

Boundary Family and Individual Services Society 2015–2016 Annual Report



Vision

Together, we the citizens of the Boundary area can create a culture of health and well being for ourselves and for our communities.

Mission

We build partnerships with families and community by delivering services which enrich lives and shape our future.

Members of the Board at March 31, 2016

- Ron Liddle** - Chairperson
- Maxine Ruzicka** - Vice Chairperson
- Sean Noble** - Treasurer
- Paula Wolkosky** - Secretary
- Teresa Rezanoff** - Member at Large
- Gene Robert** - Member at Large
- Karly Olsen** - Member at Large
- Erika Thorpe** - Member at large



THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS

The Ministry of Children and Family Development
 The Ministry of Justice
 Public Health Agency of Canada,
 Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program
 The Interior Health Authority, Public Health
 Kootenay Kids, West Kootenay Boundary CAPC Coalition
 with funding from the
 Public Health Agency of Canada
 Kootenay Family Place - Behavioral Support Program
 School District # 51 Boundary
 Selkirk College
 The Grand Forks Credit Union
 Blessings Boutique
 The Phoenix Foundation of the Boundary Communities
 Success by 6
 Kemp Harvey Burch Kientz Corp.
 COINS - Circle of Indigenous Nations Society
 BANAC - Boundary All Nations Aboriginal Council
 Boundary Métis Association
 Community Citizens and Fundraising Initiatives



Donations rose from \$10,922 last year to \$22,109 at March 31, 2016. Thank you.

Participants Served in individual or Family Programs

577

Participants Served in Groups

4180 child attendances

2563 adult attendances

504 individual groups sessions

37 individual groups

Family Centres and StrongStart West Boundary

99 individual children attending

69 individual families attending

1028 child Attendances

745 adult Attendances

East Boundary

278 individual children attending

191 individual families attending

3947 child Attendances

2689 adult Attendances

Boundary Family and Individual Services Society is accredited through CARF— Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities



Boundary Family and Individual Services Society Early Years Programs

Baby's Best Chance Community Action Plan for Children (CAPC)

"You think you know everything about pregnancy and then you come to the program and you realize that you knew nothing!"

Programming includes:
37 Thursday groups including morning and afternoon parent support and education sessions and a nutritious lunch, 2 Family BBQ's, a supper and Sing-a-long with Santa and 42 sessions of Breastfeeding Café. This programming, which provides a safe place for women to get together to talk, cry and laugh, relies heavily on volunteers, fundraising, partnerships through other agencies and organizations, business donations, grants and personal donations. \$4,500 was raised as well as awareness of the program through the Christmas Craft Fair, Babies and their Pets Calendars and a large donation from the Grand Forks Fire Department. Thank you to everyone that makes this program possible.

"If you hadn't have come to my house in those first days, there is no way that I would be breastfeeding today"

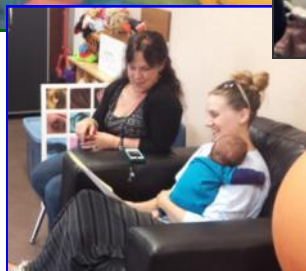
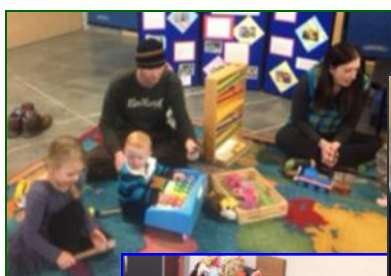
New activities in 2015 - 2016:

- Mothers Matter group in Rock Creek - 21 sessions
- Evening Breastfeeding Cafe: 2 evening sessions (plans for 1/month)
- Mothers Mental Health Groups in Grand Forks and Rock Creek.
- Peer Mentor Coordinator and Manual Development with funding from MCFD for the Early Years Test Site Programs and a Phoenix Foundation grant.
- Presentations to BC Liberals Group and Mother's Morning Out group at the Gospel Chapel.
- Grief boxes developed for miscarriages or loss of child.
- Nutritional Literacy Cooking Classes with funds from a Women's Institute Grant

Infant Development Program (IDP) Early Intervention Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy

- *Families grateful for quality services and supports provided to them at no cost as they would be unable to access intervention otherwise.
- *Professionals really open to collaborating in order to best serve our families
- *Support and Education provided for parents encourages responsive and positive care for their children as they grow and learn
- *Families level of confidence increased as they received support and they felt relieved to find answers to their uncertainties
- *Interacting with families helped to increase their level of comfort in social situations.
- *Attempts made to bridge isolated families to programs such as Strong Start
- *Applied for and received a grant to help support the funding of the Stepping Stones Therapy Group - a group which allows parents to ask therapy providers questions regarding their child's development without needing a referral or intake.
- *Connections were made with other consultants across the province due to regional in-services attended. I feel very supported by the agencies in other communities and find it very helpful when looking for resources for families re-locating.

Parents and caregivers stated they felt supported by our BFISS groups and linked to community.



Boundary Family and Individual Services Society Early Years Programs

The BC Government has established a network of B.C. Early Years Centres that provide one-stop access to a range of programs, services and information in 47 communities. BFISS'S Request For Proposal to become an Early Years Centre has been accepted. This is great news for our Boundary communities.

Early Years Community Engagement

Partnering and supporting the following events:

- CBAL Community Literacy Conversation,
- National Aboriginal Day,
- Earth Day,
- Greenwood Founders Day,
- Rock Creek Riverfest,
- National Children's Day,
- Representative for Children & Youth community presentations,
- Kindergarten- ASQ info sessions and transitions,
- Grand Forks Fall Fair.

Activities of the Early Years Centre

- Peer Mentor orientation and training procedure manual was developed and used as a framework for the Peer Mentor Program.
- The Baby's Best Chance, CAPC, StrongStart collaborative (Thursday) group is offering an additional 12 sessions for a total of 52 weeks per year in order to provide parents with greater consistency in programming.
- Child Care Resource & Referral Coordinator visits the Thursday Group collaborative weekly and shares resources and information on child care with the facilitators and participants, as well as assisting parents in applying for child care subsidy.
- Three 8-week sessions of a post partum group will be offered in both East and West Boundary. Groups will include relevant information and referrals for maternal mental health.
- ASQ screening information will be provided to parents in a variety of sessions including Early Years Fairs, StrongStart Centres, Child Care Facilities and a variety of groups in order to ensure screening of as many children as possible throughout the Boundary.
- Stepping Stones Play Therapy groups will be offered in both East and West Boundary as a strategy to bridge parents who have children with special needs into StrongStart programs and other programs and services in their communities.

Aboriginal Early Years Outreach

8

Families have been bridged to early year's programs, like Strong Start programs, the BCCRR and Baby's Best Chance, as well as to Elders and other services providers by bridging them to the weekly Aboriginal Friday Gatherings at BFISS.

A total of **79 children's drumming circles** were facilitated in **16 different programs** in communities spanning the Boundary – Christina Lake, Grand Forks, Greenwood, Midway, Rock Creek, Beaverdell and Big White.

Total attendances of these drumming circles were **714 child attendances and 581 adult attendances** for a **Grand Total of 1295** attendances across the Boundary. It should be noted that some families have attended more than one drumming circle. The feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive children, families and service providers are eager to participate!



Boundary Family and Individual Services Society Early Years Programs

As a result of attending the SSO program in Greenwood one mom said her son is engaging in play with other children and learning to follow directions and instructions such as tidying up.

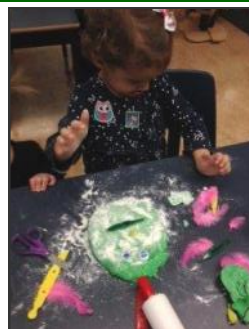
West Boundary StrongStart Outreach

- The W.B. SSO program was able to borrow resources from the Greenwood Volunteer Fire Department to use during the National Fire Safety week.

These large visuals were used in three of the StrongStart programs.

The Greenwood Volunteer Fire Department is open to StrongStart using the visuals yearly and even donated some fire safety promotional material to give away to families-(Frisbees, t-shirts, colouring books and hats).

- Nov. 20th, National Child Day, there was free skating event sponsored by Success by 6. A snack and colourful toques were given out to more than 25 people who attended without any financial barriers.
- At the Ready, Set Learn event families expressed their gratefulness that they were able to connect with the current Kindergarten teacher and ask questions. Service providers were able to check in with Families that don't frequently attend the program.
- Natasha Kellet with the Community Dental program visited the Greenwood, Midway and Rock Creek StrongStart Outreach programs.
- 14 'Going to Kindergarten' goodie bags were given out to eligible West Boundary StrongStart Outreach attendees.



Family Attachment Matters

The FAM participants represent a broad demographic including foster parents, adopted/ing parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, single parent, co-parents, couples together, mixed families, step/half siblings etc. There is also a range in socio-economic status and culture, and family background. They all have some common denominators that bring them to the program such as a child 0-6 and a need for support with attachment and parenting.

In the participant surveys, all participants reported that their relationship between them and their child has improved or become stronger and that they have gained knowledge about attachment and its process. The majority of participants strongly agree that they have greater empathy for their child and experience after being in the FAM program.

Words from a grandma: "I don't know where my grandson would be right now in terms of his development and relationships if I hadn't received the information I did from the FAM program when we first got him. I believe that this information should be offered in high school and or Post secondary schools for people to learn the impacts that can be caused by broken attachment relationships and experiences, before they start their own families."

East Boundary StrongStart and StrongStart Outreach

Facilitator highlights:

- Getting to spend so many years with families - watching the children grow and go to Kindergarten
- Likes how StrongStart brings together families
- Really great to partner with other community programs
- Watching long term friendships form for parents and children

A Grandma said:
"StrongStart has saved my life. I have my grand daughter for the summer and it is so great to have a place to play and meet other children"

Parents/Caregivers highlights:

- Enjoy the school gym and library
- Appreciate the flexible drop in hours
- Enjoy the support of other families, sharing stories and connecting to other services

Boundary Family and Individual Services Society Child, Youth and Family Programs

Collaborates with the following teams and programs in order to more effectively serve our community:

- Local Action Team
- Child & Youth Mental Health
- Boundary Integrated Services
- Violence Against Women in Relationships
- West Boundary Integrated Services
- Aboriginal Community
- School District 51
- Victim Services
- Freedom Quest

Child, Youth and Family Programs Supervisor

- Provides intake and assessment services to Children, Youth and Families.
- Refers participants to other community agencies as appropriate.
- Provides supervision to an amazing counseling and support Staff who are committed to our community and to our agencies mission and vision.
- Programs supervised: Family Support, Children Who Witness Abuse, Youth Services, Aboriginal Family Support, Community Integration Program, Behavioural Support Program, Sexual Abuse Intervention Program, Child and Youth Mental Health Program.
- Supports and supervises practicum students.

57
intakes done through the central intake system

158
Intakes done through specific programs

Community Integration Program & Behavioural Support Services

These inspiring, inclusive programs include many fun group activities for children and youth which increase confidence, social skills and foster and support friendships.

One to one services support families to increase their ability to respond effectively to their child and his/her specific challenges both at home and in the community.

The programs also include educational components such as FLASH (Family Life and Sexual Health) and parent support groups. The coordinator and support workers also participate in the child/youths individual education plan as required.

Number of participants in art, teen, youth and play group combined

25

401

Attendances in art, teen, youth and play group combined

Family Support Program

Services are provided to families experiencing personal difficulties, life transitions and family crises, with a focus on keeping children safe.

- Provides education, emotional support, skill building and collaboration with community partners in a flexible setting.
- There is diversity within the program – parents, single parents, grandparents, adult siblings raising brothers and sisters.
- Parenting groups are available for all ages and family situations such as Co-Parenting for Life (separation), Ready or Not (Pre-teen), Paren-teen (teen). Groups are created based on community need.
- Can assist with removing barriers to recreational activities and attending appointments.

52 families served

Aboriginal Family Support

- Supports the Friday Group gathering that brings families together. Provides connection with Elders and other support.
- Provides Traditional Parenting groups to families with the support of Local elders. Focus is on traditional Aboriginal ways of supporting families. Single parents/ co-parents and families with both parents.
- Bridging families with other supporting organizations within the Boundary area.
- Connecting families to services provincially and federally if appropriate.
- Respecting that there are many different Aboriginal cultures within our Boundary area and respecting the differences.
- Showing visible support at community events.
- Helping support cultural teachings within the School District.

Friday Gathering
Attendances

456 adults
321 children

Individual participants
and family units
served

19

Boundary Family and Individual Services Society Child, Youth and Family Programs

Children Who Witness Abuse Program

- Teaching strategies to children and youth to help manage anxiety and cope with grief and loss
 - Striving to educate parents on how to keep their children out of the cross-fire of divorce and separation
 - Children and Youth living with grand parents is a recent trend
 - Identifying, managing and implementing safety plans for suicidal ideation
- Community feedback thanks BFISS for our consistency and flexibility

"We are forever grateful for the time you have spent with our son"

71

Youth and Parents/
Guardians served

Youth Services

- Helping estranged and alienated youth reconnect with their parents
- Youth Art Engagement Project, in partnership with the Boundary Women's Coalition and Children of the Street was a huge success
- The Mentoring program connects service providers with youth with risks in the West Boundary

"You have been the best person for him with all that he's been through"

Child and Youth Mental Health Sexual Abuse Intervention Program Groups Coordinator

- Groups have proven to be an effective way to manage caseloads. Children and youth are provided the opportunity to attend individual sessions and/or groups as is appropriate to their needs.
- The region lost a child psychiatrist and was short staffed in Child and Youth Mental Health most of the year. This created a very busy year for BFISS's Child and Youth workers .
- Youth groups are now established and well attended in Grand Forks Secondary School, Hutton and Perley Elementary, Glanville Family Centre, Rock Creek and Greenwood. Children from other communities are transported by staff to be able to attend groups and a late school bus in West Boundary is utilized when appropriate.
- A LGBTQ group was formed and named S.A.G.A. (Sexual and Gender Alliance) by its participants. The group started with 9 participants and has grown to 25 participants with youth attending from across the Boundary.
- The Art group had their first show at the Art gallery. It was very well attended and enjoyed by the community.

#1 issue reported by youth in the Boundary is

Anxiety

Partnership Successes

The Big White Early Years group was newly started in the fall of 2015 as a 4 week Pilot Project. It has now developed and flourished into an ongoing, weekly, parent run group for pre-kindergarten children.9 families attend the group!! And it is growing!! The group is rapidly growing with new young families moving to Big White and staying throughout the whole year. There is a strong interest in continuing the group and making it a more permanent group with a permanent space.

Community members and businesses continue to generously donate their time and products to groups at BFISS. Professionals provide education opportunities for participants and businesses donate food and resources for events and programs.

Group participants are actively assisting in facilitating groups and brainstorming ideas for activities.

There are many opportunities for BFISS program facilitators to be guest speakers and to share information within each others programs. There is a very large knowledge base and amazing creativity within our staff.

Thank You