%
BCFCE 7.8% PRIDE In-Service Training 7.8% Mentor Training 7.8% Investigation and Resolution Training 6.3% Safe Babies
Caregiving Training 6.2% PRIDE Pre-Service Training 0.3% None 14% Other: 9.3%

Which workshops would you like to see?

Mental Health in Children 53.9% FASD, Caring for Children/Youth Prenatally Exposed to Drugs/Alcohol 42.8% Reactive
Attachment Disorder/Managing Difficult Behaviour 42.5% Autism Spectrum Disorder 34.9% Cultural Agility 34.9% Trauma
Informed Care 30.1% Self-Care, Vicarious Trauma 25.3% Separation, Grief and Loss 25.3%

What is the biggest barrier preventing you from attending workshops, ongoing training, or other events?

Busy schedule 59.6% Arranging childcare 45.1% Other 17.7% Cost of childcare 8% Interest/Motivation 6.4%
Transportation 4.8%

Would you be more likely to participate in ongoing training if it were available in an online format?

Yes (At my own pace/schedule) 62.5% Yes (at scheduled dates and times) 18.7% No 17.1%

What features of the FPSS Society's website have you used in the past year?

The Island Connection 68.9% Calendar of events (view) 46.5% Calendar of events (download) 36.2% Links to resources
32.7% News 31% Social Media Platform 27.5% Contact information for FPSS Society 27.5%

How often do you access the FPSS Society website?

Monthly 70.3% Yearly 23.4% Daily or weekly 6.2%

How Important is Peer Supporting and Networking with Other Foster Parents?

Extremely Important 51.6% Somewhat Important 42.1% Not at all Important 6.2%

