

Power Pages

FBCYICN



June 2007

Federation of BC Youth In Care Networks

The FBCYICN is a youth-driven, provincial, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of young people in and from care in BC, between the ages of 14 and 24.

phone 604.527.7762 | fax 604.527.7764 | toll free 1.800.565.8055

★ ★ 55 8th Street, New Westminster, BC V3M 3N9 ★ ★

Staff

Jocelyn Helland
Executive Director

Teresa Lum
Director of External Relations

Nicole Herbert
Director of Programs

Colleen Danes
Administrative Assistant

Tatiana Sean
Employment Program Coordinator

Sarah Watson
Youth Participation Coordinator

David Sadler
Hospitality Support

Chris Bentzen thisisplanb.net
Graphic Design / Consultant

Angie Cross
Alumni Strategy Consultant

Lynn Curtis
Human Resources Consultant

Youth Project Staff

Winona Williams
Moms without Moms Project

Tiffany Fehr
Employment to Freedom Program

Melissa Bliss
Employment to Freedom Program

Sean "Pugs" Adams
Aaron Chew
Angie Cross
Nicole Herbert
Teresa Lum
Samantha Pothier
Tatiana Sean
Corrie Shears
Curtis Volke
Racheal "Raven" Wright

Alumni

Jessica Auger Merritt
Summer Rain Bentham Vancouver
Tory Boser Powell River
Crystal Bowie Surrey
Samuel Clayton Smithers
Shelley "Kennedy" DeVries North Vancouver
Nathan Parnell Duncan
Nicole Petrie Courtenay
Marylyn Tait Squamish
Jamie Yorke Kamloops/Vancouver

Sandy Cooke (Chair)
Heather Cunningham
Glenda Morris
Gerry Mignault
Wally Rupert
Robert Wilmot

Board Of Directors

Leadership Council



www.fbcyicn.ca
info@fbcyicn.ca



© FBCYICN 2007



Leadership Council Accomplishments June 2006 - June 2007

Number of Meetings: 8

(includes SCMs, teleconferences and in-person meetings)

- 5 meetings at Steering Committee Meetings
- 3 teleconference meetings

Presentations:

Select council members participated in a variety of presentations to:

- Justice Institute of BC
- MCFD offices
- community agencies

Local Networking:

- Select council members participated in the design and delivery of the Welcoming and Independent living kits through the Community Kits Project.
- Select council members attended local group meetings
- New local group started on in Courtenay

Member Activities:

- Hosted a dance at the October 2006 SCM
- Welcoming and Buddy system at SCMs
- Code of Conduct at SCMs
- Select Council members participated as representatives of FBCYICN at the World Forum Conference in November 2006
- Select members co-presented a Transitions workshop at the World Forum
- Select members volunteer at the office as required/when available

Other Accomplishments:

- Select council members participated in the hiring of the Networks' first Executive Director



on the cover

"Sisters" by Sharifah Marisden
acrylic on canvas; 25"x25", 2007

The artwork on the front and back cover by Sharifah Marisden and Lacy Morin-Desjarlais are from their show "Impulsive Expression" at the Talking Stick Festival.

Steering Committee Meetings

The Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks hosts three provincial conferences called Steering Committee Meetings (SCMs) each year. These SCMs are opportunities for young people in and from care (ages 14 to 24) from across BC to come together to Network with each other (and some very cool support adults), participate in skill-building workshops, leadership activities and consultations and to explore culture and creativity in a safe and fun environment.

All of the following SCMs will be held at Zajac Ranch at Stave Lake in Mission, BC:

- SCM #46 - October 26th - 28th, 2007
- SCM #47 - Feb 8th - 10th, 2008 (15th Anniversary)
- SCM #48 - May 16th - 18th, 2008 (Annual General Meeting)
- SCM #49 - October 24th - 26th, 2008

For more information about SCMs, subsidy and registration deadlines or to download Flyers and registration forms, please go to our website at www.fbcyicn.ca or contact Colleen at info@fbcyicn.ca or (toll free) 1-800-5656-8055.

FBCYICN Independence & Leadership Camp

This year, the FBCYICN will be hosting its first-ever Independence and Leadership Camp for young people in and from care in BC. The focus of this camp will be on practical stuff to help young people prepare to leave care as well as leadership skill development. There will be lots of skill-building workshops, information about resources and supports and of course, fun stuff!

Date: Monday August 20th to Friday August 24th, 2007
Location: Zajac Ranch at Stave Lake in Mission, BC

More details will be available on our website soon.



Federation of BC Youth In Care Networks
 "by coming together, we are not alone"
www.fbcyicn.ca

To the Membership,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, of the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks, it is my pleasure to welcome Jocelyn Hellend as the first Executive Director of the Network. Jocelyn started her new position on April 30th, 2007.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members for your patience and trust as we move into a new era in the evolution of the Network.

These are challenging but exciting times for all of us. As the new Chair of the Board, and with your help and support, **WE** can keep building this organization for the right reasons!

We will continue to be a "Youth-driven organization dedicated to improving the lives of youth in and from government care."

Respectfully yours,

Sandy Cooke
 Chair, Board of Directors
 Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks



55 8th Street, New Westminster, BC, Canada V3H 3M0
 Phone 604 527 7162 | fax 604 527 7164 | toll-free 1 800 545 8055 | info@fbcyicn.ca

Hello to FBCYICN family & friends!

the Network. I have ideas to share but I would like to hear from members how their vision for the organization is growing and changing, so we can continue to advance the Network together.


I have been advocating for the rights of children and youth for almost 8 years now, although I have been working with children and youth a lot longer than that. I came to the Network from the International Institute for Child Rights and Development (IICRD) where I promoted children's rights locally and internationally. I have also had the immense privilege of working many moons ago at the Office of the Child, Youth and Family Advocate where I had a fabulous, life-changing time working with Joyce Preston, Ian Mass, Wally Rupert, Lynell Anderson, Kathy Berggren-Clive, Teresa Lum and others!

Over the years working with children and youth, my passion for supporting young people's right to engage has grown strong. Young people must have the opportunity to

engage in decisions that affect their lives, in their family and community, in their culture, and in our society. I am a strong believer in the power of intergenerational partnership and collaboration and think that we can get further together than alone!

On the personal side, I grew up in a small town in the interior of BC called Ashcroft, moved here to the big city at age 15 and have been here ever since. I live with my patient and hugely supportive partner Ryan, whom some of you have met before. Ryan is an ally for child and youth rights too, but his day job is working as a computer techie!


In short, I intend to ensure that the organization remains a unique and strong youth-driven organization that supports and advocates for youth in and from care in BC. I hope you will quickly see my actions follow my words – in the meantime, if you have questions for me or want to talk about your hopes for the Network, call me or email 604-527-7769 jocelyn_helland@fbcyicn.ca



I am very honoured to join the Network family and hope to serve the members well as your new Executive Director. I look forward to meeting all the members and partner organizations in the coming months – perhaps at the next Steering Committee Meeting

I came to work with the Network because I believe what the incredibly dedicated members, alumni, staff, volunteers and board have created is a distinct and amazing youth-driven organization! I intend to work with our members to continue to fulfill their vision for

Farewell from Teresa



As my time draws to an end with the Network, it's with mixed emotion that I write my last submission as a staff member to the Power Pages.

I have been involved with the Network in a variety of capacities over the last 15 years, with my last position as Director of External Relations. I have watched the Network grow from a fledgling local group to a provincial organization that has become pivotal in creating change for the improvement of lives of children and youth in care. I am proud to say I have been a part of something that has influenced so many lives and will continue to be a leader in the field of children and youth rights.

First I need to thank you all the young people that I have had the pleasure of working for. You all have taught me so much about myself and I will use that knowledge wisely as I venture out into a new world.

Thank you to the agency staff, the Ministry and all the caregivers throughout the province that have supported me over the years. Your passion and dedication to children, youth and their families made it easier to work in a field that can sometimes be very harsh and chaotic.

I also need to thank my very personal and close supporters who always had faith in me and kept me going

when times were difficult. I'm very lucky to say that I have too many of these supporters to list but there are a few very personal thank you's I need to acknowledge because without them, I wouldn't be who I am today; Thank you for appreciating the "blue bird" in me when nobody else did. Thank you for always "lifting my chin up" and making me feel proud. Thank you for being my "nobody" and "my everybody" that I could share anything with. Thank you for supporting me even when I was being what could only be described as a "brat"! Thank you for teaching me the worst words in the dictionary are "I can't" and "no"!

Lastly, as I venture out of the "Networking" world, it is with pleasure that I welcome Jocelyn Helland, our first Executive Director. I trust that you all will welcome Jocelyn's fresh ideas, hold her accountable to the Network's vision and walk with her as you all embark into this new era. I am so proud of how the Network has grown, the accomplishments made, and I believe Jocelyn's experience, skill set and above all passion and commitment to children and youth's rights will be a valuable asset.

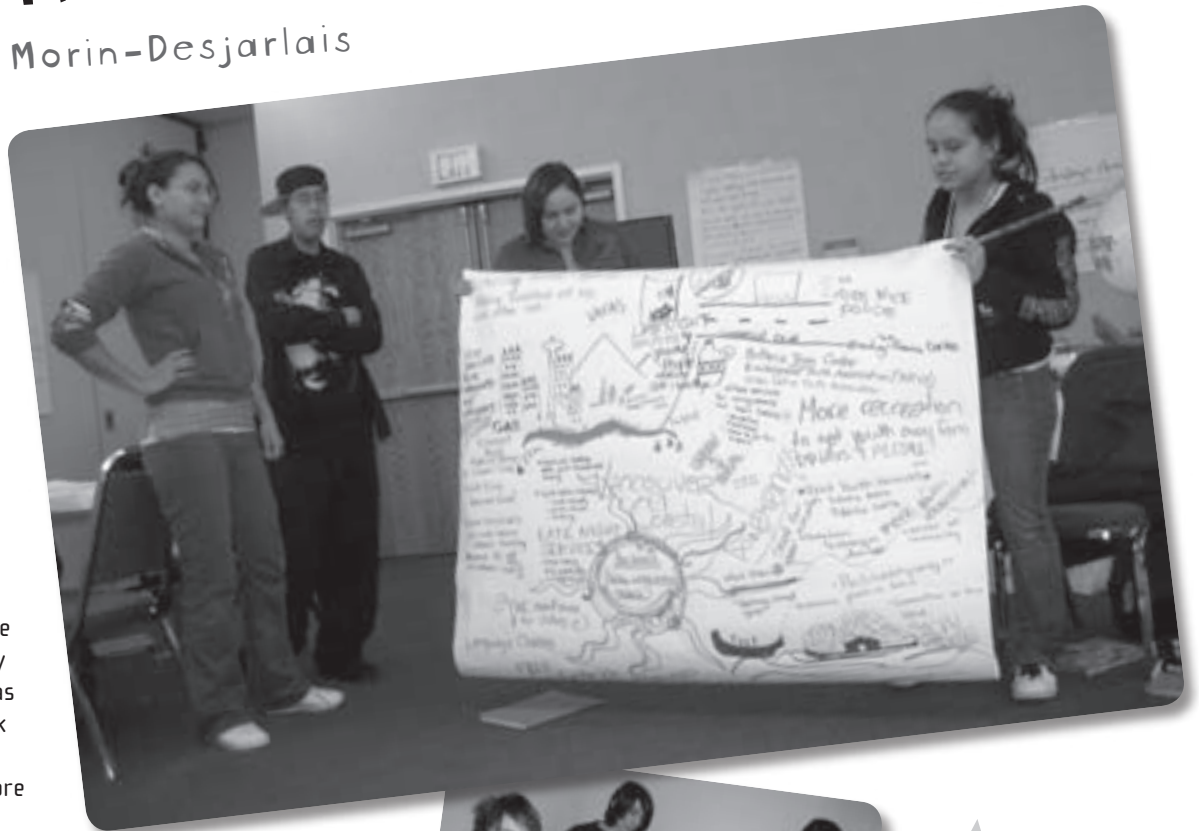
I look forward to crossing paths with many of you in the future. Thank you.

MCFD's Youth Advisory Council

by Lacy Morin-Desjarlais

Hello my name is Lacy Morin-Desjarlais and I am a part of the Ministry of Children and Family Development's new Youth Advisory Council. MCFD is currently undergoing a Transformation in their organization to improve the way they deliver services. Leslie du Toit is the Deputy Minister and was specially hired to take on this transformation work. Some interesting things have been going on in the Ministry including an Elders' Council as well as Youth Council to work along side the Ministry.

If you want to find out more about the Transformation process, go to the MCFD website at www.gov.bc.ca/mcf and there are regular updates of what's going on. Also, in each of the five MCFD regions in BC there are Reference Groups which meet that are more dedicated to the uniqueness of each region and are also open for those in the community to participate, including youth. They are not decision-making bodies, but if you are interested in being a part of them, there is information on the MCFD website to contact these groups and I encourage all interested to inquire about getting involved. Get your voice heard!!



Youth Advisory Council Members

Adrienne Greyeyes (Fort St. John)
Diandre Oliver (Prince George)
Brianna Reynolds (Prince George)
Jolene Sampare (Kincolith)
Earl Stevens (Hixon)
Brianna Lincoln (Prince Rupert)
Byrone Lane (Cranbrook)
Cheryl McLeod (Merrit)
Chantel Manjarrez (Penticton)
Justina Stolz (Kelowna)

John Canning (Kelowna)
Evelyn Travis (Vernon)
Tyler Denniston (Victoria)
Jonathan Dahling (Nanaimo)
Andrew Banya (Victoria)
Ryan Thirlwall (Victoria)
Tonya Thibadeau (Duncan)
Carleen August (Duncan)
Ayla Brown (Vancouver)
Lacy Morin-Desjarlais (Vancouver)

Sarah Watson (Vancouver)
Leandrea Carpenter (Waglisla)
Vanessa Small (Vancouver)
Joshua MacPherson (Vancouver)
Maggie Joseph (Burnaby)
Chad Hoche (Surrey)
Codi Henwood (Surrey)
Sherry Hill (Surrey)
Sabrina Sam (Mission)
Bodhi Heisler (Maple Ridge)

Who We Are And What We Do

Stan Williams is the Ministry's Special Advisor on Youth Initiatives and is also our YAC Chair. We also have supportive individuals who come out and support us!!

We had our first meeting at the 2nd Ministry of Children and Family Development's provincial Reference Group meeting earlier this year where we were inaugurated by Minister Tom Christensen.

Our second meeting, which was more down to business, was a three day retreat in April at the Quaaout Resort in Chase BC. The focus of our retreat was to create the YAC Strategic Plan which is still in the works.

Our first day was committed to us getting to know each other and networking. We had a workshop by Brent Parfitt about Child Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. He also gave us a better understanding on Legislation and how we can change or have input into it.

Day two, we broke off into our regions and did some Asset Mapping where we identified in each region some of what is working, what isn't working and what is needed!! It was clearly displayed how diverse the regions are as well as how diverse communities can be within a region. We did an activity afterward called the River of Change which mapped each person's past, present, and the future through drawing, and words. It brought together our history, passions and future visions.

On the last day, we met with regional MCFD staff and presented our Asset Mapping. Then we sat down and had some interesting conversation with them - each region had a different conversation and what came out of them is still being put together.

The council also did have a lot of fun! Some council members went to a Sweatlodge Ceremony, some went horseback riding, and we had an excellent Talent Show which I am sure is still being talked about!

The information shared and work done at the retreat is still being put together and will be available to read. We focused on the following four strategic areas:

1. Youth engagement and participation
2. Strengths based development approach for all youth
3. Aboriginal governance and the right to self-determination
4. Transforming MCFD as an organization

Here are some main areas identified by the council at the retreat that we would like to focus on for the future:

- Engaging our peers and communities throughout the province
- Shifting the ministry to a strengths based organization
- Doing away with ministry "silos"
- Better understanding what a transitioning and post majority system should/would look like
- Promoting and educating on youth engagement process
- Supporting a child rights centred approach

Ongoing work

The Youth Council is not the only way MCFD is involving youth voice in the transformation and decision-making. Within each of the five regions of the province, youth engagement strategies are being put together to ensure that the voices of young people are being included in the transformation work by MCFD staff and the youth council members.

So if you are interested in being involved, contact Stan Williams at Stan.Williams@gov.bc.ca or 1-888-775-1726, or contact the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks because they are doing work with the Ministry as well.

The council is also going to be involved in two projects happening in the MCFD right now: What's Working for Kids in BC Project and also The Next Friend Project.

You can go to www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about_us/youth_council.htm to find out more about us.

★ Networking @ Home ★

"Locals" exist across the province in various forms. Each local youth in care network develops differently based on the needs and ideas of youth in and from care with the help of some supportive adults in the community. Some groups meet frequently while others meet only occasionally. The purpose of each group ranges from recreational activities to community-based systemic advocacy but the underlying theme in networking is peer support.

The following communities currently have active Networks or young people and supportive adults who are trying to start up a local group:

Vancouver Island Region
• Courtenay / Comox Valley

Vancouver / Coastal Region
• Vancouver
• Powell River

Fraser Region
• South Fraser (Surrey)

Interior Region
• Kamloops

North Region
• Prince George
• Quesnel



If you're interested in getting connected to one of the locals mentioned above OR starting a local group in your community, please contact the FBCYICN for more information.

Employment to Freedom Program Update

by Tatiana Sean
Employment Program Coordinator



Hi Everyone! This is an update of the Employment to Freedom Program for the last few months. I am continuing to meet individually with youth ages 16-24 in the Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Regions to help them address their unique employment needs and gaps.

Based on employment needs that youth have identified, I have started to create phases within the program. Youth have the opportunity to work through these phases as they increase their knowledge related to employment. The phases cover a wide range of topics including how to set goals and important interview skills. I am also planning to offer workshops in the fall that will focus on "soft skill" development including goal setting, self awareness, communication and organization. Over the summer, Youth Project Staff will help further develop some of these employment-focused workshops.

Some youth think that once they have a job or they know how to put a resumé together that they don't need anymore help. Everyone can improve their employment skills and it is a big area with tons of information. I have discovered that although I may think I know everything there is to know about how to find a job or build a resumé, even I can never stop learning and incorporating new information to help me build better employment skills.

I found this resumé boo-boo list which amused me and I have included it in this update. It was published in the May 7th/2007 edition of the Vancouver 24 hours under Careers. I thought you may like to read it to get an idea of what personal information NOT to put on your resumé (just in case you were considering it). And yes, it is all true! For the rest of the article please refer to that edition of 24 Hours.

For more information about the Employment to Freedom Program or employment in general, check-out the Transitions Program section of our website at www.fbcycicn.ca or contact me at the office 604.527.7762 or employment@fbcycicn.ca

Resumé Boo-boos

The top 10 most unusual resumé blunders, according to hiring managers across Canada (careerbuilder.ca):

1. Candidate included weight and all allergies
2. Candidate stated the ability to persuade people sexually using her words
3. Candidate wrote resumé as a play- Act 1, Act 2, etc
4. Candidate explained that getting this job would look really neat on his resumé
5. Candidate specified emergency contact as the hospital
6. Candidate included naked picture of himself
7. Candidate explained the need for multiple bathroom breaks every hour
8. Candidate's hobbies included long walks with fiancé and bingo
9. Candidate included a letter from his mother
10. Candidate explains he works well nude

Tiffany's Tips

I am Tiffany, a Youth Project Staff. I have been having an awesome time working at the FBCYICN. I've been creating workshops that I am currently presenting in the Lower Mainland. I also went to my first SCM (in February) which was a lot of fun and I can't wait to go to the next one in June!

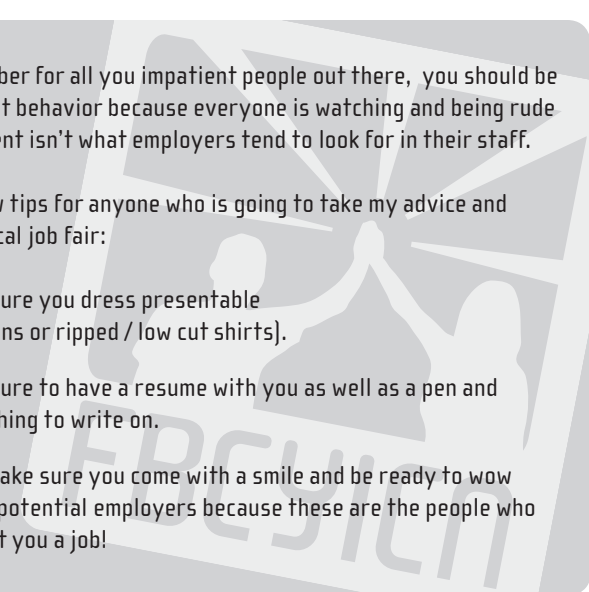
I recently attended a job fair in May. My general impression was that it was going to be boring and a waste of time. I have to admit, I was completely wrong! I walked into the room and I was shocked at the number of employers and the whole comfortable atmosphere of it. I am personally very shy and handing out resumes by myself and walking into the store alone is scary for me. This was totally different. There was a way for people like me that can go with a friend and not have to do it alone. There was also a wide range of different job opportunities.

There was nothing that I could say I didn't like about this job fair. Well... there were some people who were cutting in front of

me. Remember for all you impatient people out there, you should be on your best behavior because everyone is watching and being rude and impatient isn't what employers tend to look for in their staff.

I have a few tips for anyone who is going to take my advice and attend a local job fair:

1. Make sure you dress presentable (no jeans or ripped / low cut shirts).
2. Make sure to have a resume with you as well as a pen and something to write on.
3. Also make sure you come with a smile and be ready to wow those potential employers because these are the people who can get you a job!



APPLYING FOR A SIN CARD

WHAT IS A SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER (SIN)?

A SIN is a nine digit number used in the administration of various Canadian government programs and you are required to have a SIN to work in Canada or to receive government benefits. People are often given a SIN card and often use it as a part of their identification.

WHERE TO GET AN APPLICATION FORM?

Local Offices

Go to www1.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/gateways/wher_you_live/menu.shtml and type in your postal code or city to find the nearest office.

Online

www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/topics/sxn-gxr.shtml

WHILE APPLYING FOR A SIN YOU ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE 2 PIECES OF IDENTIFICATION TO PROVE YOUR STATUS AND IDENTITY WITHIN CANADA:

PRIMARY IDENTIFICATION	SECONDARY IDENTIFICATION
Canadian Birth Certificate (Baptismal certificate not acceptable)	Passport
B.C. Identification Card (digital style only, May not be expired more than 3 years)	School ID Card (Student card)
B.C. drivers License (digital style only, may not be expired more than 3 years)	Bank Card (Only if applicants name is on the card)
Canadian Citizenship Identification	BC Care Card
Canada Identity Card (Issued by the Department of Indian Affairs)	Social Insurance Card (new style without signature strip not acceptable)

If the name on your primary document is different from the one you are currently using. It is important that documents are originals and that they are written in English or French.

For a faster and more convenient process, apply for your Social Insurance Number in person at one of their offices. This process does not require you to part with your valuable identity documents.

From the date you submit your application, you can get your SIN number but your card should be received by mail within three weeks.

The tips above are based on information provided by www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/topics/sxn-gxr.shtml

Food Groups & Economic Eating

by Sewy Hay, Community Health Nurse

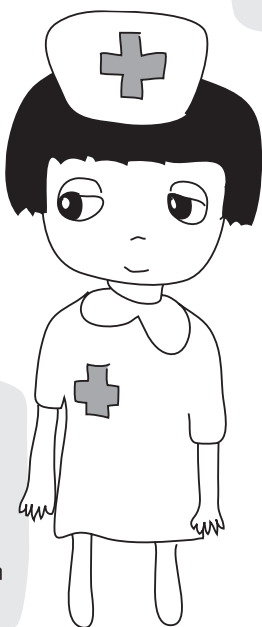
Health Canada came out with a revised Food Guide this year. I thought it would be a good time to review the food guide, and healthy eating. It can seem difficult and expensive to eat healthier; so I'll help you guys out with some tips for navigating the grocery store...

We all know about the four food groups: vegetables and fruit, grain products, milk and alternatives, and meat and alternatives.

But do we know how much of each of these products we should be eating? A male between the ages of 14 and 18 years old should eat 8 servings of vegetables and fruits, 7 servings of grain products, 3 to 4 milk product servings, and 3 servings of meat and alternatives. [I'll provide the website for your own copy of the food guide at the end of this article so that you can find out how many servings are right for you.]

One piece of fruit, half a bagel, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of yogurt and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of cooked beans are examples of one serving from each of the food groups. [For more information about serving sizes go to the Health Canada website for a copy of the new Food Guide.]

Tip: Ask your grocery store if they have a Nutritionist. Many big grocery chains have a Nutritionist who will give group (and sometimes even individual) tours of the store and education to go along with the tour.



Tip: To help you buy healthy foods at the grocery store, try only buying foods from along the walls of the store. Most grocery stores have all of their fresh foods, also the most healthy for you ones, along the walls of the store.

own vegetables, and fruits. The pre-washed and cut salad bags are very time efficient but also more than double the price of buying the ingredients and doing it yourself. The same rule applies to pre-cut carrots and apples. When

you are choosing your vegetables and fruits, try to buy as many different colours as you can.

The more colours you choose, the more varied and healthy your diet will be.

3. When choosing grains, buy whole grains. White breads have very little nutrition, and are often full of sugar. The way to tell if a grain product contains whole grains is by reading the ingredients label. The ingredients should list whole grains or whole wheat. Name brand cereals can often be expensive, so store brands and bulk choices offer substantial savings. Buy day-old bread at the bakery.
4. Milk and cheese can be expensive. Look for items on special. Stores will sell off items close to the best before date very inexpensively. As long as you are going to drink your milk or eat your cheese or yogurt soon, it is perfectly healthy to buy these items.

When shopping on a tight budget it can seem impossible to eat healthy. Here are some quick ideas on how to save:

1. Choose more meat alternatives. Dried bulk beans and legumes are great choices; they provide you with protein are very low in fat and are very inexpensive. They require a bit more prep time, but it is usually just soaking the beans, so not really that hard to do. When purchasing meat, try to buy when it is on sale. You can also ask the butcher at the store if there are any inexpensive meats they could recommend. The grocers are willing to help people out.
2. Buy your vegetables and fruits in season, and locally grown. Vegetables and fruits are much cheaper when purchased during the growing season. A great way to save money is to cut your

One of your best strategies to saving money on groceries is planning ahead. Pre-planning your meals will ensure that your food does not spoil and get wasted. Also, if you know what kinds of foods you usually use you may see something on sale at the store that you can buy and keep in your cupboard for a meal later on in the week. Planning your trip to the market will also save you time, because you will have all the ingredients that you need at home when you go to make a meal.

Eating healthy is not as hard as many people think. It requires a little planning and thought. Once you learn how to shop, cook and eat healthy, you'll wonder why you ate poorly before!

For more information, go to:

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html
www.hillbillyhousewife.com



Moms with out Moms Project:
"How do I get my child to eat?"
 by Winona Williams

Tip: Limit juice to 1 cup and milk to 2 or 3 cups per day. Try serving water with your child's meals so they don't fill up on juice or milk. Water is a healthier choice and has no limits to the amount your child can have every day. Serve juice and milk between meals.

This is a common issue for a lot of parents. It can be difficult to know what to feed your child, when to feed your child, and how much to feed your child. Your child is unique, their taste buds are more sensitive than our own, and their tummies are smaller. Eating habits also differ from child to child and can depend on the age of the child.

You and your child both have responsibilities when it comes to eating:

Age of the Child	Child's Responsibility	Parent's Responsibility
Zero months to one year <i>Note: A child under six months will get their nutrition from formula or breast milk. At six months and over your child should be eating solids however, it is okay to continue breastfeeding as a supplement to solid food until the child is one year.</i>	Your child is responsible for how much he/she eats, how often he/she eats (or whether he/she eats at all).	You are responsible for what your child eats.
One year and older <i>Note: From one year, your child should get all or most of their nutrition from solid foods.</i>	Your child is responsible for how much they eat and whether they eat at all.	You are responsible for what they eat, when they eat and where they eat.

When your child refuses to eat, do not force them to eat - missing a meal is not the end of the world. Offer the meal later when the child may be hungry or offer a healthy alternative snack.

"My child won't eat new foods, only wants their favorite foods and plays with vegetables but won't eat them. ERR!"

Never force your child to try new foods but continue to offer new foods to them. Children need to explore the unfamiliar before accepting them. Children learn by touch, smell and looking so by continuing to offer new foods they will eventually try them. Children like bright colors and love crisp textures. When offering vegetables, offer brightly-colored raw veggies. Fruit offers similar nutrients to those found in veggies. Offer your child fruit as alternatives to veggies but continue to introduce veggies. Playing is the way children explore their world, so always make sure you provide a clean, safe place where your child can explore their food. Give your child time to explore their food and to learn how to use utensils. Be prepared to clean-up a mess.

"What food do I serve my child?"

Aim for all 4 food groups during meals and choose a variety of healthy food for your child and your family. Let your toddler and child choose within the food groups and provide new foods along with the foods your child likes. Serve snacks every 2 to 3 hours.

Food Guide Recommended Servings (per day):

Age in Years (Boys & Girls)	Children 2-3	Children 4-8	Children 9-13
Milk and Alternatives	2	2	3-4
Vegetables and Fruit	4	5	6
Grain Products	3	4	6
Meat and Alternatives	1	1	1-2

Please see the Food Guide excerpt below for information about serving sizes:

Grain Products 5-12
SERVINGS PER DAY

1 Serving: 1 Slice, Cold cereal 30 g, Hot Cereal 175 ml / 3/4 cup

2 Servings: 1 Bagel, Pita or Bun, Pasta or Rice 250 ml / 1 cup

Vegetables and Fruit 5-10
SERVINGS PER DAY

1 Serving: 1 Medium Size Vegetable or Fruit, Fresh, Frozen or Canned Vegetables or Fruit 125 ml / 1/2 cup

Salad 120 ml / 1 cup, Juice 125 ml / 1/2 cup

Milk Products
SERVINGS PER DAY
Children 4-8 years: 2-3
Youth 9-13 years: 3-4
Adults: 3-4
Pregnant and Breast-feeding Women: 3-4

1 Serving: Milk 250 ml / 1 cup, Cheese 30g x1" x1" / 50 g, 2 Slices / 50 g, Yogurt 175 ml / 3/4 cup

Meat and Alternatives 2-3
SERVINGS PER DAY

1 Serving: Meat, Poultry or Fish 50-100 g, 10-20 Can / 50-100 g, Beans 125-250 ml, Tofu 100 g / 1/2 cup, Peanut Butter 30 ml / 2 tbsp

Other Foods

Taste and enjoyment can also come from other foods and beverages that are not part of the 4 food groups. Some of these foods are higher in fat or calories, so use these foods in moderation.

Tip: Children learn from their parents. Teach your child good habits by modeling it to them. Eat dinner with them and continue to try new foods your self and drink water instead of juice. By creating regular or routine eating habits, sharing the responsibility for eating, and offering healthy food choices, your child will learn how live a healthy lifestyle.

For more information about the new Canada Food Guide, go to:
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html



Moms with out Moms Project: "Staying Cool and Safe for the Summer"

by Winona Williams

Q: How harmful is the sun?

A: The sun can be very harmful to your child if you do not take the appropriate precautions. The sun is the leading cause of first-degree burns to the outer layer of skin. This is called "sunburn." The sun is made up of two types of Ultraviolet rays: Ultraviolet A (UVA) and Ultraviolet B (UVB). A sunburn happens when UVB comes into contact with skin for periods of time at high temperatures. UVA is present every day of the year and can penetrate deep into the skin's layers. UVA rays make up 5% of the sun's rays and are 20 times more abundant than UVB rays and its long-term effects can cause skin damage. UVA rays can pass through glass windows and are not affected by a change in altitude or weather. UVB rays cannot pass through glass windows and vary with the season; it is more intense in the summer than it is in the winter and varies with weather conditions. UVB rays are more intense in high altitudes and near the equator and make up about 0.5% of the sun's rays. It's also the main cause of sunburn, is related to 90% of non-melanoma skin cancers and has been related to cataracts.

Symptoms of sunburn:

- Skin becomes red and can hurt to the touch.
- Painful swelling and blisters indicate more severe sunburn and could even be considered second degree burn.
- Sunburns continue to get worse 24-36 hours after the initial burn but then start to go away in about 3 to 5 days.
- Sun poisoning, usually called "sun stroke," means a sunburn is severe enough to cause a whole body reaction and can lead to headache, nausea, vomiting, fever and chills. If this happens, seek medical attention immediately.

Q: So how do you protect your self and your child from the sun?

A: Obviously, you should limit your sun exposure and stay in the shade whenever the UV Index is high (UV index is usually reported on the Weather Channel, local news and in the newspaper). The Canadian Cancer Society suggests that you avoid direct sun exposure between the hours of 11am and 4pm when the UV Index is high. Wearing suitable clothing including a hat, light long sleeve shirt, and shorts that go to the knee help but wearing the right sunscreen will also protect you and your child from the harmful rays from the sun. SPF stands for Sun Protection Factor. Most people make the mistake of thinking that the higher the SPF number the greater the protection but this is not necessarily true. SPF is based on the high of the day (e.g. mid-afternoon) and the length of time you will be safe in the sun with a lower risk of burning.

Tip: Sunscreen should be applied at least 10 minutes before sun exposure to ensure it penetrates the skin. Reapply sunscreen often, especially when spending time in the water. Babies should wear a sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 30 at all times when in the sun. For adults, a minimum of SPF 15 or 30 should be applied. Remember, you can get burned even when you're in the shade when the UV Index is high.

Q: How do I know if my child has heat stroke?

A: There are two types of heat stroke. Classic heat stroke and Exertional heat stroke. Classic heat stroke happens when a person is exposed to a hot environment and the body can no longer control its own temperature so continues to rise. Classic heat stroke can develop over a few days and the body may no longer be able to sweat. Exertional heat stroke occurs when a person is working or exercising in the hot weather. The body can sweat abundantly but the body may be creating more heat than it can release and this causes the body temperature to rise to high levels. Both of these types of heat stroke can cause dehydration and cause organs to fail. **Heat stroke can be a life threatening medical emergency.** If you or your child shows any of the symptoms below, seek medical attention immediately:

- Unconsciousness for longer than a few seconds.
- Confusion, severe restlessness, or anxiety.
- Convulsion (seizure).
- Symptoms of moderate to severe difficulty breathing.
- Fast heart rate.
- Hot, dry, flushed skin with no sweating (classic heat stroke) or with excessive sweating (exertional heatstroke).

Overall safety tips for the summer:

- Keep you and your child hydrated. Drink lots of water and fluids throughout the hot summer days. Popsicles and watermelon in moderation are also a great way to keep hydrated.
- Use sun block several times through out your day. Especially after excessive play or swimming.
- Wear appropriate clothing to cover up and protect your skin. Light coloured hats that cover the head and shade the face are a great way to keep your child cooler. Buy sunglasses for you and your child with UV protection. Be particularly careful when buying sunglasses for your child as those without UV protection can actually do more damage than no glasses at all because they let in more UV light.
- DO NOT stay in the sun all day. Remember, your child's tolerance for the sun and heat is much lower than an adult's so make sure you and your child cool off frequently in a nice shaded place.
- Never leave your children (or pets) in the car for long periods of time (or unattended) especially on hot summer days. Air conditioned cars are great but if you don't have that luxury, make sure your windows are open to circulate cool air into the car.

And remember be cool and stay safe!

For more information about sun safety, go to the Canadian Cancer Society website www.cancer.ca and look for SunSense.



NEW! Representative for Children and Youth

You may or may not know that BC now has a new Representative for Children and Youth. This new Representative and her team replaced the Child and Youth Officer for BC on March 31st, 2007.

The mandate of the Representative for Children and Youth is to improve services and outcomes for children in B.C. through advocacy, accountability and review. The activities of the new Representative are defined by the Representative for Children and Youth Act which you can find at www.leg.bc.ca/38th2nd/3rd_read/gov34-3.htm

The Representative can:

- Advocate on behalf of children and youth to improve their understanding of and access to designated services.
- Monitor, review, audit and publicly report on designated services for children and youth.
- Conduct independent reviews and investigations into the critical injuries or deaths of children receiving reviewable services.

What does this mean for Young People?

The Representative for Children and Youth makes sure that young people between the ages of birth to 19 who are receiving government services, including young people in care, are treated fairly and have their voices heard.

The Rep works for children and youth, not for the government. She can help if a young person who is living in a foster home, group home or youth custody facility feels they are being treated unfairly, or if they think they're not being heard. She can also help youth who are receiving government services, or who want to receive government services.

The Rep believes:

- Young people should be protected and feel safe.
- Young peoples' views should be listened to, especially when a decision is being made about them.
- Young people should get the services they feel they need.

If you are a young person in BC and you have a problem getting the services you need or need help with the services you are getting, you can contact the Rep.

Toll Free at 1-800-476-3933

OR post your questions (anonymously) online at www.talktotherep.ca

Who is the new Representative?

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond was appointed BC's first Representative for Children and Youth in November 2006. She is on leave from the Saskatchewan Provincial Court, where she was appointed to the bench in 1998. She has worked as a criminal law judge in youth and adult courts, which led her to help develop partnerships to better serve the needs of young people in the justice system.

For more information about Mary Ellen, go to www.rcybc.ca

Reviewable Services = services or programs under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* and *Youth Justice Act* and include mental health and addictions services for children.

Designated Services = government funded services or programs for children and their families including (but not limited to):

- family support
- child protection
- foster care
- adoption
- guardianship
- children and youth with disabilities
- early childhood development and child care services
- mental health and addiction services for children
- youth justice
- services for youth and young adults during their transition to adulthood



Engaging YOUTH in the FBCYICN

by Sarah Watson
Youth Participation Coordinator

Over the past 14 years, the Network has been a leader in youth participation and today we're growing rapidly and it's an exciting new era. Youth participation has always been at the core of what we do. Over the years many staff have supported and contributed to the concept of meaningful youth participation and everyone has played an important role in getting young people involved.

To ensure the Network's capacity for youth participation grows along with its projects and programs, we have developed a Youth Participation Coordinator position and I'm here to explore, expand and promote youth engagement!

This will involve looking at how we currently engage young people and how we can create new opportunities to involve young people not only in the Network but also in their own communities. I'm here to help identify and create opportunities for youth engagement and to assist young people in obtaining the skills they need to be meaningfully involved.

To do this work, I am taking lead on pieces of work like the Speaker's Bureau, Youth Speak and Youth Participation workshops. One of the ways you can help me help you is by answering the following questions:

1. Think of a time when you felt really involved and empowered. Please describe what was happening that made you feel empowered and positive.
2. How did you hear about the FBCYICN?
3. What made you want to be involved and why do you stay involved?
4. What are some of the challenges to being involved?
5. What has the FBCYICN done to overcome some of these challenges?
6. What have you done to overcome some of these challenges?
7. As a member of the FBCYICN, what do you want to be more involved in?
8. What else could the FBCYICN do to better engage / involve you and other young people?
9. Please tell us what you think about the FBCYICN's current Leadership Council structure:
(Please rate each statement on a scale of 1 (not true) to 10 (very true))
 - a. The number of Leadership Council members (10 members) is good
 - b. The application process is fair and user-friendly
 - c. The role of Leadership Council is clear and reasonable
 - d. The Leadership Council election process is fair and effective
 - e. The Leadership Council members represent the young people in their regions
 - f. The Leadership Council members try to engage other members at and between SCMs
 - g. The Leadership Council is accountable to the members of FBCYICN



Honourable Tom Christensen, Minister of Children and Family Development on Friday April 20th

Please take a few minutes to think about the questions above and send me your thoughts and ideas. You can email them to me at youthparticipation@fbcyicn.ca or call me toll free at 1-800-565-8055. Your voice is important – You can only make change if you use it!





YouthSpeak



YouthSpeak is a concept that has been adapted from models used in Calgary (KidSpeak) and Ontario (Voices from Within).

YouthSpeak is an event for youth to talk about their concerns, to gain skills through workshops, and to have an opportunity to speak out in an environment where people are listening. The event consists of time for youth to brainstorm their needs, issues and ideas, attend workshops that address youth's needs, and a chance for youth to express their opinions to the decision makers in their lives.

- YouthSpeak lets youth know their opinions matter; they have rights, and encourages them to speak out in a healthy and positive way.
- YouthSpeak gives decision-makers a chance to learn first hand information about youth's needs, issues and ideas. This supplies government and service providers with information to make programs for youth more adaptable to youth's needs and more successful.
- YouthSpeak gives youth the chance to inform organizations and other influential bodies about how their services are doing and what they could do in order to help youth more.
- YouthSpeak is also an event that grants opportunity for networking between youth and service providers, allowing youth to know more about the beneficial programs in their communities for themselves and their peers.
- YouthSpeak participants are able to build on skills or learn skills through workshops offered at the event that they then can go back to their communities and use.
- YouthSpeak also lets youth come together, meet new friends, and have a good time!

In 1999, the first YouthSpeak in BC was held in Kamloops and co-hosted by the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks, the McCreary Centre Society, and the Office and the Child, Youth and Family Advocate. From the great success of YouthSpeak in Kamloops, several other YouthSpeaks took place in BC. Burnaby and Cowichan Valley both hosted their own YouthSpeaks in 2000, and Victoria hosted a YouthSpeak in 2001.

In 2004, as part of the FBCYICN's 11th Anniversary, we hosted a provincial YouthSpeak event in Richmond. Through a combination of surveys, workshops (e.g., Rights & Advocacy, Becoming Independent, Sexual Health) participants identified the following priority issues:

- Motivation to stay in school
- Youth (16 and over) not being taken into care
- Lack of support for finding jobs
- Instability; bouncing from home to home or worker to worker
- "Bad-ass" stigma (stereotypes) about foster kids

From these priority issues, the FBCYICN has since developed the Dream Fund / Educational Resources Package; has expanded our mandate to include young people in Youth Agreements; has developed the Employment to Freedom Program; has worked in partnership to develop the Youth Transition Conferencing model (currently being piloted in the Fraser Region); and has worked consistently to raise awareness about the needs, issues and ideas facing young people in and from care today.

To continue with the FBCYICN's growth and development, we will be hosting another provincial YouthSpeak event at Steering Committee Meeting (SCM) #46 in October 2007. Participants will have an opportunity to develop or improve their communication and presentation skills; prioritize their current needs, issues and ideas; and make recommendations to decision-makers.

Between now and October, we will be consulting with members and supports through a series of online and email surveys to determine appropriate workshop topics, facilitators, materials and supports are available at the YouthSpeak event.

For more information about previous YouthSpeak events, please go to the Youth Participation section of www.fbcyicn.ca or contact Sarah Watson by email at youthparticipation@fbcyicn.ca

FBCYICN Speaker's Bureau: Voices Unite!

Every year, the Network gets lots of requests from teachers, workers, foster parents, government and the community, to do presentations about the experiences, needs, issues and ideas of young people in and from government care. This is a lot of work for such a small staff and volunteer team that's why we need more members to get involved!

The Speaker's Bureau is being developed to provide youth in and from care with the knowledge, skills and abilities to make presentations both on the Network's behalf as well as local topics of importance and interest.

Participants in the Speaker's Bureau will receive free training

and opportunities to provide their feedback, input and ideas on various topics related to the experiences of being in care and the benefits of networking and youth participation there may even be some travel involved!

Whether it's a presentation to child and youth care students, a workshop for youth about their rights or a chance to speak to some bigwigs about making change, there could be an opportunity that's just right for you!

For more information or to get involved in the Speaker's Bureau, please contact Nicole at nicole_herbert@fbcyicn.ca or (604) 527-7790.

Educational Resource Package



The FBCYICN recognizes that education is a big issue for young people in and from care. We are currently developing a scholarship program for young people from care called the Dream Fund. As part of this project, we have created a guide called the Educational Resource Package or ERP. This guide includes a list of scholarships, bursaries and student loans as well as a Glossary of education-related terms, a Tip Sheet and a Financial Record Sheet. Here are excerpts from the ERP:

Scholarships for Youth in / from Care:

These scholarships, bursaries, awards and grants are available to young people who have been involved with the child welfare system.

National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE)

Deadline: June 30th

Funding: 4 awards of \$1,500 given each year to children of NUPGE
www.nupge.ca/news_2005/n27oc05a.htm

Ken Dryden Scholarship

National Youth in Care Network

Deadline: Friday, April 6, 2007

Funding: up to \$3,000 or 80% of the cost of tuition and fees
www.youthincare.ca/work/scholarship.html

Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia

Deadline: April 15th

Funding: A maximum of \$3,300 yearly

www.trustee.bc.ca/services/estate/edu_assistance.html

Jennifer Prosser Wade Endowment Fund

VanCity Community Foundation

Deadline: Varies by institution (see the section on "Internal—in school—scholarships")

Funding: Varies by institution

For more information, please contact your school's financial aid office.

Youth Educational Assistance Fund

Ministry of Children and Family Development

(Administered by: Ministry of Advanced Education)

Deadline: No deadline

Funding: YEAF funding varies each year but for 2006/07 is \$5,500

www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc/specialprograms/yeaf.htm

Tip Sheet

For more scholarships, glossary terms, tips or forms please go to the Educational Resource Package available at www.fbcyicn.ca under Dream Fund.

1. Check the application deadline.
2. Are you eligible for the scholarship/ bursary/ award or student loan?
3. Fill out the application in pencil first and then go over it in pen to keep the application clean unless you have a second copy of the application form.
4. Look for any mistakes on your application form, this is very important!!!
5. Remember, most applications take up to 4 to 8 weeks to process, so make sure to put an address where you will be living 4 to 8 weeks from the application deadline.
6. Know your Social Insurance Number (SIN)
7. Budget your money:
tuition costs + living costs – assets = amount needed
 - Tuition costs: classes, books, supplies, etc.;
 - Living costs: rent, utilities, transportation, food, clothing, medical, etc.;
 - Assets: other scholarships, bursaries, awards, grants, vehicle, Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), trust funds, stocks, property, etc.
8. Have at least two reference letters available: one personal (from a friend, relative, or anyone who knows you quite well). have at least one academic reference letter (from your high school teacher, coach, trade/ college/ university instructors). Make sure to have than 10 copies each and keep the original. Sometimes you will have to customize the reference letters to each application.
9. Be prepared to write 1 to 4 essays (all should be typed) about your achievements, goals, etc.
10. Send in your application form as soon as you complete it even though it might be weeks before the deadline
11. Last, but not least, schedule in a lot of time (at least 3 hours) to fill out the application forms.

★ ★ ★ Student Glossary ★ ★ ★

Admission

The process of evaluating applicants for acceptance to a University, Vocational or Trade school, or College. The admission process is separate from the process of registering for courses.

Assessed Financial Need

This is an amount calculated using a standardized model. The amount of money that you will need is calculated by subtracting your educational costs & living costs from your resources.

Bursary

Non-repayable award given on the basis of assessed financial need. UBC offers bursaries through the General Bursary Program, which is open to students in Canada.

Credit

In the course descriptions the credit value of a course, where given, is shown in parentheses following the course number. In general, 1 credit represents one hour of instruction or two to three hours of laboratory work per week throughout one term or a semester. A credit is approximately one term hour. Most courses are 3-credit value and have a duration of one term or semester (four months)

Financial Assistance

Assistance granted to students on the basis of assessed financial need. Forms of financial assistance include: government student loans and grants, bursaries, work study and school loans. Canadian federal and provincial grants, loans, and work study programs are generally available only to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada.

Grant

1. A financial need-based form of government assistance that is usually administered in conjunction with the federal and provincial student loan programs (e.g., Canada Study Grant for Students With Dependent Children, Canada Study Grant for Female Doctoral Students, Canada Study Grant for Students with Disabilities, etc.). 2. A grant awarded to graduate students and professors by private and government agencies, or by industry, to fund research activities at the university.

Independent Student

For financial assistance purposes, you are considered independent if you can meet and verify any one of the following conditions:

- have been out of high school for at least 48 months (four years)
- are married, living common-law, separated, divorced, widowed or a single parent
- have worked full-time in the labour force for two periods of 12 continuous months each since leaving high school
- are a ward of the court

Language Proficiency Index (LPI)

A method of rating the standard of English language usage that must be met by all incoming undergraduate students before they are allowed to register for first-year English courses. The LPI, with some exceptions, is determined through a written examination. This is only applicable to students who wish to attend a British Columbian post-secondary institution.

Mature Applicants

A student who is at least 23 years of age, a resident of British Columbia, whose activities have led to intellectual development, but who lacks formal university entrance requirements.

Prerequisite

A prerequisite is a course you must successfully complete prior to registering in another course. Course descriptions show prerequisites where applicable.

Scholarship

Non-repayable award based on academic excellence and involvement in school and/or community.

Student Loan

A major source of need-based financial assistance provided by the federal and provincial governments. The governments pay interest on student loans while the borrower is engaged in full-time study but the borrower must begin repaying loan principal and interest six months after the he/she ceases to be registered in at least 60% of a full course load. Students who have exhausted aid available through government loans may qualify for short- and long-term loans directly from your post-secondary institution. Usually, a credit-worthy co-signer is required in order to qualify for a school loan.

Transcript

A document listing grades for all courses in all semesters at a particular school or university.



Alumni of Care: Helping Networks Grow

In 20 years we, the National Youth In Care Network, along with other networks have come a long way – and yet there is still so much further to go.

To assist with addressing this urgent need for change we are growing our membership to include not only youth in care between the ages of 14 and 18, but also alumni from care over the age of 18, without an upper age limit. With this change, support and opportunity to those from care will be extended and with our collective voice we will push for change across the country.

As young people are leaving care and feeling the effects of this fast-paced period of changes they can find comfort in knowing they can be apart of a permanent and self directed community of other alumni of care. So while being in care can be scary and leaving care can feel lonely, being a part of the alumni community can bring a sense of belonging and comfort in a young persons life.

This change in our membership will expand the social support network for those from care, beyond the age of 24 (our original upper age limit). We have heard from past members as they aged beyond 24 that they still had a need for the benefits of the social support community provided to them by the NYICN. And they still required access to resources, such as financial support for post-secondary education, well beyond the 25th and 30th birthdays. We also continue to hear from our past members that they want to give back to the community that gave them so much when they were youth, by providing financial support and mentoring to the youth of today. This membership growth will create many new and exciting opportunities.

- Growing the membership to include alumni of care older than 24 increases the pool of professional expertise and experience.
- Alumni members are valuable resources to local and provincial networks.
- Our community of peer support is expanded and extended beyond age limits, to ensure an on-going, supportive and fluid social support network without fear of being “aged out”.
- Together, youth and alumni from care can influence policy makers, programs and push for change.
- Having paying alumni membership will ensure, for the first time, financial sustainability for the NYICN, which in turn will sustain the work and increase our effectiveness.

For more information or to register as an Alumni of Care and join the Canadian Alumni Community, go to the National Youth in Care Network website at www.youthincare.ca today!

Responsibility by Trevor Coburn

The reason it is important for me to be responsible is because I wouldn't know what to do in life. If I want to be able to work with youth I have to have my priorities in place and that means being responsible as an adult. With all the shit that has happened to me in the past it has made me understand that if I can't be responsible then I can't become a Youth Worker.

The things that I have been doing to be more responsible are: forgetting the shitty past and working with youth and street youth. I think that the only way to better myself is by staying positive and achieving what I promised to do. I think that is important for everyone to be responsible because if you have a child, your responsibilities are to your kid. It is impossible to find someone who isn't responsible. The only way that I can succeed in life is by changing what I know is not in my best interests.

Farewell Teresa

As many of you know, Teresa Lum is leaving her position with the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks as of June 2007. Most recently, she was the Director of External Relations, but she has also been on staff as a Team Leader and Local Development Officer and before that sat on the First Executive Committee. In fact, she was one of the founding members of the FBCYICN!

Teresa has been an integral part of not only the Network's on-going development but also establishing rights and standards for young people in care in BC. She has created key partnerships with the Ministry to keep the Network funded and supported and ensured the voice of young people in and from care has been heard in the creation of government policies, community programs and services and a variety of important projects.

She is well-respected by the FBCYICN staff, Board and membership and by her colleagues across the province and her day-to-day contributions to the Network and the child welfare system will be sadly missed.

We're not sure what Teresa intends to do next in the adventure she calls life but we know wherever she ends up, they will be lucky to have her!

On behalf of the FBCYICN, we wish her health and happiness and extend her an open invitation to come home and visit us whenever she feels like she could use a little family around her.

Yours in Networking,
Nicole Herbert

Former Co-Conspirator to the Director of External Relations

Friend + Family: Passion from Pain

I have a friend and we are family. We didn't start out that way – not by a long shot...

I was around 18 or 19 years old and getting ready to graduate from high school when my social worker called me into his office. He informed me that he had registered me for a conference in a place called 108 Mile House. To make a long story short, I was too shy to go but to meek to say no and so off I went on a train into what seemed like the middle of nowhere.

I arrived not knowing anyone and remained quiet for the duration of the event. Well, quiet on the outside anyway. I sat back and listened to other youth in care talk about their experiences. They shared their most intimate and horrifying stories with a room full of their peers, service providers, caregivers and a panel of government representatives. On the inside, I screamed in sadness for my peers and what they had endured and in anger at those government representatives, our "parents," as they sat with uncomfortable smiles on their faces while these young people poured their hearts out.

Later, this sadness and anger turned into pride and a passion I never knew was possible. A passion that still burns inside me today and that I know I share with my friend.

When I think about who and where I am in my life today, a lot of the positives can be attributed to my involvement in the Network and the people who have crossed my path. It hasn't always been easy or fun. In fact, there have been many frustrating and painful moments where I've wanted to give up and just exist in the "normal" world.

I know I am not alone in how I feel about where I came from, where I've been or where I'm going in life. Because I know I have a friend who is so much more than that – they are family – and they understand and accept and encourage me.



We started off as peers from care with nothing else in common. She was a stuck-up snob and I was quiet. As we got to know each other through steering committee meetings, she was still a snob hanging out with her clique and I became a little less quiet and we rather disliked each other – she was a bitch and I was a bit weird and abrasive. Eventually, we were on the same Executive Committee and then we got stuck working together.

It wasn't until we had to combine our efforts to 'defeat the bad guys' that we realized we had begun to tolerate each other. Soon we started working together more closely and realized we had something important in common – our passion to do something good with the opportunities we were given.

And so began the Tag-Team effort...

For 14 years, my friend and I have worked side by side and navigated the strange world of personalities, policies and politics. We've learned difficult lessons about holding ourselves and others accountable while consistently striving to learn and grow and create opportunities for youth voice. We have been

through some very challenging times together, shed more than our fair share of tears and we've come close to giving up more than once.

But we have also been through some amazing times. We have been so very fortunate to travel all over BC together as well as other parts of Canada and the USA. We have even gone to Australia, where we co-presented a keynote speech on Celebrating Success. We've gotten lost once or twice and gone crazy but we always found our way back.

We've learned how to support one another through good times and bad and to light a fire under the ass of the other when it seems our passion is dwindling. Most importantly, we've had the opportunity to grow-up together and have learned a lot about who we are and what we are capable of.

From my friend, I've learned I am a worthy person. Worthy of praise when I achieve a goal or do a good job or help someone who needs it. Worthy of patience when I take little steps towards taking healthy risks in my life. Worthy of gratitude when I lend a hand or an ear or my shoulder. Worthy of someone's unconditional love and trust.

I can think of only one way to thank my friend for all of the black and white and sometimes grey ways she has helped me 'peel back the layers of my onion' and become a better person – and that is to love her unconditionally and remind her we will always be family.

Love always, Aunty Nicool





PRIDE

by Nicole Herbert

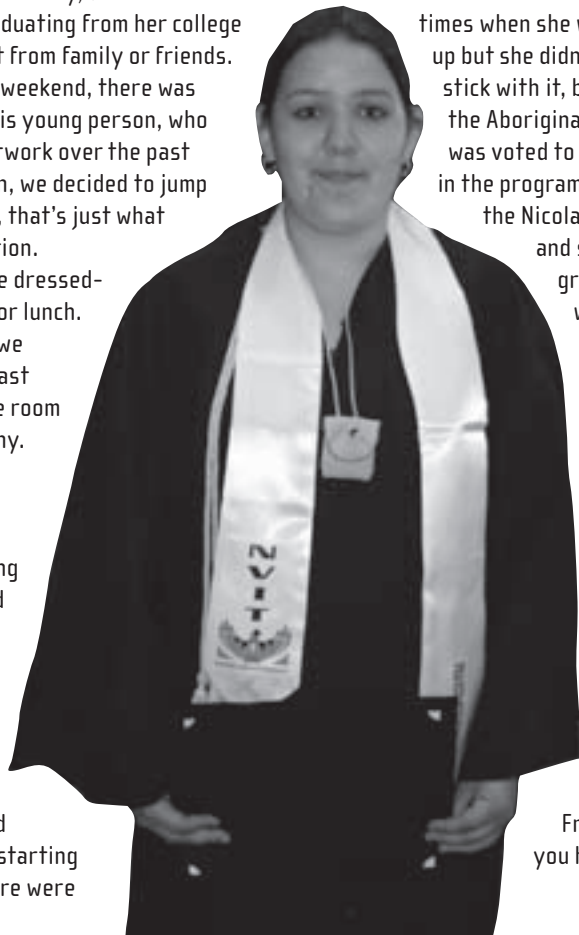


We must never forget to celebrate the accomplishments of the ones we love. We must always remember that the simple gesture of showing-up, can make all the difference to a person who thinks maybe no one will.

We got a message late last week from Willy, a foster mom concerned that one of her kids was graduating from her college certificate program with little support from family or friends. Although we already had plans for the weekend, there was a strong feeling of responsibility to this young person, who has been so quietly involved in the Network over the past few years. And so with little hesitation, we decided to jump in my car and head up to Merritt. To us, that's just what family does for one another – no question.

On Saturday morning, we got a little dressed-up and headed off to the Civic Centre for lunch. We joked around (probably more than we should have) and had our fill of the "feast food" before being kicked out while the room was re-organized for the grad ceremony. Hanging out in the dusty parking lot, we laughed some more and took a few pictures. When it was time to go back inside, we stood in the hallway sweating until they finally opened the doors and let us take our seats.

When our grad came out of the bathroom wearing her long black robe and gold valedictorian curtain chords ;-), I was a bit overwhelmed. All of a sudden I had this huge wave of pride roll over me. I know she has had many ups and downs since starting the program and that there were



times when she wanted to give up but she didn't. Not only did she stick with it, but she earned her certificate in the Aboriginal Early Childhood Education Program and was voted to the Valedictorian Select Committee by her peers in the program. She waited patiently with other graduates of the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology while politicians and school representatives and Elders and former graduates each took their turn to speak. Then it was time to walk across the stage, collect her school sash and medicine bag and have her photos taken. And trying to hide her smile, she giggled while all the camera flashes went off – many of which were from my camera!

The day seemed long at times but it was so powerful being there. Representing the FBCYICN and sitting next to her former foster mom and former social worker (who also brought her son) to demonstrate our support gave me pride not only in this young person's accomplishment but also in knowing individuals who care enough to show-up when we're needed the most. Not because it is our job to do so but because we understand that family can be what you make it.

From my heart, congratulations Jessie for what you have and will accomplish in your life!

dear Summer



Dear Summer,

I take the bus every day to and from work and am appalled with people's behaviour on the bus. I am wondering what you feel is proper Bus / Transit etiquette?

– Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

A lot of people need to take a course in proper transit etiquette (also just in proper manners). Taking transit is not the easiest way to get around but if people followed some simple rules of respect when taking transit, the ride could go some much smoother:



1. First rule of riding the bus: If an elderly or disabled person gets on the bus, get your butt off the seat and offer it to this person. Do not pretend to be asleep as soon as you see them board the bus and don't pretend to be reading just 'cause you are lazy and don't want to stand.
2. One bum, one seat. The only exception to this is if the bus is not full and there is lots of other seating available. This also pertains to backpacks, purses, bags, and other personal belongings; this stuff is not deserving of its own seat so put it on your lap or on the floor in front of you.
3. There is no need to scream into your cell phone while on the bus. Most others do not want to know what is happening in your life... we honestly don't care. The person on the other end of the line can still hear you if you talk in a normal voice. When you're in a car, do you have to scream into the phone? No you don't and you don't need to scream on the bus either.
4. Please don't douse yourself with so much perfume or cologne that others on the bus are suffocating in the smell. On the other side of this, please take a shower or at least use deodorant before riding the bus. No-one likes to get on the bus first thing in the morning to sit next to someone who reeks of yesterday's food, bad B.O. or a whole bottle of Old Spice.
5. If the person next to you is reading, or clearly keeping to themselves, don't try to spark up conversation. If they make eye contact, or if they're looking around, perhaps you can say a few words, and pay attention to their response to gauge whether or not they're interested in conversation. If their response is a "yea", "ok", "yup", and nothing more, stop talking. They don't want to talk to you. Don't take it personally either.
6. Lastly if you have children, do not allow them to scream at the top of their lungs. Do not allow them to poke and prod random people. Do not allow them to run around the bus. Basically, do your best to make your kid behave themselves. It's your job as a parent to teach them how to respect others and what behaviour is appropriate in public.

If you have any questions or issues that you would like some advice on, please email them to me at dearsummer@fbcyicn.ca and I will do my best to answer them in the next edition of Power Pages!

Power Pages Needs YOU!

The Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks produces this provincial newsletter - Power Pages - three times each year. In it, you will find information and updates about FBCYICN projects, programs and people; important information about opportunities and tips relevant to young people in and from care in BC; articles and stories about the needs, issues and ideas of young people involved in the child welfare system; photos from various networking events; updates and information from other agencies and government; and of course - submissions from YOU!

Power Pages is sent to over 4,000 young people, service providers and caregivers around the province and to other Networks across the country! Every edition of Power Pages (and previous FBCYICN newsletters) is also available for download from our website at www.fbcyicn.ca

In order for Power Pages to grow and get better, we need YOU to submit your local updates, success stories, opinion articles, letters to government, poetry, questions and artwork TODAY! You can email, fax or mail your submissions to our office at:

FBCYICN

55 8th Street
New Westminster, BC
V3M 3N9
Fax: (604) 527-7764
info@fbcyicn.ca

For more information about Power Pages submissions and deadlines, please check-out our website or contact our office. We look forward to publishing YOUR work!







"Seven Generations"
by Sharifah Marisden
acrylic on canvas
25"x25", 2007

"Spirit" by Lacy Morin-Desjarlais
acrylic on canvas, 25"x25", 2007



"Strength" by Lacy Morin-Desjarlais
acrylic on canvas, 25"x25", 2007



By coming together,
we are not alone!