



# 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

(April 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2022 through March 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2023)

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
September 15<sup>th</sup> 2023**

**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)*

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**Notes:**

The FPSS Society would like to begin by sincerely thanking our funder, the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Their support allows us to bring training and support to caregivers across Vancouver Island.

In February of 2023, long-time staff member Ruth Smith passed away. Ruth had been with FPSS Society for over 25 years and will be fondly remembered and dearly missed.

As we move forward from COVID-19, changes and challenges to FPSS's service delivery remain. While some caregivers are eager to return to in-person gatherings, others are not yet comfortable with this. Caregivers have also become accustomed to the convenience of online training that is available on demand. Some facilitators allow their presentations to be recorded so FPSS can offer replays at a later date. When provided via virtual platform, Regional training and events allow caregivers in remote communities to access training and support. In-person training and events encourage caregiver engagement and build relations as they share stories and experience.

Regional office staff occasionally work from home but rotate so the office is staffed daily.

FPSS continued to monitor its Facebook Group pages and post announcements, information, training reminders, and ministry updates. FPSS continues its use of the Microsoft Teams platform to communicate, share information, and provide support within FPSS and with external stakeholders. Staff meetings continued to take place every two weeks. The organization provided caregivers with up-to-date information on ministry practice bulletins through email distribution lists and Facebook Groups.

The language used in the children welfare is constantly changing to reflect current trends and practices in the province. Rather than Foster "Parent," the preferred term is Foster "Caregiver." Both terms are used in this report as terms that refer to the names of groups, locals (South Island Foster Parent Association), and meetings (Foster Parent/MCFD Partnership) have been left unchanged until we receive direction from the source to change. What were known as Delegated Aboriginal Agencies (DAA) are now known as "Indigenous Child and Family Services Agencies." Some of these agencies continue to refer to themselves as DAAs.

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**CHAIRPERSON'S ANNUAL REPORT**April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Respectfully submitted by Diane Daigle

I am pleased to present the Board of Directors Chair report for the Foster Parent Support Services Society AGM 2023!

I would like to begin by thanking Dan and FPSSS staff for your dedication, tireless efforts, and heart you put into supporting the agency, caregivers and children in care Vancouver Island.

I would also like to acknowledge our competent and dedicated Board of Directors who collectively bring 78 years of volunteer service to FPSSS, Foster Caregivers and Children in Care on Vancouver Island. I am proud to serve with this amazing team! In 2022-23 our Board of Directors engaged in ongoing discussions at meetings, and two days of strategic planning in the interest of bringing our agency forward and growing in these times of change in the world of foster care. We developed a strategic plan with strong focus on service excellence and agency growth through profile raising and diversifying operational revenue. Our Board has also undertaken a major project with Trauma Informed Transition Training. The education committee has devoted their energy and skills for the past two years to bring this project to life.

And finally, I would like to give a huge hurrah to our 20th year celebration, which brought caregivers and social workers from all over the island together to celebrate the great work we do. The success of this event was very much due to incredible teamwork of the staff and board! Looking around that room, it was so very clear how every person here believes wholeheartedly in what this agency stands for! I thank you all for making this event, and the work of FPSSS a huge success on our 20th year and every day!

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**TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT**April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Respectfully submitted by Jo Axe

The FPSS Society Executive Director has responsibly managed the financial matters of the organization in 2022-2023. It is because of this efficient management that FPSS Society has healthy financials. In year ending March 2023, current Assets totaled \$360,045. Current Liabilities totaled \$115,302. Net Assets totaled \$244,743. The FPSS Society Surplus Efficiencies Retention Fund has a balance of \$88,642.

FPSS Society has lease commitments at the regional office as follows:

2023	\$35,280
2024	\$14,700

The Ministry of Children and Family Development conducts an Annual Review of the financial statements and may require the Society to repay a portion of any operating surplus. Prior year funding adjustments are recognized in the fiscal year they are determined.

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**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT**April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Respectfully submitted by Dan Malone

In 2022-2023, 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 2022-2023 year. We have continued virtual training but had a focus to increase networking in communities.

Highlights of the support, training, and more FPSS Society provided in 2022-2023 include:

- FPSS Society 20 years of Service to Foster Caregivers – December 2022.
- Increase to cost of living for Foster Caregivers and Children in Care – over a decade of advocating.
- Victoria Foundation Grant for Trauma Informed Transition Training to create additional modules for Transition – Foster to Adopt, Foster to Foster, and Aging out of Care (Transition to adulthood).
- FPSS online Learning Management System was initially used for Trauma Informed Transition Training and continues to be used for workshops and replays. This delivery format assists in breaking down identified barriers of travel, time and childcare.
- Provided opportunities for 4,662 caregivers, agency and community members across Vancouver Island to attend workshops, training, networking, support, planning, relationship building and information sharing events.
- Provided Virtual Safe Babies Training Island-wide – 2022/2023

- Foster Hope Recruitment Program Island-wide in all communities. Advertising tailored to each community's needs. Foster Hope Information Sessions hosted Island-wide, bi-weekly. Facebook page for people going through the study process.
- Trauma Informed Transition Training - 2 Rounds
- Board planning session November 2022
- Focus on networking and bring caregiver together in community after Covid
- Mentor program fully updated – Training and Mentor Coordinator. Received a \$7000 grant to Mentor Program for the Capital Regional District

The collective efforts of the FPSS Society's team, including staff, directors, and volunteers, consistently align with the society's Mission and Vision. I'm grateful to everyone associated with the FPSS Society for their dedication to the foster caregivers of Vancouver Island, by offering them valuable support, resources, knowledge, training, and networking opportunities. Your commitment enhances the capacity of foster caregivers to provide outstanding care to the children they look after. Thank you for your dedication to FPSS Society and Foster Caregivers.

Staff have pivoted post covid to promoting safe opportunities for caregivers to get together. They have also worked on planning training in community to offer an effective and efficient balance of in-person and virtual training available. The collaborative effort of all staff and Board Members is what makes FPSS Society such a great organisation to work for. You all go above and beyond on a regular basis.

Foster Caregiver Locals consistently create fresh and innovative networking opportunities. Our efforts would be incomplete without the dedicated volunteers from the Investigation and Resolution Support Team, Mentors, and the Foster Caregiver Locals. Thank you for building a close-knit community of foster caregivers that continually uplift and support each other, showcasing the essence of a collaborative culture. Thank you for your unwavering commitment.

The Board of the FPSS Society offers guidance, leadership, and inspiration. Their instrumental role in our 20th Anniversary Celebration Planning, future strategies, Revenue Diversification, and the Trauma Informed Transition Training cannot be overstated. The consistent direction, expertise, experience, and precious time you contribute to the Foster Parent Support Services Society are greatly 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)

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## SUMMARY OF SERVICES PROVIDED IN 2022-2023

### *Peer Support Groups*

Peer Support Groups continue to be a source of communication, networking, and support services for foster caregivers 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 often 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.

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 caregiver groups continue to meet with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) for joint discussion around foster caregiving; recruitment and retention, ongoing training; ministry changes and policies; and issues and concern. 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 caregivers to communicate with each other, and with MCFD and other Community Agencies.

FPSS has added a Learning Management System to its toolkit. This on-line learning platform provides another way to deliver training to caregivers, agency staff, and community members. The organization is looking forward to collaborating with workshop facilitators to make their material available in this format. Once this training is in place, FPSS could potentially make it available provincially or nationally. In the future, this could provide another source of revenue.

### *FPSS Society Regional Partnership Meetings*

These meetings afford foster caregivers 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 caregivers 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 caregivers and MCFD in this Region. There are five editions per year. The Annual Satisfaction Survey results indicate that the newsletter is one of the main reasons foster caregivers go to the organization's website. 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 distributes 400-500 hard copies to caregivers and agency offices who prefer this format as well as handing them out at various meetings and events.

#### *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 caregivers can download calendars to their mobile devices or home computers. We regularly communicate with foster caregivers 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014. CASL procedures include ensuring that foster caregivers 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. FPSS updated its organization and Foster Hope Brochures this year with a fresh look. These publications illustrate our services and provide conference/forum/workshop details and registration information. We have an FPSS Society Information Kit available which summarizes the services and programs available to foster caregivers 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 Indigenous Child and Family Services 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 caregiver 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 diverse 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. FPSS printed Foster Hope posters and sent them to several MCFD offices on Vancouver Island. 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. FPSS does not currently have a dedicated Central//Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator. Local FPSS Coordinators in Campbell River and the Comox Valley manage the training and peer support opportunities in their areas. Please see individual *Safe Baby Area Coordinator* report 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 delivered the training in-person with safety precautions in place. Foster caregivers 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, emergency drills, and bulletin board displays with Health and Safety information of interest to staff and foster caregivers. The coordinator often includes Health and Safety information in *The Island Connection*. Please see *Health and Safety Annual Report* for more details.

## REVIEW OF OUTCOMES FOR 2022-2023

REVIEW OF TARGETS FOR 2022-2023	OUTCOMES
<i>Provide support and ongoing training to foster caregivers 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 –Sandra Beagley; Nanaimo/Ladysmith Sandra Beagley; Comox Valley – Lisa Bowie; Campbell River – Judy Hollywood Bonnett Local coordinators provide caregivers with support, resources, ongoing training, and updates to MCFD policy, practice, and procedure as well as alerting caregivers to other relevant developments.
<i>Promote Investigation and Resolution Support Program for Foster Caregivers.</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 caregivers undergoing an investigation. Foster caregivers 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. Caregivers undergoing this process with MCFD must contact FPSS and request support as FPSS does not receive notification when an investigation begins. FPSS Society is striving to ensure that Resource Workers notify caregivers that this service is available and that they can reach out to FPSS for support.
<i>Update, Expand, and Promote Mentor Program for Foster Caregivers.</i>	FPSS Society continued to provide Mentor support for new caregivers. Having a pool of mentors available to guide foster caregivers 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 caregivers 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. The updated Mentor Manual/Training is in its final editing stages. FPSS has hired a Dawna Drapeau as the new Regional Mentor Coordinator, and she is working to build relationships with South Island MCFD offices and caregivers to increase awareness of the Mentoring Program. Ideally, the goal is to connect new foster caregivers to mentors as part of the approval process.
<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. Several staff members have attended training that will benefit them and the organization. This includes such topics as CARF Surveyor Training, Reconciliation, and fundraising.
<i>Increase the number of foster caregivers in the Vancouver Island Region through enhanced and increased Retention efforts.</i>	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 work together to find solutions to the challenge of housing cost/availability and its direct effect on fostering. The Annual Satisfaction Survey allows FPSS Society to gather information regarding which services and training foster caregivers need in their communities. Continued peer support opportunities provide foster caregivers with networking opportunities that connect them to local resources. Appreciation events and social events build stronger relationships among foster caregivers and between foster caregivers and resource workers. These activities increase the retention of well-educated, actively engaged, and supported foster caregivers.
<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. A staff member at the Regional office has attended the CARF Surveyor Training Program and is now a Survey Intern.
<i>Continue to Advocate for and increase in payment rates for caregivers that, at minimum, meets cost of living.</i>	In April of 2023, levelled foster caregivers will see a significant increase to their Fee for Service payment. This comes after years of advocating by FPSS Society and other support agencies. This increase will aid in retention and recruitment.
<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 caregivers

REVIEW OF TARGETS FOR 2022-2023		OUTCOMES
		across Vancouver Island. Calendars of events are available for download on various media devices including Smartphones and tablets. Facebook pages (private and public) allow caregivers to post information and questions. FPSS monitors these pages regularly and removes inappropriate comments when appropriate.
<i>Gather and use foster caregiver input in planning training, services, and supports.</i>		FPSS gathers input from caregivers about the types and format of training they would like to see in a variety of formats. These include one-on-one conversations (in-person, email, text, and phone), workshops evaluations, surveys, meetings (partnership, education, peer support), and Facebook.
<i>Increase capacity for online learning platform.</i>		FPSS Society has a learning management system in place that gives it an increased ability to offer online webinars including presentations in various formats such as videos, PowerPoint, audio files, and livestreaming. This is important as not all caregivers are comfortable returning to in-person training. FPSS is committed to business practices that are effective and ethical and fairly compensate workshop facilitators when presentations are recorded and replayed.
TARGETS FOR 2023-2024		OUTCOMES
<i>Offer Updated Mentor Training.</i>		FPSS will have mentors available across Vancouver Island to ensure new caregivers do not foster in isolation.
<i>Implement updated (2023) CARF Standards.</i>		FPSS Society has made revisions to the Organization Manual and Staff Handbook to meet or exceed CARF 2023 standards. FPSS Society will incorporate new or revised policies/procedures into daily practice through the year.
<i>CARF Survey</i>		FPSS is scheduled to undergo a CARF Survey in Fall 2023 to maintain accreditation.
<i>Out of Care/Kinship Options.</i>		FPSS Society continues to advocate for the inclusion of Out-of-care and Kinship caregivers in the services it offers foster caregiver. FPSS is aware of the need for a measured and respectful approach to this inclusion. Out-of-Care and Kinship caregivers generally consider themselves separate from the foster system, despite the need they may have for similar support and training as the children and youth involved have similar needs and rights.
<i>Recruitment.</i>		FPSS Society collaborates with local communities throughout Vancouver Island to publicize the need for foster homes. 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 resources on behalf of the ministry. Critically understaffed MCFD offices in many communities has meant home studies can take some time. The ministry is turning to a provincial approach to recruitment, and this should reduce wait times.
<i>Expand Funding Sources</i>		FPSS is in the process of exploring funding sources through donations, grants, and other activities. FPSS will be reviving the Best Care Fund to provide funding that supports children and youth in care to access activities, events, equipment, and other benefits not otherwise available to them.
<i>Expand the Trauma-Informed Transition Training</i>		Dr. Jo Axe and Royal Road University have designed a Trauma-Informed Transition Training Program. Foster caregivers have provided input, perspective, and expertise to make this a success. The first part of the program focussed on transitioning Indigenous children and youth from caregiver homes to the community of their ancestors. Three additional parts are in development, including Transitioning from Foster Home to Adoptions, Transitioning into Community (Aging Out of Care), and Transitioning from Foster Home to Foster Home.  Long term plans include the possibility of reformatting the program for delivery to ministry staff.

## WORKSHOPS PROVIDED IN 2022-2023

### SOUTH ISLAND AREA

Summary of Workshops provided April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

(See Appendix for full list)

TOTAL	SOUTH ISLAND WORKSHOPS	FACILITATOR	TOPIC ADDRESSED	ATTENDANCE
4	Communication	Ali Tabb, Vicki Bridge, Ashleigh Martinflatt	Screenagers-Growing up in the Digital Age <sup>®</sup> , Creating Our New Normal, Communication	81

			<i>Skills for Helping Relationships with Children and Youth</i> <sup>R</sup>	
8	<i>Cultural Agility</i>	April Reeve, Erma Robinson, Riley McKenzie, Surrounded by Cedar	<i>Circle of Continuing the Conversation-An Act Respecting First Nations</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>Traditional Foods</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>Cultural Safety World View</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and Fostering</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>Cultural Lunch and Learn</i>	54
4	<i>FASD</i>	Stacey Roberston, Asante Centre Delena Hills, Katrina Griffin, Kee Warner, Marcel Gagnon	<i>Supporting Success for Individuals with FASD</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>FASD 101 Virtual Workshop</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>FASD Presentation</i> <sup>R</sup>	100+
	<i>Grief, Loss, and Attachment</i>	<i>See Trauma-informed Care</i>		
1	<i>Health and Safety</i>	<i>Alert First Aid</i>	<i>Basic First Aid with Infant CPR</i>	9
2	<i>Investigation and Resolution</i>	<i>Ros Pringle</i>	<i>Investigations and Resolutions Support Training</i> <sup>R</sup>	12
2	<i>MCFD</i>	<i>Vicki Bridge, Ros Pringle</i>	<i>Allegation Prevention, Investigation and Resolution Support Training</i>	30
1	<i>Managing Behaviour</i>	<i>Sarah Naish</i>	<i>The A-Z of Therapeutic Parenting</i> <sup>R</sup>	18
9	<i>Mental Health</i>	<i>Vancouver Island Crisis Centre, Lori Nichols, Sarah Dillon</i>	<i>Mental Health Medication</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>Youth Experiences with Anxiety and Self-Injury</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>Working with Children Who Can't Engage</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>Resiliency Bounce Back and Thrive</i> <sup>R</sup>	137
1	<i>Neurodiversity</i>	<i>Katherine Paxton</i>	<i>Anger Management and ASD</i> <sup>R</sup>	
7	<i>Safe Babies Caregiver Training</i>	<i>Ros Pringle</i>	<i>Safe Babies Caregiver Training Program</i> <sup>R</sup>	78
3	<i>Self-harm/Suicide</i>	<i>Lynne Chobotar, Dr. Harjit Aulakh, Lyndsey Wells, Kerri Isham</i>	<i>Anxiety and Self Harm-Strategies on Supporting Youth</i> <sup>R</sup> ; <i>Trauma-Informed Approaches for Suicide Awareness and Intervention</i> <sup>R</sup>	20
2	<i>Sexual Health</i>	<i>Nanaimo Family Life Association, Kerri Isham</i>	<i>Sexuality and Gender Diversity</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>Sex Trafficking in Our Backyard</i> <sup>R</sup>	9
7	<i>Transitions</i>	<i>Ros Pringle</i>	<i>Trauma-Informed Transition Training</i> <sup>R</sup>	147
43	<i>Trauma-Informed Care</i>	<i>Ros Pringle, Dianne Thompson, Juanita Currie, Sandra Beagley, Show Hope, MCFD, Complex Trauma Institute</i>	<i>Hope for the Journey</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>Trauma-Informed Care Next Level</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>Trauma-Focussed Residential Caregiving</i> <sup>R</sup> , <i>Big Steps to Success Giving and Receiving Healing for Traumatized Kids</i> <sup>R</sup>	144

#### CENTRAL ISLAND AREA

Summary of Workshops provided April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

(See Appendix for full list)

TOTAL	CENTRAL ISLAND WORKSHOPS	FACILITATOR	TOPIC ADDRESSED	ATTENDANCE
1	<i>Communication</i>	Ashleigh Martinflatt	<i>Communication Skills for Helping Relationships with Children and Youth</i>	39
7	<i>Cultural Agility</i>	Erma Robinson, Kerri Isham	<i>Traditional Foods</i> <i>Cultural Safety World View</i> <i>Creating a Culture for Child Safety,</i> <i>Replay Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and Fostering</i> <i>Residential Schools and TRC Calls to Action</i> <i>Sexuality and Gender Diversity Training</i>	102
1	<i>FASD</i>	Stacey Robertson	<i>FASD: Tips and Strategies</i>	9
1	<i>Grief, Attachment, and Loss</i>	Sarah Dillion	<i>Working with Children Who Can't Engage</i>	37
1	<i>Health and Safety</i>		<i>Basic Level First Aid</i>	9
1	<i>MCFD</i>	Bonnie Cook	<i>Life Books</i>	
	<i>Managing Behaviour</i>	Katherine Paxton	<i>Anger Management and ASD</i>	77
7	<i>Mental Health</i>	Lori Nichols, Sarah Dillion, Lyndsay Wells, Katherine Paxton	<i>Mental Health Medications: and overview</i> <i>Resiliency Bounce Back and Thrive</i> <i>Working with Children Who Can't Engage</i> <i>Youth Experiences with Anxiety and Self-Injury</i>	253

2	<i>Self-harm/Suicide</i>	<i>Lyndsay Wells</i>	<i>Youth Experience with Anxiety and Self-injury; Trauma-Informed Approaches to Suicide Awareness and Prevention</i>	38
2	<i>Sexual Health</i>	<i>Kerri Isham</i>	<i>Period Talk, Sexuality and Gender Diversity (postponed)</i>	11
	<i>Transitions</i>	<i>See South Island</i>		
26	<i>Trauma-Informed Care</i>	<i>Sarah Naish, Ros Pringle, VICS, CCI Coaches, Sandra Beagley, Kerri Isham, Anna Allen</i>	<i>Parenting A to Z, Trauma Focused Care, Trauma-Informed Care Next Level, Trauma-Informed Residential Caregiving, Giving and Receiving Healing for Traumatized Kids, Creating a Culture for Child Safety, Aces</i>	176

## UPPER ISLAND AREA

Summary of Workshops provided April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

(See Appendix for full list)

TOTAL	UPPER ISLAND WORKSHOPS	FACILITATOR	TOPIC ADDRESSED	ATTENDANCE
2	<i>Communication</i>	<i>Karen Hlady</i>	<i>Parents and Kids Screens</i>	32
2	<i>Cultural Agility</i>	<i>Kathi Camileri, Lorna Adams, Kristie-Lynn Campbell</i>	<i>A Village Around Every Family Medicine Bag workshop Aboriginal Policy and Practice Framework, Standard D3</i>	43
8	<i>Grief, Attachment, and Loss</i>	<i>Kathie Camilleri, CR REC Team</i>	<i>A Village Around Every Family Circles of Security</i>	48
12	<i>MCFD</i>	<i>Ashley Visser, Margaret Fidler, Kaya Sebastian, Kristie-Lynn Campbell, Laurie Sheldon, Ashley Visser, REC Team</i>	<i>Life Books Aboriginal Policy and Practice Framework Documentation Standard C.2, C.3, D.3, D.5, D.8, D.9</i>	126
2	<i>Mental Health</i>	<i>Victoria Morton</i>	<i>Kids and Cortisol: How Stress Shapes Us Good Mournings</i>	16
13	<i>Safe Babies</i>	<i>Catherine McCauley, Cherie Dalton, Kristy Daskoch, Victoria Morton, Ros Pringle</i>	<i>Car Seat Clinic, First Aid, IDP, Play, School Wrap-up, The Importance of Play, First Bites, High Risk Infants, Thrive by Five, Caring for the Carer, Transitioning</i>	90
2	<i>Self-Care</i>	<i>Victoria Morton</i>	<i>Wellness Webinar Dissociation</i>	26
	<i>Self-harm/Suicide</i>			
3	<i>Sexual Health</i>	<i>Myra Koehler, Michael Collins</i>	<i>Prevent It, Human Trafficking</i>	42
7	<i>Transitions</i>	<i>See South Island</i>		

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**PERSONNEL COMPLEMENT FOR 2022-2023**

<b>FPSS FOSTER PARENT SUPPORT SERVICES SOCIETY</b>			
<b>PERSONNEL COMPLEMENT APRIL 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2022 TO MARCH 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2023</b>			
<b>POSITION</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>HOURS / WEEK</b>	<b>START DATE</b>
<b>MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL</b>			
Executive Director	Dan Malone	35.0	2007-2023
<b>REGIONAL STAFF POSITIONS</b>			
Administrative Assistant	Krista Shelkey	32.5	2011-2023
Recruitment Coordinator	Eva Vowles	34.5	2005-2023
Administrative Support	Elisa Morrison	20.0	2020-2023
Investigation and Resolution Support Team Leader	Dianne Thompson	6.0	2018-2023
Office Custodian	Ruth Smith	4.0	2003-2023
<b>COORDINATORS:</b>			
South Island	Dianne Thompson	20.0	2018-2023
Cowichan Valley	Sandra Beagley	10.0	2020-2023
Nanaimo-Ladysmith	Sandra Beagley	10.0 to 15.0	2020-2023
Port Alberni	Juanita Currie	6.0 to 8.0	2017-2023
Comox Valley	Lisa Bowie	10.0	2013-2023
Campbell River/North Island	Judy Hollywood Bonnett	10.0	2009-2023
<b>SAFE BABIES COORDINATORS:</b>			
South Island	Dianne Thompson	4.0	2018-2023
Central Island			
Upper Island	Catherine McCauley	4.0	2021-2023
<b>INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS STAFF (S)</b>			
<b>BOOKKEEPER:</b>			
Regional Office	Denise Salmon	Regional 3.0+	2010-2023

## 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	SOUTH ISLAND MEETING	TOPIC ADDRESSED	OUTCOME	ATTENDANCE
	Appreciation Events	Child and Youth in Care Planning	Retention, Networking, Support	2
	Foster Caregiver Support	In addition to the peer support provided at Coffee Meetings, Social Events, Training Events, one-on-one		
24	Foster Hope Information Sessions	Introduction to fostering in BC and the application process.	Recruitment, Retention, Communication	132
15	Foster Parent/Partnership (MCFD) Advisory, Resource, Brunch and Brainstorm	Foster caregiver supports, issues, and concerns, MCFD policy.	Networking, support, planning and information sharing.	127
3	Recruitment and Retention	Ministry and foster caregivers come together to discuss how best to retain current caregivers and recruit potential new caregivers.	Networking, support, planning and information sharing.	42
2	Regional Partnership	Ministry and foster caregivers come together to discuss Ministry updates and challenges to fostering.	Networking, support, planning and information sharing.	43
12	Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Support, networking, and information sharing.	99
4	Social Events	Children's Christmas Party Holiday Tea End of Summer Child and Youth in Care Week	Networking, support, retention, and communication.	406
6	Workshop/Event Planning	ScreenAgers, Hope for the Journey, Circle of Continued Conversation- An Act, Big Steps to Success Planning, Mentor Training, Child and Youth in Care event	Networking, support, planning, collaboration, and information sharing.	31

## South Island Area Coordinator Annual Report

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Dianne Thompson – South Vancouver Island Regional Coordinator

## Summary

Conversations at Partnership, Advisory, and Retention Committee meetings continue to enrich relationships between foster caregivers and Resource Social workers. Our email distribution list is a terrific way to connect with foster caregivers and update or remind them on upcoming events such as relevant workshops, meetings, events, and training. We continue to look to foster caregivers for suggestions of what ongoing training they would like to see.

We distribute short evaluations and surveys to gather input and encourage foster caregivers to suggest workshop topics through the evaluation forms or by contacting Dianne Thompson or Sandy Case (SIFPA). We monitor our private Facebook groups daily. Two *Empowered to Connect* Facebook groups allow caregivers to share information and support. There is also a Mentor Facebook group where participants connect with and support one another. We monitor these groups on a regular basis and use them to provide information and promote educational training/workshops offered by FPSS or other support organizations.

## Planning/ Partnership Meetings

Planning and Partnership meetings occur every four to six weeks and assist with maintaining healthy communication and connections between FPSS, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies, and our local South Island Foster Parents Association (SIFPA). These meetings include the Foster Parent/MCFD Resource Partnership meetings, Foster Parent Advisory meetings, Retention and Recruitment Committee meetings, and Executive Planning meetings. FPSS Society Area Coordinators, foster caregivers, and social workers attended a hybrid Regional Partnership meeting with in-person and virtual options. The Ministry provides a guest speaker at Partnership meeting, when possible. This further engages caregivers and is well received. We had a presenter on policy and the many updates with staffing



changes. We are now hosting the bimonthly Partnership, Advisory and Retention meetings in a hybrid format, with in-person (FPSS Regional office) and virtual (MS Teams) options.

#### *South Vancouver Island Retention and Recruitment Committee*

MCFD Residential Resources, MCFD Aboriginal Resources, Child and Youth with Special Needs, Indigenous Child and Family Services Agencies, FPSS, SIFPA and foster caregivers work collaboratively to support the recruitment and retention of South Island foster homes. We encourage foster caregivers to participate when available and have an average of five foster caregivers at each meeting. The meetings are hosted in a hybrid format which offers both in-person and virtual on the MS Teams platform bi-monthly.

#### *Safe Baby Support Group*

The Safe Babies Support Group continues to meet monthly with an average of nine in attendance. The facilitator connects with caregivers in-person in a large private home. They meet to support one another and discuss relevant information pertaining to the care of vulnerable infants. On occasion, the facilitator, Angela Hatch, provides a guest speaker to update caregivers on changes to policy or practice, or new research. Angela will be retiring from fostering June 2023 and from the Safe Babies program September 2023.

#### *Life Book Sessions*

FPSS's in-person Life Book sessions are currently on hold. We are looking to hold an in-person event this spring. Life Books document memories for children and youth in care. FPSS offers to scan Life Books so a copy can be placed in the child's file.

#### *FPSS Mentoring Program*

Mentors are experienced foster caregivers who have received specialized training on how to mentor other foster caregivers. South Island mentors are available to connect with new foster caregivers. Janet Christie revised the original program and has created a promotional PowerPoint presentation. Our new Mentor Coordinator, Dawna Drapeau is promoting the revised material to the Ministry and FPSS will host a program training in the coming months.

#### *Investigation and Resolution Support Team*

We have trained volunteer IRS support workers who support caregivers undergoing an investigation with MCFD. Support may be informal assistance or more formal support. We provided a refresher training session in January 2023.

The informal and formal support hours provided in the past year were lower than the previous year. There ministry closed four homes; this was higher than the previous year. In one case. The ministry removed one child from a foster home. We had several support requests from Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies throughout the Island. We forwarded these to Indigenous Support worker April Reeve at Indigenous Perspectives Society. Our long-term North Island IRS support worker retired from the program. We are currently working to fill the vacant position with a caregiver who successfully completed the training.

#### *Self-Care Evenings*

FPSS distributed an anonymous survey to caregivers. Most responses stated that they were still feeling uncomfortable with in-person gatherings. We are working towards providing in-person events with plans to host an in-person indoor gathering in the fall for those who are comfortable attending.

#### *Foster Caregiver Events*

The South Island Foster Parent Association (SIFPA) host events for foster families, providing opportunities for foster caregivers and the children in their home to meet and network with other foster families.

We partnered with SIFPA to host a celebration for *Child and Youth in Care Week*. Forty-one adults and 70 children enjoyed pizza, a face painter, a balloon clown, new games and toys for children to play with (and take home), and an ice cream truck near the end to complete the fun. The event was a tremendous success. We had the support of the ten Ministry and Nil Tu, staff members who attended and handed out pizza.

SIFPA hosted the *Annual Children's Christmas Party to Go* in December. Foster families drove by enjoy the magical display of lights and animated holiday characters then pick up their family experience gift card and goodies. This year's experience was a family Imax gift card. Approximately 45 families with 180 children attended throughout the night.

SIFPA hosted *Spring Break Fun!* Event in March. This event took place at a local school playground with snacks and drinks for kids. There were \$50.00 gift cards for families to take the children and youth to Play Zone, Mini Golf or Skating. It was well received with foster families attending (23 adults and 56 children and youth).

#### *Ongoing Training*

FPSS offered Show Hope's *Hope for the Journey Training Series* again in April of this year. Several caregivers attended and completed the series and provided positive feedback. The *Safe Babies Caregiver Training* with four sessions took place in April with facilitator Ros Pringle and host Catherine McCauley. Sixteen caregivers attended and completed the training.

We hosted *Creating Our New Normal* with facilitator Vicki Bridge leading discussion to help and support our caregivers as we return to in-person events. There was great discussion on what caregivers would like to see moving forward. We offered a two-part *Allegation Prevention* workshop with Vicki Bridge facilitating and nine participants attending.



FPSS provided a replay of the *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* workshop for 28 caregivers who missed the original workshop. We continue to present training on important topic.

We were to host the Big Brothers and Big Sister's *Big Steps to Success* from Big Brothers Big Sisters but had to postpone due to low registration. We presented a replay of the *Circle of Continuing the Conversation, the Act*.

We offered the Asante Centre's FASD training with two presenters and shared resources for the 42 attendees. We postponed our *The Circle of Continuing the Conversation, the Act Part Three*, when the facilitator was unable to attend. Sixteen caregivers attended the rescheduled training.

We arranged the *Screenagers Movie-Growing up in the Digital Age* presentation with Ali Tabb facilitating. This was well received with 45 attending caregivers the live event and 28 attending the self-paced version.

*The Anxiety and Self Harm-Strategies on Supporting Youth* training provided valuable information and strategies from a nurse and doctor from the Child and Youth Mental Health team. There were 10 attendees.

The fall *Trauma-Informed Transition Training* program allowed 10 caregivers to complete the 7-session training. Eight caregivers completed the Spring training.

Our Safe Babies training started at the end of March and will continue until May.

FPSS provided a two session *Investigation and Resolution Training* in January.

Nine caregivers successfully completed the Basic Level first aid training.

We held a fun-filled *End of Summer Get Together* at a popular water park/playground. Foster families connected with each other over coffee, tea, water, Tim bits, muffins watermelon, and toys that the children could take home.

#### Holiday Tea

FPP welcomed foster families, FPSS staff, and ministry staff to its *Annual Holiday Tea* at the Regional office. It was our first in-person get together in two years. There was a wealth of food, drinks, treats, and great conversations amongst the 14 people attending.

#### South Island Private Facebook Group

We continue to have connections with caregivers through our private group. We share our trainings, MCFD information and current information of interest to caregivers. Caregivers share information, comment on posts, and give away or sell items. We had 272 posts with 5,649 views.

Completed May, 2023

### **Investigation and Resolution Support Team Annual Report**

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Dianne Thompson South Island Investigations and Resolutions Coordinator

#### **South Island Quarterly Activity Summary**

Quality of Care Review -4

Family Care Home Investigations - 4

Dispute Resolution for Caregivers - 0

Number of cases where children were removed - 3

Number of cases where homes closed - 2

Total Formal Support Hours: - 50.5

Total Informal Support Hours: - 132

#### **Central Island Activity Summary**

Quality of Care Review - 3

Family Care Home Investigations - 4

Dispute Resolution for Caregivers - 1

Number of cases where children were removed – 1

Number of cases where homes closed - 2

Total Formal Support Hours: - 60

Total Informal Support Hours: - 55

#### **Upper Island Activity Summary**

Quality of Care Review - 0

Dispute Resolution for Caregivers - 0

Number of cases where children were removed - 0

Number of cases where homes closed - 0

Total Formal Support Hours: - 0

Total Informal Support Hours: - 0

Total Support Hours provided by Vancouver Island Support Team: 326.5

#### Investigation and Resolution Support Team Coordinator

##### Total Hours: 29

- Gathering statistics and preparing reports
- Ensure all materials reflect the new Resource Work policies
- Speaking to foster caregivers involved in an investigation, coordinating, connecting with and supporting Support Workers
- Providing Support Workers with information packets if required
- Providing foster caregivers involved in an investigation all information through documents and the link to our website
- Regional Meetings and training

##### Trends:

We have a dedicated team consisting of seven trained Investigation and Resolution Support Workers representing Vancouver Island. Support is provided on South Island (Duncan to Victoria), Central Island (Port Alberni to Ladysmith) and Upper Island (Courtenay to Campbell River and Port Hardy Area). FPSS records statistics in the areas where team members provide support rather than their own home community. Caregivers may choose to have a Support Team member from outside their community provide support. Our Upper Island Investigation Resolution Support worker retired, and we are currently working to fill the position.

The number of support hours (formal and informal) provided in the past year was lower than the previous year. South Island had three children removed from homes, with two homes closed. Foster caregivers trying to access support from the Ministry Protection Social worker experienced challenges. A caregiver also experienced difficulties in getting support from Surround by Cedar Guardianship worker and the Resource Social worker. There were no reports regarding North Island Investigations.

There were 15 investigations and Quality of Care Reviews and one Disputer Resolution on Vancouver Island for the period April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. There were eight Family Care Home Investigations, most of which took place in the Central and South Island. MCFD closed four homes. Investigations are still taking longer expected (critical staff shortages) and leaving caregivers uncertain of outcomes. This engaged the support workers for longer periods of time.

Team members provided Informal support to caregivers requiring assistance in resolving disagreements with social workers regarding concerns with child, a lack of support, and contractual support arising from the rate increase. Poor communication between Resource/Guardianship social workers and caregivers caused conflict.

In one case, the Team Lead and Social Worker made an abrupt decision to return children to their family home. There was little communication or transition planning as the child went from supervised phone calls and visits to being returned to home. Social Worker's make decisions regarding returning child and youth with no notice and no transition plan. A foster caregiver received support in dealing with a youth who found their sibling in their care deceased. There was support for homes with teens and a special needs incident with a new placement.

We received several support requests from Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies throughout the Island. They were forwarded to Indigenous Support Worker April Reeve at Indigenous Perspectives Society. FPSS forwarded support requests to BCFPA when appropriate.

Report completed May 2023

4. Support to caregivers involved in Protocol Process, including the organization, training, and supervision of volunteer Support Workers						
Description	Code Type	2021-2022	South	Central	Upper	2022-2023
Number of hours re: IR Support Team leader position - including the organization, training, and supervision of volunteer support workers	PR01	28				29
Number of IRS workshops provided	PR02	0				2
Number of participants attending Investigation and Resolution Info Workshops	PR02.1	0				12
Number of support hours provided to foster caregivers	PR03	Informal: 258 Formal: 163	Informal: Formal:			Informal: 187 Formal: 110.5
Number and Type of Protocol	PR04	FCHI: 16 DRFC: 0	FCHI: DRFC:	New	Ongoing	FCHI: 8 DRFC: 1 QOCR: 7

		QOCR: 3 Number of homes closed: 2	QOCR: Number of homes closed:			Number of Homes Closed: 4
Other: Regional IRS Meeting	PR05	3				
Other: Number of participants attending IRS Meeting	PR05	4				

### **South Island Safe Babies Coordinator Annual Report**

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Dianne Thompson South Island Safe Babies Coordinator

The monthly Safe Babies Support Group continue to be a source of support and training. Angela Hatch connects with Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal, and respite caregivers, occasionally inviting speakers from the community. The South Island Area Coordinator for FPSS Society attends the meetings when her schedule allows.

Angela Hatch will be retiring from fostering June 2023 and from the Safe Babies program September 2023.

FPSS hosted a Safe Babies training in March/April/May 2023.

### **Events, Training and Support Relevant for Safe Babies Caregivers:**

DATE	EVENT	TOPIC	OUTCOMES	ATTENDANCE
April	Safe Baby Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	9
May	Safe Baby Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	9
June	Safe Baby Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	9
July	Safe Baby Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	9
Aug	Safe Baby Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	9
Sept	Safe Baby Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	9
Oct	Safe Baby Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	99
Nov	Safe Babies Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	9
Dec	Safe Baby Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	9
Jan	Safe Baby Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	9
Feb	Safe Baby Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	9
Mar	Safe Baby Support Group	Support, training, and networking needs of Safe Babies caregivers.	Networking, support, communication, and retention.	9

### **CENTRAL ISLAND AREA ANNUAL REPORTS**

*Summary of the Meetings and Training Events in the Central Island:*

*(See Appendix for full list)*

TOTAL	CENTRAL ISLAND MEETING	TOPIC ADDRESSED	OUTCOME	ATTENDANCE
	<i>Appreciation Events</i>	Celebration of Life for Francis Nuttgens	Relationship building, Retention	76
22	<i>Foster Caregiver Support/Peer Support* Peer Support also takes place at Social "Events and Meetings"</i>	<i>Cowichan Valley Foster Port Coffee Support Morning, Port Alberni Coffee meeting, Nanaimo Foster Parent Support Morning</i>	Communication, Connection, Relationship Building, Retention, Support.	99
	<i>Foster Hope Information Sessions</i>	<i>See South Island</i>		
22	<i>Foster Parent/Partnership (MCFD)</i>	<i>Nanaimo FC/MCFD, Nanaimo MVFD Resource Team FC, Port Alberni Local Partnership, CVFP Local, Cowichan Vallet</i>	Communication, Networking, Support, Retention, Opportunity to connect, receive updates, ask questions, plan	114

		<i>Education Committee, Cowichan Valley MCFD/FC</i>	events, and discuss topics relevant to fostering.	
26	<i>Foster Parent/Partnership (Other than MCFD)</i>	<i>Adoptive Families Association of BC Networking Meeting, FPSS Coordinators, FASD Key worker, Port Alberni Local Action Team, Usma, CVFP Local and FPSS Collaborative Event Planning Meeting</i>	Networking, education planning, resources, support.	79
	<i>Regional Partnership</i>	<i>See South Island</i>		
	<i>Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering</i>	<i>No activities</i>		
10	<i>Social Events</i>	<i>Cowichan Valley Festive Gathering, Cowichan Valley Foster Family - Summer Fun Day, Cowichan Valley Foster Family BCCYIC event, Cowichan Valley MCFD Foster Family Gelato Day, Cowichan Valley Ministry Foster Caregiver Appreciation Dinner, CVFP Local Foster Family Festive Event, Celebration of Life, Foster Family Treat Days, Festive Celebration for Foster Families, Family Paint In, Nanaimo Sun Park Event, Nanaimo MCFD Festive Celebration</i>	Connection, Relationship Building, Retention, Peer Support.	554
21	<i>Workshop/Event Planning</i>	<i>Cultural Safety Worldview, Hope for the Journey, BCCYIC, Education Planning, Foster Parent Retention Planning, CVFP Collaborative Planning, FPSS Coordinators, Caregiver Appreciation, Resiliency Training, Festival Planning/Wrapping</i>	Cultural agility, networking, communication, education planning.	106

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### **Cowichan Valley Area Coordinator Annual Report**

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Sandra Beagley, Cowichan Valley Coordinator

With most Covid PHO restrictions being lifted, there was a focus on providing in-person options for many meetings. FPSS and Cowichan Valley Foster Parent Local also offered in-person Foster Caregiver Support Mornings. Their focus within the fostering community was to rebuild connections that were impacted by Covid. Foster caregivers and social workers continued to value the variety and quality of training FPSS offered.

#### *Enhanced Communications among Caregivers*

Sandra held eight support meeting opportunities for foster caregivers. She took part in six partnership and committee meetings.

Sandra supplied printed copies of FPSS's *The Island Connection* Newsletter to foster caregivers and social workers. Twenty-seven copies to foster caregivers and five copies to social workers. Sandra distributed 6,952 informative emails to area distribution lists. She had 655 emails with individuals. She continually managed and updated Area Open Homes and email lists. FPSS manages Cowichan Valley Foster Caregiver private Facebook group and had 1,541 views of their 168 posts.

#### *Provision of ongoing Training Opportunities*

There were 19 trainings offered. Topics included trauma informed awareness and practises, attachment, mental health, cultural agility, sexual health, autism, FASD, navigating challenging behaviours, neurodiversity, communication, self care. Sandra sent confidential anonymous online evaluation surveys to foster parents to encourage feedback. Sandra continued to promote FPSS Society's offer to deliver therapeutic books to foster parents' homes. She also shared relevant information and links to free community resources, trainings, and webinars.

#### *Caregiver Peer Support Services*

Sandra had 307 individual supportive contacts with foster caregivers about various issues, concerns, or challenges through email, in-person, virtual meetings, or by phone.

Creative social events ranged from arts and craft opportunities to special treats.

FPSS Society mailed six Welcome to Fostering Packages to new local foster caregivers and Sandra invited each to give Express CASL consent to join our email distribution lists.

#### *Identification, Presentation and Management of Common Issues for Caregivers*

There were 7,572 contacts with foster caregivers and 558 contacts with MCFD and ICFSA social workers regarding foster caregiver support, retention, information, and referral. Sandra continued to invite input and ideas of how FPSS Society can help

support foster caregivers. Sandra had 472 contacts with the Cowichan Valley Foster Parents Local to share information, support, and collaborate for social events, meetings, and fundraisers. She also co-hosted their June AGM event. Sandra provided 39 referrals to foster caregivers including referrals to MCFD, Office of the Representative for Children and Youth, BC Medical Benefits Program, Canadian Mental Health Association, Office of the Ombudsperson, and Adoption BC. There were 343 contacts with community agencies and the public. Sandra received two mentor inquiries and provided contact with FPSS Society Mentor Coordinator. She had one support request for Investigation and Resolution Support and connected the person with FPSS's IRS coordinator.

#### *Recruitment and New Family Caregivers*

There was one recruitment inquiry. Sandra referred the person to Foster Hope website and Foster Hope Information Sessions and gave contact information for social workers in charge of recruitment for Cowichan MCFD and DAA. There was one foster caregiver appreciation event. FPSS Society supplied gift baskets to be given out to foster caregivers at the dinner event.

#### Continuous Quality Improvement

- Participated in FPSS staff meetings and AGM.
- Participated in Regional Partnership Meetings.
- Worked with other Area Coordinators.
- Worked with Cowichan Valley Foster Parent Local.
- Provided newsletter submissions.
- Tracked work activity and emails.
- Completed time sheets and staff summaries.
- Pursued relevant education.
- Reviewed health and safety modules. Did module quizzes.
- Supplied Quarterly statistics, tables, and reports.
- Supplied Annual statistics, tables, and report.

Cowichan Valley Area goals for 2023-2024 includes:

- Review and update Open Homes list.
- Cross reference MCFD Open Homes information with CC email distribution list and Area email distribution list.
- Collaborate with CVFP Local for social events.
- Collaborate with MCFD for development of APPF engagement opportunity.
- Increase in-person attendance for meetings, trainings, and events.

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#### ***Nanaimo/Ladysmith Local Area Coordinator Annual Report***

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Sandra Beagley, Central Island Coordinator

The disrupted in-person connection opportunities prior to Covid continued to affect the central island fostering community. Foster caregivers, area Team leaders, and social workers gave positive feedback about the quality and quantity of FPSS trainings. Although some foster caregivers were eager to gather in person, others are not yet comfortable with this. As a result, in-person attendance at meetings and events was lower than expected. Many caregivers appreciated the hybrid option of being able to participate in-person or virtually for some meetings and events.

#### *Enhanced Communications among Caregivers*

Sandra supported seven opportunities for foster parents virtually gather to connect and share. Gatherings included resources sharing, crafts, self care, and prizes.

There were five Partnership Meetings offered. Foster caregivers could choose to attend in person at the MCFD Resource office or virtually via Teams. During these meetings, participants discussed retention, MCFD updates, health and safety concerns, and other relevant fostering topics.

Sandra gave 19 foster caregivers and 10 social workers printed copies of FPSS's *The Island Connection* newsletter. She distributed 6,549 information emails and had 569 individual email contacts to share information including health and safety, education and training opportunities, community resources, and MCFD updates. There are two private foster caregivers Facebook groups in the Nanaimo/Parksville area. FPSS had 37 posts with 893 views in the Nanaimo Group and 53 posts with 171 views in the Parksville Group. Sandra accepted and shared luggage donations with foster families.

#### *Provision of ongoing Training Opportunities*

Sandra planned 15 training opportunities. Trainings included topics of trauma informed practices, attachment, challenging behaviours, harm reduction, mental health, sexual health, resiliency, and child passenger safety. Sandra also supported a fellow coordinator with her island wide workshop opportunities. FPSS sought participants' 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 caregivers' doorsteps at no cost. Sandra also provided foster caregivers and social workers with relevant information and links to free community resources, trainings, and webinars.

*Caregiver Peer Support Services*

Sandra individually supported caregivers with varied issues, concerns, or challenges on 262 occasions through email, phone, or in-person meetings. FPSS sent eight Welcome Packages to foster caregivers new to fostering in the central island area. One hundred and twenty-nine participants enjoyed social events like Festive Christmas Celebration and crafts at BCCYIC day.

*Identification, Presentation and Management of Common Issues for Caregivers*

There were 6,357 contacts with foster caregivers. Sandra had 864 contacts with MCFD and ICFSA social workers regarding foster caregiver support, retention, and information. Sandra continued to encourage input from foster caregivers and social workers about how she and FPSS Society can help support foster caregivers. Sandra provided foster parents with 45 referrals to agencies including MCFD, Representative for Children and Youth, Canadian Mental Health Association, Foster Parent Support Line, and Adoption BC. There were 330 contacts with community agencies/resources and the public.

Sandra supported foster caregivers with four insurance inquiries, two mentorship inquiries, and four investigation and resolution inquiries.

*Recruitment and New Family Caregivers*

There were three inquiries from the public about fostering. Sandra supplied information and links to Foster Hope Information Sessions and contact information for social workers in charge of recruitment for Nanaimo MCFD and ICFSA.

## Continuous quality improvement

- 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 collaboration.
- Submitted activity reports, expense reports, event summaries, and newsletter submissions as required. • Submitted time sheets and staff summaries.
- Participated in Regional Partnership Meeting.
- Reviewed monthly health and safety modules. Completed and submitted quizzes.
- Brought outdated material of sensitive or confidential nature to Regional for shredding and disposal.
- Updated laptop, phone, and printer software as prompted.

## Central Island Area Coordinator goals for Central Island 2023-2024 include:

- Successful evening and daytime offering of Sexual Health seven part series trainings.
- Confirm resiliency training for spring.
- Building up in-person attendance for meetings and events.
- Get updated open homes lists from MCFD and ICFSA.
- Build stronger relationship with ICFSA Kw'umut Lelum
- Consult with MCFD and ICFSA KL for foster caregiver appreciation.
- Explore fostering book club interest.
- Update first aid kit at Nanaimo office

**Central Island Safe Baby Coordinator Annual Report**

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

**Nota Bene:** Due to the retirement of FPSS Society's Central Island Safe Baby Coordinator in December 2020 there were no Safe Babies events in Central Island.

**Port Alberni Coordinator Annual Report**

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Juanita Currie, Port Alberni Coordinator

Local foster caregivers continued to meet at Port Alberni Coffee Support gatherings. These are great opportunities for peer support and connections that assist caregivers in managing some of the challenges in meeting the needs of the children in their homes. Equally important, it is also an opportunity to celebrate successes and milestones.

The Port Alberni Coordinator works with Erma Robinson and others to coordinate Cultural Training events for caregivers both locally and regionally. Workshops included *Calls to Action*, *Residential Schools*, and *Cultural Safety World View*.

The coordinator works with the Port Alberni Local Action Team and community agencies to keep connected with local resources and activities. As well, the coordinator works closely with Usma, the Indigenous Child and Family Services agency in the area. The Port Alberni coordinators partners with other FPSS coordinators to plan and present Regional Training Events. The majority of these trainings are delivered using digital platforms such as MS Teams and Zoom.



Volunteers in the Alberni Valley area continue to offer the Annual Toy Run that provides gifts for children and youth.

## UPPER ISLAND ANNUAL REPORT

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

TOTAL	UPPER ISLAND MEETING	TOPIC ADDRESSED	OUTCOME	ATTENDANCE
50	<i>Foster Caregiver Support/Peer Support* Peer Support is also provided at Social Events and other meetings</i>	<i>Comox Valley Coffee and Chit Chat, One-on-One, Foster Parent Drop-in, Social Distance Walk, Campbell River Foster Parent Association Coffee Meeting, Comox Valley, Social Committee</i>	Networking, Support, Retention, and Information Sharing.	167
	<i>Foster Hope Information Sessions</i>	<i>See South Island</i>		
60	<i>Foster Parent/Partnership (MCFD)</i>	<i>Comox Valley Partnership, Campbell River FC/MCFD, North Island Family Resource and Upper Island Coordinator, PRIDE Pre-Service, Campbell River Resource Enhancement Coordinator, Meeting with Minister, Comox Valley Meeting with Courtenay MCFD/DOO</i>	On-going training, peer support, communication, and community, Development, Life Books	424
11	<i>Foster Parent/Partnership (Other than MCFD)</i>	<i>K'omoks First Nations Outreach Worker, Comox Valley and FPSS Meeting, Community, Campbell River Joint Education Committee, Truth and Reconciliation, Comox Valley Youth-in-Care Committee (Youth Steering Committee), , Comox Indigenous Advisory Committee,</i>	Communication, network development.	88
14	<i>Safe Babies Caregiver Gathering</i>	<i>Retirement, Grief and Loss, Planning Caregiving Interventions to Support Development, High-risk Infants, Levelling, Car Seat Clinic, First Bites, IDP, Thrive by Five, Strategies, Self-Care, Songs and Games</i>	Networking, Peer Support, and Information Sharing.	89
14	<i>Social Events</i>	<i>Foster Community Picnic, Holiday Lunch, Splash Park Meet and Splash Goodie Bags Project, Retirement Party, Post-Easter Event, Christmas Party, Summer Fun, Youth in Care Week, Swing By, Northern Holiday Social, Comox Youth in Care Over 12, Campbell River Child and Youth in Care Event, Campbell River Annual Trick or Treating at MCFD, Campbell River Potluck</i>	Networking, Peer Support, and Information Sharing.	270
2	<i>Workshop/Event Planning</i>	<i>View and comments on rewrite of Mentorship program, Trauma-Informed Transition Pilot Review, Youth in Care Week, Trauma-Informed Transition Training, , Halloween Event Planning, Campbell River Child and Youth in Care Week, FPSS Mentorship Program</i>	Retention, program development, Training, Community Relations, Communication	30

### **Comox Valley Local Coordinator Annual Report**

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

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-always! Every few years, we review it to ask how we can change what we do to achieve our goal.

During the 2022 fiscal year, the Covid restrictions decreased which allowed the fostering community to reintroduce in-person events, meetings, and workshops. The trend of struggling with the number of care-homes in the Valley continued. Our Recruitment Resource Worker was diligent in completing home studies, which added a few more new fostering homes to our community. Unfortunately, some of these left fostering within 4-6 months of starting. Caregivers left for different reasons, including unstable income, insufficient income, moving out of community, and the difficult behaviours of children. We currently

have twenty-five homes in the Comox area. The majority of the children and teens are still being placed in “out-of-care” homes. The children and youth who are coming into foster care have complex behaviours that may not fit for our homes and families.

We were fortunate enough to have a new Behavioural Consultant start in the second quarter. This position was empty for almost two years. The new behavioural consultant is working with the fostering community and out-of-care families. The new Behavioural Consultant is an active team player in our committees, workshops, meetings, and events. She previously was the Family Resource Coordinator for The John Howard Society in Campbell River. With that position, she was the 180 Degree Stabilization and Recovery Program which gave her huge experience with teen issues. Because of the low numbers of foster homes in the Valley, we continually have difficulties getting participation in our meetings, events, and workshops. With life being so busy, we continue to offer hybrid workshops and meetings. We now have Zoom available as well as in-person. For a consistent few of our homes, this hybrid offering has been convenient so that they can participate from their jobs or from home because childcare is no longer a barrier to attending workshops. Since the reduction or removal of Covid restrictions, our *Comox Valley Foster Parent Only Chitchat* has been very well received. Many caregivers tell the Comox Valley Coordinator that they look forward to participating in this event. A family that had been fostering for 27 years retired this year.

We had eight Partnership meetings this fiscal year. At every Partnership, we cover a Standard. This provides a reliable way for our foster caregivers to receive their on-going education as per their contracted learning plan. We constantly work on foster caregiver connection with their Resource Worker. Our Resource Team has staff had members go on medical leave, retire, maternity leave, and reduce hours to part-time. These changes make it difficult to develop or continue a relationship built with our foster caregivers. We had a few incidences or misunderstanding that could have been avoided if connection were stronger between the two parties or if the Resource Team was more stable.

Our Comox Valley Education Committee had many meetings to plan and host workshops that included the *A Village Around Every Family* with Kathy Camilleri and *Parents and Kid's Screens* with Karen Hlady. The turn out was reasonable considering the low number of foster homes in the Valley. The first workshop virtual (Zoom) and the second was a hybrid. Our Comox Valley Social Committee had three meetings and much communication through email. We put together our *Post-Easter* event at the Air Force Beach in the first quarter and *Christmas Party* at Air Force Beach Pavilion in the third quarter. Both events were well attended. We would still like to put on *Bannock Friday*, an *Eagle Feather* workshop, and continue with our Comox Valley Monthly Chit-chats outdoor at the parks. The Chit-chat is for foster caregivers only with the Behavioural Consultant. With our monthly Chit-chats, there was always great connection and discussion of Valley issues in a thoughtful and respectful manner.

The Comox Valley Coordinator had many one-to-one connections with members of the fostering community. There have been many social distancing coffees and walks. Connection is maintained through texting, phone calls, and emails. The coordinator checked in regularly with foster caregivers in need of extra support – they vent, or we trouble-shoot, or just listen to the weekly issues in their homes.

When Comox Valley foster caregivers needed Investigation and Resolution support, they often contacted the Comox Valley Coordinator who directed them to one of our amazing Investigations and Resolution Support volunteers. The coordinator continued to support our foster caregivers behind the scenes, which they reported they appreciated. The investigations often left foster caregivers feeling isolated, so the coordinator listened, stayed positive, and encouraged them going forward.

There were two events for the 2022 *Children and Youth In-Care Week*. The *Under 12* Event was held at the Air Force Beach group campsite where there was a petting zoo, wienie roast, lawn games, and arts and crafts. It was well attended. The *Over 12* Event was held at The Linc where the teens were able to use the basketball court, bouncy castle, skate park, video games, and so on. Hard 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 2022), the Resource Team asked the Comox Valley Coordinator to do a survey asking foster caregivers what they wanted for Appreciation Month. The survey showed that homes were still concerned about meeting in person because of Covid and did not want a dinner but voted on a gift card instead. The Resource Team personalize gift cards for every foster home along with a \$50 to \$100 (couple) gift card to the store of their choice. These were hand delivered by the Resource Team.

The Valley is unique as this community has relied on informal mentorship for years, even decades! The foster caregivers turn to each other for support as well as taking any new caregivers under their wings. There have been situations where we had solved problems as a group, using our experiences to strategize, use techniques and our knowledge to trouble shoot. Our culturally diverse experiences have assisted our community members to feel cared for and appreciated. The Comox Valley Coordinator also participated on the Comox Indigenous Advisory Committee. 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. The 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. We had monthly meetings during the first, third, and fourth quarters but then Curtis Cameron, Operating Office, decided to retire and let us know at the beginning of January. Hopefully the meetings will start up again in the new fiscal year.



*The Comox Valley Coordinator facilitated and participated in:*

- Comox Valley Advisory Council (two meetings).
- Comox Valley Foster Parent Education Committee (three meetings).
- Comox Valley Foster Parent Social Planning Committee (four meetings).
- Comox Valley Foster Family Social (two events).
- Comox Valley Children and Youth in Care Week (two events).
- Partnership (eight meetings).
- Comox Valley Education Committee (two workshops).
- Comox Valley Safe Baby Gatherings (three meeting/workshops).
- Many “Social Distancing Coffee” or “Social Distancing Walks” sessions with Caregivers.
- Did “Welcoming” for K’omoks First Nations Territory for many work shops and meetings (approx. 25).

The coordinator participated in and represented FPSS at:

- Comox Valley Safe Baby Gatherings six meetings/workshops,
- Participated in seven Island Wide Workshops,

In addition, the coordinator attended workshops offered by Community Agencies, MCFD, and FPSS Society. Lisa participated as a foster caregiver and attended eight 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.

### ***Upper Island (Campbell River and North Island) Annual report***

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Submitted by Judy Hollywood Bonnett, Upper Island Area Coordinator

#### *Campbell River Area and North Island Report*

Upper Island foster caregivers continued to be impacted by application of *An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families (The Act)*, and as Upper Island MCFD offices navigated staffing changes and shortages.

In December 2022, MCFD announced the transfer of North Island resource files to the Campbell River Team. The NI FPSS Society coordinator position remained posted since Jackie Kervin’s retirement in July 2021. The UI coordinator and regional staff provided support services for North Island foster caregivers and their support team.

#### *Enhanced Communication among Upper Island Caregivers*

The UI area coordinator communicated with Upper Island foster communities via the FPSS Society Area Coordinator’s email distribution lists and personal contacts. The coordinator had 5,812 contacts including Campbell River and North Island foster caregivers, MCFD staff and Community Agencies. The Campbell River Foster Parent private Facebook group (twenty-nine members) and the North Island Foster Family Facebook group (twenty-five members) viewed posted topics from the regional FPSS team, local check-ins, and caregiver training notices.

The coordinator offered individual support or information to 17 Campbell River foster caregivers including referrals to the MCFD and other community or regional services. She consulted and shared resources with Cheryl Jorgenson, North Island Foster Caregiver Support/Resource, to address foster caregiver’s specific questions.

#### *Provision of Ongoing Training Opportunities*

Campbell River Education Committee and monthly workshops

November’s *Connect in Circle* Standards training focused on the MCFD’s *Aboriginal Practice and Policy Framework* and Foster Home Standard D.3 *Right of Indigenous Child to know and belong to their community* Training combined morning sessions on APFF, and the afternoon session let caregivers experience the Indigenous decision-making Circle Model. The committee organized the Standards Training then disbanded largely due to the MCFD members’ work demands.

The area coordinator and Catherine McCauley then arranged monthly foster caregiver Thursday Trainings beginning in December with sessions on *Kids and Screens*, *Human Trafficking Awareness* and *Understanding Fear*. They partnered with Little Warriors (Alberta) on March’s *Prevent It!* session on preventing and responding to child sexual abuse.

The North Island fostering community did not offer foster caregivers’ workshops. North Island foster caregivers enrolled in FPSS Society’s online live and recorded workshops.

#### *Caregiver Peer Support Monthly Meetings*

Campbell River Safe Babies caregivers had five training opportunities arranged by Catherine McCauley. Of note, was May's Alert First-Aid Basic First Aid with CPR Level "C" course arranged by the FPSS area coordinator. Catherine retired from the Safe Babies coordinator's position in December.

The area coordinator arranged January, February, and March Safe Babies Caregivers' support groups with topics arising from the caregivers' discussion. Catherine McCauley joined the meetings when available and her comments and expertise were welcomed by the caregivers.

The North Island fostering community did not offer peer support sessions for their Safe Babies caregivers.

#### *Foster Family and Network Events*

##### *Campbell River Foster Parent Association (CRFPA) Events*

The CRFPA hosted seven in person "foster-parent-only" coffee support meetings in caregivers' homes.

The Association arranged August's annual *Foster Family and Community Picnic* and December's *Holiday Goodie Bags* project filled with games and goodies for children living in foster homes. FPSS Society was please to collaborate with CRFPA on their projects.

##### *Campbell River network events*

##### *BC Child and Youth in Care Week May 30 - June 5*

The Sasamans Society Youth Navigator and community partners organized celebrations for the week. Each registered foster child or youth received supplies to make a tasty treat and/or a cultural craft (Medicine Bag) and their names were put in a prize draw. The highlight of the week was an in-person event on Thursday June 2<sup>nd</sup> with a scavenger hunt downtown followed by a celebration at Maritime Heritage Centre. The FPSS Society coordinator was pleased to partner in arranging, promoting, and co-funding the week's events.

The CRFS Resource Enhancement Counsellor Team, MCFD workers, and the FPSS coordinator collaborated on other network events including August's *Meet and Splash*, October's Foster Family Appreciation Month, *Annual Halloween Trick or Treating* at MCFD, and December's *Holiday Potluck*.

#### **North Island network events**

##### *Child and Youth in Care Week*

North Island teams were unable to organize a local event this year. A foster caregiver who is a member of a First Nation community posted a notice on the North Island Foster Families Face Book group inviting children and youth registered with Quatsino First Nation to access CYIC week swag packages though the Nation. Also posted on the Face Book group was a notice to join The Fed and AgedOut.com for a virtual roundtable celebration followed by Kahoot Trivia.

##### *October Foster Family Appreciation Month*

North Island MCFD hosted a gift baskets draw for its foster caregivers which included baskets donated by MCFD Teams and a reader's-themed basket contributed by the FPSS Society.

Cheryl Jorgenson invited foster caregivers to May and June's Coffee Wednesdays, *Christmas Holiday Social* on December 20 and 21, and Mondays, Tuesdays, or Wednesdays *Spring Break Swing-By* at her Port Hardy office.

##### *Upper Island Recruitment and New Caregivers*

The local MCFD Resource team shared the March 23<sup>rd</sup> Campbell River and North Island foster caregiver resource document and the FPSS local and regional databases were updated. Through this process, the Campbell River Foster Care Home contact list went from 50 email addresses to 48 addresses and the North Island list went from 28 email addresses to 23 addresses.

The area coordinator received one community member inquiry about becoming a foster caregiver. The individual was directed to FPSS's Foster Hope website and encouraged to register for an information session.

##### *Campbell River FPSS Society Mentorship Program*

The area coordinator and Dawna Drapeau, FPSS Mentor coordinator, met by phone in March. They discussed the state of the FPSS mentorship program in the Upper Island.

##### *Partnership Meetings Identification, Presentation and Management of Common Issues for Caregivers*

The Campbell River Foster Parent-MCFD Partnership met seven times with agenda items addressing subjects from local foster caregivers, MCFD staffing updates, and information from Resource Enhancement Counsellors and FPSS Society coordinator. The Upper Island coordinator circulated each meeting's minutes through our local distribution list.

The North Island partnership did not meet this year. Collaborative discussions continued regarding a future partnership meeting process. As of January, the Campbell Resource Team managed North Island foster caregivers' resource files. The assigned Social Worker connected with each foster family as part of the transition process.

##### *Continuous Quality Improvement*

The area coordinator participated in FPSS Society staff meetings and submitted activity reports, expense reports, event summaries, Upper Island newsletter submissions and quarterly reports as required. The coordinator participated in Health and Safety committee meetings and monthly safety drills and inspections. On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, she met with the FPSS Executive Director for her annual staff performance review. She was recorder at the Regional Partnership meetings and shared the draft minutes with the FPSS Executive Director. The area coordinator acted as FPSS Society's representative on June's morning session PRIDE Pre-Service Teleconference and March's RCY Learning Circle *Skye's Legacy – Focus on Belonging*. She served as tech support and audited February's FPSS Investigation and Resolution Support training. She provided the final review of the revised Mentor Coordinator Facilitator Manual.

### **Upper Island Safe Babies Annual Report**

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Judy Hollywood Bonnett, Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator

#### *Safe Babies Program Curriculum – Virtual Modules*

The FPSS Society provided the Safe Babies Program training for Vancouver Island caregivers co-facilitated by Catherine McCauley and Ros Pringle. The online training offered two modules every Friday between April 1<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> (no sessions on April 15<sup>th</sup>, Good Friday). The sixteen MCFD-recommended foster caregivers who completed the program were from Victoria, Nanaimo, Parksville, Nanoose, Ladysmith and Port Alice. The group appreciated the excellent facilitation and Dianne Thompson's management of the Zoom platform for each session.

FPSS Society Upper Island Coordinators reported having seven Safe Babies caregivers' request information or support on infant safe sleeping protocols, childcare article, respite and relief practices for Safe Babies homes, foster to adoptive home transitions and timing, and advocating for level reviews.

#### *Basic First Aid with CPR Level "C" Training*

The FPSS Society arranged the four-hour Basic First Aid with CPR Level "C" Training on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Donna from Alert First Aid provided outstanding training to seven Campbell River Safe Babies caregivers, one Parenting and Mentorship home caregiver, two foster caregivers, and the Upper Island FPSS Society coordinator. The eleven participants earned their 3-year certification valid until May 2025. The Safe Babies caregivers received an email notification that reminded them of their responsibility to document their current Safe Babies training by submitting their certificate to a Resource Worker.

#### *Caregiver Peer Support*

The Upper Island Safe Babies Coordinator arranged April to November (except over the summer) in compliance with Provincial Health Officer's COVID-19 relaxed guidelines. She offered workshops or discussion topics tailored to her caregivers' needs. Participants appreciated the on-going training offered by the coordinator and community professionals.

In October, Catherine announced her retirement from the FPSS Safe Babies Coordinator position. She stepped away from this role at the end of December. The local groups carried on with monthly peer support gatherings arranged by the Comox Valley and Upper Island Coordinators. Each gathering provided an opportunity for caregivers to network with fellow Safe Babies caregivers. MCFD Resources Social Workers and caregiver support staff (REC/Behaviour Consultant) were invited to the meetings.

### **Upper Island Virtual Safe Babies Workshops/Support Groups July 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

DATE	VIRTUAL WORKSHOP	FACILITATOR	TOPIC ADDRESSED	ATTENDANCE
Apr 1, 8, 22 & 29	Island Wide Safe Baby Program Training (virtual)	Catherine McCauley, Ros Pringle	Safe Baby Curriculum Program.	16
Apr 8	Campbell River Safe Babies	Catherine McCauley, UI Safe Babies Coordinator	Car Seat Clinic with Cherie Dalton, BCAA Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Educator.	4
Apr 22	Comox Valley Safe Babies	Lisa Bowie, Comox Valley Coordinator	Car Seat Clinic with Kristy Doskoch, BCAA Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Educator and peer support.	3
May 20	Campbell River Safe Babies/Foster Caregivers Workshop	Judy Hollywood Bonnett, UI Coordinator	Basic First Aid – CPR C w/ Donna, Alert First Aid Inc. Training	11
May 27	Comox Valley Safe Babies	Catherine McCauley	IDP and peer support.	5
Jun 7	Comox Valley Safe Babies Peer Group	Catherine McCauley	Airforce Beach wrap-up and peer support.	6
Jun 10	Campbell River Safe Babies	Catherine McCauley	Schoolyear wrap-up, <i>Songs &amp; Games with Little Ones</i> and peer support.	6
July/August	No Safe Babies groups			
Sept 16/23	Campbell River/Comox Valley Safe Babies	Catherine McCauley	First Bites and peer support.	13

Oct 14/28	Campbell River/Comox Valley Safe Babies	Catherine McCauley	<i>Thrive by Five</i> and peer support.	10
Nov 18/25	Campbell River/Comox Valley Safe Babies	Catherine McCauley	<i>Caring for the Carer</i> and peer support.	14
Dec	No Safe Babies Caregivers groups			
Jan 20/27	Campbell River/Comox Valley Safe Babies	Judy Hollywood Bonnett, Lisa Bowie	SB group becoming peer support and peer support.	12
Feb 10	Campbell River Safe Babies	Judy Hollywood Bonnett	Grief and loss and peer support.	3
Feb 24	Comox Valley Safe Babies	Lisa Bowie	High Risk Infants.	8
Mar 17	Campbell River Safe Babies	Judy Hollywood Bonnett	Trauma and developmental benchmarks and peer support.	5
Mar 24	Comox Valley Safe Babies	Lisa Bowie	Discussion of Ministry issues with leveling Safe Baby homes.	9

## ADDITIONAL REPORTS

### ***FOSTER HOPE RECRUITMENT PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT***

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

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 purpose of the Foster Hope Recruitment Program is to increase the number foster homes on Vancouver Island by:

- Increasing awareness of the need for foster homes
- Increasing the number of people attending Foster Hope Information Sessions
- Providing accurate information on the process of applying to be a foster caregiver in BC
- Creating realistic expectations of the fostering experience (dispelling misconceptions, countering stereotypes, and presenting an understanding of the needs of children and youth who come into care)

*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 an urgent need for foster homes on Vancouver Island.
- You will receive support and training.
- There are many ways to support children in care, even if you can't be a fulltime caregiver at this time.
- Single people and same sex couples can become foster caregivers.
- You don't have to own your own home to foster.
- You can make a profound difference in a child's life.

*Objective:* Receive registrations for Foster Hope Information Sessions, receive requests for foster caregiver application packages

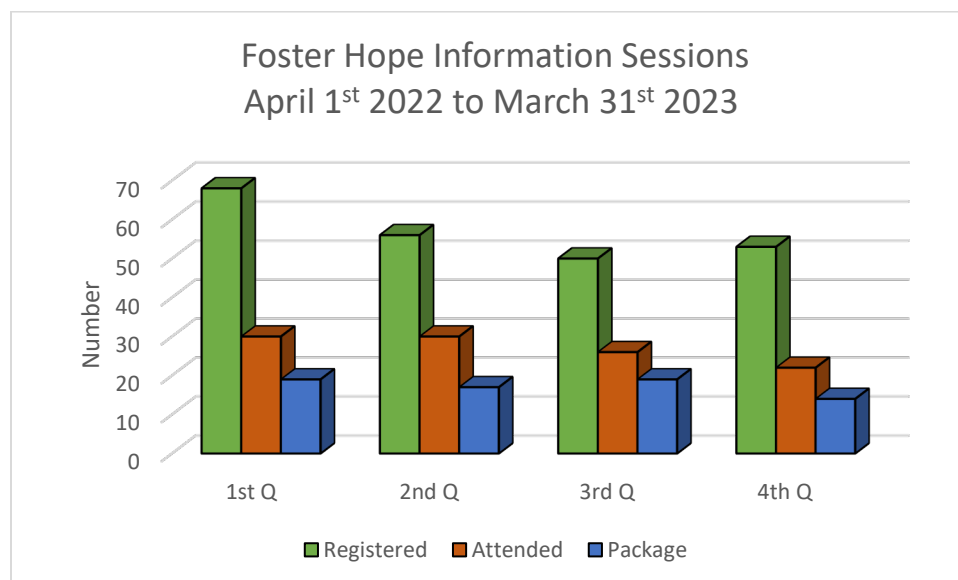
#### **Foster Hope Information Sessions**

FPSS and MCFD collaborated to provide 24 Foster Hope Information Sessions between April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, and March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. 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. Speakers at the sessions include FPSS staff members, MCFD staff members, and long-time foster caregivers. Each brings a unique perspective and shares knowledge and personal reflection on fostering.

Over 108 (number in table below indicates number of homes not participants) participants have attended these sessions and have requested 69 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 multiple-person 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 appropriate MCFD office. Participants at the information sessions come from all areas of Vancouver Island. We have also had participants from other parts of BC and Alberta.

Number of homes at Foster Hope Information Session					
	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	Total
Registered	68	56	50	53	227
Attended	30	30	26	22	108
Number of Foster Parent Application Packages Requested	19	17	19	14	69



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, Emergency, Respite and Relief, Teens, Sibling Groups, Infants, Safe Babies, Children and Youth with Support Needs, and Indigenous homes. Print ads appeared in Black Press newspapers across the island and in Island Parent magazines. The coordinator mailed printed posters MCFD offices in Central and Upper Island for distribution in the community.

#### **Facebook**

FPSS posted Facebook ads throughout the year in communities across Vancouver Island. Specific audiences are targeted in each community in a rotating pattern. These include General Fostering, homes for Sibling Groups, Youth/Teen homes, Respite and Relief homes, and homes for children and youth with Support needs. Ads generally change on a monthly basis and news ads (graphics and words) are created several times a year. The primary work is done using MS Publisher or Canva.

FPSS promoted Foster Hope Information Sessions on our main Facebook page with ads on Facebook throughout the year. There were over 200,000 views with numerous people requesting further information. FPSS continues to receive phone calls and emails requesting detailed information and assistance with registration. All were positive engagements; many resulted in attendance at information sessions. There were over 100 comments on the Facebook recruitment ads during the year.

#### **Communities Reached**

- South Island (Sidney, Sooke, Victoria, Saanich, Langford)
- Cowichan Valley (Duncan, Cowichan, Lake Cowichan)
- Port Alberni (MCFD, Usma)
- Central Island (Nanaimo, Parksville, Ladysmith)
- Comox Valley (Courtenay, Comox)
- North Island (Port Hardy)

#### **Brochures and Foster Hope Information Booklet**

The Recruitment Coordinator has Foster Hope Brochures for Teen Homes, Safe Babies, CYSN, Sibling Groups, and General Fostering and updated the *Foster Hope Information Booklet*.

#### **Posters**

FPSS printed posters in the Regional Office and mailed them to MCFD recruitment workers in South, Central and Upper Island upon request.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Eva Vowles, Recruitment Coordinator

FPSS Society has continued to provide a safe environment for staff and visitors. As Public Health restrictions eased, coordinators began to use offices for in-person training, meetings, or small social events. Regional Office staff members alternated between working from home and working in the office for much of the past year. This made implementing unannounced drills a challenge. The Organization will work harder to maintain the required schedule of drills.

Masks and hand sanitizer is available in the Regional Office.

### 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.

<i>The Island Connection</i>	
March-April	Passing on Good Advice, Connections, Good Habits for Good Sleep
May-August	Playgrounds and Play Spaces
September-October	LGBTQ2S* Moving Beyond June
November-December	Something Amazing, Seasonal Affective Disorder
January-February	Stress Buster, How to Identify Misinformation, Disinformation, and Malinformation, The Healing Power of Pets
March-April	Time Change, Reconciliation

### 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. Topics may apply to work and/or personal lives.

### 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	Updates/Inspections
April	Critical Incidents	72-Hour kits, First Aid Kits, Fire Extinguishers, Emergency Lighting, Emergency Desktop Kits, Flashlights, Internal Inspections, External Inspections (Heat/Smoke Detectors [by Property Managers])
May	Safety Tips, Working from Home	
June	Utility Failure, Bomb Threats	
July	Reducing Risk (Summer, driving, campfires), Heat Related Illness	
August	Hazardous Materials	
September	Substance Misuse, Fire Extinguisher Use	
October	Natural Disasters	
November	Suicide Prevention	
December	Cybersecurity and Human Trafficking	
January	Reducing Risk	
February	Hazardous Materials	
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.

In January 2023, the electrical/computer cords under the front office desk were re-organized to remove an extension cord that had been connect to a power bar. In the same month, the surge protectors in the offices were replaced (these should be replaced every five years). The South Island Coordinator's office was reorganized and a power bar with a longer cord was added to fit the new layout.

### Fire/Safety Equipment

FPSS Society has a company that attends the Regional Office annually to inspect fire extinguishers and emergency lighting. The committee addresses health and safety problems upon becoming aware of them.

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. Staff inspect these kits 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 inspect fire alarms and heat/smoke detectors annually. There were no deficiencies.

Regional Office staff inspect the First Aid kit, Blood Spill Kit, and Universal Precautions Kits regularly and replace any missing or expired items.

### Support

In February of 2023, long-time Regional Office employee Ruth Smith passed away. The Health and Safety Coordinator offered staff members who needed support to contact the Regional Office (Executive Director or Health and Safety Coordinator) so formal support could be arranged or informal support could be provided.

### Critical Incidents

There were no Critical Incidents between April 1<sup>st</sup> 2022, and March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023.

### First Aid Reports

There were three First Aid Reports between April 1<sup>st</sup> 2022 and March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023.

One involved a steam burn from the kettle in the kitchen. A staff member reached over the kettle while putting something into the compost container. The burn was minor and was treated onsite. The wound was disinfected and bandaged. The kettle has been relocated farther from the compost bin.

The second involved a tick bite. A staff member was bitten by a tick (identified by cell phone) while seated at her desk. The wound was washed with soap and water. No other ticks were observed in the office, and none have been seen since.

The third incident was a staff member feeling unwell at work. This staff member had been undergoing health issues at the time. The staff member rested until another staff member was available to drive her home.

These were unique incidents and do not indicate a trend or unsafe practice.

### Incident Reports

There was one incident this year. A glass bowl was knocked off a shelf and broke. The glass was cleaned up.

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### ACCESSIBILITY PLAN REVIEW

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

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 caregivers 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 2021. In addition to the information noted in the Internal Inspection, identification of barriers may come from staff meetings, Team meetings, conversations with foster caregivers, and workshop evaluations. FPSS Society's Annual Satisfaction Survey contains a question that invites caregivers to identify any barriers they experience when accessing services.

Examples 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>	<p>FPSS Society staff and Board members speak positively about fostering and address misconceptions in the community where appropriate.</p> <p>Visitors to FPSS websites occasionally post comments that contain disinformation, misinformation, and/or Malinformation. FPSS monitors comments posted on fpsss.com and fosterhope.ca and responds appropriately, depending on content. Options may include providing correct information, banning the commentor from page.</p> <p>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></p> <p>FPSS distributed a Cyber Security Document that provided guidance on cyber security and strategies to manage passwords, backups, virus scans and other related topics.</p>
<i>Inclusivity. (Attitudinal, Communication)</i>	<p>FPSS Society strives to use person-first language in all its publications (brochures, newsletters, website, social media, emails etc.) There is some information coming from support agencies suggesting that person-first language is not the preferred term for some groups, who prefer the condition to come first. Examples of</p>



	these groups include Deaf Canadians and Autistic Children. FPSS will continue to watch for details as this situation unfolds. FPSS Society reviews posters, brochures, and reports as they are created and at other intervals.
(Transportation)	This barrier has been reduced significantly as training and other events have moved to a virtual environment. When travel is involved, foster caregivers often carpool. FPSS has supported caregivers with travel reimbursements when appropriate.
Multiculturalism. (Attitudinal, Communication)	FPSS Society has joined the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria. FPSS encourages staff members to take part in training offered.
(Communication)	<a href="https://fpsss.com">fpsss.com</a> 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.
Payments for foster caregivers does not cover actual costs incurred. (Financial)	On July 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2022, MCFD increased the Maintenance Payment for foster caregivers. As of April 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2023, there will be a substantial increase to service payments. This should reduce the financial barrier.
Unique needs of individuals (Environmental, Architectural, Technology)	FPSS Society has a Request for Accommodation form staff and caregivers 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 Facebook posts, 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)	Staff and Board members have participated in Reconciliation Programs offered by the Federation of Community Social Services Agencies. Coordinators take part in workshops the organization offers to caregivers.
Cultural Agility (Attitudinal, Communication)	FPSS has provided staff members with instructions on how to customize Grammar Settings in Word documents to identify 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 personal territory acknowledgement in their email signature. FPSS welcomes staff members to include their preferred pronouns if they care to. These are options rather than directives and FPSS respects the right of staff members to make choices they are comfortable with.
Cultural Agility (Environmental)	The Regional Office posted a sign acknowledging the territory on which we live and work.
Cultural Agility (Attitudinal, Communication)	FPSS Society includes a Territory Acknowledgement in its Foster Hope Information Sessions (Recruitment).
Cultural Agility (Attitudinal, Communication)	FPSS updates its Territory Acknowledgements as preferred terminology evolves ( <i>Lands</i> becomes <i>Territories</i> ; <i>Aboriginal</i> becomes <i>Indigenous</i> ).
Language (Communication)	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.
Visual or Auditory Limitations (Technology, Environmental)	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 readability.
Availability and comfort with technology (Technology, Communication)	FPSS delivers 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

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 caregivers of Vancouver Island. Local Area Coordinators use FPSS Society owned cellular phones or their own 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. FPSS owns five cell phones; two employees use their personal cells and are compensated for the extra charges.

### **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 owns 11 laptop computers which are replaced every three to five years. 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 recently hired staff members who are unfamiliar with Microsoft Office programs. Computers are password protected and staff protect files with sensitive data (Master data base) with a second password. The Regional Office assists coordinators by accessing their computers remotely.

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. Staff members run regular scans on their systems.

FPSS Society replaces computers proactively, before they fail. FPSS cleans computers (physically and digitally) and uses them to replace other, older ones.

### **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 caregivers using email distribution lists and submits material for inclusion in The Island Connection newsletter.

### **Websites**

The FPSS Society updates its fpss.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 caregivers can take part in.

Fosterhope.ca provides the dates and times for Foster Hope Information Sessions as well as registration links and information relevant to those interested in fostering.

### **MS Teams**

FPSS uses MS Teams to connect staff members across the region communicate and share documents. The organization uses Teams to conduct staff meetings as well as other meetings (Board, Trauma-informed Transition Training).

### **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.

### **Backups**

FPSS uses OneDrive as a backup to its data.

### **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.

FPSS has now incorporated a Learning Management System to expand and improve its ability to provide quality, accessibility training online. Future training and workshops will use the system whenever appropriate, and FPS can share these resources provincially and beyond.

### 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 caregiver, and other organizations reach out to us on Facebook regarding promotion of events they are hosting that they feel may be beneficial to foster caregivers or children in care.

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

### In-House Publishing

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

## SWOT ANALYSIS REVIEW

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Eva Vowles, Recruitment Coordinator

SWOT ANALYSIS REVIEW	
Component	Outcome
	<b>Strength</b>
<i>Experienced staff and Board members</i>	Experienced staff and Board members are passionate about their work. There is low staff turnover, suggesting overall job satisfaction. Staff members have a combined total of over 109 years of experience with FPSS Society. Staff members are knowledgeable, approachable, and committed to providing quality support, information, and training.
<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 caregivers. Experienced coordinators are available by phone or in person to answer questions and provide guidance for new coordinators. Regional office is available to support and assist coordinators.
<i>Positive feedback from stakeholders</i>	Last Annual Satisfaction Surveys indicate that caregivers are satisfied with FPSS Support, Communication, and Training.
<i>Experiential Knowledge</i>	Caregivers share a wealth of experience and training that benefit their peers. Facilitators are often selected because of both their academic knowledge and their experiential knowledge. Caregivers report that they are more willing to share information and stories when they know the facilitator has personal experience with the day-to-day challenges of fostering.
<i>CARF accredited</i>	CARF has accredited FPSS since 2008. CARF Standards provide a framework to ensure the delivery of quality communication, support, and training that enhances the lives of the persons served.
<i>Flexibility in providing services</i>	FPSS delivers support, communication, and on going training through its use of phone, emails, and virtual platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams®, and in-person. The organization's Learning Management System will expand its ability to provide online training. Small, private Facebook pages allow foster caregivers to meet in a safe space to share challenges and successes. Staff members adapt quickly to unfamiliar technology and service delivery to make services accessible to all caregivers. FPSS also uses the OWL conference in its meeting and training sessions.
<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, disinformation, or malinformation. Private Facebook groups are available across the island for caregivers to connect and support one another in the absence of in-person gatherings.
<i>Collaboration with other agencies</i>	FPSS Society continues to work with support/service agencies to provide coordinated, cohesive, and informed support for foster caregivers across BC. Willingness to collaborate with agencies and community experts brings additional knowledge and resources.

<i>Mentorship Program</i>	Mentorship training continues to expand across the Vancouver Island Region. Former staff member Janet Christie has updated the Mentor program and training. New mentor training is planned for Fall of 2023.
<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 caregivers.
<i>Communication</i>	FPSS maintains open communication with foster caregivers, ministry staff, and other stakeholders. The Organization's strong website and social media presence allows it to reach a 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 locally and provincially.
<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. FPSS works with facilitators to be able to record workshops that can be replayed for those who are unable to attend the live presentation.
<i>Accessible Services</i>	Training is free whenever possible and subsidies are available for foster caregivers who experience financial barriers. Facilitators are experts in their fields and are aware of how the subject material applies in fostering.
<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.
<b>Weakness</b>	
<i>Need to increase profile</i>	Some foster caregivers and MCFD/Agency staff members are unaware of the range of services and supports FPSS provides. Local coordinators contact new foster caregivers to introduce FPSS and its role.
<i>Diverse Service Population</i>	FPSS services caregivers across Vancouver Island. Each community has its own unique needs and resources. The organization must use a wide range of formats, practices, and delivery styles to deliver services efficiently. There are often differences in ICFS agencies in terms of their openness to working with FPSS (encouraging their caregivers to attend FPSS training; allowing MCFD non-Indigenous caregivers to attend their training), collaboration on recruitment efforts, sharing contact information for their caregivers so they can receive FPSS newsletters and notices of upcoming training and foster family events.
<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. Funding limitations and desire to provide local coordinators in communities across Vancouver Island means staff positions are often part-time. The limited number of hours for some staff positions often means there few qualified applicants. FPSS selects diverse applicants when appropriate.
<i>Ministry Changes</i>	FPSS must 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 caregiver updates and FPSS's role. It is not uncommon for FPSS employees to find themselves providing information regarding MCFD policies, practices, and procedures to MCFD staff as well as caregivers. Frequent changes in MCFD staffing and differing local practices sometimes result in misunderstanding of FPSS's role (FPSS works <i>with</i> local offices, not <i>for</i> local offices).
<i>Retention of Caregivers</i>	Retention of foster homes is becoming increasingly difficult due to the aging foster caregiver population, housing availability, and the cost of living. Children and youth coming into care have more complex needs and require skilled caregivers to succeed.
<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 caregivers to gather. Limited hours mean many

	potential/current staff members must have other employment, thereby reducing the number of applicants for each position. Currently, FPSS depends fully on its contract with MCFD to operate. A diversity of funding sources would potentially allow the organization to continue if this contract ended.
<i>Missing Skill Sets</i>	FPSS provides a wide range of services and employees are often required to learn new skills on an “as needed” basis (LMS, Constant Contacts, Cultural protocols). FPSS currently has no full-time staff members with experience in writing grant and project proposals.
<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.
<i>Lack of Competition</i>	MCFD contracts FPSS Society to provide support, training, and networking to caregivers on Vancouver Island. Its unique role limits the number of competing organizations in the Region. Competition can be a motivating factor in improving and expanding services.
<i>Succession Planning</i>	While FPSS does engage in cross-training, it has not fully developed its successional plan. Loss of key staff members would create challenges within the organization.
<i>Staffing</i>	Most positions within FPSS society require a wide range of skills and experience. Coordinators may find themselves doing the work of project managers, counsellors, instructors, researchers, social media experts, and administrators. Constant changes in policies and practices, the complex needs of children and youth in care, socioeconomic pressures, and service-delivery requirements make predicting the skills that will be needed a month from now difficult.
<b>Opportunity</b>	
<i>Partnerships</i>	FPSS Society continues to partner and work with other groups with similar interests. This may include: MCFD, Royal Roads University, Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies (Delegated and non-Delegated), Community Groups (FASD, Autism, Public Health, School Districts), and other Support Agencies (Adoptions, John Howard Society, Interior Services, Okanagan Foster Parent Association) throughout the province. Keeping the best interest of the child at the heart of discussions, planning, and training unites representatives from these various groups.
<i>Reputation</i>	Local, regional, and provincial agencies recognize FPSS as being dependable, knowledgeable, and respectable.
<i>One Time Funding</i>	As a non-profit with a proven record for delivering quality service, FPSS is a suitable candidate for various funding from organizations such as the Victoria Foundation. The organization continues to apply for grants that will provide funds that support program development and delivery.
<i>Fundraising and Donations</i>	As a non-profit with a proven record for delivering quality service, FPSS occasionally receives donations to support foster family events. FPSS is looking at ways to pursue fundraising to provide training events and supports to children and youth in care that they might not otherwise have access to (Best Care Fund).
<i>Reconciliation</i>	Staff and Board members have participated in the Transformative Reconciliation Program offered by the Federation of Community Social Services Agencies. Creating an organizational definition/perspective on Reconciliation will contribute to FPSS’s commitment to creating Cultural Safety in its offices, partnerships, and service delivery. As part of reconciliation training, FPSS has developed its “FPSS Society Commitment to Reconciliation,” which is posted in the Regional office.
<i>Websites</i>	fpsss.com and fosterhope.ca reach a wide audience and are an efficient way to share information and resources and engage stakeholders as well as community members.
<i>Learning Platforms</i>	The skills and technology FPSS developed during the pandemic continue to be a valuable tool moving forward. Virtual workshops allow caregivers from all communities to participate in Regional training. FPSS can use the training beyond the region to include caregivers provincially and nationally. The organization could charge fees to those from outside the region to increase revenue.

<i>Satisfaction surveys</i>	Input from caregivers on the Annual Satisfaction Survey assists FPSS in planning training events and activities throughout the year.
<i>In-house publishing</i>	FPSS Society continues to produce newsletters, manuals, posters, brochures, social media posts, and print advertisements that promote fostering, training opportunities, and social events relevant to community members and foster caregivers.
<i>Recruitment and Retention</i>	FPSS receives 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. FPSS creates poster, print ads, and Facebook ads customized to address the need in individual communities. Regularly scheduled Foster Hope Information Sessions provide interested community members an opportunity to learn more about how fostering works in BC and connects those who want to take the next step to the ministry or agency in their community.
<i>Local Coordinators</i>	Having Local Coordinators in communities across the region allows FPSS to be aware of and address local challenges and needs quickly. Coordinators build relationships with caregivers in their area. This gives them the ability to provide support during challenging times. These relationships increase retention and improve outcomes for children and youth in care.
<b>Threat</b>	
<i>Public Health</i>	The pandemic has changed the way FPSS delivers its services. The organization has been successful in adapting its services to ensure foster caregivers feel supported, connected, informed, and trained. The loss/reduction of in-person training has resulted in fewer opportunities for caregivers to engage face-to-face. Traditionally, the opportunity to share experiences, support, and strategies at training events has often been as valuable as the training itself.
<i>Complex Needs of Children and Youth in Care</i>	Children and Youth in care have experienced trauma and have complex support needs. Caregivers require training and support to help these children heal. Due to financial costs, caregivers may have to seek part-time employment to supplement Service payments. This reduces the time they can devote to the children and youth in their home.
<i>Conflicting goals/roles between ministry personnel and caregivers</i>	Fostering can be where hearts meet policy. When foster caregivers encounter challenges in working with local ministry offices, FPSS Society refers them to relevant documents such as <i>Resource Work Policies, Standards for Foster Homes, or The Foster Family Handbook</i> while providing support and a listening ear. FPSS Society provides mentors and Investigation and Resolution Support Workers for foster caregivers. Positive, respectful, and trusting relationships between workers and foster caregivers are essential to provide the best care available to children and youth in care.
<i>Negative media attention</i>	Public perception of foster caregivers and fostering in general continues to vary widely. Opinions range from viewing foster caregivers as heroic people doing incredibly challenging work to believing they are only in it for the money. News stories implying a cause-and-effect relationship between youth being in care and being involved with homelessness, criminality, and addiction 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 caregivers.
<i>Decreasing number of foster homes</i>	As the average age of foster caregivers increases, the number of foster homes decreases. FPSS is increasing efforts to recruit new foster caregivers, especially those with specific skills in working with special needs children, children who have experienced multiple traumas, and at-risk youth.
<i>Increased cost of living</i>	FPSS Society continues to seek opportunities to advocate for supports for family care homes. Despite recent increases to Maintenance and Service payments, there are still challenges. In the current economy, few families can afford housing that includes the extra bedroom/s needed to foster. It often means that sibling groups coming into care must be separated and placed in different homes at a time when being together would reduce the trauma they experience when removed from their home.
<i>Resources</i>	In addition to the cost of physical resources caregivers must supply, time is another limited resource. Caregivers may not have time to attend valuable



	training because of the need for outside work, or the needs of the children and youth in their home.
<i>Role confusion</i>	There is confusion amongst the public, MCFD staff, and caregivers regarding the roles of MCFD, BCFPA, FPSS, and local foster caregiver groups. FPSS provides clarification in <i>The Island Connection</i> , on its website, and at Foster Hope Information Sessions, and in Welcome Packages. Foster caregivers having an issue with MCFD may be reluctant to contact FPSS for support when they believe the two agencies function as one. Foster caregivers need to understand that they can speak to FPSS in confidence (with the usual exceptions). This is emphasized at For Hope Information Session.
<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. Most MCFD offices on Vancouver are currently critically understaffed due to a number of factors. New staff in new roles require time to master the complexities of the fostering community and transition from what they learned in books to what happens in the real world with caregivers, children and youth who have not read the books.
<i>Frequent changes to foster caregiver data base</i>	FPSS Society relies on MCFD and ICFS 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 fillable update forms to MCFD/ICFS 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 caregivers.
<i>Political Environment</i>	Changes to fostering in BC and Canada have the potential to alter the services MCFD contracts FPSS to provide. Implementation of <i>The Act representing First Nations, Inuit, and Metis children, youth and families</i> will return the protection and guardianship of Indigenous children and youth back to their home communities. The Ministry of Children and Family Development is committed to reducing the number of children and youth in care. This does not necessarily mean there are fewer children coming into care, but that they are coming in under distinct types of care such as kinship and out-of-care options. These caregivers still need support, training, and connections to community resources. The term “foster parent” is being replaced by the term “foster caregiver.” This is to reflect the profound, unique bond between the child and the biological family.

