

# POWER PAGES

ISSUE #50



FEDERATION  
OF BC YOUTH  
IN CARE  
NETWORKS

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

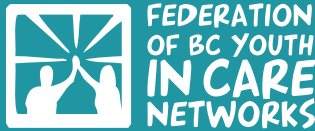


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HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE  
RECONCILIATION  
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**YOUR ADVICE FOR THE  
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AMAZING POEMS,  
STORIES, REPORTS,  
ARTWORK &  
PHOTOGRAPHY!**





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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## CONGRATS TO OUR NEW ALUMNI

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Hari Sun  
James Penner Power  
Janelle Barth  
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Steven Turnau



# 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 past 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.



## ON THE COVER:

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# POWER PAGES

## EDITION #50 BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

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

*Hi Fed Fam! It has been a busy time as usual at the Fed! We hope you have been keeping up with us on our new website, Facebook or our monthly e-news, but if you are feeling a bit behind, check out our updates and get up to speed!*

## OUTREACH GROUP

After a busy spring and a quiet summer, the Outreach Group is looking to get active again with presentations about what we do, their stories and experiences and the top five issues impacting youth in and from care. OGs have presented to the YWCA Strive program and at the Access to Justice for Children: Child Rights in Action Conference. The OGs have also hosted info booths at the Connect 2 Thrive event, Vancouver Youth Volunteer Opportunities Fair at Point Grey Secondary and a Graduation Celebration for youth in care in South Fraser.

We really need new spokespeople, so if you are interested in joining the OGs, contact Rebecca. [Rebecca.Larder@fbcyicn.ca](mailto:Rebecca.Larder@fbcyicn.ca)

## WEBSITE/COMMUNICATIONS

Since the launch of the new website, communications has been focused on increasing awareness about the Fed with youth, adult allies, community partners and donors — as well as helping to kick-start some exciting new programs!

Rebecca was thrilled to attend a Discourse Media workshop series in September with several youth leaders. At the workshops journalists, non-profits and youth advocates discussed how to tell more nuanced stories about the experiences of youth in and from care— so cool! These conversations are important to informing how we conduct media training and how we update our communications plan in the future.

## RETREATS

On June 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> we hosted SCM #73 at UBC! We had 49 youth in and from care attend this incredible weekend driven by a stellar team of 6 youth called the Extreme

Team and 4 amazing youth MC's. During the weekend participants engaged in consultations, workshops, fun activities, celebrations and a talent show. On Sunday, June 4, we hosted our Annual General Meeting where two new board members were elected to join our board of directors.

As we are writing this, we are looking forward to our next SCM on November 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> at Evans Lake Camp, Squamish BC.

## TAKE THE WHEEL

This year we received funding through ICBC to help support youth in and from care 16–24 in obtaining their license. We had



applicants from all over the province and we were able to provide 59 youth with funding that totaled over \$40,000. Also thanks to Dueck GM who donated a brand new 2016 Chevrolet Cruise, to support youth who are looking to get in extra practice driving time! We are working hard to find new funding sources so we can support more youth in and from care with this bursary.

## BCCYICW RECAP

Another BC Child and Youth in Care Week has come and gone and the organizing committee would like to thank everyone who came out to show their support for youth in and from care across BC from June 3–11 this year!

We were also thrilled to see participation this year from a group of young activists! A grade 5 Social Justice class from École Rose-des-vents, a Francophone school in Vancouver, approached the committee because they had decided that the issue

they wanted to learn about was the need for supports for youth in and from care.

Matthew and Sanjesh, two young adults involved with the Fed, volunteered to help and they visited with the students in April to answer their questions! It was a great experience for everyone, and the class came away with a better understanding about what it means to be in care. They even put on a play to teach other kids at their school about what they had learned! It was a phenomenal awareness-raising event and an honour to see these young leaders making change.

The Fed would like to thank all of the partner organizations who worked together on the committee this year. We were one of many and we would like to acknowledge the celebrations and contributions of: the Adoptive Families Association of BC, the Metis Commission, the Indigenous Perspectives Society, the McCreary Centre Society, the Vancouver Foundation and the Public Guardian and Trustee of BC. And of course thank you to the Ministry of Children and Family Development for proclaiming the week and taking the time to celebrate the incredible children and youth in care.

## TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION TOUR

The Indigenous Youth Program is excited to start its first project this fall! The Fed received a grant from the Government of Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to do a youth-driven tour across BC to explore experiences with and hopes for reconciliation. With the support of an Advisory Council made up of Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Community Partners, and Alumni, our Youth Ambassadors for Reconciliation will facilitate discussions with their peers in their communities. As we write this, we are in the final stages of recruiting volunteers and will have dates set for our stops in each community this fall.

Our conversations will be going on into early 2018, so if you are a youth in or from care in any region in BC and would like to participate in these discussions, please contact Gabby Hillis, Indigenous Youth Program Manager, at [Gabby.Hillis@fbcyicn.ca](mailto:Gabby.Hillis@fbcyicn.ca).

# MESSAGE FROM YOUR BOARD CHAIR

## BUILDING A MORE ACCESSIBLE BOARD

One of my greatest personal joys is participating in the Fed's Youth Retreats — Hearing your voices, catching up on your stories, reflecting on your powerful presence in every room. You are the reason I joined the Fed board and you are the reason I stay.

This year, for the first time, I was forced to miss two retreats. Like you, I was snowed out in February. Then in June, I wasn't able to attend because of very difficult family health circumstances.

It is important to me that you know how much I wanted to be with you at both those retreats. Missing them left me with a profound sense of loss — a loss of the joy of your companionship and a loss of connection with the how and why of the Federation.

As a board member, a lot of my Fed time is spent reviewing numbers and strategies and talking about workplans and deliverables. The board's job is to govern the Fed. That means we set strategic policies and make sure goals are met and that we don't overspend our budgets.

This summer and fall, along with co-chair Gary Tennant, Governance and Human Resources Committee, Chair Katelyn Crabtree and the rest of the board, I have spent time speaking directly with youth members and staff about what they would like from their board members. What we've heard is that many of you want the

board to play a more active role with staff and youth.

I would like to thank you for being so clear about what you want from the board. In September, the board held a working session with Fed staff and our number one priority was to identify new ways the board can build a stronger connection to youth members and alumni. Here are a few of the most important steps we identified:

1. Work directly with you to better understand what we, as an organization, mean by 'youth-driven'
2. Improve board member attendance at the Youth Retreats and other events
3. Create regular opportunities to hear your ideas, your concerns, and your thoughts
4. Work with staff to create clear and transparent reporting on Fed programs so that you can see at a glance where progress is being made and more work is required

This month, we are launching our first ever board outreach to members and alumni. We'd like to know how you would finish this sentence:

**THE ONE MOST IMPORTANT THING I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE FED BOARD DO DIFFERENTLY IS:**



You can enter one word, a short phrase or several paragraphs. It's up to you. Your comments will help inform board discussion and planning.

I am eager to hear your thoughts and ideas. I am open to hearing about what you think we are doing well and to finding out ways we can serve you better. I am excited to work collaboratively with you to create a Federation that is everything you want it to be.

Thanking for reaching out. You can reach me any time by email at: [Debbie.FBCYICN@gmail.com](mailto:Debbie.FBCYICN@gmail.com)

Debbie Cox  
Board Chair

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

We are hard at work updating and organizing our membership information. What does this mean for all of you? It means if you think your membership has expired — it's time to renew it. If you're not a member and you want to be — it's time to fill out a membership form. Why do I want to be a member you may ask??

- By uniting our voices, we are part of a movement and we're able to impact decisions affecting the needs, issues, and ideas of youth in and from care.
- We are youth-driven and by sharing your

thoughts you help us make important choices about our work.

- As a member, we see you as family and celebrate your accomplishments and milestones.
- You get first dibbs on cool opportunities, like representing FBCYICN, travelling to conferences, and participating in our programs.
- IT'S FREE

Membership forms can be found online under *Get Involved*. They can be filled out in person at the Fed office or at any of the community events you may find us at. If you would like

more information, have any questions or would like to chat about membership or anything else contact Shannon Dolton our Engagement Coordinator. You can reach her at [Shannon.Dolton@fbcyicn.ca](mailto:Shannon.Dolton@fbcyicn.ca) or 604 527 7762 ext 109. Also on Facebook as Shannon Dolton-FBCYICN.

*Hopefully reading through that 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!*





# SPRING YOUTH RETREAT

Youth Retreats, or SCMs, are youth-led weekend retreats for youth in or from care from all across BC who 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 an SCM can be very rewarding. There are always tons of new youth attending and tons of staff and allies there to support a safe and inclusive weekend.

Our last retreat was at the beautiful UBC in June. A huge thank you to staff, volunteers and young people who helped to make our 73rd retreat for youth in and from care a big success! Over 50 young people came out to join us for consultations, workshops, poetry reading, games, and other fun.

## NEXT RETREAT:

Interested in participating in our next retreat? Make sure to sign up for our e-newsletter on our website so you are the first to know when the next retreat date is announced! For more information, please contact the office at 604-527-7762 or email [info@fbcyicn.ca](mailto:info@fbcyicn.ca)

## FUND DEVELOPMENT EXPLORING WAYS TO SUPPORT, SUSTAIN, AND GROW THE FED

The staff team has been working hard to find new way to support, sustain and grow the Fed so that it can be more responsive to your interests and needs.

In the fall of 2015, Fed members voted in favour of the Fed applying for Charitable Tax Status and in April 2016, we successfully achieved Charitable Tax Status.

This makes it easier for organizations and individuals to donate money to the Fed so we can continue to make a positive difference for youth in and from care.

Fund development activities are key to helping the Fed secure the money we need to preserve, expand and create programs and services for youth in and for care. Here are some exciting new wins for BC's youth in and from care:

- Radius Fire and Security has donated \$6,500 for our youth retreats. This funding allows us to support youth travel to the event.
- Hollis Wealth has donated \$2,050
- Vancouver Foundation has donated \$10,000 for the 2017 BC Child and Youth in Care Week youth award packages and community celebration grants
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada has granted \$78,000 for the Reconciliation Tour. With this funding, we can bring Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth in and from care together to share their

voices and experiences in conversation about what 'Reconciliation' means so that we can create a common definition based on the voices of youth in and from care.

In addition, the Fed has been working with the Construction Foundation of BC to identify new ways to open up trades and paid apprenticeship opportunities for youth in and from care. We will keep you posted as these opportunities move forward.

As always, we are looking for dollars that align with what you have told us are your priorities:

1. Connect directly with your peers and share common experiences;
2. Develop personally and professionally;
3. Raise awareness about the Federation with youth in and from care and the greater community;
4. Connect youth with their cultural identity, especially Aboriginal youth;
5. Advocate with decision-makers and governments; and
6. Build organizational capacity and excellence.

We are thrilled with the community support we have received so far and will continue to look for the right opportunities — the ones that make a direct and immediate difference in your lives — and hope to have another positive update for you in our next edition.

Stay tuned, stay positive and stay focused!



# 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/what-we-offer/programs/financial-supports](http://fbcyicn.ca/what-we-offer/programs/financial-supports)

### 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.

#### EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT:

Recipient	\$	Institution
Aryelle A-W	\$750	Selkirk College
Barrett W	\$625	Douglas College
Hayley E	\$1,500	Stenberg College
Kiana C	\$750	Vancouver Island University
Serena G	\$750	Thompson Rivers University
Stephanie B	\$625	Athabasca University

#### REACH FOR SUCCESS:

Recipient	\$	Program/Training
Shawna M	\$500	Server training
Tanya K	\$500	Horse camp

### 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/)



## ARE YOU PREPARED TO REP YOUR PEERS? APPLY FOR THE FED'S LEADERSHIP COUNCIL TODAY!

The Fed is committed to engaging and amplifying the voices of youth in and from care. The Fed's Youth Leadership Council is a brand new way you can practice your leadership skills and make sure the voices of youth are heard by the Fed staff team and decision-makers across the province.

You asked us to find new and innovative ways to connect youth members directly to Fed planning and decision-making. The Youth Leadership Council is an important first step to making sure you have a consistent and recognized voice at every planning table.

The Leadership Council will bring forward the perspectives and lived experience of youth from every region in BC: the Interior, the North, Vancouver Island and the Coast Fraser region.

The Leadership Council might be the right fit for you, if you want to:

- share your knowledge of what's going on in your region and community;
- bring forward the experience and perspectives of your peers in care;
- develop your leadership skills; and
- make a direct contribution to Fed planning and decision-making

We'd love to hear from you.

If you'd like to apply, please check out [www.fbcyicn.ca/leadershipcouncil](http://www.fbcyicn.ca/leadershipcouncil) to fill out the application.

If you have questions or interests related to the Youth Leadership Council, please call our office or send a note. We look forward to introducing our Youth Leadership Council in the next edition of *Power Pages!*

# VOLUNTEERING AT FBCYICN

Thank you so much to all of our incredible volunteers who have helped out at events, distributed Power Pages, worked on developing Locals in your community and so much more! At the Fed, our volunteers are the heart of our organization and their contributions make it possible for us to connect with the thousands of youth in and from care across BC — THANK YOU! We would like to recognize all of you for the dedication, perseverance, talent and hard work that you bring to the Fed, we could not do what we do without you!

## YOUTH VOLUNTEERS (14–24)

Ashley M  
Ruby B  
Cammy L  
Karmella B  
Kami S  
Natasha S  
Darian N  
Randi T  
Cazlynn  
Candy F

## ALUMNI MEMBER VOLUNTEERS (25+)

Matthew Shaw

## ADULT ALLY VOLUNTEERS (19+)

Aimee Oakes, RCY  
Dawn Johnson, Fed Ally  
Gaye Smith, IPS  
Geraldine Manson, Elder  
Heather Spence  
Lise Haddock, RCY  
Local Adult Supports  
Alex West  
Austyn Brackett  
Barb Thompson  
Danielle Venne  
Janet Christie  
Jeffrey Watts  
Kari Bepple  
Kristina Splane  
Leigh Macleod  
Monica White  
Nicole McRae  
Renata Saat  
Roland Gurney

## 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

Locals are groups of youth in and from care who come together regularly to meet new people, do fun activities, develop their skills and unite their voices to make change.

Every Fed Local is youth-driven and is unique in order to meet the needs of its community. Local youth leaders are also supported by a host agency in the area and a Fed staff who can help the group to establish a budget, create an annual plan and follow the Fed's Code of Conduct.

Are you interested in starting up a Local in your community or joining a local near you? Connect with Emily Muth, Engagement Specialist at [Emily.Muth@fbcyicn.ca](mailto:Emily.Muth@fbcyicn.ca) today to find out more!



## KAMLOOPS

Approved Local as of March 2016

**Host Agency:** Interior Community Services

**Contact:** Renata Saat, Network Facilitator

[RSaat@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca](mailto:RSaat@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca)

## SQUAMISH

Approved Local as of June 2016

**Host Agency:** Sea to Sky Community Services

**Contact:** Nicole McRae, Youth Outreach Counsellor

[Nicole.Mcrae@sscs.ca](mailto:Nicole.Mcrae@sscs.ca)



## KELOWNA

Approved Local as of March 2013

**Host Agency:** The Bridge Youth & Family Services

**Contact:** Danielle Venne, Adult Support

[Danielle.Venne@thebridgeservices.ca](mailto:Danielle.Venne@thebridgeservices.ca)

## VICTORIA

Approved Local as of June 2012

**Host Agency:** FPSS Foster Parent Support Services Society

**Contact:** Austyn Brackett, Facilitator  
[austynbrackett@hotmail.ca](mailto:austynbrackett@hotmail.ca)

## PRINCE GEORGE

Approved Local as of December 2015

**Host Agency:** Prince George Native Friendship Centre

**Contact:** Alex West, FUBU Facilitator

[awest@pgnfc.com](mailto:awest@pgnfc.com)

# ROOTS CONFERENCE

by Dawn Johnson



On July 10th I had the opportunity to travel to the beautiful Interior to spend a day at the 10th Annual Roots Conference. This conference brings together children and youth in care and their caregivers for a weekend full of cultural sharing and celebration. There were attendees from all across BC who attended and of all ages, from tiny babies to 'young at heart' Elders and lots of in between! I felt right at home and spoiled with bannock on a stick, Labrador tea,

and Indian Tacos for dinner... mmmm.

I was given some floor time to speak with everyone about the Fed and to share some of the great work that we are doing. It was an amazing opportunity to share about the Fed and all of the programs and services that we offer, with many who had not heard of us before. There was a lot of excitement and questions afterwards and this can hopefully be the start of a new long term connection!

# MCFD YAC UPDATE

2017 has been another successful year for the Provincial Director's Youth Advisory Council (YAC)! We've accomplished a lot of work and continue to advocate for positive change every single day. Some of this work includes: advising on the development of new policies/youth teams, speaking on panels/at forums, and meeting other amazing youth in/from care from around the province. Our group is a force to be reckoned with, and to think the year isn't even over yet! Yes, there are still goals to be accomplished, as well as obstacles to be overcome, and as we are writing this our council is looking forward to a big event we are hosting in partnership with South Island MCFD in late September. This event will be called "Aging into Community". It will showcase all the resources available to youth leaving care and it is also a celebration of the coming of age for all the youth who

are turning 19 this year in the Southern part of Vancouver Island. There will be performers, speakers, and an honoring ceremony where we will celebrate the resiliency of these courageous youth. We couldn't be more excited!

Alas, we are also coming to the end of another YAC year. With this cycling change some of our members leave and become alumni of our group. However, with the leaving of some members also comes other new YAC members and future leaders of our group. We are ecstatic to meet our new peers and continue the amazing work that we are so blessed to do. Keep an eye out for us as we shall for you. None of us are an island to ourselves, and it is only together that we can make real positive change. Onwards and upwards foster fam!!

Bryant Doradea

## WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR BC'S NEW GOVERNMENT?

What do you want BC's new government to know about how they can make a difference for BC's youth in care?

The Fed is collecting your thoughts and ideas so we can bring them directly to BC's new Ministers. All you have to do is check out our website: [www.fbcyicn.ca/myvoicematters](http://www.fbcyicn.ca/myvoicematters) to tell them about your priorities, concerns and great ideas.

We will gather your comments into themes and present them to the Ministers. It will be great to see how many of your priorities become their priorities for the coming year. Participate in our My Voice Matters initiative to make sure your voice is heard!

On July 18, 2017 the NDP Leader and BC's Premier John Horgan announced his cabinet which is responsible for the governance and growth of BC. With change comes opportunity, new perspectives and great dialogue. The top 5 issues facing youth in care identified in the 2016 YouthSpeak report were: permanency, transitions, mental health, supportive social workers and youth voice. The key cabinet appointments (based on their mandate letters) that appear to have the greatest impact on these areas are:

- Honourable John Horgan  
Premier

- Honourable Katrine Conroy  
*Minister of Children and Family Development*
- Honourable Melanie Mark  
*Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training*
- Honourable Scott Fraser  
*Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation*
- Honourable Judy Darcy  
*Minister of Mental Health and Addiction*

Check out *My Voice Matters* to share your thoughts and ideas directly with BC's new Ministers.



## UPDATE FROM THE REP!

### BC'S REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

Hi everyone,

I know that in November summer is a distant memory, but do you have time for one more "What I did this summer" story? I want to tell you about an amazing youth-led event we held in August.

One of our priorities at RCY is to hear from youth in care. We need to know about your experiences and opinions as we work to improve child- and youth-serving systems. With that goal in mind, we held our second Ignite Your Spirit Indigenous youth engagement event at Lake Cowichan on Vancouver Island, entirely planned and led by youth.

The goal was to let youth talk about and explore their experiences, and to hear and record their recommendations for government and Indigenous leadership. More than 30 youth in care attended and generously shared their experiences, ideas and dreams. I was impressed with their honesty, passion and ideas to make things better for youth in care.

Our Indigenous Youth Leadership team is now in the process of creating a report documenting the event and the recommendations developed. We are planning to continue to engage with youth and ultimately to present the recommendations to government and Indigenous leadership to create change based on what youth say they need, not what others have decided for them.

Remember, if you ever need help, you can call our advocates at 1-800-476-3933 or email [rcy@rcybc.ca](mailto:rcy@rcybc.ca). 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 we're on social media, too — on Facebook [@rcybcyouth](https://www.facebook.com/rcybcyouth) and [@rcybc](https://www.facebook.com/rcybc), on Instagram [@rcybcyouth](https://www.instagram.com/rcybcyouth) and on Twitter [@rcybcyouth](https://twitter.com/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.

Bernard Richard  
Representative for Children and Youth



## CONTINUING TO BUILD A BETTER FED THE FED'S ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW

Our goal is to be the strongest, most resilient organization we can be. That means we need stable funding and a stable organization. As you all know, we've experienced many changes in the last few years. You've told us that some of those changes have been unsettling for you and may have impacted our delivery of programs and services.

In response to your concerns, the Board asked for a quick and efficient organizational review to identify priority areas where we could improve our internal structure and our services to youth. We were fortunate to be able to contract Ian Mass, who has a depth of experience working with youth and youth-serving organizations.

In his report, Ian recommended we look closely at the following key areas:

1. Work with youth, alumni, staff and the board to develop a practical and clear description of what we mean by 'youth-driven'
2. Appoint a senior manager to ensure the activities of staff are 100% aligned with the organization's strategic priorities and that all commitments to youth and funders are delivered on time and on budget; this includes creating a simple and transparent report on accomplishments and work still to do
3. Develop strong, reciprocal partnerships with other youth-serving organizations so that youth can benefit from shared services and shared thinking
4. Increase the connection between the board and youth, including increasing board participation at Youth Retreats and other events
5. Build a stronger advocacy role by connecting youth voices directly to government decision-makers
6. Identify new ways to re-connect Alumni
7. Find a new way to distribute Power Pages so that it reaches more youth in and from care;
8. Use this year to stabilize and strengthen the organization; only pursue fundraising opportunities that will support our financial security beyond 2018

We look forward to working through these changes with you and keeping you up-to-date on progress made.



## 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. 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.

### TRANSITION PLANNING — MANAGING YOUR TRUST FUND

Did you know that the PGT may be holding money for you in trust? If you received a settlement from a car accident or other personal injury claim, an inheritance or other money due to the death of a parent,

those funds may have come to the PGT to hold in a trust account for you.

When you turn 19 years old, the PGT can pay these funds out to you. Money can bring joy but also responsibility and possibly stress. Now you need to decide what to do with the money.

Don't feel like you have to make these decisions alone. PGT staff are here to help support you in setting goals and learning how to make good financial decisions. A Guardianship and Trust Officer (GTO) from the PGT can meet with you, along with your social worker and anyone else who supports you, to help you plan before you turn 19. We will go over the different options you have to make sure your money is safe, while meeting your needs. We can talk about what you want to do with your money, any goals you might have and how your money can help you to achieve those goals.

Do you think the PGT has a trust account open for you? Contact us and we can let you know. We can also get started on planning! Please phone 604.775.3480 or email us at [cys@trustee.bc.ca](mailto:cys@trustee.bc.ca) and ask to speak to a GTO. For more information about our services, please check out our website at [www.trustee.bc.ca](http://www.trustee.bc.ca).



FEDERATION  
OF BC YOUTH  
IN CARE  
NETWORKS

## STAFF GOODBYES

*As many of you know by now we had to say goodbye to three of our staff team in the last few months. Change is hard for everyone and we know it can be especially difficult for members, but we hope you will join us in celebrating the amazing contributions of these former employees and wishing them the best as they move on to exciting new things!*

### FAREWELL LETTER FROM CHRIS

After over 8 years of being fortunate enough to be part of the Fed family and support our members as a manager here, I will now be moving on to the next chapter of my life. My partner just finished med school and got accepted to do his residency in Calgary so I will be moving there with him at the beginning of June.

I feel so fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with and develop meaningful relationships with such incredible, talented youth, staff and board members. I have learned so much from my time here from all of you. One of the biggest things I've learned about youth in and from care is that not only are you accepting of people's differences regardless of sexuality, gender, race, abilities, and personalities but you welcome difference with open arms and hearts. Working here I've always felt I could be myself and that hasn't always been the case in my life so thank you for that.

The Fed is such an amazing organization in large part because we are youth-driven. During my time here I saw how powerful and meaningful it was to support young people to lead the work we do. I know that the current staff team and the board also recognize how important that is so never forget you have a voice here and you are all so key in driving the work that we do. Also, right now is an exciting time for the Fed, with the new and improved



### IVAN'S GOODBYE

Woah! Time flies when you're having fun! I can't express how much of a blessing it has been to meet all you kind, loving and passionate peeps. I will embark on a new journey in this game of life and see what adventures I will encounter. Thank you everybody for being such awesomeness. The Youth in Care movement will always hold a special place in my heart.  
#youthincareareawesome  
Ivan



### DASHA'S GOODBYE

Dear Fed Family,  
After much deliberation, I have made the difficult decision to leave my position as Program Coordinator at the FBCYICN. With my part-time contract coming to an end in August, I have decided to leave early in order to accept a full-time position with the Vancouver Pride Society as an Event Coordinator. While I am sad to go, I am so grateful for the time I did have here. I have learned so much about the youth in care movement and that the work of organizations like the Fed is not only beneficial, but absolutely necessary. The incredible staff team here has taught me so much, and for this I will always be grateful. But mostly, my learning has come not from the job, but from the members of the organization.

Although my time at the Fed has been fairly short, the impact that the members have had is something I will keep with me forever. To those of you I only met briefly: I learned how welcoming and open you are to all those around you, and I thank you for making me feel like I belong. To those of you I was lucky to get to know throughout my time at the Fed: you have taught me so much about the resilience and passion of individuals within the youth in and from care community, and it continuously inspires me to work hard and keep sight of what matters.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for the conversations, the laughs, the learning and the connections. Thank you to the staff, board, alumni and members for the endless wisdom, knowledge and insights that I know will help to shape my future endeavors. I will miss you all.

With love,  
Dasha Cotic-Ehn



website, a commitment to focusing on how we communicate with the world and with now having the ability to find different sources of funding. These form key building blocks the Fed needs to grow and to have a greater impact on improving the lives of youth in and from care.

I will really miss all of you and my time here, but I know that the Fed will always be a huge part of my life. If you would like to stay in touch you will still be able to find me on my Facebook under Chris Buchner Work. Thank you all again for allowing me in your lives and giving me this amazing experience the past 8 years.

Sincerely  
Chris Buchner



# BCCYICW ART CONTEST



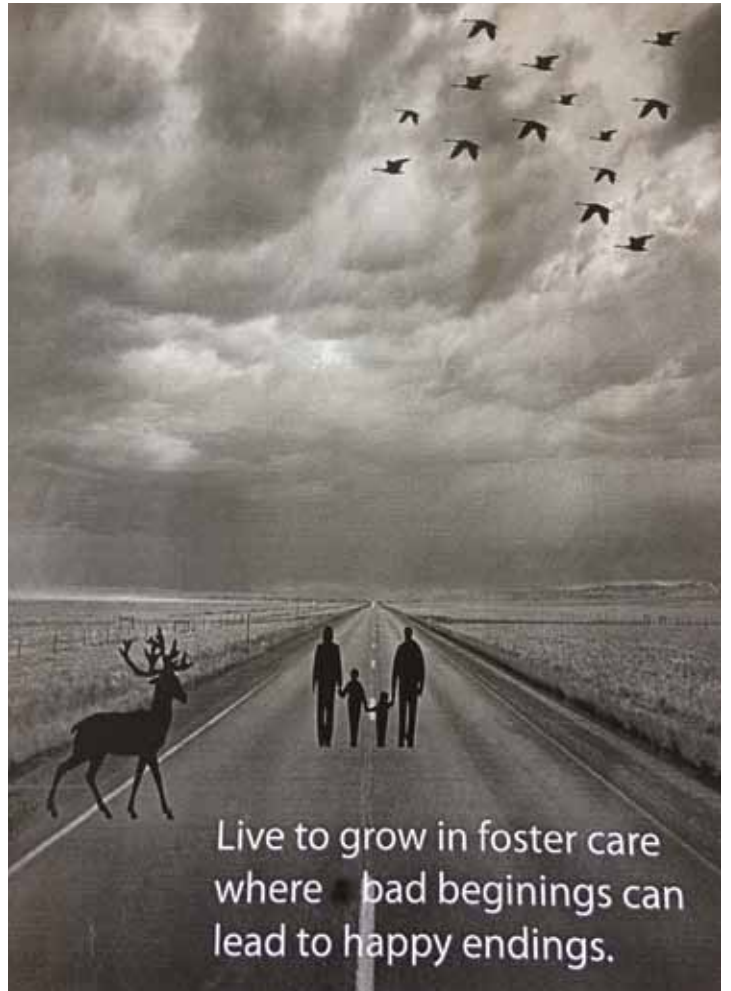
Photo by Jordan R



Photo by Brooke E



Photo by Maggie R H



Live to grow in foster care  
where bad beginnings can  
lead to happy endings.

Photo by Mattia





FEDERATION  
OF BC YOUTH  
IN CARE  
NETWORKS

## NEW STAFF

*We are so excited to announce that we have had three new faces join our staff team this summer! Without further ado, meet Gabby, Program Manager, Aboriginal Youth Programs; Emily Muth, Research and Engagement Specialist and Shannon, Engagement Coordinator! Don't hesitate to stop by, or give us a call to say "hi" and join us in welcoming them to the team!*



**EMILY MUTH**  
**RESEARCH AND**  
**ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST**

I am incredibly excited to be joining the Fed as the Research and Engagement Specialist. After six years living and working in the Northwest Territories, I realized it was time to move back home to British Columbia. I have a Bachelor of Arts in Health Science, a Bachelor of Social Work and a Master's in Public Health focusing in Indigenous Peoples' Health. My work experience has involved working with youth and young adults in a variety of settings including: providing health promotion in schools; designing program evaluation materials; employment counselling; job coaching; and providing one-on-one support

to young adults with disabilities.

I love to read, try new workouts (currently loving Barre), spend time with friends and family, and create new recipes. On the weekends I can often be spotted in Vancouver trying out new coffee shops. I am so grateful that the Fed has offered me an opportunity to use my passion for social justice, research, evaluation and most importantly, working with youth. I can't wait to meet, and get to know, all of the current members, alumni and allies!

**Emily.Muth@fbcyicn.ca**  
604-527-7762 ext 104



**GABBY HILLIS**  
**MANAGER,**  
**INDIGENOUS PROGRAMS**

I am thrilled to be joining the Fed as Manager of Indigenous Youth Programs. As a former youth from care myself, I have experienced what a lot of Indigenous people have and are facing today, from trauma and loss, to poverty. I have been fortunate to take those experiences and become a strong, single, Indigenous mother, eager to help strengthen, support and advocate for youth in and from care.

I hold a B.A. in Psychology with Honours and my past experience working with Indigenous peoples includes Early Child Development, teaching Hip-Hop and collaborating with local community organizations.

My world revolves around my two year old son; when we're not attached at the hip, I enjoy making espresso drinks, dancing, singing and making jewelry.

**Gabby.Hillis@fbcyicn.ca**  
604-527-7762 ext 113



**SHANNON DOLTON**  
**ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR**

I am so excited to be joining the Fed family as the Engagement Coordinator. I am passionate about working with youth and look forward to building youth involvement and connection at the Fed. I know when given access to tools and support youth can achieve anything they desire.

My educational background is a combination of Child and Youth Care work with Women's Studies and Gender Relations. I have had the opportunity to work with children and youth in a variety of settings including one-to-one home support, low barriers crisis intervention, and life/parenting skills development.

I like to think of myself as a grown up with a healthy balance of childlike whimsy and a touch of 80-year-old grandma.

I am an avid tea-drinker, reader, unicorn collector and believe in the power of Wonder Woman. I am an intersectional feminist with strong ties to the body acceptance community and a strong advocate for the rights of all LGBTQI2S+ people.

I look forward to meeting and getting to know everyone!

**Shannon.Dolton@fbcyicn.ca**  
604-527-7762 ext 109











## YOUTH MEMBER PROFILE

# CANDY F

Despite Candy's innate ability to slip into a persona — be that an award winning drag queen, a dancer, entertainer and comedian, or a passionate activist — the 21 year-old has a sincere approach to the world that comes from deep reflection and a true sense of self. In their relatively short time at the Fed, Candy has already made the jump from participant to organizer, a role that is not new for the long-time LGBTQ2+ activist. Both humble and down to earth — Candy is not afraid to take a close look at hard truths and turn discoveries to action; but as you will see from our conversation, just when things start to get pretty serious, Candy flashes a brilliant smile and dazzles us with another brilliant side of their personality. When asked how to put on a great performance, Candy explains, "you give the audience what they want." Read on to learn more about the captivating world of Candy F!

### Tell us about yourself!

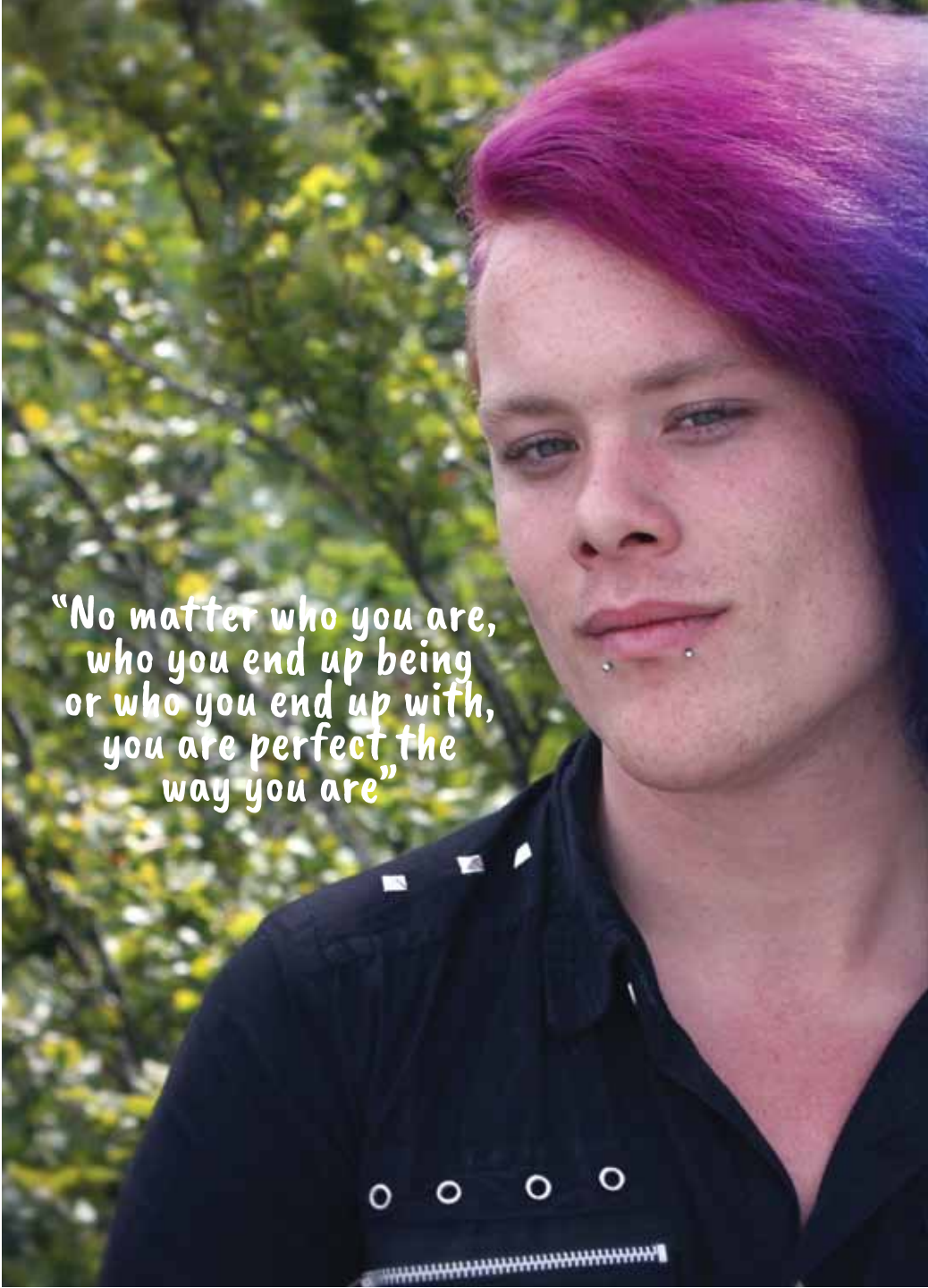
*My name is Candy F, I am 21 years old and currently living in Surrey. I have been involved with the Fed for over a year.*

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

*Through Shaelyn, she was working for the housing program that I was participating in and she was like, "ya, there's an SCM, you should go... you should go.... it's fun... you should go." I'm one of those people that you need to drill it into their head that they need to do something, but when I went to the retreat it was fun. I knew about the Fed and retreats a long time ago but I was more focused on LGBTQ2+ activism and fighting for queer rights and I didn't know if this would be a place for me.*

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

*I care about standing up for my beliefs and paving the way for other young people to make sure things are better for them. I am passionate for things to be right.*



*"No matter who you are, who you end up being or who you end up with, you are perfect the way you are"*

### What are some of your proudest accomplishments?

*I am the founding member of Basically Queer, an international, award winning, LGBTQ2+ activist and advocacy group. We are getting an LGBTQ2+ intergenerational textbook published by a New York publisher this summer. We also have art exhibits every summer, one of them is happening today and I will be doing some of my spoken word poetry there. We are the first group in Canada to work with an LGBTQ2+ elders group to create elder abuse workshops, awareness videos, and other materials to tackle this issue. I have acted in one of the videos and drafted scripts. We also flew to the*

*major health regions and did presentations there and worked at various pride events: Surrey, New West etc.*

*I am also an award winning drag queen. The first time I got dressed in drag I was 14, but I didn't compete until I was 15. I won my first competition when I was 16 and I won my second title when I was 19. I have one three titles to date: Miss Sweetheart, Princess of Hearts and Queen of Hearts. When I am performing I am sassy, I am witty, I am in your face. It is very painful being in drag (it takes four hours to get ready), but it is amazing — I feel beautiful, I feel like myself!*



*preconceived notions that are inaccurate. I feel that the best way to move on in society is to have extreme lefts and extreme rights understanding each other.*

*With youth in care I want to see people who actually care really get involved and I want to see the federal and provincial government pay attention and start caring. There are way too many youth who become homeless after turning 19, there are way too many youth who don't complete their high school education. If I hadn't been put in foster care and if my foster parents hadn't cared about me, I probably wouldn't have finished high school, but I see so many youth who don't have that luxury.*

*People have a hard time talking about the negative stuff but if you want to make change, you have to talk about this stuff, that's just the way it is — and I want to help with that.*

### **How do you see your work with the youth in care movement and the LGBTQ movement as overlapping or being connected?**

*It is completely different talking about youth in and from care issues vs. LGBTQ issues. I was only in care for a short time, and while it is a part of my experience I do not feel like it is my whole identity. On the other hand, I have lived my entire life feeling like I will never be accepted by society because of something I can't change, so that makes LGBTQ activism my main focus, because I don't want anyone to feel the way I have felt. I don't want to hear about any more violence against queer people. This is something you are born with and you can't change.*

*I'm 21 years old and I'm fairly comfortable in my own skin and I present myself as being confident but a certain amount of that is a façade or a performance. Sometimes people can be cruel and say horrible things — but I wish I could tell them, we can be a whole lot worse to ourselves.*

### **What advice would you give to someone who was younger than you who might be facing similar challenges?**

*Realize that things are going to be hard but never give up hope. There is always something that you are supposed to do and there is something that you are meant to be. No matter who you are, who you end up being or who you end up with, you are perfect the way you are. Like Dory says, "Just keep swimming."*

### **What do you think is the most important quality to be successful?**

*I am terrified of success — it is hard to commit to your dream. What if you succeed and then you fail?*

### **What inspires you most?**

*I inspire myself. I feel that you need to look at yourself and see yourself as hero before you can look to someone else in that way.*

### **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?**

*Save money. If you are on a youth agreement: save your money. Stop spending it on things you don't need and save it.*

*If you are under the age of 19 and you are coming close to aging out: use all of the resources that you have and ask your social worker! There were a lot of things that I did not know that you could get when you are in care that can just happen. Like my name change, I didn't know that could be covered by the ministry. If you are transgendered, you can get your gender marker changed for free if you are under 19 and in care. Get your social worker to help you with your taxes, pay for driving lessons, give money for dance classes — if there is something that you want that you are imagining for your future: get your social worker to help you out! If you are Trans: counselling, hormones — FREE. They [social workers working for MCFD] are your parent, use that to your advantage and better yourself. Make sure you have all the things you need before you turn 19.*

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

*Sign language interpretation and makeup lessons. Eventually I would like to do a YouTube channel teaching makeup for deaf and hearing impaired people.*

*I would also like to be rich and famous so I could use my influence to open up shelters that provide comprehensive programs for LGBTQ youth.*

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

*I'm a human garburator! I have literally been kicked out of all you can eat buffets. I am also extremely double jointed.*

### **If personalities were crayon colours, what colour would you be?**

*Hot hot pink — because it is gay and in your face!*

### **What have you learned from this experience?**

*I have learned to get my opinion across without victimizing or putting blame on someone else. I also learned how to take criticism and how to be persuasive in important meetings with city councils and courts. We helped in the process for the City of Surrey to pass the bill on LGBTQ safety in schools!*

### **Why did you decide to be an activist?**

*I want people to be equal in all aspects of life. I also want to teach that both [political] sides are valid but also both sides are incorrect in certain things. Both sides have*



## COMMUNITY MEMBER PROFILE

# KATE HODGSON

Kate Hodgson is an old friend to the Fed, having served on our board but also keeping the connection going long after her term ended in 2013. An energetic and passionate leader, the youth in care movement in BC is fortunate to have an ally like her! When she is not hard at work as Coordinator of the RayCam Cooperative Centre, Kate can be found engrossed in a good comic. Meet Kate and learn about how she has stayed passionate working in this field for over 20 years!

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

I was lucky enough to be working with Gerry Mignault who had put in many hours of volunteer work as a board member at the Fed. Gerry was a former social worker and had played many roles in Vancouver and the Downtown Eastside working with young people on the street and in care and supporting families in the inner city. He was also my mentor when I worked at the Network of Inner City Community Services Society and brought me to my first Fed event to see if I would like to volunteer and be part of the Board (I did!).

I had also, of course, known of the Fed through young people in our community who had been part of the organization and received support and advocacy through the Fed. The foundation of FBCYICN as an organization by and for youth in Care was legendary. The support by adult allies, many of whom I got to work with over the years, impressed me and was a great way to give back to youth in our community and across the province.

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

So many things! First, growing up in a mixed family with immigrant parents and an Indigenous brother and seeing every day the impact of racism on his and our lives really implanted in me the necessity to change systems and conditions children grow up in. Many of my friends growing up were adopted or in foster care and the inequities that are inherent when the

“state” is your parent or when you require supports to grow up, to access education, to get healthcare were real, day to day struggles. Seeing that children and young people, and their families and communities were just not priorities in our country was horrifying. Seeing what communities could do when they came together was electrifying.

### What are some of your proudest accomplishments? Why do you think you’ve been able to overcome and accomplish so much?

It is a complete privilege to do the work I do in the community where I work. For me the accomplishments I treasure most are the relationships I get to have with young people, families and colleagues — from my work in Winnipeg’s North End to coming to the



Downtown Eastside 17 years ago and getting to know the children, youth and families here and the hard work and energy they put in to their community and improving conditions. Through FBCYICN and through my current work at Ray-Cam Co-operative Centre I got to know so many amazing people struggling for change and I value those relationships. Degrees and acknowledgements seem much less important than that kind of success that comes from having an amazing and supportive husband, two amazing children and a great community of friends and colleagues.

I have been lucky to have support from family and friends throughout my life to reach my goals and the ability to work in Vancouver with people who want to change systems and look at the root causes of challenges and issues we are facing—poverty, colonialism, economics—and really apply local solutions and voices to these problems. I get to learn everyday about people’s experiences and try to change

outcomes for them and the neighbourhood as a whole—I am so lucky.

### What inspires you most?

I am most inspired by the children and young people I meet—as well as their families, elders and chosen family. So many creative people have come up with strategies to survive and sometimes succeed in a really difficult city that isn’t very forgiving if you are poor.

My Board of Directors at Ray-Cam is made up of parents and young people and seniors from the community and they are inspiring and creative and keep me challenged to do the best work I can with the staff and volunteers at the centre to be innovative and creative.

### 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?

Finding your voice and your chosen community to amplify that voice is so important. Know your rights—the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, your rights as a young person receiving Care from the Province, your rights as a citizen— and use those to stand up for yourself, your friends and family. We have a responsibility to provide solutions to change the current system and to support those with less ability to speak out. Find allies and champions. I really have come to believe that the most important thing for me and children and youth in our community is to ensure you are given your right to an education and critically to READ. If you have barriers to learning and reading, demand the help you need to get it. Reading, sharing stories, lifelong learning are the core for our future leaders.

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

Working with the amazing residents and community at Ray-Cam Co-operative Centre I want to further the work of the neighbourhood to rebuild the community centre to expanded space that includes housing for families, seniors and for young people transitioning to adulthood. Housing is so critical.

We have an initiative in Downtown Eastside/ Strathcona to improve the graduation rate in our community and ensure all children and youth have access



to education with the support of their families (whatever form those may take), their neighbours and organizations. I want to keep growing the Graduation Strategy in our community with all of our amazing partners and make sure all of our children and youth are school ready, make healthy transitions, complete secondary school and are life ready with tools they need to reach their goals.

Also I want to make sure I have time to read the amazing books I have picked up in the last while and most importantly keep up on my comic collection!

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

The critical change I would like to see (and that I hope with others we are working towards) is putting children at the CENTRE. The centre of all the things we do: planning a city, growing food, designing healthcare, taking care of our water. If we think of everything from the child's perspective and our responsibility to ensure they are protected and cared for, all other things follow: fair and just schools, workplaces,

childcare, safe streets, clean water and air. There are great examples in other cities and countries where this kind have planning has been put in place, in which you look at the PLACE where children and youth are growing up and ensure they have access and support to be healthy and successful.

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

Did I mention I love comics?! I love books and literature but comics are really special for all the things they can express between images and words—the huge scope of self-expression from zines to fine art comics, to science fiction, indigenous comics artists, punk music comics...so many great artists, writers and stories. So comics take up a lot of space on our bookshelves at home. Here are some great ones to check out: *Monstress* by Marjorie Liu and Sana Takeda (an almost entirely female cast of characters with amazing design and a great action, plus talking fox people); *Mimi Pond Over Easy* and *The Customer is Always Wrong*, great storytelling about working life and trying to make art; *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi (and all her comics) that

talk about growing up in Iran. I highly recommend the library and online comics if you are interested—and try your hand at making your own comic!

**If you were a character from a book, movie or TV show, who would you be?**

So many choices! The first one that comes to my mind is Meg Murry in Madeleine L'Engle's *Wrinkle in Time* (and subsequent books) because she gets to travel by tesseract, she is stubborn and flawed and has a big heart. Meg is a great misfit hero, struggling with growing up and finding her place and figuring out how her flaws can also be gifts. I really love the books Medeleine L'Engle created about Meg and her family but I am also really excited for the new movie coming out directed by Ava DuVernay (who directed *Selma* among other things) where Meg is played by Storm Reid an amazing young black actress. Can't wait!

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

Your voice is so important! Keep connected to your community and networks and groups like the Federation to make sure your voice is heard and included.

**\$1000**

# Student Award

For youth in and from foster care and youth who joined their family through adoption.

The Howard Legacy Youth Fund and the AFABC Youth Bursary are two separate scholarships that are awarded once per year, at \$1,000 each.

These scholarships assist in covering tuition or other costs directly related to post secondary programs.



Deadline to apply  
April 30, 2018

Learn more at  
[www.bcadoption.com/scholarships](http://www.bcadoption.com/scholarships)



Adoptive Families  
Association of BC

## YOUTH MEMBER PROFILE

# MARY N

At Mary's first youth retreat this spring, she amazed us all with her determination, courage and incredible basketball skills. Being one of the younger youth members and new to the Fed didn't stop Mary from performing in the talent show, being an outstanding participant, and making many new friends. We were so pleased that Mary said yes to being featured in this issue of Power Pages. She has a busy schedule so she wrote to us to tell our readers more about her in her own words, check it out:



Hi, my name is Mary N and my homeland is Taloyoak, Nunavut. I came to BC in January 2014. Shortly after arriving to B.C. I was introduced to the foster care system. I come from a large family so my siblings and I were separated. I am happy to be living back with some of them now, it just makes things easier. I'm proud that I am so athletic. I am able to pick up new sports quickly and enjoy doing so. I love playing basketball. <sup>and</sup> Again this year I will be joining my school team. We had a lot of fun last year. IF I could teach other kids anything it would be not to use drugs or alcohol. They do a lot of damage and tear families apart. My goals for the future are to get custody of my younger siblings if they are still in care. IF I was in a TV show I would like to be on law and order. I like watching how they solve crimes and seeing how the criminals are caught.



## LOCAL LEADER PROFILE

# SANDY K

Sandy K loves horror movies, a good fantasy book and spending time with her adorable new baby! When she is not busy with work, family, or escaping into her imagination, Sandy volunteers with the Kelowna Local and thinks about all the possibilities that life has to offer.

### Tell us about yourself!

I was born and raised in Kelowna and I am a former youth in care. I was in and out of care up until I was 8 or so then ended up staying in care until I was 18. Since then I have moved around Kelowna a couple of times. On June 29, 2017 I became a mother to my first child. I love to read and also like to write every once in a while. I am ok with most music, but I guess my favourite kind is something with a good beat. My favourite types of movies are horror.

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

I have been involved with the Fed for over 6 years and have been participating in the Kelowna Local for most of that time. I remember one of the workers from the Fed office came to my local one day just before the first leadership retreat and I have been to a bunch of retreats since then.

### What do you like about being a part of the Local?

It is great to have a place to connect with other young people and make new friends. We do fun activities together like going out for food, catching a movie or going bowling. I also participated in making a video for the Local this year. I helped with the script.

### What are some of your proudest accomplishments?

At this moment in time my greatest accomplishment is giving birth to a healthy son.

### What inspires you most?

One thing that inspires me is the fact that I don't know what life is going to throw at

me. I love the unexpected. Another is that I know that I have a good set of friends and someone that cares for me. Something that inspires me as well is finding a career and supporting my family.



**“Live life to the fullest! Take chances and have fun!”**

### 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?

The biggest life lesson that I have learned is that life isn't a straight line. It's unexpected and nothing is always as it seems. Sometimes when someone says they can do something, they may not mean it at the time. Sometimes things come up and people can't keep their promises. Yes it sucks. It's terrible in some cases. In the end

though, there isn't anything you can do. Life sucks sometimes but in the end there is good in life as well.

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

So far I have two goals: First is working on getting my son back in the future (right now he is not living with me). The second is probably going back to school to upgrade some courses. I am thinking about going back to school to study Human Services.

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

Hmm probably trying to keep the child in one home for a while and not move them around too much. Having a child bounce around too much could be hard on them mentally and emotionally. It could probably affect them in their

social life as well. I would like to see family try to stay together more as well.

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

I'm not sure what to say about that. I guess I could say that I'm pretty weird. I sometimes even weird out my other half. I don't really show that side to other people.

### If you were a character from a book, movie or TV show, who would you be?

That is a tough one. I don't know what to choose since I love to read. I have a ton of books. It would have to be fantasy fiction or something like that. I really like horror movies and one of my favourite things to do is watch them with friends and laugh at their reactions!

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

Live your lives to the fullest! Takes chances and have fun!





PHOTOS BY MELINDA H







## MATTER OF CHOICES

by Mandy Gill

Plant-Based Super Athlete | Total Body-Mind-Spirit Wellness Advocate

Using both her life’s pain and triumphs as fuel, celebrity fitness guru, plant-based super athlete and total body-mind-spirit cover model Mandy Gill shows us all what happiness we can have when we claim responsibility for our own contentment and embrace our beautiful, authentic selves.

Today she is featured in magazines, endorsed by national athletic and fashion brands, regularly booked as a fitness and nutrition expert and motivational speaker, and has appeared hundreds of times on talk format and morning television programs. Yet, the wisdom that she shares was not learned in school or in books, but rather through struggle, hitting bottom, getting up again, choosing to survive—and ultimately deciding to thrive.

For Mandy, developmental years of self-doubt manifested into insecurity, a struggle with anxiety, depression, and body image issues that became deadly anorexia. Struggling with these serious health problems, Mandy reached a turning point and at last set out on a mission to heal, and in doing so, to also help others overcome powerlessness and perfectionism and instead strive for abundance and joy.

She discovered fitness and true wellbeing. Through following her inspired passion for total health, she formed a new meaning and purpose for her life. She says, “I wanted to live and I wanted extraordinary experiences in life. I realized that I needed my body to take me there.” Mandy’s story is about surviving loss, finding out who you are, embracing true love and thriving in every way possible.

Her message is far beyond fitness and nutrition: it’s about body-mind-spirit wellness. “When you surround

yourself with the best environment, best conversations, best fuel, best workouts, best rest, then the best things are yet to come,” she explains, “Well fed and exercised people are happier people.”

We caught up with Mandy to ask her more about her fitness tips for someone looking to follow a similar path to health and happiness.

### What is one of the biggest benefits of exercising regularly?

*It is going to entirely change your perspective on what you look at your body’s potential as, not just physically but also mentally.*

### How would you recommend getting started if you are interested in leading a more healthy lifestyle?

*Start small and don’t overwhelm yourself with doing food, fitness and doing a complete overhaul of everything all at once. I would*

*highly recommend committing to no more than three days a week to start. Whether it be a fitness regime or healthy eating just because it has to be done in progressions to make sure there is long term success so it is manageable. Don’t expect instant gratification! It takes time to make real change.*

### What is one of the biggest misconceptions about dieting and exercise?

*That it is the same for everybody. When I work with clients I tell them every body is different. Some bodies will respond well to cardio, some will respond better to strength training. It doesn’t matter what your size is or what your goals are – everyone is different and it is important to do what works for you.*

### How much water should you drink after a workout?

*Keeping yourself well hydrated is more important than any workout you could do or any nutrition plan that you could jump on. Our*

*body is 80–90% water. Pop doesn’t count, juice doesn’t count — you need to drink water. If you need to add a splash of lemon or lime or whatever you need to do, just make sure you are drinking plenty of water every day.*

### Describe your favourite workout: what kinds of exercises/machines do you like to use.

*Putting in my headphones, listening to a podcast, lacing up my runners and going for a run!*

### Do you have a mantra or saying that you use to encourage yourself to get out the door or push through a particularly tough workout?

*Inside my right wrist I have my only tattoo that reads “life begins at the end of my comfort zone.” That is true for everything from workouts, to relationships, to business, to family – to challenge myself every single day.*

### STRESS BUSTING EXERCISES FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

- Complete 3-5 rounds based on fitness level
- 25 Bicycle Crunches
- 25 Mountain Climbers
- 25 Plank Jacks
- 10 Burpees
- 1 Minute Plank

For a demonstration of this workout and hundreds of others, check out Mandy’s blog by following this link: [mandygill.com/blog](http://mandygill.com/blog)

### HEALTHY & DELICIOUS HOLIDAY TREAT: CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT MACARONS

I’m telling you, you will not get enough of these vegan friendly Chocolate Peppermint Macarons! Here is a healthy twist on a rich, delicious dessert. Friends and family approved — the perfect treat to bring to holiday parties.

- 3 Tbsp organic coconut butter
- 3 Tbsp organic coconut oil
- ¼ cup carob powder, or cocoa powder
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup, or honey
- ¼ ml peppermint oil, (2 drops) or 1 tsp peppermint extract
- 2 cup shredded coconut

Place coconut butter, coconut oil, carob powder, maple syrup and peppermint in a bowl and stir to combine. Add coconut and mix until incorporated. Form 1 inch balls and place onto parchment lined cookie sheet. Set in fridge to chill, about 30 mins. ENJOY!





PHOTO BY NOKOMAS T



PHOTO BY STAR M



## MENDING ANCIENT WOUNDS

by Valeen J

I wrote this with clenched fists and a restless heart  
at the hour when my world and your galaxy meet  
for those who have known the land of suffering  
and my soul is laying on the ground  
trying to comprehend such tragedy.

I want to invent words profound enough to uplift you  
and if all I can do is speak  
it is for the land I shall speak  
where my spirit arose again and again  
and shouted that it believed in its humanity.

Twenty years of my love and my pain  
twenty years of my struggle simply to survive  
while they told me to give up and give in  
but mama never taught me how to dispose  
of my dreams  
and I have no place to measure my life by  
the standards of man.

Some days I am the love that slides away  
and ignores itself  
you may see me with a great display of lightning and rain  
I am dismantling that wall that separates me from myself  
and loving you is all I need to get through  
so I am learning how to fall asleep mending ancient wounds.

I am the mountain you call home, take refuge in my heart  
I live for those without whom the land would not be the land  
I live for the days without pain and the nights without loss  
I live for the love and the love and the love  
not an inch on this Earth devoid of my love.

## RECLAIMING SPACE

by Valeen J

They encouraged me  
to reclaim space  
and at first I thought I couldn't  
but then I realized:  
my love d i s s i p a t e s  
across galaxies

## AROUND

by Valeen J

I run circles on the coast  
I circle the sun  
I spin counter-clockwise  
And I wonder why I am so dizzy

I run around for the community  
Delivering love letters,  
solar panels,  
not so sh\*tty poems  
and gifts from a home I rarely have the privilege of staying

I circle the sun  
Damn do I ever circle that sun  
making every inch count,  
remembering to breathe,  
forgetting to sleep  
and working selflessly

I spin counter-clockwise  
Dancing babies to sleep,  
excitedly stargazing,  
trying to bring back time  
now wouldn't that be sublime

And still I wonder why I am so dizzy  
I feel like the medicine wheel getting spun  
around and around and around  
wondering who will be the one to stop me,  
tell me to rest,  
give me the medicine that I struggle to ask for

And this is me asking for that medicine.

## MY KIND OF SMALL TALK

by Valeen J

Tell me about your failures  
Tell me about the mistakes you continue to make  
I want to see the cracks you call your flaws  
where love comes and goes with ease

Tell me about forgiving yourself  
Tell me about the wounds you tend with care  
I'm interested in all that is raw and real  
I'm interested in all of the things that you feel

## THERE WILL COME A DAY

by Danae C

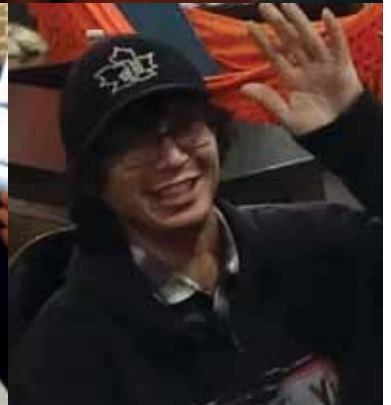
There will be a day when I say no!  
I've broken my silence  
To the soul that's hidden my conscience.  
Feeling as if I was in the wrong for loving.  
I wasn't the one who stole respect,  
and you neglected to mention I was younger  
and naïve.  
That small lips of an eighth grader could be  
just as poisonous  
as a man 3 times the age.  
Sharp tongues lashing out  
Knocking  
Crumbling pieces with  
every whip.  
Every tear  
squeezing out of my eyes,  
who would've thought they could be loved  
rather than beaten and despised.  
My mother always told me to be careful...  
But having street smarts  
and walking on sidewalks,  
can't save from those who lurk around dim  
corners.  
The heart doesn't have a return policy.  
Who'd want me after being disposed as trash,  
Thrown in,  
tightly tied at the top with,  
mouth sealed while contents  
rot inside  
How will I receive justice,  
when the judge and jury have blood stains  
on their hands.  
But I will tell them...  
"Its... all... true."  
He can't hide  
He will not be frozen  
in my past  
Iced over by boiled down memories,  
or chunks of repressed emotions  
that are being chipped away.  
There will come a day!  
I will not stop speaking as a witness  
until saliva dries in my mouth  
or my heart stops beating.  
They'll have it all in writing.  
And although my hand aches  
or I no longer have ink,  
I'll use my blood  
on a canvas to say  
you were wrong!  
Everything will change.  
There will come a day



# #TRTSQUAD AMBASSADORS FOR RECONCILIATION

In addition to recognizing our long standing volunteers, we are excited to announce a new team of young people starting out at the Fed this fall: our Truth and Reconciliation Youth Ambassadors who will be hosting community conversations with youth in and from care about what reconciliation really means. Check out some pictures from their first week of training and stay tuned for more updates from our Ambassadors as the tour unfolds!

This project has been made possible with funding from the Government of Canada through Canada 150 and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. We would also like to thank The Representative for Children and Youth as a partner on this project.



Funded by the Government of Canada  
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada.



## THANKS FROM A DREAM FUND RECIPIENT

Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks  
500-625 Agnes Street  
New Westminster, BC  
V3M 5Y4

May 29, 2017

To whom this may concern,

I am writing to share my deepest gratitude for your organizations generosity.

I am currently in my second semester in the Early Childhood Education program at Langara College. I am pursuing my dream of becoming an Early Childhood Educator. I have discovered my passion for working with children as they bring things to light with their imagination and curiosity. I am excited to see where this educational journey takes me.

Thank you again for supporting my educational goals. I promise to continue to work hard through my educational journey and continue to help others as an Early Childhood Educator.

Sincerely,

*Anna McNicholl*

## PHOTOS BY HOLLEY D





PHOTOS BY KEESHANAE E



PHOTO BY VALEEN J



PHOTOS BY HOLLEY D



PHOTO BY  
KAITE G



## 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.

Jules has provided a list of hot or classic tracks to match whatever part of your journey you may find yourself in. Here's his go to tracks for various vibes that get him through the highest of highs and the lowest of lows in life:

### Resilience

*Breathe* — India Arie  
*The Man* — Aloe Blacc  
*Subway Art* — Tish Hyman  
*Unbreakable Smile* — Tori Kelly  
*Raise Your Hand* — Javier Colon

### Reflection and Loss

*Angels Cry* — Mariah Carey and NeYo  
*See You Again* — Wiz Khalifa and Charlie Puth  
*Missing You* — Puff Daddy  
*Call to Angels* — Jenn Bostic  
*Prayer for the Dying* — Seal  
*Til It Happens to You* — Lady GaGa

### Energy and Drive

*Happy* — Pharell  
*Over the Mountain* — Ozzy Osbourne  
*Best Things in Life are Free* — Janet and Luther  
*I Found My Smile Again* — D'Angelo  
*Fuel* — Metallica

### Chill

*Ascension* — Maxwell  
*Joy* — Blackstreet  
*Queen* — Raheem DeVaughn  
*Time after Time* — Cindy Lauper  
*Future Looks Good* — One Republic

### Karaoke

*Rainbow Connection* — Gwen Stefani  
*Ain't Yo Mama* — Jennifer Lopez  
*Know Who You Are* — Moana  
*Soundtrack*  
*Cruising* — Huey Lewis and Gweneth Paltrow  
*Ghostbusters* — Ray Parker Jr

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





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share your voice #standwithyouthincare

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