

# POWER PAGES

ISSUE #49

A FREE MAGAZINE FOR  
YOUTH IN & FROM CARE  
AND THEIR ALLIES

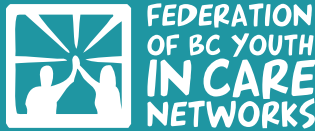


FEDERATION  
OF BC YOUTH  
IN CARE  
NETWORKS



**TAKE THE WHEEL  
HARM REDUCTION  
YOUTH PROFILES**

PLUS MORE OF YOUR AMAZING  
POEMS, STORIES, REPORTS,  
ARTWORK & PHOTOGRAPHY!



FBCYICN is a youth-driven, provincial, non-profit with charity status dedicated to improving the lives of young people in and from care in BC between the ages of 14 and 24!

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FEDERATION OF BC YOUTH IN CARE NETWORKS



FBCYICN



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Curtis Volke  
Kristina Wheeler  
Chantai Whitecalf  
Winona Williams  
Racheal "Raven" Wright  
Rob Wood  
Lilia Zaharieva

**CONGRATS TO  
OUR NEW ALUMNI:**  
Carlee Connors  
Sandy Kulchyski  
Bayleigh Patron  
Matthew Shaw  
MJ Ziemann

# BE A POWER PAGES CONTRIBUTOR!

## WHAT'S POWER PAGES?

In each edition of *Power Pages*, you will find information and updates about FBCYICN projects and programs, partner-agency updates, important information about opportunities, resources and tips relevant to young people in and from care and, most importantly, writing, art, and photography by BC youth in and from care!

*Power Pages* is distributed to more than 5,000 young people, service providers and caregivers around the province and to other networks across Canada. You can find all editions of *Power Pages* at: [fbcyicn.ca/what-we-offer/programs/power-pages](http://fbcyicn.ca/what-we-offer/programs/power-pages)

## HOW DO I SUBMIT STUFF?

To make sure *Power Pages* keeps representing the diverse interests and voices of young people in and from care, we need to hear from YOU!

If you are a youth in or from care between the ages of 14 and 24, you will receive an honorarium (\$\$) for each submission printed in *Power Pages* (up to a maximum of \$50/issue), so please include your name, phone number and email address with EVERY submission and submit often! You can submit anytime. We publish two editions per year.

For more info about *Power Pages* submissions and deadlines — and to submit your stuff by fax, mail, email or in person — get in touch with us: Toll-Free: **1.800.565.8055** | Fax: **604.527.7764** | Website: [fbcyicn.ca](http://fbcyicn.ca) | Email: [powerpages@fbcyicn.ca](mailto:powerpages@fbcyicn.ca)

## FBCYICN EDITORIAL POLICY:

FBCYICN welcomes all submissions — including agency updates, articles, reports, stories, poems, lifestyle pieces, art and photography — relevant to youth in and from care in BC.

- Youth can request that their submissions not be edited for spelling, grammar and clarity. We feel it is important to print what young people have to say without censorship.
- Adult submissions are subject to edits, which we share with the contributor before printing. We do not print submissions from adults or youth not from care unless they are relevant to young people in care and youth friendly.
- Printing contributors' names:
  - Under 19: unless they request to appear anonymous or indicate a pen name, first name and last initial are printed with each submission;
  - 19–24: unless they request to appear anonymous or indicate a pen name, first name and last initial are printed with each submission; if their submission reveals no overly personal information, they can request to print their last name with their submission (e.g. An award announcement, a recipe, an advocacy article). However, this remains at the editor's discretion;
  - Alumni of the FBCYICN: unless they request to appear anonymous or indicate a pen name, both first and last name are printed with each submission unless otherwise appropriate; and
  - Community partners and allies over 19: first and last name will be used unless otherwise appropriate
- When we receive more submissions than we are able to fit in one issue, we prioritize submissions from BC youth in and from care.
- We will print submissions from every contributing youth in or from care unless their content does not fit with our Code of Conduct (see [fbcyicn.ca](http://fbcyicn.ca) for more details). For example, conflicts with code of conduct may arise with critical content where individuals are named or content that could make readers feel unsafe.
- When youth submit more than one submission, we may not have room to print them all. Have no fear! We keep remaining submissions for future *Power Pages*.

NOTE: Articles printed in *Power Pages* do not necessarily reflect the opinions or values of the FBCYICN.



Photos by Caz D

**ON THE COVER:**  
See youth profiles on pages 16, 18, 20 & 22

- 2 FBCYICN Updates
- 4 2017 Youth Retreat  
Update from Your Chair  
Fed Finance
- 5 Education Bursaries  
McCreary Centre Society
- 6 Volunteering at the FBCYICN
- 7 Become a Member
- 8 Locals Update
- 9 Take The Wheel  
Update from the Rep
- 10 Message from the PGT!
- 11 Staff Goodbyes
- 12 Fentanyl: What you Need to Know
- 13 Housing First Youth Program
- 14 Photos by Randi T & Melinda H
- 16 Profile: Kami S
- 18 Profile: Rachel M
- 20 Profile: Matthew P
- 21 AgedOut.com
- 22 Profile: Star M
- 23 PowerPlaylist
- 24 Dreamcatchers by Kami S  
When Grief Strikes by Valeen J  
The Girl In The Mirror by Natasha S  
When My Body Says No by Valeen J
- 25 Daddy by Natasha S  
Panic Attack by Natasha S  
My Sisters by Natasha S  
Happy Birthday by Natasha S  
The Dirty Knees Of Prayer by Valeen J  
The Sky Is Crying by Kami S  
Recovery by Natasha S
- 26 Photos by Bayleigh P
- 27 We're Queer & We Are Most Definitely Here
- 28 Youth Advisory Council Update  
Keep Being Strong & Stay Beautiful
- 29 Art by Liana K

# POWER PAGES

EDITION #49  
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VIEW OR DOWNLOAD PAST & CURRENT EDITIONS AT [fbcyicn.ca](http://fbcyicn.ca)

*Hi Fed Fam! Although it hasn't been too long since the last Power Pages, there's lots going on at the Fed that we're stoked to tell you about. We've had some staff changes, attended forums and conferences, done some fundraising, and had tons of fun doing outreach and advocacy work with our volunteers. We've also been up to lots of other sweet stuff that you can read about in this edition of Power Pages. We hope you enjoy.*

## OUTREACH GROUP

Our team of youth and alumni who are part of the Outreach Group have been busy practicing the presentation they created to tell people about who we are and what we do, share their stories and experiences, and explore the top five issues affecting youth in and from care in BC, identified in the 2016 YouthSpeak report.

If you are interested in booking a presentation or having us host an info booth at your event please contact Chris Buchner at [chris.buchner@fbcyicn.ca](mailto:chris.buchner@fbcyicn.ca).

## WEBSITE & COMMUNICATIONS

If you have checked out our website recently, you have probably already noticed that things are looking pretty different at [fbcyicn.ca](http://fbcyicn.ca). We are very pleased to announce that after many months of planning and preparation, the new website has launched!

Fed staff worked closely with young people, board members and our web developers at Affinity Bridge, to provide a much-needed update to the existing site. The goal was to build an engaging, functional website that makes it easy to see the supports we offer, how to get involved and how to connect with us, while also doing a better job at demonstrating the impact of the work we do. The site's new look is designed to strike a balance between professional and youth friendly in the hope that it will appeal equally to young people and adults looking for information and resources.

Here is a handy list of some pages that you may want to bookmark on your browser:

- ★ News — Check our news page for Fed updates and news related to youth in and from care across BC!
- ★ Volunteer postings — See all of our latest volunteer opportunities in one place and apply online.
- ★ What we offer — See a list of all of our programs.
- ★ Resources — Our resources page is an archive of our publications and materials from other community partners.
- ★ Ways to give — Our online donations page is connected to CanadaHelps and provides a tax receipt. Donate today and support young people in and from care in BC!



This is only a short list! Please explore the site on your own and be sure to get in touch with any comments or suggestions about how we can make it better. Keep checking back because we will continue to update the site with new stories, postings and opportunities as they come up!

The new site may be live, but our digital update at the Fed is not done! We will be continuing to work with Affinity Bridge on our internal database and hope to wrap up the final phase of the rebuild in the next few months.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) & BOARD MEMBER VOTING UPDATE

The unusual winter scene in February resulted in the Fed's first SCM cancellation in many years. Not only was there a great deal of disappointment from this, but it also removed our ability to carry on with the Fed's AGM process and voting on new

board members. The Fed has connected with the powers that be the BC Registrar's Office to confirm what our options are and to ensure that we would not be in violation as an organization and a charity by this delay. By the time you read this in June, the AGM will have taken place as well as voting on the five possible board nominees. Rescheduling the Fed's AGM was not easy, and we understand that the impact on members was profound; we did our best to find another solution to complete this process once all the options and impacts were known to the organization. We look forward to doing an introduction to the new board members in our next edition of *Power Pages* in October.

## GRANT FUNDING UPDATE

The Fed's first year as a charity has been filled with insights, new learnings and many opportunities to explore grant funding and partnerships with various organizations. We are pleased to announce two grants that we received to support work that we had outlined as priorities in the Fed's strategic plan.

### Heritage Canada Grant — Youth in Care Reconciliation Project (\$48,000)

This grant provides the resources for the Fed to engage youth in and from care to co-facilitate discussions and teachings related to the experiences of Indigenous Peoples in Canada and what the process of reconciliation can look like in our everyday lives. We will likely be able to share the results of our efforts to recruit provincial youth leaders and adult allies to inform and create the session and plan community visits around the time you read this edition. We look forward to having conversations about reconciliation with youth in and from care around BC and to capture participant insights using a video blog!

### ICBC Grant — Take the Wheel Driver's Training Bursaries (\$50,000)

This grant will provide much needed additional financial support to youth in and from care ages 16 to 24 across BC who are looking to start their driving journey by taking an ICBC approved Graduated Licensing Program as they prepare for their road test. The financial supports are split into two bursaries:

1. The Driver's Training bursary will provide up to \$1,250 for youth 16 to 24 to help cover the cost of an ICBC approved Graduated Licensing Program (GLP) course for passenger vehicles, or professional driving lessons in communities where no GLP course is available.
2. The Driver's License Support bursary will provide up to \$250 to help cover costs associated with completing the necessary driving practice hours prior to a road test, and incidentals such as proper identification, gas, insurance and other vehicle-related costs.

For more information on the process of both the Reconciliation and Take the Wheel initiatives visit our website at [fbcyicn.ca](http://fbcyicn.ca).

### A DONATION FROM THE CANADIAN FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN—VICTORIA

Each year, the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) Victoria chapter selects a charitable organization to partner with that values education, life-long learning, equality among ethnicity and gender, and human rights. This year, they



collectively decided to donate proceeds from their annual celebration during International Women's Day to the Fed! Their guest speaker, Zarqa Nawaz is a public speaker, TV series producer and advocate on gender and faith, Islam, multiculturalism and plurality. We were honoured to attend and to share information about our programs and services that support BC's young people in and from care across the province. Before the feature film started, the theatre played the Fed's 2016 campaign video on the big screen and it received raving reviews from the viewers! A huge thank you to the CFUW and Zarqa for their solidarity with

BC's young people in and from care and for supporting the work of the Fed!

### UBC MED GALA

Every year the Faculty of Medicine at UBC hosts a gala where med students can show off their instrumental, vocal, dancing, karate, hula hooping, and other diverse talents to their friends, family and community. It's like the talent show at an SCM but only med students! Every year they donate their proceeds to a charity and this year Chris' partner nominated the Fed and we were selected! A huge thanks goes out to the organizers of the UBC Med Gala who selected our organization as the recipient of the event's proceeds.

### 2017 BC CHILD & YOUTH IN CARE WEEK (BCCYICW) JUNE 5–11

It's hard to believe that this year marks the seventh annual BCCYICW! Year after year the committee members work hard to ensure that this week reminds British Columbians of their responsibility to young people in care and to highlight their strengths, and combat social stigma. This year, the committee welcomed new community partners to join us to expand our reach to young people and their allies, ensure we're celebrating young people in ways that are meaningful to them, and create greater awareness about this incredible week.

Our Young Adult Advisors suggested that we revamp the materials through a province-wide art contest open to young people in and from care between the ages of 6-24. We're excited to reveal the talented winner during the week and to have all of the BCCYICW materials re-designed for next year!

McCreary's Youth Research Academy has joined the committee to create a survey to evaluate BCCYICW's impact on young people, their allies and communities across the province. The committee wants to ensure that BCCYICW represents the diversity, accomplishments and resilience of young people in and from care and that our province continues to recognize and support young people after the week is over.

The survey will be released June 5<sup>th</sup>. Please take a few minutes of your time to complete it so that we can continue to improve BCCYICW!

Working hard on the committee this year are our fabulous Young Adult Advisors: Jaye S, Wheeshay M, Sanjesh S & Randi T! Community partners include:

- ★ Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks
- ★ Ministry of Children and Family Development & the Youth Advisory Council
- ★ Public Guardian and Trustee
- ★ Indigenous Perspectives Society
- ★ Vancouver Foundation and Fostering Change
- ★ Adoptive Families Association of BC
- ★ McCreary Centre Society & the Youth Research Academy
- ★ Métis Commission

We'll be heading into the week as you're reading this so keep in touch with the Fed for updates on the celebrations that will happen across the province, the award winners, the art contest winner, and more!

### WE ♥ OUR VOLUNTEERS

As usual, our volunteers have been working hard and all of us at the Fed are incredibly grateful for the long hours they have put into making our programs as successful as possible! While we can't list everything, here's a taste of the stuff they've been up to:

Our volunteers have helped us to mail out *Power Pages* to folks around the province, attended conferences and forums to share their opinions and experiences, and given feedback to staff on the future of the organization through alumni consultations, and a communications workshop. We've been lucky to have a steady stream of volunteers for our Outreach Group, our Extreme Team, and our Dream Fund Selection Committee, among many of our other programs.

We are always looking for more volunteers, so if you're interested check us out on Facebook or on our newly launched website to find out about opportunities, and to get in touch with staff!

*Hopefully reading through our updates gave you a good sense of what's been keeping us busy. And now for the fun stuff: have a look through the rest of the magazine for photos, artwork, poetry, upcoming opportunities and more!*



## MESSAGE FROM YOUR BOARD

Hi Fed members,

There has been a lot going on since the last edition of *Power Pages* in February.

We are thrilled that we've secured a two-year contract with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The two-year term provides additional stability for our programs and services. Our thanks to the Ministry and the staff team who worked so hard to make this happen.

Through extraordinary effort from Fed staff, we've also obtained additional funding to strengthen the Fed's Indigenous perspective and add your voices to Canada's reconciliation dialogue.

This is one of many opportunities coming our way because of the new Charitable Tax Status your vote helped make a reality.

Our thanks, too, to the youth and alumni who recently shared their thoughts about Fed direction with the board. We heard your voices loud and clear and will continue to work with you to make sure the Fed stays true to its youth-centred and youth-driven focus.

Also exciting is the ICBC new drivers' training fund and new car, courtesy of

Dueck GM. If you are over 16, make sure you get your application in to the Fed. Whether the program's a fit for you or not, please let me know your thoughts. We are keen to identify ways to offer even more driving support in the future.

On behalf of all board members, I would like to echo and affirm the words I heard from Ministry staff this year during our contract discussions: Our Time is Now. With an unprecedented focus on youth in and from care, and a Fed network that is stronger than ever, your power and influence has never been greater.

It is my pleasure and honour to chair your board and help bring your voices forward. Can't wait to see you all at the next Youth Retreat!

Debbie

Board Chair

[Debbie.FBCYICN@gmail.com](mailto:Debbie.FBCYICN@gmail.com)



## FED FINANCES

Hi Fed members,

It's the Finance Committee's job to keep a close eye on the Fed budget. These are the dollars that make our programs and services possible.

Here are a few highlights I thought you'd like to know about:

This spring we secured core funding from MCFD to deliver specific programs and services (that's good news).

We recently reached the end of the Fed Reserve Fund. As the name implies, these funds were "reserved" for special projects and have been used over the years to help pay for Youth Retreats and *Power Pages* (that's not such good news).

This year, we brought in some new money, thanks to Charitable Tax Status (excellent news). This includes:

★ A grant from Canada 150 to strengthen our Indigenous perspectives and add your voices to Canada's reconciliation dialogue; and

★ A grant from ICBC for drivers' training — dollars that will go straight to you to pay for driving lessons.

The grant money is all earmarked for exciting new projects, and leaves us looking for innovative new ways to help cover the costs of some of the things we all value, like time together with youth, alumni and adult allies from all over the province.

The Finance Committee is always looking for more youth perspectives. If you're passionate about numbers and want to play a role in the business of the Fed, please contact me. It took a while to get this new committee rolling, but we are now well on our way and can't wait to hear what you have to say!

If you've got any questions or would like to learn more about the committee work, please send me a note.

Gary

Finance Committee Chair

[Gary.FBCYICN@gmail.com](mailto:Gary.FBCYICN@gmail.com)

# 2017 YOUTH RETREAT

Youth Retreats, or SCMs, are youth-led weekend retreats for youth in and from care from all across BC to participate in and lead workshops, activities, consultations and events. They're an opportunity to meet other youth in or from care, share common experiences and have fun! Attending a Youth Retreat can be very rewarding. There are always tons of new youth attending along with staff and allies there to support a safe and inclusive weekend.

Due to a crazy snow storm that hit most of BC, we unfortunately had to cancel our February Youth Retreat. Happily we still got to spend an evening with those who travelled from far away. Although it was upsetting to have to cancel, we enjoyed hanging out with those who we did get to see, and we are looking forward to the next Youth Retreat!

## NEXT ONE:

Our next Youth Retreat is tentatively scheduled for November 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

To apply to attend or if you have any questions about upcoming Youth Retreats, please contact Chris Buchner at [chris.buchner@fbcyicn.ca](mailto:chris.buchner@fbcyicn.ca) or by phone at 1.800.565.8055



# FBCYICN EDUCATION BURSARIES



## DREAM FUND BURSARY

### WHAT'S THE DREAM FUND?

If you have any questions about school, like how to get into post-secondary school, available funding, or just figuring out what you want to do, you can call our office and speak to any of our staff who can support you to pursue your education.

One way that we support young people with their education and skill building is our Dream Fund. The Dream Fund is an umbrella term that includes two distinct bursaries. The **Education Achievement Fund** bursary awards recipients up to \$5,000 for post-secondary education. The second bursary, **Reach for Success**, provides youth up to \$1,500 for extra-curricular or skill building activities. We offer these bursaries three times a year—check out our website for deadlines and to apply: [fbcyicn.ca/programs/education](http://fbcyicn.ca/programs/education)

### RECENT RECIPIENTS

We distributed another round of Dream Fund bursaries in March thanks to the youth, alumni and staff selection committee! Under the Dream Fund umbrella we awarded \$6,500 to split between eight awesome applicants pursuing post-secondary education through the Education Achievement Fund and another \$1,500 to four wonderful young people through our Reach for Success bursary to help them with skill building and extra-curricular activities.

### MARCH 2017

#### EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT:

Recipient	\$	Institution
Alberto M	\$1000	John Casablanca Institute
Anna M	\$1000	Langara College
Vanessa K	\$750	Vancouver Island University
Shirley T	\$750	Vancouver Island University
Nala H	\$750	University of Fraser Valley
Teana B	\$750	Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Jeanne B	\$750	Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Dmitiri M	\$750	Sheridan College

#### REACH FOR SUCCESS:

Recipient	\$	Program/Training
Bayleigh P	\$500	Driver Training
Keeshana E	\$500	Laptop for school
Angeline S	\$250	Photography
Sarah K	\$250	Traffic Pro Services

## DONATE TO THE DREAM FUND AND SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE PURSUING THEIR PASSIONS!

With each selection process we receive many, many more applications than we have money to support. The money that sustains these funds and gives young people opportunities to pursue their dreams comes from community donors. Large or small, each contribution helps address the barriers young people in and from care face in pursuing their goals. For more information about how you can make a young person's dream a reality, check out our website: [fbcyicn.ca](http://fbcyicn.ca) or check us out on Canada Helps: [canadahelps.org/en/charities/federation-of-bc-youth-in-care-networks/](http://canadahelps.org/en/charities/federation-of-bc-youth-in-care-networks/)



McCreary Centre Society

McCreary Centre Society is a BC charity that works to improve youth health through research, evaluation, and youth-led projects. You may have gotten to know McCreary through the 2016 YouthSpeak project, which saw youth in and from care create a survey about the care system and transitioning into adulthood.

McCreary is always looking to connect with youth who bring different voices, experiences, and ideas to the work they do. If you are interested in youth health and youth-led research, here are a few ways you can get involved:

### YOUTH RESEARCH ACADEMY (YRA)

The YRA trains youth aged 16–24 with government care experience



to work on projects to improve the lives of youth in and from care in BC. Academy members learn community-based research skills like how to create surveys, analyze data, write reports, and facilitate youth-led workshops. The second Academy group just started, and new cohorts run annually with 6–8 paid positions of around 10 hours per week. Throughout the year, the YRA hosts small-scale projects that offer an intro to community-based research. Opportunities are advertised through the Fed, so stay tuned for upcoming events!

### YOUTH ADVISORY & ACTION COUNCIL (YAC)

The YAC is a group of volunteers aged 15–24 who want to make a difference in their communities. They organize their own projects and events, and take part in McCreary projects. If you are interested in joining the YAC or would like more information, contact [mccreary@mcs.bc.ca](mailto:mccreary@mcs.bc.ca) or 604-291-1996.

### YOUTH ACTION GRANTS (YAG)

YAGs provide up to \$500 to support youth-led projects in BC. YAGs are a project of McCreary's YAC and were created to offer youth aged 12–19 an opportunity to deliver a project to improve youth health in their community. For more information, visit [youthactiongrants.wordpress.com](http://youthactiongrants.wordpress.com).

# VOLUNTEERING AT FBCYICN

At FBCYICN, our volunteers are the heart of our organization—driving the work that we do and making it possible through their dedication, perseverance, and hard work. We want to recognize all of our volunteers since the last edition of *Power Pages* for their time, energy, and acts of kindness—Thank you for being so generous and for sharing your ideas and passions.



- |          |           |            |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Ashley J | Eddy B    | Randi T    |
| Ashley M | Jaye S    | Sandy K    |
| Caden L  | Joshua W  | Sanjesh S  |
| Cammy L  | Kami S    | Sarah K    |
| Candy F  | Marcey A  | Tre R      |
| Carley E | Matthew S | Wheeshay M |
| Caz D    | Natasha S |            |

## ALUMNI MEMBER VOLUNTEERS (25+)

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| Sara Dawkins | KT Matheson  |
| Rachel M     | Raven Wright |

## ADULT ALLY VOLUNTEERS (19+)

- |                |                  |                     |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Alex West      | Gary Tennant     | Kate Ritchie        |
| Austyn Bracket | Gay Smith        | Kristina Splane     |
| Chelsea Turpin | Jeff Schiffer    | Leigh Macleod       |
| Dan Malone     | Jeff Watts       | Marna Forsyth       |
| Danielle Venne | Jessy Neal       | Pam Kranz           |
| Debbie Cox     | Kari Beppele     | Violet-Rose Pharoah |
|                | Katelyn Crabtree |                     |

### INTERESTED? QUESTIONS?

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Facebook: [Chris Buchner Work](#)

## INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED? BY GIVING BACK YOU ARE GETTING BACK! YOU CAN DISCOVER NEW INTERESTS, BUILD ON SKILLS, MAKE NEW FRIENDS & GUIDE THE FED AS WE MOVE FORWARD IN OUR WORK!

As part of our youth-driven approach, young people in and from care help lead many aspects of our work, including through volunteer roles! We offer volunteer opportunities for youth in and from care 14 and older who live in BC. Through our volunteer program, we match you with opportunities based on your interests and skills to help ensure your volunteer experience is as fun and meaningful as possible.

As a youth volunteer, you will receive training and a \$100 honorarium for every 20 hours of volunteer time. Become a Fed Volunteer today by filling out a volunteer registration form online and we'll contact you shortly with available volunteer opportunities that might interest you!

### HOW CAN I HELP OUT?

The Fed's work could not be done without people volunteering their time for the roles we have listed below. Each volunteer role is just as valuable as any other and your support is greatly appreciated! Some of the volunteer roles happen around specific events and are not always available. We will keep all interested volunteers posted on upcoming volunteer opportunities.

### BOARD COMMITTEES

Do you have an eye for the bigger picture? Do you like helping to connect the dots towards a brighter future? Consider applying to be on one of the three Fed board committees: Mission, Vision, Values; HR & Governance; or Finance.

### DISTRIBUTION ASSISTANTS

A lot goes into keeping our members connected. If you're curious about the process and want to get involved, become a Distribution Assistant and help package, label, stamp, and mail issues of *Power Pages*, and new member Welcome Packages. It's pretty neat!

### FED GREETERS

Let's see your biggest smile! Do you enjoy or would you like to become more comfortable talking to guests and event participants? Want



to test your Fed knowledge by answering random questions? Maybe being a Fed Greeter is the role for you!

### OFFICE ASSISTANTS

Do you enjoy connecting with folks in person and on the phone? Do you have an interest in administrative duties such as data entry, typing up meeting minutes, and creating posters and agendas? This opportunity is a great way to learn more about the daily operations of the Fed.

### PHOTOGRAPHERS

Do you enjoy capturing memorable moments with a photo? Would you like to learn basics about framing subjects and going beyond the auto setting? This might be the perfect option for you.

### PROGRAM & EVENT ASSISTANTS

Are you someone that appreciates all the details that help make an event really special? Do you want to help shop for supplies needed at events or coordinate fun activities for young people and their kids? This role is vital in helping our events and programs run smoothly.

### SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Do you like to ask questions and learn about processes? Do you ever wonder how big decisions are made at the Fed? Selection Committee Members consider and compare different applicants for awards, bursaries, opportunities and at times, even staff positions.

### YOUTH FACILITATORS

Do you enjoy speaking in front of people and engaging them in different ways? Have you ever considered leading an icebreaker or delivering a workshop at a youth retreat? As a youth facilitator, you'll receive lots of experience speaking in public and managing group dynamics.

### YOUTH MCs

Are you interested in building on your skills and experience speaking in front of others? Do you want to help create a welcoming and fun environment while introducing speakers and keeping people focused and on task at events? Help host our events by being a youth MC!

### YOUTH TEAMS

Do you consider yourself a team player and love working with others to complete a specific and common goal? Youth team members make up our SCM Extreme Team and the OGs. Stay tuned for upcoming opportunities to work with other youth and staff!

**VOLUNTEER WITH THE FED TODAY.  
BY GIVING BACK  
YOU ARE GETTING BACK!**



## BECOME A MEMBER!

Fed membership is open to any young person in or from government care in BC between the ages of 14 and 24. We encourage and support all youth in and from care to get involved in the various levels of our work as they see fit, which may include: as a participant, a member, on our board, or taking on volunteer and leadership roles by helping to run our programs. Don't forget, only members are eligible to vote on our governance decisions and elect board members!

There are no membership fees and a young person can renew their membership every two years or cancel their membership at any time.

### TOP 5 REASONS TO GET INVOLVED:

- 1. Empower Yourself!** With all kinds of learning opportunities and supports available to help you reach the goals important to you.
- 2. Be heard.** Share your voice and expertise as a part of a movement to make BC better for youth in care.
- 3. Be valued.** Because we are youth-driven, members help us make important decisions and are the reason we're here.
- 4. Develop Leadership Skills.** Volunteering and training prepare you with some of the most important career and life skills.
- 5. Join a loving, understanding and supportive community.**

*"By coming together,  
we're not alone."*

Join the FBCYICN today by filling out a membership form found on our website:  
[fbcyicn.ca/get-involved/become-member](http://fbcyicn.ca/get-involved/become-member)



## FBCYICN LOCAL YOUTH IN CARE NETWORKS UPDATES



**Current Locals:** Kamloops, Kelowna, Prince George, Squamish & Victoria  
**Interested Communities:** 100 Mile House, Williams Lake, Merritt, Surrey, Quesnel, Port Alberni & Campbell River  
**Communities that have started the Application Process:** New Westminster

**KAMLOOPS**  
 Approved Local as of March 2016  
 Host Agency: Interior Community Services  
 Kamloops has set some incredible goals for their group for this fiscal year. They came together and decided to focus on quality member participation, increasing awareness of the local through various platforms and, most importantly, having fun together! Connect with us to find out how you can participate in the Kamloops local.

**KELOWNA**  
 Approved Local as of March 2013  
 Host Agency: The Bridge Youth & Family Services  
 The Bridge has a new youth-friendly space equipped with a large kitchen, dining area, laundry facilities, shower amenities and a large yard! The local has been busy creating their annual plan, budget and determining

new goals for the year, which include: volunteerism, spreading awareness of the local in Kelowna and building stronger relationships with allies in their community to reach more young people!

**PRINCE GEORGE**  
 Approved Local as of December 2015  
 Host Agency: Prince George Native Friendship Centre  
 For Us By Us (FUBU) meets once per month during their Youth Council Meetings at the Prince George Native Friendship Centre. In addition to their Youth Council Meetings, FUBU has activities almost every day of the week such as community kitchens, drum group, recreation night, movie night, youth connections and an afternoon activity. Check out FUBU next time you're in the area; drop in Tuesday through Friday between 12pm–8pm and on Saturdays from 10am–6pm.

**SQUAMISH**  
 Approved Local as of June 2016  
 Host Agency: Sea to Sky Community Services  
 Since the last edition, Squamish has been busy creating their annual plan and budget for the upcoming year. They're also seeking

more young people to join the local! If you're in or around the Squamish area be sure to connect with us and inquire about how you can participate.

**VICTORIA**  
 Approved Local as of June 2012  
 Host Agency: FPSS Foster Parent Support Services Society  
 The Victoria Youth in Care Network (VYICN) is really looking forward to the year ahead as they've got some big ideas! Since the last edition, they've connected at the board game café to discuss planning for this fiscal year, trained members to become local leaders, and participated in a variety of community initiatives. Members of the VYICN act as a youth advisory council to share their wisdom, insights and expertise with the program developers at United Way Victoria and Dialogue and Resolution Services Society to help plan the Youth Reconnection Dialogue program. This program focuses on supporting young people from government care to connect and build relationships with family and allies in their community. Connect with them if you're living in Victoria and would like to participate!



## TAKE THE WHEEL

The Take the Wheel Driver Training and Support Bursaries provide financial and in-kind supports to help youth in and from government care in BC obtain their driver's licence.

The Driver Training bursary provides up to \$1,250 for young people to help cover the cost of a Graduated Licensing Program (GLP) course or professional driving lessons.

The Driver's Licence Support bursary will provide up to \$250 to help to cover costs associated with completing the necessary driving practice hours prior to a road test, and incidentals such as proper identification, gas, insurance and other vehicle-related costs.

These bursaries are funded by ICBC and administered by the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks with the support of the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

### ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

Do you live in the Lower Mainland and need a vehicle to use to get in your practice driving hours? Youth who apply for the bursaries in the Lower Mainland can access a new car leased to the Fed for driver training.

If you live in another part of the province

and need access to a vehicle, please indicate this in your application so that Fed staff can help connect you to resources in your area.

The Fed also provides one-to-one support to help young people navigate the steps they need to follow to succeed. Call us to talk to a staff member today!

### PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

- ★ You have obtained your Learner's Licence
- ★ You are currently in care or a former youth in care either under a continuing custody order (CCO) or temporary custody order (TCO, Voluntary Care Agreement or Special Needs Agreement) or Youth Agreement in BC under the Child, Family and Community Services Act.
- ★ You are between the ages of 16 – 24.
- ★ You are a Canadian citizen or a landed immigrant.
- ★ You are currently enrolled or are planning to enroll in an ICBC approved driver's training course or professional driving lessons (if the former is unavailable) or you have completed this step and are preparing for your driver's test.

Check out our website for the next deadline!



## UPDATE FROM THE REP!

### BC'S REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

Hi everyone,

Did you know that, as a youth, you have the right not only to have your own opinion, but also to have adults take it seriously? This right is part of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It's called Article 12 — but to me, it should be No. 1 because it's the most important, especially for youth in care. Too often, children and youth feel like they are not heard, or that their opinions don't make any difference. Does this sound familiar to you? If so, it's worth giving us a call. Helping you to speak up for yourself is one of the things we do here at RCY, and it's a skill that you will use all your life.

At RCY, we have three offices — in Prince George, Burnaby and Victoria — and we have advocates at each one who can help you learn what your rights are and assist you with making sure they are being upheld. Even if you don't live in one of those three areas, our advocates are available to help you. You can call them free of charge at 1-800-476-3933, or you can email [rcy@rcybc.ca](mailto:rcy@rcybc.ca) and what you say will be kept private. We're serious about your rights.

We can advocate for you until you turn 19, or — if you are receiving CLBC services — until your 24th birthday, so please don't hold back.

And don't forget, we're on social media, too: on Facebook @rcybcyouth and @rcybc, on Instagram @rcybcyouth and on Twitter @rcybcyouth. You can also find our contact info on our website: [www.rcybc.ca](http://www.rcybc.ca). If you need us, please get in touch. That's what we're here for.

Have a great summer!

Bernard Richard



## A message from THE PGT



The Public Guardian and Trustee (PGT) shares guardianship for children and youth who are in the continuing care of the province with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and Delegated Aboriginal Child and Family Service Agencies. As your property guardian, the PGT works hard to protect your legal and financial interests. Our job is to investigate potential legal claims and ensure that you receive any financial benefits you are entitled to. Instead of social workers, the PGT has Guardianship and Trust Officers (GTOs). Any money that we collect for you goes into a safe account called a trust account and is released in full when you turn 19. We are also out in the community, talking to youth about money: how to save it, how to be wise when spending it and how to

make plans for important things in their lives. We provide training in financial literacy, an important skill for youth aging out of care.

### TRUE STORIES (NOT FAKE NEWS)

In this issue, we are sharing a couple of stories about the services the PGT provides to youth in care. The stories are factual, but the names have been changed to protect the identities of the youth involved.

### LEGAL ADVOCACY FOR SELINA

Selina's social worker told the PGT that Selina's father had recently passed away. Selina was the named beneficiary of her father's insurance policy. The policy was made up of both life insurance and accidental death benefits, meaning there could be more than one source

of money for Selina. The PGT applied for these funds on Selina's behalf, but the insurance company denied the accidental death benefits claim. The PGT provided legal advocacy that resulted in Selina receiving the funds from both types of her father's insurance.

### FINANCIAL LITERACY FOR NOAH

Noah recently learned from his GTO that the PGT had a trust fund for him. While at the Broadway Youth Resource Centre, Noah met with a GTO to discuss the benefits of financial planning. He then took part in a six week PGT financial literacy workshop to learn how to manage his funds independently once he ages out of care. Having this money and knowing how to manage it will enable Noah to focus on his goals, such as furthering his education.

For more information about our services, please phone 604.775.3480 or email us at [cys@trustee.bc.ca](mailto:cys@trustee.bc.ca). You can also check out our website at [www.trustee.bc.ca](http://www.trustee.bc.ca).



FEDERATION  
OF BC YOUTH  
IN CARE  
NETWORKS

# STAFF GOODBYES

## Goodbye Family!

It is with some sadness that I take the time to write this note. The past eight months at the Fed have been an incredible journey. I have learned so much about the resilience, compassion, and humanity that we all carry in our hearts, regardless of our different care experiences and the various circumstances that have brought us to the Fed. The love and empathy each of you display in our personal and group interactions has made this experience a wonderful one.

I also want to warn you that I won't be going away forever. I may not be a staff any longer, but as a young former youth in care I will be returning soon to continue to work for this amazing organization, and I will hopefully get to know many more of you. My endeavor as a staff comes to an end, but my involvement as a member and fellow peer will commence very soon. I will forever be grateful for the opportunity to work with such a dedicated team of co-workers, members, and allies.

In the meantime during my transition from staff to member, I will be moving on to work as the Youth Programs Coordinator at Kiwassa Neighborhood House in East Vancouver. This is an important step in my professional career as I will be overseeing all youth programs at the organization and leading a wonderful and small team of youth workers and facilitators. If you go to UBC, I will also see you there in September as I begin my 3rd year courses.

Sending lots of love,  
Diego



Dear Fed Family,

It is with a very heavy heart that I announce that I will be leaving my position as the Youth Coordinator here at the Fed. I will definitely still be around as a youth member and volunteer, I am just unable to continue in this role. I have been given an opportunity to pursue further education in my chosen field with reduced tuition, and simply cannot pass up that opportunity. This means that I will no longer have the time required to perform my role in the way that I have up until this point.

I feel so fortunate for the time that I was able to spend in this role. Working so closely with the staff team and many of our incredible youth members has been one of the most valuable experiences of my life, and I am so grateful that I was given the opportunity to do it. I have been given a perspective on our organization and our members that is very different from the one I had before working here. I always knew that our members were strong, empowering young people, but I witnessed great courage and passion in a whole new light from them when the SCM was cancelled in February. I initially thought I was alone in facing the challenges of the

day, but you all very quickly showed me that this could not be further from the truth. The perseverance all the youth showed to get through it together and still have a great time was absolutely amazing. You all gave me the strength to push through and try my best to make the experience a great one for everyone. You are all such amazing people, and I am so proud to have had the opportunity to learn with you and work with you in this beautiful way.

I will miss being in this role very much. I will miss seeing the staff team 3 days a week. I will miss working one-on-one with so many young people. I will miss being a supportive role for the Outreach Group, and I will miss organizing the SCM. I will miss this very much.

But I am glad that I had the opportunity to experience it all and be a part of a team that does so many amazing things.

I am excited to continue to be a youth member and volunteer, and I am excited to be going back to school to do what I know I'm meant to spend my life doing.

Always keep fighting, friends.  
Much love,  
Star Martin



# FENTANYL

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Last year British Columbians were faced with an unprecedented tragedy: in 2016 there was a dramatic increase in fatal overdoses in this province with 931 reported deaths. On April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016, BC's provincial health officer declared a public health emergency in response to hundreds of overdoses which appeared to have been caused by fentanyl. This article goes over some basic facts about fentanyl, and also highlights harm reduction tools that can be taken into consideration if you choose to use any illicit drugs.

## WHAT IS FENTANYL?

Fentanyl is an opioid pain killer in the same class of drugs as codeine, morphine and oxycodone. It can be used safely when prescribed by a health professional and taken as directed, but it is also produced and sold illegally and found in multiple forms: straight powder, in a pressed pill, or mixed with other drugs. Fentanyl is increasingly being mixed into other street drugs, and users and their dealers have no way of knowing what they are taking until it is too late.

## CONCERNS ABOUT ILLEGAL FENTANYL

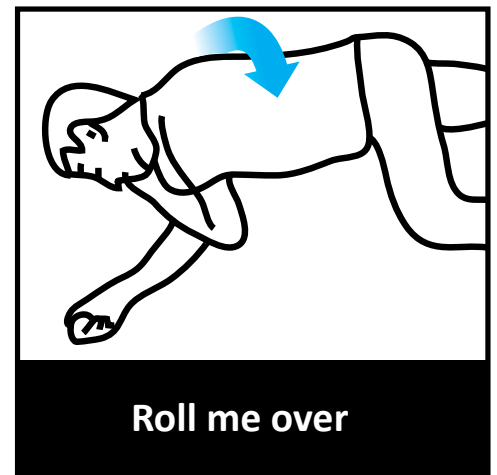
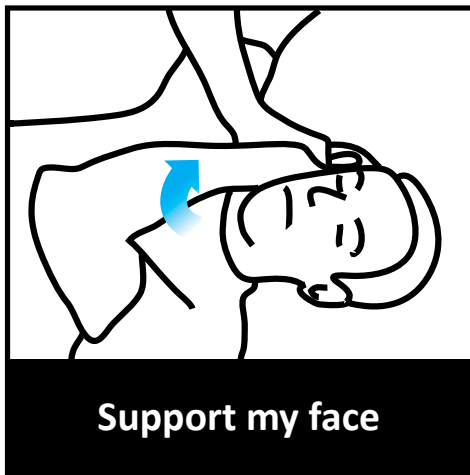
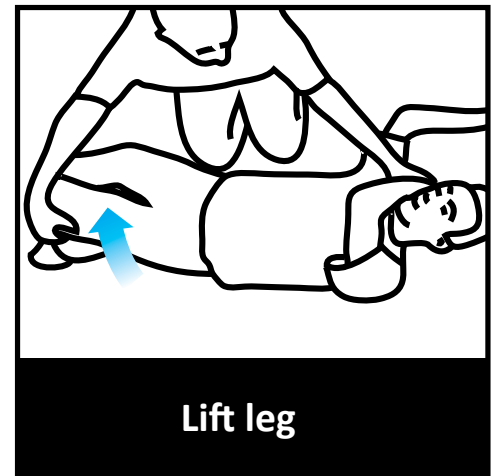
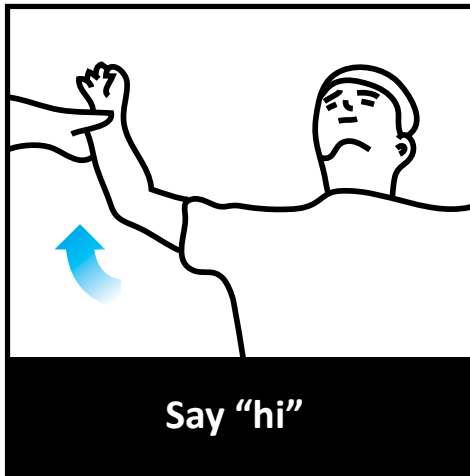
Fentanyl has been connected to many of the 931 overdose deaths in BC in 2016, and unfortunately the crisis is not slowing down. This year, between January and March, fatal overdoses have already claimed 347 lives. Here are some key pieces of information you should know:

- ★ It is being made on the street and there is little or no quality control.
- ★ The powder is the purest form that this drug comes in and it only takes an extremely small amount to be deadly: possibly as little as the equivalent of one grain of salt.
- ★ You may not realize you are taking this drug as it is being mixed with drugs like cocaine, ecstasy, pot, and others, or being sold under a different name.
- ★ The effects of this drug are rapid, and within minutes of use your life could be in danger.

## ILLEGAL FENTANYL STREET NAMES

Fentanyl may be referred to by the following, among other, names. Just

## RECOVERY POSITION



because something isn't called Fentanyl does not mean it does not contain it.

- ★ Faded 80s
- ★ K22s
- ★ A215s
- ★ Fake Oxy
- ★ Greenies
- ★ Green Beanies
- ★ Phantom 100
- ★ Ice cream
- ★ Fading (slang for the high)

## WHAT IS HARM REDUCTION?

Harm reduction aims to keep people safe by using strategies to reduce the negative consequences related to taking drugs. There are many strategies for reducing harm, and education and understanding of these strategies can help to keep you safe. "The best prevention in this case is not to use at

all..." says Chief Medical Health Officer for Fraser Health, Dr. Victoria Lee, "...however, if you are using, make sure you have an overdose plan in place."

## IF YOU CHOOSE TO USE, HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO TO REDUCE YOUR RISK

We found this information on a Harm Reduction — Fentanyl Community Response website for the Ontario Harm Reduction program. Check out this page if you want to learn more: [www.healthunit.org/harmreduction/\\_resources/Fentanyl\\_Teachers\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](http://www.healthunit.org/harmreduction/_resources/Fentanyl_Teachers_Fact_Sheet.pdf)

## MAKE THOUGHTFUL CHOICES

Only you, or a doctor you trust, should be making the choice of what you do or don't

put into your body. Make sure you know as much as possible about the substance you are using; sometimes you might think you are taking one thing, when in actuality you are taking another.

### DO YOUR RESEARCH

It is important to know and understand what you are putting into your body. Make sure you can answer the following questions: What is the substance? How was it made? Has it been altered? How will the substance affect you? What are the side effects of taking the substance? What will you do if your experience is not what you expected?

### USE PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

If you choose to use, following these tips will help to reduce the risk:

- ★ Never use alone
- ★ Never mix drugs
- ★ If you are using a new substance, always take a small test dose first to see how it affects you
- ★ Only use where help is easily available

### KNOW THE SIGNS OF AN OVERDOSE

People having an overdose from pain medications such as fentanyl will show one or more of the following signs:

- ★ The person is unresponsive, or won't wake up easily
- ★ Their lips and fingernails turn blue
- ★ Their skin is cold and clammy
- ★ Their body is limp
- ★ They may be breathing very slowly or not at all
- ★ They may be snoring or gurgling
- ★ They may throw up

### KNOW WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE IS IN TROUBLE

- ★ Call 911
- ★ Get trained on how to give Naloxone and have a Naloxone kit with you (you can get these free at many drug stores and clinics, or you can get in touch with one of the Fed staff to help you get this set up)
- ★ Get trained in First Aid and CPR
- ★ Know how to put someone in the recovery position and when to use it (see the image on the previous page)

## HARM REDUCTION TOOLS

### SET-SETTING-DOSE

Set-Setting-Dose is a harm reduction

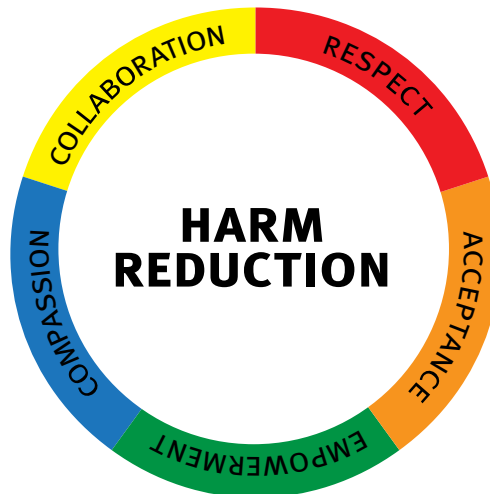
tool that you can use before using drugs or alcohol. Your mindset and the setting you are in when using drugs may have an impact on your experience, and it's important to consider the following questions before deciding to use.

### SET — MINDSET

This is your "mindset" or "mind frame." Check in with your emotional and mental self: How are you feeling today? Are you stressed out? Are you happy? How you feel prior to using may impact your experience.

### SETTING — WHO, WHAT, WHERE AND HOW

Ask yourself the following questions: Where are you going tonight? Will you know everyone where you are going? Will you be alone? Do you feel comfortable with the people you will be with? How will you get there? How will you get home? You can evaluate your answers to these questions based on your mindset. For example, say



you are feeling happy but you are going somewhere you know will be a stressful environment. You can use that information to determine the next step.

### DOSE — WHAT TO CONSUME AND HOW MUCH

After checking in with yourself through thinking about your mindset and the setting you will be in, decide on your dose. What substance are you choosing to consume? How much of the substance will you consume? What is your source? Is it reliable? Have you tested your drugs?

# SPIRIT OF THE CHILDREN SOCIETY (SOTCS) HOUSING FIRST YOUTH PROGRAM

## WHAT DO WE DO?

At Spirit of the Children Society, our workers from the Housing First Youth Program support youth who are aging out of care to obtain, or sustain housing.

## WHAT IS HOUSING FIRST (HF)?

As a philosophy, the Housing First approach is premised on the assumption that the first and primary need of a homeless individual is to obtain stable, permanent housing.

## AS AN INTERVENTION

The HF approach involves moving individuals who are chronically or episodically homeless from the streets or homeless shelters directly into permanent housing. Permanent housing is complemented by the provision of services to assist clients to sustain their housing and work towards recovery and reintegration into the community.

## PROGRAM GOALS

- ★ Connecting Youth to permanent housing
- ★ Life Skills development
- ★ Cultural Teachings

## OUR STORY

Our program is based on the Seven Sacred Teachings: Love, Respect, Honesty, Wisdom, Humility, Courage, and Truth

### Who do we serve?

- ★ Youth Eighteen and over

### How long is the program?

- ★ 18 months

### How do we support the youth?

- ★ Advocacy
- ★ Cultural connections and support
- ★ Develop transition plans with youth
- ★ Linkages to Services

### Youth Participation?

- ★ Life skills Workshops
- ★ Youth & Support / Liaison Worker Outing

For more information, please give us a call at 604-524-9113.

201 - 768 Columbia Street  
New Westminster, BC V3M 1B4  
Tel: 604-524-9113 Fax: 604-524-9124

[www.sotcs.ca](http://www.sotcs.ca)

PHOTOS BY  
RANDI T



PHOTOS BY  
MELINDA H









# YOUTH MEMBER PROFILE

## KAMI S

Within minutes of meeting Kami her easy-going and kindhearted nature will make you feel at ease. She is one of those special souls who seems to genuinely and deeply care about those around her, and she is an exemplary part of the Fed community. Kami is always up for helping out in whatever way she can, and has volunteered for the Extreme Team planning a youth retreat, has given presentations to community groups on the Fed, and has even helped with *Power Pages* distribution! We've really enjoyed seeing more and more of Kami since she first got involved with the Fed through BC Child and Youth in Care Week, and we are excited to see all that the future holds for her. We had the chance to learn more about Kami through this interview, and we know you'll enjoy reading it!

**What's your name, age, where do you live and how long have you been a Fed member?**  
My name is Kamryn, I'm 19 and I live in Surrey. I've been a member of the Fed since February of last year.

**How did you get involved in the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks?**  
My social worker told me about the committee for BC Child and Youth in Care Week so I applied and I think it was Jessica that replied to the application and set me up with Brittaney. She was the one that came and got me from the SkyTrain and helped me get unlost, haha. After the 5 hour meeting Brittaney told me about the SCM and asked if I was interested, I said yeah and it went from there.

**What makes you passionate about the youth in care movement?**  
Being a youth in care, [the movement] was the one thing I really needed, it was the one thing that kind of saved me. I didn't have much knowledge on youth agreements or foster homes and such growing up, I didn't know there were options for me. Whenever I had a social worker come to my house I was always told to lie and say there was food in house, or that I was happy and safe even though I wasn't. I didn't know that there were those types of support for me, and so I

guess what makes me passionate about it is wanting to have other youth know that you don't have to stay in a traumatic situation, there are other options. There is the Ministry, there are social workers, there are people you can go to. Just making it known.

**What are some of your proudest accomplishments?**  
One of them would be being here in general. I'm super proud of myself over the fact that I've come this far because when I was younger, for a really long time I didn't see myself graduating. I saw myself ending my life before Grade 12 and the fact that I didn't makes me really proud of myself. Because of it I've graduated high school, I did my first year of college, I got my first official job, I moved into my first place by myself—there have been so many other accomplishments because of that. But I guess the main one is just making it this far.

**Why do you think you've been able to overcome and accomplish so much so young?**  
It's been a lot of self-support, but it's also stemmed from friends, my counsellor I had a few years back, my social worker, a few close family members. Some of those people have really helped me overcome the things that I've had to deal with from my past. But I definitely believe that it's a lot of inner support.

**What inspires you most?**  
The youth I know, their strength and ability to overcome is what inspires me. My mom, and the people I've met along the way, the ones who are still trying to be okay inspire me to keep trying as well.

**What are some of the biggest life lessons and wisdom you have learned that you'd like to share with youth growing up in care and transitioning on their own?**  
I've learned that it isn't a competition when

it comes to your history, you've experienced what you've experienced and you feel how you feel. We don't have to justify anything. Another really good thing I've learned is that everyone has their own limit and just because theirs may be different from your own does not make either of you weaker.

**What are some of your goals for the future?**  
I want to get my degree in Child & Youth Care and work in that type of field. I want to work with youth in care, or youth at risk because I feel it's the only way I can take good from my experiences. I want to be able to save somebody's life.

**What changes would you like to see happen for children and youth in and from care in BC and around the world?**  
I'd like to see more permanency, less moving around, more letting a child stay in the same foster home. It's the only way for them to

**"I've learned that it isn't a competition when it comes to your history, you've experienced what you've experienced and you feel how you feel. We don't have to justify anything."**

really gain connection with somebody and it's also a bad experience in its own, just having to constantly move around. It really does something to a child or youth within the system.

**Tell us something interesting or surprising about you that no one would guess!**  
I'm certified in self-defense and I did MMA for a year and a half!

**What would your karaoke song be if you could pick anything?**  
Would NOT be doing Karaoke, haha, but I'm really into Dive by Ed Sheeran. So right now that would be the song, but when I read this I'm going to be like "noo, why that song?"

**Anything else you'd like to share with us?**  
I just want to say that I'm really thankful for this opportunity and I am so appreciative of the support that I've received from the Fed, and the connections I've made because of the Fed and through the Fed. I love you guys!



## ALUMNI PROFILE

# RACHEL M

Rachel is a force to be reckoned with; her passion and drive for creating positive change in the system and her willingness to get involved make her someone we are proud to know. Her history with the Fed is an extensive one; she's been our Youth Staff, went on the Olympia Trip, helped to write some really important publications of ours, and continues to volunteer as an Outreach Group member to this day. Rachel is wickedly intelligent and a role model for young people, and we were grateful for the opportunity to catch up with her on what she's been up to!

### Tell us about yourself!

*I am a 25 year old living in Vancouver, BC. I was adopted at birth and grew up on Vancouver Island, but was on my own by 14. I am a visionary hustler, politics nerd, and social justice activist. I am a cat person and I love to kidnap my friends for impromptu dinner parties at my house.*

### How did you get involved in the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks?

*I moved to Vancouver as a high school dropout at 17 years old. I had the choice between a job at a U-Haul call center, and a job off Craigslist as the Youth Project Staff at the Fed. I had no idea about the Fed but tried anyway. As Youth Project Staff, I facilitated Rights 2 Success workshops in BC Youth Custody, and wrote the Exploring Your Dreams Education Workbook. I stayed after on contract to bring Rights 2 Success into the community, and continue to volunteer today as an Outreach Group member.*

### What makes you so passionate about the youth in care movement?

*The thing about the youth in care movement is that it is more like a big extended family. There is something unbreakable about the bond we share. We might annoy each other, tease each other, or piss each other off, but we will still give each other a knowing nod on the street at the very least. We still love, care and pay attention to each other. The other thing is the resilience and power. It takes something special to excel in spite of the odds, and our community knows how to make it happen.*

### What are some of your proudest accomplishments and how did you get to where you are today?

*Personally, I am most proud of overcoming homelessness three times over, and getting classier each time. Overcoming addiction, exploitation, and abuse. Learning to heal from trauma, move beyond pain, and grow from the challenges. I am also proud of receiving*

*the Representative for Children and Youth's Award of Excellence in Youth Leadership when I was 19, the 24 Hour News Top 24 under 24 when I was 21, and the BC Child and Youth in Care Week Super Star Award last year.*

**Why do you think you've been able to overcome and accomplish so much?**

*I think it is both what's inside and what's outside. On the inside, it's about determination and a sense of justice. A knowledge of my legal and moral rights, a belief that things could get better, and a willingness to endure anything to get there. On the outside, it's all about community. Relationships with peers and change makers offer an escape in the dark times and a place to celebrate every single small victory.*

**What inspires you most?**

*My biggest inspiration is seeing the ripple effect of words and actions. Seeing little ideas turn into a big event, policy or campaign. Seeing people grow and change. Seeing systems transform. I also have always sought inspiration in art, music, poetry, beauty in dirt, and those who live their lives like masterpieces.*

**Tell us about what's going on for you outside of the Fed that you're excited to share.**

*We just finished a project at the BC Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women. It was called the Aging Out of Care Study Circle Project, and we brought together community members and young people across the province to learn from each other. We made a brochure, report and study guide, and I am now supporting ongoing action by participants. I have also recently started a consulting company called Authentic Engagement focusing on writing, facilitation, and strategic planning.*

**What are some of the biggest life lessons and wisdom you have learned that you'd like to share with youth growing up in care and transitioning on their own?**

*First, life goes in cycles and nothing is permanent. When you are up, plan for the fall and when you are low, plan for the rise. Second, you can always come back. Those in the youth in care community are no strangers to struggle, we get hard times, and we rejoice in making it through the other side. Finally, you can and will get where you want to go. It may take longer, be harder, and look different than imagined, but if you keep sight of your*



***"Those in the youth in care community are no strangers to struggle, we get hard times, and we rejoice in making it through the other side."***

*dream you will make it one day. Belief and perseverance get you there.*

**What are some of your goals for the future?**

*My biggest goal is simply to find balance between changing the world and living in it. In the long run I would love to study human rights law, possibly looking for a position within the UN to support the rights of those on the margins. Maybe get married if I find someone who can handle my wildness, maybe have a couple kids who can travel the world with me, and maybe fill my nights with dance and poetry.*

**What changes would you like to see happen for children and youth in and from care in BC and around the world?**

*I would like to see young people aging out of care with the same supports and opportunities as others who are transitioning to adulthood in BC. To see that the journey is slow and winding, that it is not as simple as just turning 19, and that it takes a lot of exploration to find the right path. To see that the people in our lives can make all the difference and to see our communities rise up to the challenge.*



**Tell us something interesting or surprising about you that no one would guess!**

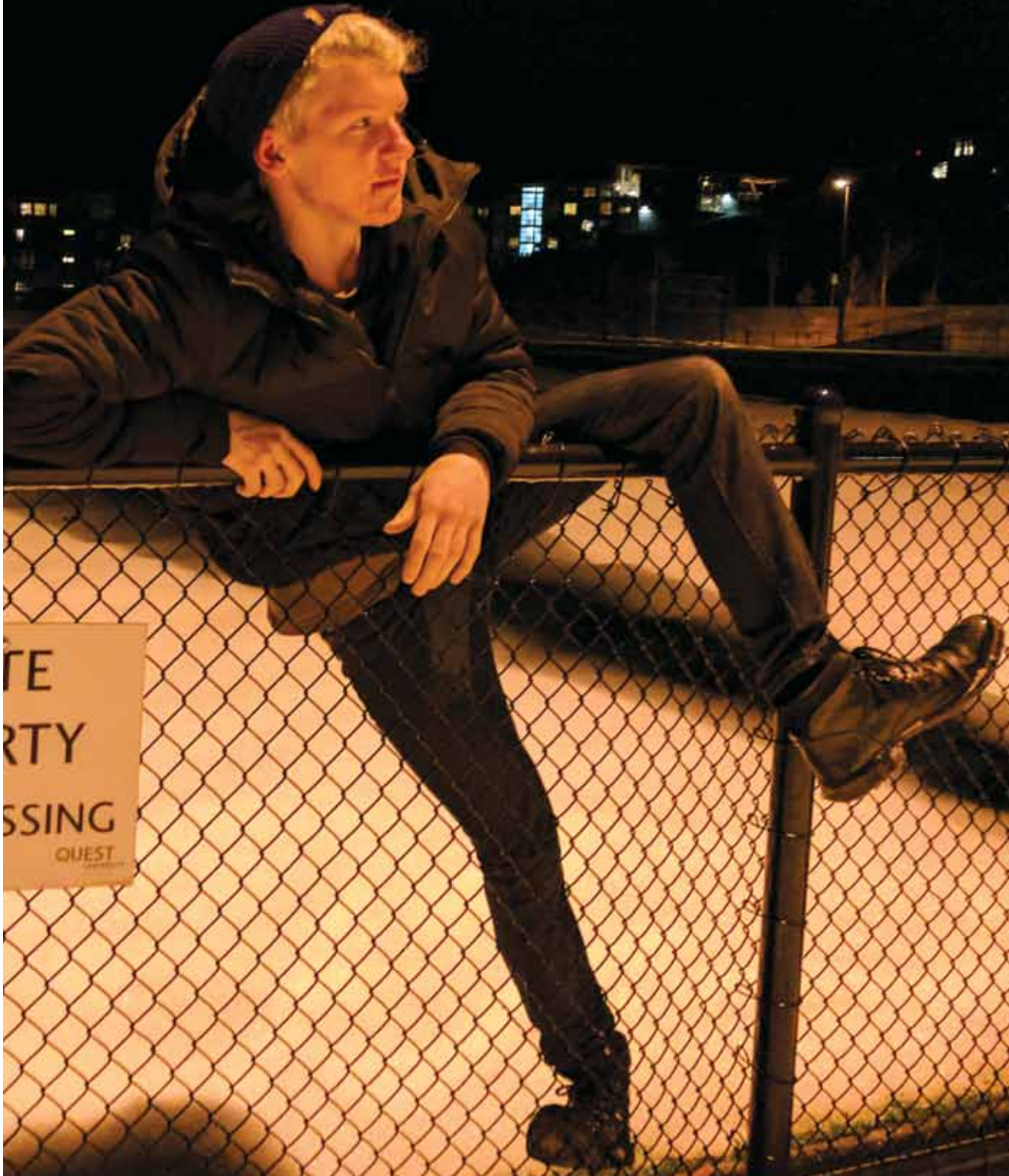
*Back when I lived on Vancouver Island my biggest passion was belly dancing. I would travel locally as part of a small troupe that performed at festivals, farmers markets, and local halls. We would have potlucks where troupes from far and wide would come together, feast, and dance until dawn. I made many of my own costumes and traded and bartered for the rest.*

**What would your Karaoke song be if you could pick anything?**

*Nobody Knows You by Bessie Smith. Or by Dinah Washington. Or by anyone old really.*

**Anything else you'd like to share with us? Seriously. Bessie Smith rocks.**

*"Seeing other people with massive drives to be the best they can be inspires me to do the same."*



## LOCAL LEADER PROFILE

# MATTHEW P

If you've met Matthew, you'll know that he's thoughtful, responsible, and very driven. He's mechanically inclined, and enjoys working on everything from cars to cellphones, and has been able to find jobs that allow him to use and improve these skills. Matthew's involvement as a local leader has included helping to organize trips to Frights Nights, an escape room and more, and he has even been involved in ensuring the local is on budget and keeping the Fed's main office up to speed. We are so grateful for all the time and care he put into his role as a local leader, and to have Matthew as part of our community!

### Tell us about yourself!

*I'm an 18 year old guy that lives in Squamish, BC. Currently I manage a small tech repair shop, but who knows what the future holds. My #1 want is to own my own store or business in the future!*

### How did you get involved in the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks?

*While talking to my school counsellor about my classes, I let slip that I was working around 30 hours a week to pay for rent, food, my phone bill and everything else. She helped me get in contact with the FBCYICN so that I could focus on school. Believe it or not, it helped!*

### What makes you so passionate about the youth in care movement?

*I know that there's a surprisingly large amount of youth that have struggled due to many different reasons, and after seeing how much the youth in care services have helped me, I try to make sure that anyone I know who may benefit from them knows that they exist.*

### What are some of your proudest accomplishments?

*Honestly I'm not sure. It seemed like I got the most congratulations from graduating high school, but that feels like it's mandatory these days. I think it might be my current job, and the things I've contributed to it, such as building the new website, but really I feel like I need to do more first.*

### Why do you think you've been able to overcome and accomplish so much?

*I think it's because of a philosophy that I believe in—that nothing is impossible if you*

*try. The way I think about it is a bit different though. To me, it isn't about something being "too hard" or "too difficult" to learn or do, but about me being too lazy.*

### What inspires you most?

*Seeing other people with massive drives to be the best they can be inspires me to do the same. Kinda boring answer, but in a way it is the same thing as seeing someone else happy making you happy.*

### What are some of the biggest life lessons and wisdom you have learned that you'd like to share with youth growing up in care and transitioning on their own?

*It might seem a bit grim, but the world owes you nothing. Something a friend told me was "Everyone has a sad story." My twist would be, "Everyone has a sad story. Make sure yours has a happy ending."*



### What are some of your goals for the future?

*I plan on owning my own business, for sure. I'd say that's the main goal. I'm also looking into being able to provide housing for my sister, but living in Squamish, that's a harder goal!*

### What changes would you like to see happen for children and youth in and from care in BC and around the world?

*I think something related to housing would be best, something that might help landlords understand that a 17 year old kid might not have a reference, or a credit score.*

### Tell us something interesting or surprising about you that no one would guess!

*When watching Inside Out, I cried when Bing Bong died.*

### What would your Karaoke song be if you could pick anything?

*Haha, probably Sweater Weather by The Neighbourhood, if I could sing.*

### Anything else you'd like to share with us?

*Super boring, but just try and be the best you can be, and good things will come naturally.*

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**Agedout.com** is a fresh, fun, and friendly one-stop shop for youth in and from care. Watch videos, do exciting activities, and learn the skills you need to succeed in the real world.

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**Agedout.com** is an up-to-date warehouse of information on resources and services for young adults in BC. It focuses on six key topics: housing, health and wellness, money and income, education, ID needs, and your personal life.

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Sign up now at **AgedOut.com**! Watch the tutorials for more information about how to earn your rewards.

\* if you're a youth in or from care who is less than 25 years old



“Use your resources.  
Take advantage of  
the opportunity  
to the fullest. And  
above all, love what  
you are doing.”





# YOUTH STAFF PROFILE

## STAR M

Star is what you would call a triple threat. She can sing, play instruments and is an incredible actor. Not only is she a gifted performer, she did an amazing job as a Fed staff, supporting her peers to plan and organize our youth retreats. Star has been a member and a volunteer at the Fed since she was 15 years old and has given so much of her heart, talents and passion for youth voice to the organization. Star is one of those people who will work super hard when she wants something, and her drive to succeed has helped her overcome so many challenges in her life. If you ever want to start a conversation with her just ask her about the show Supernatural; she has some pretty cool stories to share.

### Tell us about yourself!

*I'm a very artistic individual who is very passionate about helping others. I'd like to consider myself someone that people can come to when they need help, or simply need a friend to talk to.*

### Tell us what's going on for you outside of the Fed that you're excited to share!

*I'm currently studying acting for film and television, voice over, and will be starting screenwriting soon. I'm also studying American Sign Language.*

### What kind of work did you get up to as the Youth Staff?

*I worked very closely with the Outreach Group, as well as the SCM Extreme Team. My main job, for the most part, was organizing the SCM.*

### What did you like best about your job?

*Working so closely with so many wonderful youth members.*

### How did your views of the Fed change as a staff compared to being a member?

*I now understand a lot more about how our organization runs, and it gave me a new perspective on a lot of things. It helped me understand that a lot of things are much more difficult and complicated than what I'd originally thought.*

### How has your involvement with the Fed impacted your life?

*It gave me a family. It has given me a space to be open about myself and my experiences where everyone understands and relates and empathizes. That is so important.*

### What was the most memorable moment you had while working at the Fed?

*The SCM that was cancelled due to weather. Even though it was cancelled, the Extreme Team and staff team came together in such a powerful way to still make those couple of days wonderful and memorable for everyone there. It was incredible.*

### What skills are most valuable in order to succeed in this role?

*Patience is a big one, I think. Sometimes things don't happen as quickly as you'd like them to, or quite in the way you'd like. So it's good to be patient and open-minded.*

### What advice would you give to the next Youth Staff?

*Use your resources. Take advantage of the opportunity to the fullest. And above all, love what you are doing.*

### Anything else you'd like to share with us?

*Always keep fighting!*



## PowerPlaylist Songs that Matter to Us!

Certain songs mean a lot to us, and there's not always a good explanation why. Often they're songs we listened to when going through rocky times, or they're songs that have lifted us up. The Power Playlist column gives people the chance to share these special songs.

### POWERPLAYLIST BY CADEN L:

#### Fireside

By: Brett Bixby

#### I'm Alive

By: Shinedown

#### King

By: Lauren Aquilina

#### Carnivore

By: Starset

#### Gasoline/Control

By: Halsey

#### Warriors

By: Imagine Dragons

#### The Voice

By: Celtic Woman

#### Never Alone

By: Barlow Girl

#### Wrong Side of Heaven

By: Five Finger Death Punch

#### Shipwreck

By: USS

#### Anti-Gravity

By: Runaground

#### Crossfire

By: Stephen

#### Player One

By: Machinae Supremacy

#### Where Do We Go

By: Lindsey Stirling

## 100 MEN WHO CARE VANCOUVER DONATES \$10,000 TO THE FED



We were so honoured to be selected as the chosen charity for a 100 Men Who Care Vancouver community donation! Our Executive Director, Jules Wilson, had the pleasure of attending their holiday event and received the cheque on behalf of the Fed. Thanks so much to this fantastic group of local professionals who care about giving back to their communities!

If music has meant a lot to you in your life, submit a PowerPlaylist column to us at [powerpages@fbcyicn.ca](mailto:powerpages@fbcyicn.ca). You just may see it in the next *Power Pages!*



## WHEN GRIEF STRIKES

by Valeen J

Last night the clouds came to grieve with me.

We cried nearly enough tears  
to get us out of this drought of a life  
because crying is healing, or so they say  
and grief is like a half-life:  
always decreasing but never fully gone.

This morning I let my coffee get cold  
on the empty countertop;  
the sugar is too sweet  
for the bitter pain consuming my heart.

Right now I remind myself that I am here  
because I inherited the gravity of my  
Mother's love.

## THE GIRL IN THE MIRROR

by Natasha S

This girl,  
She stares with glassed eyes.  
She can see into eternity and past my lies.  
She mimics my words but is no help to me,  
I know that deep down she wants to break  
free.

I lash out at her with broken claws,  
I reach out and grasp her flaws.  
She shatters with a heart wrenching cry  
and

I watch as pieces of her and I fly.  
Blood trickles down my torn skin,  
She looks up at me with blurred eyes and  
asks,  
Did I win?



DREAM CATCHERS  
MADE BY KAMI S

## WHEN MY BODY SAYS NO

by Valeen J

I've worked myself  
to unbearable exhaustion  
so I began stretching again  
with the promise to practice  
loving more of myself each time.

## DADDY

by Natasha S

I know there's nothing I can do to help you  
even though I want to try,  
but I'm afraid if you go further on this path  
there's nothing left to do but Die.  
I miss you in my life,  
the father I've always known  
but drugs is what you want,  
that is what you've shown.  
I pray that you see different  
And you find a better way.  
I take the time to think of you,  
I do it every day.  
Maybe we will meet again  
Maybe in some way.  
And this is what I promise you,  
In my heart you'll always stay.  
I love you more than anything  
And I wish you all the best,  
I hope that you find happiness  
Before you lay down to your final rest.  
I believe that when that happens,  
God will welcome you with open arms.  
He will accept you for who you were  
And forgive you for what you've done.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

by Natasha S

It's taking all of my strength to keep the  
tears  
From running down my face today and  
I would give anything to be able to escape,  
To a place where I can feel you near.  
Somewhere that takes away all of the fear I  
hold in my heart  
Ever since the day the world decided to rip  
us apart.  
I need you and with every passing day this  
statement grows more true.  
I woke up today and the sky looked hazy,  
Your missing presence is really starting to  
phase me.  
Six years have passed and it's hard to keep  
the memories of our past  
From clouding my mind.  
I feel like a piece of me is gone and I don't  
know how to find it.  
I miss you and that scares me,  
I try to live my life without you,  
It's unbearable.

## PANIC ATTACK

by Natasha S

No one knows how it hurts inside.  
The pain is there and it intensified.  
I want to run away but there's nowhere  
to hide.  
A thousand and one memories about how  
I was never enough.  
They kept telling me to stick it out and just  
act tough.  
Don't show your emotions it's your  
weakest point.  
Keep it all in and pretend everything's OK.  
It was a lie they told,  
How the pain is just for now and  
tomorrow's a new day.  
But the truth of the matter is,  
It never goes away.

## THE DIRTY KNEES OF PRAYER

by Valeen J

There is an apple tree by the church  
down the street from me.  
I sit here in poverty wondering:  
Will they banish me from the garden  
if I pick an apple for me to eat?

Although

I am woman  
I tend to the medicines

I am medicine  
I tend to the hearts.

## RECOVERY

by Natasha S

I'm winning because I'm here.  
Even though I have my feelings to fear.  
I can stand up and rise above it.  
With nothing to lose and everything to  
gain,  
I'm beginning to love it.  
My past is behind me and the present is  
clear.  
I have a bright future ahead of me,  
It's finally near.  
They tried to break me but I'm continuing  
to fix the cracks.  
My self-love is what I lost and I'm beginning  
to get it back.



Art by Melinda H

## MY SISTERS

by Natasha S

A similar background but a different place  
And yet here we are running the same race.  
All wanting the same things,  
Having the past in our way.  
We need a better life,  
We choose that today.  
It's not an easy thing  
To overcome what we've been through,  
Personal growth and hard work  
Is the stuff we have to do.  
Do not think we are bad people,  
We have as much worth as you.  
Just because we have a hard time seeing it,  
Doesn't mean it isn't true.  
We all need to learn how beautiful and  
strong we are in our own way  
And with the tools we have now asked for  
we can achieve it someday.  
We now stand together to stop the  
competition against ourselves,  
As sisters,  
To deal with the lives we were originally  
dealt.

## THE SKY IS CRYING

by Kami S

Late night sitting in the park,  
That's when it's the most peaceful.  
When you can't hear the chaos of the city  
anymore.  
When your thoughts are louder than the  
sounds that surround you.  
Clear skies, you look up and see the big  
dipper.  
You start to think about your life, sadness  
consumes you  
And suddenly you feel a raindrop on your  
cheek.  
No longer clear skies,  
But instead a down pour.  
It's almost as if the sky is crying for you.



# WE'RE QUEER & WE ARE MOST DEFINITELY HERE

by Jaye S

It's February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 and for the first time in my entire life, I hear an acknowledgement and recognition of LGBTQIA2S+ youth in care that is outside of the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks. When Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond acknowledges us, saying we exist and deserve the best, tears come pouring out of my eyes. For the first time ever, I feel validated in my experiences as a queer person who was in care. I finally exist.

I wasn't "out" while in foster care, mostly because I was often placed in resources that held strong Christian beliefs. I may not have been "out" and I may not have had the language to explore who I was, but I sure was queer. That being said, it wasn't until I received my file from care (nearly 4 years after I requested it) that I realized that I had in fact faced discrimination while in government care from my social workers, and my foster parents. It was in October of 2016 (on my birthday, actually) that I received my file and I read all 4000 or so pages and had to stop and breathe. Early in my file, from the time I was 4 or 5, in sloppy, quick cursive was my name and concerns about my 'sexuality' followed by several question marks. The next line was:

We need to meet with the team leader and our lawyers about future possible liabilities re: sexuality.

That must've been in 1999, nearly 18 years ago. I was profiled and deemed a threat. To whom I wonder; at 5 years old, who was I a threat to? And I realized: my questioned sexuality was a threat to other kids, my peers and friends. I also realized why I was never allowed over at anyone's house for sleepovers or birthday parties. I also have to acknowledge that even though this happened years and years ago, I'm only now just realizing the situation, long after the fact, and am mourning these small slivers of childhood I missed.

I laugh a little now, as I identify as non-binary and Two Spirit, and exist outside the gender binary. I laugh because throughout the years and in the file, so many folks tried to make me do more "boy things" and be "more of a boy," forcing me into rigid stereotypes of masculinity in hopes I

wouldn't be gay, but joke's on them, I exist devoid of gender and choose to love any who love me. I choose to love those who ask for love; I love unapologetically.

So there I was, a queer, transgender young person in care, not fully knowing who I was and how I fit into everything. There I was, flesh and blood, existing without any acknowledgement, and I have to say, that is where the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the Delegated Aboriginal Agencies fail. They refuse to acknowledge the existence of myself and other like-folk. They refuse to acknowledge the violence, discrimination and trauma that queer folk experience. They refuse to support these young queer folk who need support. Where I grew in regards to my queer identity, I did it with the support of other queer folk and via mentorship, relationships and permanency all without MFC and the DAAs. What MFC and DAAs lack is the understanding that we are no threat, we are people and we need sustainable and meaningful support, and we need it now. They don't seem to know how their actions (or should I say inactions so far) have affected other queer youth in and from care.

Egale Canada reports that in Toronto 1 in 4 homeless youth identify as LGBTQIA2S+ and I can't help but think, how many are or were in care? It also strikes me deeply that British Columbia is lacking in data and information related to LGBTQIA2S+ youth in and from care. How can we as a society let this happen and allow so many to "fall through the cracks." It is this very lack of knowledge, research and recognition that fueled the discrimination I faced whilst in care, and I was done a great disservice. It is my belief that the Province should invest in research and provide sensitivity training to social workers, service providers, foster parents and anyone working with youth in and from care in order to help build a healthier community and nurture a deeper and healthier connection. I also think small whispers of how MFC and DAAs don't include, recognize and acknowledge intersectional identities. I think of all those queer folk who also hold different identities sacred. I myself am Indigenous.

I think about how there must be other QTBIPOC (Queer Trans Black Indigenous People of Colour) in and from care. We must exist, as here I am today, as I was yesterday too. I know I'm not the only one with these intersections, with these sacred aspects and facets of my identity.

I am only 22 years old, still very young, and still trying to figure out who I am as a young, queer, trans, Indigenous person and how I fit into the worlds I traverse. I am messy in this, and I am proud of the messy, hard work I am doing and the other magical folks I encounter. I am also healing from this, the fact that my body was never my body and that this queer trans body was discriminated against by those meant to ensure my survival. I am healing from this in so many ways and I am glad to have the support of the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks, who include the queer perspective and celebrate queer youth in and from care. At the FBCYICN I feel safer than anywhere else because before I got there, there were gender neutral washrooms, there was "other" options for gender on the paperwork; it was acknowledged. I see that I am supported in my advocacy, and am being held up and celebrated for it too. I know I am not alone. This is only the beginning of the discussion, there is much work to do, and I am so looking forward to it, as it is a piece of my journey in healing. I exist and I have always been here. You exist and have always been here.

If you or anyone else you know identify as queer and are a youth in and from care, I want you to know that you are not alone. You exist, your identity is valid and you deserve to exist and thrive. You are magical and mighty and I believe in you.

*Jaye Simpson is a queer trans Indigenous person whose family comes from the Sapotaweyak Cree Nation, currently living, loving, playing and working on the traditional, unceded and ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Tsleil-waututh and Squamish First Nation peoples, and would like to acknowledge that they are a guest on these lands. Sources come from Egale Canada's website.*

## MCFD YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL (YAC) UPDATE



We are half way into the second year of the Provincial Director of Child Welfare's Youth Advisory Council. Since September 2016 we have been involved in various projects and presentations where we:

- ★ Met with staff from the RCY
- ★ Presented to the Children's Forum
- ★ Consulted on policies
- ★ Provided feedback to care plans and caregiver training programs
- ★ Spoke at the Telus/IBM partnership announcement
- ★ Participated in the Promising Practices Conference
- ★ Participated in the Ignite Your Spirit Youth Gathering with the RCY

- ★ Created videos acknowledging Social Worker Week
- ★ Met with Executives and front line staff

Check out the First Year Report for the Provincial Director of Child Welfare's Youth Advisory Council.

[www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/data-monitoring-quality-assurance/reporting-monitoring/youth\\_advisory\\_council\\_report.pdf](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/data-monitoring-quality-assurance/reporting-monitoring/youth_advisory_council_report.pdf)

In early June we will be sending out applications for the 2017–2018 council! If you have any questions contact [Kymerlee.stogan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Kymerlee.stogan@gov.bc.ca)



Photo by Sanjesh S



## KEEP BEING STRONG & STAY BEAUTIFUL

by Claudia D

When you're in care sometimes it can be very frustrating because it feels like you have no freedom when really they just worry about you. Sometimes they won't even let you see your family that love and care for you, they're just trying to protect you as much as they can but sometimes it can feel very isolating. It's hard when you feel like they're trying to take away so many important things that you feel are very important in your life at the time. They're trying to do their best instead of leaving you on the street freezing to death and leaving you no bed to sleep on; they

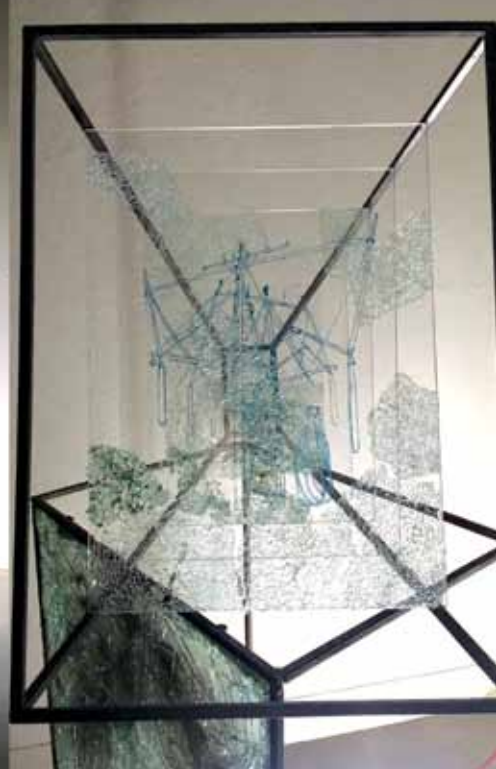
rescued me from the street life.

They helped me get a drug and alcohol worker, a mental health worker and a family doctor. They do their best to help you when you're in care. They can also help you with schooling. But they might not let you go out anywhere after a while if you did drugs even if you don't smoke weed or do drugs at the present moment when you want to go out. They'll also keep you inside and tell you to do some coping when sometimes those things they give you aren't the things you need to focus on, and something different is what you actually

need to help distract yourself from all the crazy thoughts in your head.

You do not always get along with others that live in your home but sometimes there is nothing they can do to help you move into a different home because they think it's the best fit for you. In care a lot of people can come and go, that can lead to not trusting people and also lead to depression, but everything works out in the end. Try to stop reminiscing and focus on the present. Sometimes that can help out a lot. Remember you're not the only one out there in care, keep being strong and stay beautiful.

ART BY LIANA K



# CELEBRATE

BC CHILD & YOUTH IN CARE WEEK!

JUNE 5 - 11, 2017

BRITISH COLUMBIA



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