


We respectfully acknowledge the traditional territories of the
Coast Salish Nations and Nuu-chah-nulth Nations of southern Vancouver Island



SOOKE FAMILY RESOURCE SOCIETY

Annual Report April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023

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Our Vision

RESILIENT, CONNECTED PEOPLE

Our Mission

We provide people of all ages and abilities on southern Vancouver Island, with services and resources that encourage them to enhance skills, address challenges, and create a path forward.

Board of Directors

Dal Little	Chair	Janice Alexander	Director
Adriana Martinez Fernandez	Vice-Chair	Bobbi Neal	Director
Ellen Bergerud	Secretary	Susan Percival	Director
Sam Purdy	Secretary	Michael Strong	Director
Brian De Clare	Treasurer	Julie Bowser	Director
		Jeremy Andersen	Director

2022-2023 Achievements, Adjustments, and Improvements

Through this past year, we settled into some new ways of doing business, acknowledging that the Covid-19 pandemic and operating as a “hybrid” union/non-union team has changed how we practice to support the needs of the people we serve, and of all the SFRS work teams.

Our fiscal year 2022- 2023 started off with some uncertainty, as the BCGEU and government negotiations were stalled. We had several “first time” experiences as a result, including preparations for a potential strike action. Thankfully, a strike was avoided, and after a full year of cautious waiting, a new collective agreement was ratified in March 2023. For our non-union employees a review of equity was completed, and we were able to implement some improvements for benefits and RRSP contributions.

Other work regarding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion was also started this year, as we were granted the lead role in a project with the Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses. This is an exciting initiative with a wide scope to advance EDI throughout the Capital Region.

Several board members stepped down this year, and we welcomed new members Jeremy Andersen, Julie Bowser, Micheal Strong, and Sam Purdy. Essential work was accomplished by board committees; leading the development of a new Strategic Plan, starting the work of a Fund Development Plan, and planning to hire a new executive director in the new year.

As part of essential post-Covid healing we started conversations focused on increasing our happiness at work. After 2 years of small and virtual meetings, we finally had an in-person training day in May, and an all-staff appreciation event in December.

The high point of the year came close to year-end when we received the CARF accreditation report in March. Of almost 2000 international CARF standards to be met or exceeded, the report cited just 3 areas for improvements. This confirmed our “best ever” results in accreditation.

As we look ahead to 2024 our efforts are focused on coming closer to achieving our vision of Resilient, Connected People. We are implementing Happiness at Work activities, working towards increasing non-restricted revenues, and welcoming a new executive director. It's going to be a busy year!

Strategic Initiatives

In this final year of the SFRS Strategic Plan, several initiatives were completed:

- Regular reviews of programs for alignment with SFRS mandate are ongoing.
- ORCA database implementation continues.
- HRIS implementation in Payworks is complete for payroll functions and maintaining employee records.
- Training plans included in Payworks HRIS are continuing.

The following activities incomplete from the “old” Strat plan will continue:

- Review of space needs for growing AOS services/SICC program in West Shore.
- Review Operations for budget 2024-25 for funding needs.
- Increase IT security with second factor authentication.
- Implement ORCA for Management Plans and Strategic Plan and reporting.

A board committee was formed to develop a new Strategic Plan, which is planned for approval at the Annual General Meeting in September 2023.

Health and Safety

In addition to the ongoing accreditation and WorkSafe required standards the following health and safety activities took place through the year:

- The Health and Safety Committee met regularly throughout the year.
- Regular health and safety activities continued: Committee meetings, procedure drills, safety site inspections at all program locations, fire inspections, and reviews of policies and Critical Incidents.
- The Health and Safety committee moved all required manuals and documents to a digital format.
- All committee meetings are now held virtually through Teams online making it more inclusive for staff to attend from various locations.
- We had 14 incident reports through the year ranging from a bump on the head in the playground to a fire on the property (and everything in between).
- We continued conversations with all staff teams to develop employee wellness strategies, and we are beginning to implement Happiness at Work activities.
- Implemented a new sign in/out procedure for fire wardens at Wadams Way location.
- The policy Animals in the Workplace was reviewed, and a comprehensive new policy has been developed for a safe and low-risk way to support inviting pets into our spaces.
- Six Critical Incidents were recorded in Homeshares and submitted to CLBC. SFRS works with the homeshare providers and CLBC to determine appropriate actions/improvements using the information recorded in these incidents.

Risk Management

The Risk Management Plan was reviewed and updated in December 2022.

- Regular risk management activities continued, including insurance review, criminal records checks, policy revisions, inventory review, board orientation, staff evaluations, training, and staff records reviews and updates.
- A Fund Development Committee was struck. The focus of this committee will be the development of a plan to support a net zero Budget average across the organization, and review opportunities for increasing unrestricted funds.
- Continued review of HR policies and practices with a lens to consistency and equity.
- Board members received individualized tech support.
- A comprehensive Business Continuity Plan was completed.
- Health and Safety protocols are reviewed as needed to maintain compliance with provincial recommendations/orders and contract responsibilities.

Accessibility and Accommodations

The Accessibility Plan was reviewed and updated in November 2022.

- The policy for Remote Work (previously Work from Home) was revised to include planning for safety and communications while working remotely.
- Space needs for our main office workers was reviewed, resulting in shared desks and work-at-home scheduling.
- Flooring in the Bryn Maur activity room was changed for efficient cleaning.
- A review of equity for non-union employees was started. Some improvements were implemented, some improvements are still being reviewed for cost impacts.
- Our social enterprise Thrift Shop opened in a new location with a long-term lease.
- Review of all policies for gender neutral language continues.
- Anti-bias training was completed for employees.
- Requests for accommodation were supported within our capacity to do so. Employees requested work from home options and flexibility in schedules for healing after surgery and to support a child's school challenges. A client was accommodated to continue receiving services after moving outside of our service geographic area.

Communications

The Communications Plan was updated in May 2022.

- The SFRS Monthly Memo is now consistently used as an internal communications tool. Messages are shared about staffing changes, union updates, board activities, technology.
- MS Teams training continues to improve our skills at using this tool both internally and with partners and funders.
- SFRS participated with the regional Neighborhood House Coalition in productive meetings with provincial legislators. We shared information about our services, how Neighbourhood Houses can support provincial goals, and our challenges for core operations funding. This "Outreach Day" at the legislature is planned to continue annually.
- Use of virtual tools implemented through the pandemic (YouTube, program Facebook pages) was continued for program participants to stay connected to program delivery, and to share program messaging.
- Re-established our pre-covid participation in in-person community activities including National Indigenous People's Day, Sooke Duck Day, annual Sooke Chamber of Commerce Awards event.

**SFRS participants celebrating
Nation Indigenous Peoples Day**



Technology

The Technology Plan was updated in November 2022. Technology improvements and activities through the year included:

- The IT Lead position was reduced to 2/3 time to support fundraising planning.
- Increased the flexibility of access to our digital resources for on-site and remote workers by moving appropriate employees to mobile technology, laptops & tablets.
- Updated and increased wireless access at Wadams Way and Bryn Maur locations.
- Monitored and adjusted mobile phone data use to accommodate remote access.
- Added a new Switch to Wadams Way infrastructure.
- Better integration with firewalls at all locations.
- Development and implementation of the SFRS bespoke database, Orca continued, we rolled out the module for the Welcome Home Program, and updates and enhancements for other modules continue as required.
- Continuous monitoring of threats and potential exposure in coordination with our technology service provider.
- Review to replace the antiquated phone system is in progress.
- New MS Teams on-line requirements for accreditation were implemented.
- A new policy for Service Delivery Using Communication Technology was developed and implemented.
- A comprehensive Business Continuity Plan was finalized, including a significant technology component.
- The IT Lead position supports technology emergencies as needed.
- Covid has forever impacted our philosophies regarding the use and type of end user technology. We continue the acquisition of laptops as desk top computers “age out.”
- Technology security training is ongoing with a regular feature in the Monthly Memo and at SFRS all-staff training days. System safety is integral to all planning and implementation, with training emphasizing on keeping exposure and mitigation front of mind for all staff to keep our systems safer.

Finance

Overall, we finished the year in a positive financial position. The following is of note:

- The largest impact to the organization was the process of the negotiation of a new collective agreement for our unionized employees. Increases in wage rates and changes in health and dental benefits, adoption of union dues, a switch to employer paid LTD and the introduction of the Municipal Pension Plan continue to be a significant cost to the organization.
- Provincial funding remained stable; Regional funding increased with a municipal services contract and a new contract for mental health services through Island Health, and federal funds decreased as pandemic subsidies were no longer available.
- Program delivery revenue increased by more than 40% due to increased Preschool fees, increased sales in the Thrift Shop (due to a revised business model and move to a larger retail space), and an increase in the amount of fee-for-service counselling provided to clients.
- Personnel Expenses increased by 10.80% due to the cost of unionization and wage grid step increases and the ratification of a new union collective agreement.
- Our capital asset base increased by \$38,617.79 mainly due to the: upgrade and replacement of computer systems (\$27,027.59); the purchase of office equipment and furniture (\$11,590.20).
- Leasehold improvement in the amount of \$15,067.22 was made to our Anna Marie Thrift Shop location and our Bryn Maur and outreach Services location.
- Finance policies were reviewed, with revisions for the Fuel Cards policy, and the implementation of an improved tracking system for distribution of cash cards.

Cultural Competency, Diversity, and Inclusion

The Cultural Competency, Inclusion and Diversity Plan was updated in November 2022.

- Continued to diversify board membership. This is an ongoing activity.
- Prioritized learning regarding use of pronouns and appropriate gender-based language.
- Revised service intake forms to include socio-economic factors, spiritual beliefs and religious factors impacting the people we serve.
- SFRS is an active participant in the regional Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion project of Neighbourhood House Coalition. SFRS is leading this project on behalf of the Coalition.
- The management team is considering a Decolonization Plan to be developed in the coming year.

Succession Planning

The Succession Plan for key positions and the board of directors was updated in May 2022.

- The Executive Director submitted notice of resignation in December with a 12- month notice period. A succession committee to hire a new ED was struck in January 2023.
- Advocacy to increase the USTAT program clinician to full time was unsuccessful in June 2022.
- Recruitment of board members to increase diversity and program representation is ongoing.
- Board succession strategies are on hold with efforts focussed on recruiting a new ED.

Human Resources and Staff Development

Much time and effort were given through the year implementing changes for our Human Resources functions within a union/non-union/ management “hybrid” model.

- The collective agreement for our unionized employees expired on March 31, 2022. The process of the negotiation of a new collective agreement for our unionized employees was delayed throughout the year, and a new collective agreement was finally ratified on March 31, 2023.
- At year end, SFRS has 50 employees, 35 contractors and 30 regular volunteers.
- Through this year, SFRS issues 17 Records of Employment to employees (9 terminations and 2 leaves), and 14 new employees were hired.
- Policy reviews and revisions this year included: Sick Leave, General Leave of Absence and Use of Personal Vehicle for work.
- Wellness and Happiness at Work themes were explored through the year.
- In celebration of a successful CARF accreditation, a staff appreciation event was held in December. We gathered at a local pub for food, fun and friendship.
- All-Staff Training Day was held in May, a first opportunity to gather in-person post-Covid.
- Employees completed an unprecedented amount of training through the year.

Communities of Practice and Learning Circles

The Executive Director, or delegate, continues to participate regularly in local, regional and/or provincial groups, committees, and/or learning circles to ensure our programs and the people we serve have a face and a voice at sector and community planning tables.

- Neighbourhood House Coalition, Capital Region (regional).
- Community Living BC Service Providers (South Island region).
- District of Sooke Health Care Committee (Island Health led with local municipality).
- Sooke Region Communities Health Network.
- District of Sooke Age Friendly Committee.
- Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce.
- Tenants OHS group, Sooke and West Shore Child Youth and Family Centres.
- The Village Initiative (previously SD62 Health Schools – cross sector regional service planning group).
- Bean Counters (finance group - regional).
- Federation of Community Social Services (provincial social services advocacy group).

Neighbourhood House Program

This service team supports all the other programs and services at SFRS to continue operating smoothly. Also, Neighbourhood House functions as a point of contact and resource centre for the community, providing the following supports:

- Distribution of bus tickets, mail service, fax, photocopying, and public phone access for clients of the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR) receiving or trying to access provincial Income Assistance.
- Distribution of food and other donations received at the main reception in Sooke. These donations averaged over \$5,000 a month in value and are distributed through the program staff as needed for families and clients.
- Information about community services and resources in Sooke, West Shore and Greater Victoria.
- Reception services for SFRS as well as other building tenants at the Sooke Child, Youth and Family Centre, offering resources and referrals to clients and the public.
- Reception services offered more than 5,200 supports throughout the year.

NH provides the administrative functions for all SFRS programs and service locations, as well as the overall agency administrative needs. This includes:

- Reception services for all programs.
- Finance services for all programs.
- Human Resources services for all programs.
- Agency-wide services for Information Technology and technology security.
- Agency governance activities and board support.
- Agency Strategic Planning and Management Plans.
- Agency-wide administrative management (including health and safety, quality assurance, legal requirements, facilities management, etc.).
- Leadership of our accreditation activities.

Bridging the Digital Divide

- In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, this program was developed in partnership with the Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses Capital Region in 2020.
- BDD offered technology help desk support for community members referred through the Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses, Capital Region.
- BDD has continued to support older adults at James Bay Community Project. Using a combination of group and one-to-one sessions the participants learn and build knowledge to navigate their best use of technology.
- BDD supported SFRS board members with technology access and training.
- We continue to seek funding support to sustain this service in the longer term.

A BDD story...

The real work of BDD is translation. Translating what they are asking for to ensure what they are saying is what they want. Finding a solution or process, and then translating the tech-jargon into a process they will understand and remember. One of the participants has dyslexia and has a hard time communicating in text from. Texting and email are the main ways individuals, businesses and service providers are communicating. This created issues when a person has issues with reading and writing. But speech and listening can be a way to get around this.

After trying different solutions for this particular participant, we figured out that using the different built in transcription applications on a smart phone, in this case Android, allowed them to both receive and send messages to family, health care providers, and other support systems. "I feel so understood." Was what she said after one of our sessions.

SFRS Community Thrift Shop

Reduce, Re-use, Recycle, Reinvest

The thrift shop had a very interesting and successful year. The thrift shop location move was much bigger than anticipated. In the month of July, we received more than 1800 volunteer hours to facilitate the move, with the Sooke Lions, Sooke Harbourside Lions and Sooke District Lioness Lions being fully engaged to help. Volunteers worked tirelessly on a Saturday morning to have the old location completely empty by noon. Lorne & Donna Christensen provided morning coffee and treats, and a delicious lunch for all 30 volunteers to enjoy. The official opening was held on August 20, with the Mayor, SFRS Board members, volunteers, and our valued donors and customers enjoying a festival atmosphere with music, hot dogs, and drinks. It was a wonderful way to acknowledge the hard work that it took to get this new location up and running.



- Thrift Shop is still operating at fewer hours than pre-pandemic but is consistently exceeding sales targets.
- On-line auctions continue to be very popular to engage our customers and donors, and to maintain the program and the agency profile in the Sooke community.
- Volunteers received orientation and training with a focus on maintaining a safe environment.
- Thrift shop volunteers continue to be highly committed to this service, offering 7752 hours of time and talent last year, valued at a significant amount of \$116,280.
- A Volunteer Appreciation event was held in January, which also incorporated an annual after-holidays cleanup of the store. Lunch was provided, and all volunteers received a store gift certificate. Our volunteers love thrifting!
- The Thrift Shop sales significantly surpassed our projections, resulting in a year-end surplus of more than \$90,000 for this program.
- At the Sooke Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards in November, the SFRS Community Thrift Shop won awards for Best Retail Service, Best Non-Profit and Volunteer Service as well as the most coveted People's Choice award. It was truly humbling to be recognized in this way by our community.

Family Resource Program

The **Family Resource Program (FRP)** brings parents and children together to strengthen parenting, promote social networking, reduce isolation, and promote community cohesion. The FRP is grounded in the belief that consistent positive parenting practices and secure, healthy parent-child relationships are fundamental factors in all aspects of healthy child development. The FRP serves families with children, ranging in age from birth through school-age, living in the Local Health Area 62, including: Colwood, Langford, Metchosin, Highlands, and Sooke to Port Renfrew.

This program provides the following services:

- Parent-Child drop-in groups (Parent-Tot Drop-In, Parent Discussion Group, Neurodiverse Play Group, Family Support Group).
- Family Support Outreach, Prenatal Education and Outreach.
- Parent education workshops and courses.
- Special family events.
- A food program and "free store" for participants.

The FRP provides support for Sooke School District 62 with:

- Strong Start Outreach.
- Ready- Set-Learn events.
- Early Development Instrument support.
- Transitions to Kindergarten Provincial Pilot Program.

The FRP works actively in the community supporting Early Childhood Development initiatives and networks, as well as raising both the profile of SFRS and funds for programming.

Program Objectives include:

- Family support, information, and referrals.
- Play-based learning and early literacy.
- Parent education, including child development, effective parenting, health and wellness, language and literacy, family economy, as well as awareness and reduction of risk factors.
- Increased knowledge of effective parenting skills for parents/caregivers.
- Increased level of personal and family support from the community for parents/caregivers.
- Gains in children's social and emotional competence through play experiences.

Activities and Outputs for 2022-2023

- 7 families supported with monthly Good Food Boxes; 31 families were supported with BC Association of Farmer's Market Coupon Nutrition Program; all FRP program participants were provided access to the SFRS food pantry.
- FRP YouTube channel provided craft, cooking and food, and circle time playlists.
- 2 SFRS Newsletters, 2 FRP Program brochures, and 12 FRP Program Calendars were provided.

Prenatal Education and Outreach:

- 18 pregnant women, plus 18 partners, received 72 direct service hours in 4 six-week prenatal course sessions.
- 25 pregnant women, plus 12 partners/family members received 1,300 hours of one-to-one or small group outreach support.
- No clients received Doula support this year.

Drop-in Group Participation:

- ECD Information/Referrals/Linkage provided to families: 14,880.
- Parent-Child mentoring provided: 1,983.
- Intervention/Supportive advice provided: 1,369.
- Number of families on email distribution list: 1,085.
- Drop-in groups provided (virtual and in-person): 273.
- Attendance at drop-in groups (virtual and in-person): adults 2,598; children 2,680.
- Participation of drop-in programs reflects cumulative attendance of 460 families: 453 adults, 570 children.



Family Support:

- 54 families received formal intake and support services.
- 1,076 FS Information/Referrals and 205 linkages to additional services were provided.
- 3,289 instances of mentoring, supportive advice, and/or intervention were provided for clients.
- 410 food supports were provided to families.

"They've sat with me while I've cried, shared practical ways of healing life struggles, explained confusing child development milestones, checked in with me when I've experienced trauma, made me laugh so I go home lighter and given me tools to care for myself and my family."

FRP participant, Winter 2022

"They provide so much support advocating for my child and I and helping us navigate the confusion of parenting with a disability."

FRP participant, Winter 2022

Client and Program Participant Feedback

Client and Participant Feedback is gathered formally through a month long “snapshot” survey, at the culmination of one-to-one work or course sessions, and informally in group discussions or conversations with participants.

Prenatal Education and Outreach Services Outcomes

- 100% of group session clients and 100% of outreach clients indicated they would not have been involved in a Prenatal Program if it were not available in Sooke.
- 100% of group session clients and 100% of outreach clients identified at least ten areas of increased perinatal knowledge as a result of coming to the program.
- 100% of prenatal clientele learned about additional supports/resource in the community and 100% of outreach clients received additional supports based on need.

Drop-In Group and Family Support Programs Outcomes

- 19 categories of parenting/family/life skills addressed in programming had up to 99% of participants state a gain in knowledge.
- 100% of Children gained social competence and showed development through play experiences.
- 100% of Parents/caregivers expressed an increased level of connection to their community.
- 100% of Parents/caregivers gained awareness of community resources.
- 100% of Parents/caregivers stated they were satisfied with program service delivery.

Program Trends and Analysis

- FRP group program participants had increased need of the Family Support and Pre/Postnatal Outreach services in this fiscal year. The acuity of need was quite high and took more services hours per client than in past years.
- Family Support service needs were of an on-going nature and clients maintained on-going service files.
- Postnatal Outreach support needs increased and were of an on-going nature that included transitions to Family Support Outreach.
- Programs and services returned to pre-Covid models.



Achieved Program Quality Improvement Goals for 2022-2023

- Made decisions regarding which programs benefit from online registration as an on-going option and provided that service.
- Re-developed connection with VIHA-Public Health regarding referrals and Public Health Nurse participation in FRP groups and with Prenatal services.
- Created new model for Team connection/de-brief after group, and a new model for inservice learning for FRP Team with content and discussion quarterly.
- Secured grant funding for 2023-2024 Prenatal services.

New Program Quality Improvement Goals for 2023-2024

- Engage in the new Cap-C Federal Government renewal process.
- Focus on “common language” with FRP staff using FRP philosophy.
- Assess and consider service model changes for the FS group in Sooke.
- Secure grant funding for 2024-2025 Prenatal services.

FRP Community Involvement/Partnerships

Family and Early Childhood Resource Network (Coordinator/Chair for Sooke and Westshore)
Neighborhood House Coalition; Capital Children Coalition (Cap-C)
Sooke Literacy Task Group; Literacy Connection Westshore
Child and Youth Health Network; Westshore Family Strategy Group
Boys and Girls Club of Greater Victoria
Sooke School District No.62: Human Early Learning Partnership (EDI) Community Trainer,
Strong Start Support
Island Health - Public Health
Membership with BC Association of Family Resource Programs
and BC Pregnancy and Outreach Programs



Kingfisher Preschool

Kingfisher Preschool has been operating since 1987. The Kingfisher program, which is licensed by the Island Health Authority, serves children aged 30 months to 5 years and their families.

At Kingfisher, we believe that children learn best in a safe, secure environment, with age-appropriate challenges to their physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development. Our aim is to nurture the child's natural creativity and curiosity through play. We encourage the development of a positive self-image, self-esteem, and high self-acceptance through open ended activities where exploration, discovery, and repetition can happen at the child's own pace. The curriculum supports play-based learning and early literacy, with emphasis on social and emotional development. We offer an inclusive program that addresses the needs of each child and provides additional staffing for children who need extra support. In Kingfisher, groups of 20 children attend with 2 or 3 qualified staff. Positive relationships with children and parents/caregivers are developed and nurtured.



Program Objectives include:

- Children gain social competence and learning through play experiences.
- Parents/caregivers increase the level of personal and family connection within the community.
- Preschool staff help to identify if an early intervention referral is needed.

Activities and Outputs for 2022-2023

The SFRS reporting year spans two programming years for the Kingfisher Preschool.

- Starting in September 2022, 60 spaces were made available with an 89% program registration rate throughout the 2022-2023 preschool year.
- Kingfisher Preschool was involved in the SD62 Sooke Early Years Transition to Kindergarten pilot program.
- 2 SFRS Newsletters and 10 Kingfisher Newsletters and programming calendars provided.
- Communication with parents was maintained through online distribution of newsletters and Early Childhood Development information in addition to a private Kingfisher Facebook page, phone, and face-to-face connections.
- Parents were invited to orientation sessions and families were provided with individual family tours prior to the start of preschool to create connection and cohesiveness regarding the Kingfisher program and health related protocols.
- Families with children "graduating" from Kingfisher attend a wonderful ceremony celebrating their children.

Client and Program Participant Feedback

Parents are offered the opportunity to provide formal evaluation of the Kingfisher program at the end of the program year. Informal feedback is solicited regularly from parents and children in the classroom.

Formal survey outcomes indicated:

- 96% rated the happiness of their children in the program as good-excellent.
- 97% found the staff's skills to be excellent; 97% found the quality of the program to be excellent.
- 100% found the safety of the environment and procedures to be good - excellent.

Informal feedback outcomes emphasized:

- Staff knowledge and program environment are greatly valued and appreciated.
- Parents emphasized the value of a play-based program to develop their children's social/emotional development.
- Parents expressed strong appreciation for the provision of a 4-year-old program.
- The children love Kingfisher Preschool - their teachers, playing outside, circle time with songs, dance, and stories, and the daily play activities-especially crafts!

Program Trends and Analysis

- Preschool parents expressed continued appreciation for the program and value a quality play-based preschool opportunity for their children within their community.
- An average of 22% of the children in the program have identified additional needs.
- An average of 43% of program participants receive the Affordable Child Care Benefit.
- The Kingfisher team continues to see a need to give increased attention to children's development of self-regulation and social/emotional development.

Achieved Program Quality Improvement Goals for 2022-2023

- Gave focused attention to fundraising – 3 to 4 activities throughout preschool year.
- Provided guidance and modeling from senior staff for junior staff due to staff shifts.
- Utilize SCD and QA guidance for working with high number of preschool children with support needs; provided staff in-service learning regarding specific support methods.
- Re-worked how we provide the Meet the Teacher and Open House events.

New Program Quality Improvement Goals for 2023-2024

- Fundraise to support the funding needs of the preschool: staffing for support needs, material supplies, rent.
- Develop new service model for T/Th PM class; assess service model for potential changes to T/TH AM class.
- Manage impact of the changes in the government's provision of SCD service for children with additional support needs.

"You care deeply about the families attending Kingfisher. I have felt heard, cared for, and respected in our talks and it's nice to know we can have such open and productive dialogue."

- Kingfisher Parent, 2022/2023

Child Care Resource and Referral

The Sooke-Westshore Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) has been a program of Sooke Family Resource Society since 1997. The Sooke-West Shore CCRR serves families and child care providers living in Local Health Area 412, including: Colwood, Langford, Metchosin, Highlands and Sooke to Port Renfrew.

This program provides the following services: recruitment of and support for Registered License-not-Required (RLNR) child care providers, parent referrals for child care, workshops and training courses for parents and care providers, consultations on child development and child care issues, drop-in playgroups for children and care providers, network information about and support with provincial child care programs, initiatives, subsidies and other community services, equipment and resource lending for care providers and families, as well as support and health/safety site visits for Registered LNR care providers.

Program Objectives include:

- Registered LNR care providers receive support to meet and maintain the criteria to be included on the Provincial LNR Registry.
- Parents receive up-to-date referral, subsidy (ACCB), and child care resource information in a timely manner.
- Licensed caregivers can access support.
- Child care providers and parents receive access to training to increase knowledge of effective care giving.

Activities, Outputs, and Outcomes for 2022-2023

- Membership: 1 Registered License Not Required and 99 Licensed Care Providers.
- 421 parents received child care referrals; 6,107 parents and care providers received referral to other community resources; 123 parents/care providers received ACCB support services.
- 4 CCRR Newsletters and 2 SFRS Newsletters provided.
- 25 Workshops, Training Courses, Network/Appreciation Events provided virtually; 340 participants attended training opportunities and appreciation activities for care providers.
- The CCRR Toy Lending Library was used by 44 care providers, parents, and community members.

Client and Program Participant Feedback

Client and program participant feedback is gathered through annual surveys, and at bi-annual RLNR support visits. Verbal feedback is solicited and recorded on a regular basis and at semi-annual networking gatherings. Feedback included:

- The CCRR was very supportive for care providers trying to navigate the new government initiatives.
- The CCRR service provided timely referrals with helpful supplementary information for the process of finding quality childcare.
- The CCRR provided necessary support regarding the completion of the ACCB process for families.
- Appreciation for the monthly email updates and quarterly newsletters.

"Erin's workshop was very resourceful and provided me with the tools and knowledge to be creative at circle time. She was fun and knowledgeable about the topic."

-Sooke-West Shore Child Care Provider - 2022-2023

Program Trends and Analysis

- ACCB referrals/consultations continue to require more time as client needs are increasingly more complicated.
- Professional support for care givers has seen an increase as the needs they are faced with become more complicated.
- Provincially, and in our region, RLNR numbers continue to remain lower than in past years.
- Registration processing time for RLNRs was 6-8 weeks, dependent on client's completion of responsibilities.
- The workshop/training offered were regularly full to capacity.



Achieved Program Quality Improvement Goals for 2022-2023

- Created an annual fee/rates survey for regional data from care providers to provide to families.
- Enhanced and updated the Family Child Care Course online/virtual format.
- Developed a Community of Practice/Learning Circle for care providers.
- Created an online registration format for workshops.
- Gave more attention to the EYPD site for online workshops.
- Updated the Toy Lending Library catalogue and items (themed bins).
- Re-built a post-Covid outreach connection with care providers with on-site visits and check-ins.

New Program Quality Improvement Goals for 2023-2024

- Develop an annual plan to meet the Ministry's new criteria, including Quality and Inclusion Grant.
- Enhance service hours to include evening and weekends offerings to meet the requirements of the Ministry's pilot project regarding this contractual obligation.
- Support/provide the *Year with the BC-EFL* course in partnership with Frog Hollow Neighborhood House.

CCRR Community Involvement

Early Learning and Care Committee
Communities of Practice Steering Committee – South Island
Island Health Child Care Facilities Licensing Office and Officers; Island Health Public Health
Sooke School District No.62
Ministry of Education and Child Care
Regional partners: CCRRs in Victoria, Duncan, and Nanaimo



South Island Community Connections (SICC)

This program serves neurodiverse adults with achieving greater independence and inclusion within the community. The program offers skilled and compassionate community support staff who provide person-centered Outreach, Skill Development and Inclusion supports. Examples of services offered include building life skills (ADLs), financial literacy, shopping assistance, transportation, hygiene, medical compliance, physical and leisure activities. Participants in this program are referred to us from Community Living British Columbia (CLBC).

Empowering Personal Wellness Adult Activity Club (EPW)

This program offers individuals referred to us by CLBC opportunities for skill development and community inclusion within a group model. In recent years, this program has seen marked growth in attendance and popularity because it unites peers with similar interests and diverse skills. The group setting provides a safe, welcoming environment, engaging activities and emotional support.

Program Activity in 2022-2023

- Increased attendance and word-of-mouth referrals in EPW Adult Activity Club.
- Enhanced activities, skills training, personal growth, and inclusion programming in EPW Adult Activity Club.
- Implementation of revised person-centered, SICC/EPW Personal Care Plan.
- Successful approval and completion of the Work Experience Grant program from the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.

Trends and Analysis

- 55 clients were provided with community inclusion, skill development and outreach services.
- 11 newly referred individuals joined our service.
- 4 clients left SICC services.

Program Goals for 2023-2024

- Continued Quality Assurance and Improvement plans for service delivery.
- On-going service delivery development and focus on skills development and outreach.
- Focused development in employment-for-all service delivery.
- Focused development in Community Inclusion Enhancement.

SICC/EPW Participant Survey Results

Client Feedback is gathered formally through surveys and quality of life interviews and informally by group discussions or talks with participants. In 24 formal surveys returned to us clients indicated what was important to them:

- 22 said socializing.
- 18 said accessing community.
- 15 said learning new skills.
- 18 said attending Activity Club.
- 17 said completing their goals.
- 90% of respondents were satisfied with their support worker being flexible with meeting times.
- 95% of respondents were satisfied with their needs being understood.
- 80% of respondents were satisfied that they felt they could make their own goals.
- 95% of respondents were satisfied that their worker was accepting and non-judgmental.
- 90% of respondents felt they had made positive changes in their lives.



Welcome Home - Home Sharing Services (WH)

This is a CLBC funded residential option for adults with developmental disabilities. Individuals are matched with the Home Share Provider (HSP) and living arrangements that best suit their lifestyle and needs. Living situations vary from a room in a house with regular involvement from the HSP to independent suites with caring oversight. HSPs provide a safe and secure home environment and support individuals' needs and goals. This may include helping with meal planning and preparation, budgeting, and time management, as well as connecting them to community resources, employment opportunities, support networks, and public transportation.

Program Activity in 2022-2023

- 37 individuals and 30 home share providers were supported by SFRS.
- 5 funded home share individuals joined.
- 8 individuals moved to independent living or alternative accommodation.
- 7 new home share providers joined our program.
- 6 home share providers retired, moved, or otherwise resigned.

Program Improvements and Achievements

- Improved Monitoring Tools and Quality of Life reporting.
- Improved Home Share Coordinator Manual.
- Approved grant eligibility from the BCCEO network for online HSP training and development models.
- Successful approval and completion of the Work Experience Grant program from the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.
- Implementation of the customized ORCA online database module.
- Revised Home Share Provider satisfaction survey completed: roll out date September/October 2023.

Program Goals for 2023-2024

- Fully implement digital tracking and record keeping in ORCA database.
- Continued Quality Assurance and Improvement plans for service delivery.
- Continued Quality Assurance and Improvement plans for staff and Homeshare provider training.
- Implement Open Future Learning online training module for HSPs.
- 10% Program Growth.

Achievements

- Successful work term placement for Camosun Coop Student.
- Successful CLBC monitoring review with accolades.
- Successful approval of Ministry Work Experience Grant.
- Increased retention (duration) of skilled support staff.
- Implementation of Tech hardware for staff for greater efficiency (Lenovo Tablets).
- Implementation of Tech software and resources (ORCA and MS Teams).
- Implementation of Professional Development and Cohesion Team Meeting Model (4 hours).
- Development of SICC Team Lead role for staff development and opportunity.
- Approved eligibility for BCCEO network OFL training grant.

Trends and Analysis

- Continued referrals for individuals with complex mental health, addiction and/or behavioral support needs.
- Continued underfunding for individuals with complex mental health, addiction and/or behavioral support needs.
- Continued lack of subsidized, supported, social or otherwise affordable housing.
- Outgrowing programing space/facilities.
- On-going supports for staff wellness.

Goals for 2023-2024

- Network with other agencies and services to enhance service delivery.
- Complete and file Request for Qualification in CLBC's L.I.F.E program.
- Develop and implement SICC Employment Program.
- Relocate Activity Club home base.
- Implement Open Futures online training module.
- Enhance Staff training and development opportunities.
- Enhance Staff wellness and satisfaction opportunities.

"SFRS has impacted my life in an extremely positive way, with the new friends I have made. The workers are such amazing, caring people, it's just a really fun group overall." C.J.P.

"This program changed my entire outlook on life, met so many amazing people and became a better me." B.D.

"Be more myself and they're just very supportive." C.T.

"I appreciate the opportunities to be social, to go out on activities, to go to restaurants, ice skating & the libraries & barbeques and nature. It makes my life better to be part of Activity Group." C.V

Youth Outreach and Navigator

The Youth Navigator and Outreach Program provides mental health support services to youth in the Sooke region. The Youth Outreach Worker provides assessment and services for youth aged 13-18 who are experiencing significant challenges in their everyday lives, including youth with substance use, school attendance and family of origin issues. In addition, the workers help youth in navigating and accessing additional services they may require either in the short or long term to further enhance the likelihood of healthy and successful transitions into adulthood. The program is adaptable in its approach, with flexible hours and sees clients in the office, the community and local schools ensuring that there are no barriers to youth being able to access the services. The Youth Outreach and Navigator Program offers professional support services and builds respectful and beneficial connections with the youth we serve and the local community.

The Navigator team provides the following activities:

- Assessments.
- Referrals.
- Short term crisis support.
- Community outreach.
- Support for dealing with mental health, conflict, family, and school issues.
- Navigation through the mental health, substance use system and other community resources.
- Provides up to date information to other community agencies about availability of community programs and resources.
- Advocacy.
- Facilitation of family meetings.

Program Outputs for 2022-2023

- 30 new youth were referred.
- 82 youth served with 14 new files opened.
- Approximately 600 hours were spent providing direct service with youth.
- 12 youth attended a summer group.
- 1 Sooke Youth Service Providers meeting was hosted by the SFRS service.
- The average wait time for services this year was approximately 4-5 months.

Program Trends and Analysis

- Youth with mental health issues was the most common presentation.
- Anxiety was the most common issue – social anxiety in particular was prevalent.
- Depression is also a common presentation of youth entering the program.
- Waitlists for other community mental health services continue to get longer, and often are not available to youth with mild to moderately severe concerns.
- Substance use services continue to be available within a reasonable time frame.

Challenges / successes / changes in 2022-23

- Intake and managing the waitlist are continuing time challenges. The Youth Navigator does intakes, but this is an ongoing issue for the program.
- Our Youth Navigator was successful in organizing and managing the regional Youth Services Providers group which gathers local youth service providers bi-annually for support, collaboration, sharing of ideas and resources.
- To reduce the waitlist and serve more youth in this program, the service model changed this year, with a maximum of 6 months of service offered to youth.

New Program goals for 2023-24

- Secure existing and new funding sources.
- Evaluate the program to see how we can serve more clients.

I couldn't have survived all the stuff I went through this year without you. You are literally the best.

-Sooke youth, 2022

Caring for Community Counselling

The Caring for Community Counselling Program provides affordable counselling to individuals including youth, children, couples, and families living in Sooke and the Westshore. This program is staffed by professional, master's level trained clinicians and students. Fees are offered on a sliding scale dependent on income and family size. There is always a strong demand for this service which has a low barrier accessibility.

The Caring for Community Program provided the following services:

- Short term counselling for residents of Sooke and surrounding areas.
- Individual, family, couples, youth, and child counselling sessions (ages 10 and over).
- Group counselling for women experiencing violence and women experiencing anxiety and depression.

Activities and Outputs for 2022-23

- Approximately 1000 counselling sessions occurred.
- 2 groups were offered.
- A total of 145 clients were seen in the program.
- Approximately 67% were female, 30% male and 3% transgender.

Program Trends and Analysis

- The counselling program continued to offer affordable high quality of service to the communities of Sooke and the West Shore.
- Demand for low-cost counselling continues to increase.

Challenges / successes / changes in 2022-23

- Ongoing funding continues to be a challenge for this program.
- Attracting qualified counsellors has been challenging.
- Two students successfully completed their master's level training in counselling.
- The program successfully offered groups for the first time in many years.

New Program Goals for 2023-24

- Continue to provide accessible, affordable counselling to the residents of Sooke and the West Shore.
- Seek out new funding opportunities to support the program.
- Replace the current counsellor who will be going on maternity leave in the fall of 2023.

You saved my life. No other way to say it. Thank you soooo much.

-Caring for Community program client, 2022

USTAT- Urgent Short-Term Assessment and Treatment

The Urgent Short-Term Assessment and Treatment (USTAT) program provides accessible free short-term counselling to individuals experiencing serious and urgent mental health issues. Services are provided in collaboration with physicians, psychiatrists, and other mental health practitioners. Individual counselling includes crisis intervention and brief psychotherapy treatment on a priority basis as deemed 'urgent' by an intake screener. Services are available to adults in the Sooke area who have received an initial assessment by their physician and referral through Island Health Mental Health Intake Services.

The USTAT Counselling Program provided the following services:

- Short term counselling for adults of Sooke and surrounding areas.
- Counselling for high needs clients who need a referral from their doctor.
- 8-10 sessions offered free of charge.

Activities and Outputs for 2022-23

- Approximately 700 counselling sessions attended.
- A total of 110 clients were seen in the program.
- Approximately 72% were female, 26% male and 2% transgender.

Program Trends and Analysis

- The counselling program continued to offer high quality of service to the communities of Sooke and the West Shore.
- Demand for the service continued at a very high level with a substantial waitlist.

Challenges / successes / changes in 2022-23

- The program went for 3 months without a clinician during this time period as we struggled to attract suitable candidates for the position.

New Program Goals for 2023-24

- Continue to provide free counselling to the residents of Sooke and the West Shore.
- Seek new ways to attract qualified staff to the area.
- Advocate for management hours to be included in all contracts.

I now have so many more skills than I had before. Thanks for everything!

-USTAT client, 2022

Short Term Community Counselling

In the fall of 2022, we were successful in obtaining funding for 2 years to offer short term community counselling. The program is designed to help clients with mild to moderate mental health issues. Clients can receive up to 12 free sessions of counselling. We hired a new full-time counsellor to fill this role and we started the new program in March 2023.

Family Development & Family Preservation

The Family Development Program supports families who have an open file with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). These are families whose children have been removed from their homes or are at risk of being removed. Family Development Workers work collaboratively with MCFD Social Workers and other community members to support the client families. The Family Development Program provides supported access visits between the children and their biological parents, individual supportive parenting advice, intensive parenting education, assistance in accessing other community supports, and advocacy. The program is designed to provide families with the help they need to create a safe and healthy home environment for their children. Services are offered in a flexible manner, and may include transportation, access at various locations in the community for the convenience of the family, and flexible service times.

FDW Program notes

- The program has the resources to deliver one-to-one supervised access and at the present time, 4 families are utilizing this service.
- Transportation is provided on an as needed basis.
- The Family Development Workers provide intensive parenting education that focuses on teaching parents the necessary skills for caring for their children in a healthy way.
- FDWs may complete assessments of parenting capacity on the request of the Social Worker.
- FDWs respond to court subpoenas as needed to report on family cases.
- We distribute donated food and hygiene essentials to local First Nation communities.

Linking families to community resources as appropriate, including:

- Referrals to treatment options for mental health and/or addictions services.
- Income assistance.
- Health care services.
- Neighborhood House programs.
- Parenting support groups.
- Clothing and household items from SFRS Community Thrift Shop.
- Sources of free and/or affordable healthy food.

Activities and Outputs for 2022-23

- 10 new referrals were received in this fiscal year, 33 were carried over from the previous year.
- FDW's mostly worked with clients in their homes and at Pacheedaht First Nation.
- During this year, FDW's also offered the Pacheedaht lunch program. Transitioning the implementation of the lunch program to members of the Nation was started by year end.

Successes / Challenges through 2022/2023

- Demand continues to be steady, and workers maintained full caseloads.
- Housing challenges have been a particularly difficult issue for clients this fiscal year with demand and costs of rentals skyrocketing, effectively eliminating many of our clients from the rental market. Many of our families are now living in trailers and other substandard housing arrangements.
- Increases in food prices have also resulted in more stress on families, with many needing help with food vouchers.
- There has been a steady increase in referrals and the acuity of referrals, with an increase in intimate partner violence, drug use and neglect.

New Program goals for 2023-24

- Advocate for more housing, counselling, and social support for program families.
- Find additional support to increase food security for families.

You guys are the best. I don't know how you do what you do, but we sure appreciate everything you do for us. We love you guys!

-FDW Program participant, 2022

Supervised Access Program

In 2022, we restarted a service to offer Private Supported Access visits for parents who need supervised visits with their children, but who are not otherwise involved with MCFD or SFRS services. These parents pay privately for this service. Throughout the year, there was only one family using this service. At the end of the fiscal year, the client was awarded unsupervised visits and therefore, the program was suspended. We hope to grow this program to serve families throughout the Greater Victoria area.

Where to Find Us



Sooke Child Youth and Family Centre
Sooke

Main Office and Mailing Address
100-6672 Wadams Way
Sooke, BC V9Z 0H3
Phone: 250-642-5152
Fax: 250-642-7663

West Shore Child Youth and Family Centre
Colwood

345 Wale Road
Phone: 250-940-4882
Cell Phone: 250-217-7479

SICC and WelcomeHome Langford
202-2800 Bryn Maur Rd
Phone: 778-433-2023

SFRS Community Thrift Shop
2065 Anna Marie Rd
Phone: 778-352-3001

Email: info@sfrs.ca

Website: www.sfrs.ca

FaceBook: facebook.com/SookeFamilyResourceSociety

Thank You from Sooke Family Resource Society

Amazing volunteers at SFRS Community Thrift Shop
Anne Boquist
Anonymous—food donors
Anonymous donors to the Prenatal Program
Anonymous—Provincial Employees
Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses, Capital Region
Community Services Fund
BC Employer Training Grant
BC Farmers Markets Coupon Program
Board Members
Boys and Girls Club of Greater Victoria
Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island
Clark Trowsdale LLP
Cob's Bread Bakery
Community Living British Columbia
Corrie Cullen
District of Sooke
Don Thomson
Donna Kendrew
Douglas Scott Miller
First Nations Health Authority
Food Share Network
Give Food Get Food
Gift of Good Food
Hamber Foundation
Island Health
Jacquie Saurette

Karen Shipway
Kingfisher Preschool - Fundraiser
Participants
Linda Gabriel
Maria Waterway
Ministry of Children and Family Development
Ministry of Education and Child Care
Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction
Mustard Seed Food Bank
Red Barn Market
Pacheedaht First Nation
Public Health Agency of Canada
Rainbow Kitchen
RBC Sooke Branch
Sooke and Juan de Fuca Foundation
Sooke District Lioness Lions
Sooke District Lions
Sooke Harbourside Lions
Sooke School District 62
SFRS Homeshare providers
Sooke Region Literacy Project
Sooke Rotary
Tecnec Canada Inc.
Telus
Thrift Shop patrons and donors
Tim Hortons—Sooke
United Way of Greater Victoria
Victoria Foundation
West Shore Lions Club



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