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“Since 1974...building on individual and family strengths which support growth and healthy lifestyles”

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

July 18, 2019

Comox Valley Family Services Association
Annual General Meeting
1415 Cliffe Avenue,
Courtenay, BC V9N 2K6

Date: July 18, 2019

Location: 1415 Cliffe Avenue, Courtenay, BC V9N 2K6

Time: 3:00 pm. Refreshments and 'meet and greet' at 2:45 pm

Member/Stakeholder Notice: In person, email and posted on webpage

AGENDA

1. Call to Order- Introductions
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Adopt Minutes from July 19, 2018
4. Financial Statements:
 - Report by Presley & Partners (Accounting Firm)
5. Appointment of Accounting Firm
6. Appointment of Directors
7. Executive Director Report (as per this document)
8. Program Reports (short versions – full reports submitted to funders)

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• Y-Mind (Mindfulness Group)/Parenting Through Anxiety	11
9. Adjourn	



Executive Directors Report

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome each of you to our 45th Annual General Meeting (AGM). As always I feel it is an honour to be the Executive Director for Comox Valley Family Services Association. It has been a pleasure to work with the wonderful employees, volunteers and the Board. I'm very proud of the work we've all done together and the work the Agency will continue to do after my retirement this year as the Executive Director.

The Board has been working hard to find the right person to take over the leadership of the agency and ensure a smooth transition. I look forward to what CVFSA will do with its new leadership 2019 and beyond. I will miss the agency that I have been part of since July 1991. Prior to my role as Executive Director, starting in 2010, I was a Family Development Program Manager for over 10 years, and prior to that a Family Education Coordinator and Special Services to Children worker. It has been a wonderful 28 years.

All in all, I could hardly be more pleased this year with CVFSA activities which have grown to take on more challenges children and families are facing around a multitude of issues.

A few key points

- **Accreditation:** Our next survey will be in 2020; between September and October 2020. Things will kick more into high gear as of January 2020.
- **CAMS** (Case Administration Management System) is a successful case management system used by over 26 agencies throughout BC that are different in geography, size and complexity. The two programs where we have launched this system in 2018-2019 period are: Family Development and Community Based Victim Services. The results will be reviewed by December 2019 and if working successfully then will be introduced to other program areas to be decided with management input.
- **Staffing:** There will be many changes this upcoming year with 3 staff going on maternity leave and one long term employee of over 13 years leaving (Collaborative Planning Program) to work at Ministry of Children and Family Development.
- **Funding Increase:** Healthy Families: The Ministry of Children and Family Development is strengthening early years' services that directly support children and families. They are in affect replacing what the United Way use to fund. We have partnered in with 3 other agencies and were successful in obtaining 3-year funding for Valley Families Community Early Years. This money will help fund a community navigator role with Healthy Families.
- **Community Early Years Vision '25 by 25'.** We are members of an Early Years Collaborative. We share a vision of children and families in the Comox Valley thriving and we envision that early development vulnerability will be reduced to 25% by the year 2025. In the last collection of Early Development Instrument data, the vulnerability in our community was at 40%, one of the highest in the province. While this is a challenging target to reach, the Collaborative has developed a comprehensive, evidence based, plan of action to reach this goal. Our agency is proud to be part of this Collaborative.

On behalf of our Board I would like to thank all our staff, volunteers, program funders, donors and stakeholders who play such a key role in ensuring our agencies success.

Gillian Normandin – Executive Director

PROGRAM REPORTS



Collaborative Planning Program (CPP)

Referrals are through Ministry of Children and Family Development. Goal is support and facilitation of Family Case Planning Conferences (FCPC) and coordination and facilitation of Family Group Conferences (FGC). We also offer Youth Transition Conferences (YTC) to youth ages 16, 17, and 18 that are either on youth agreements, independent living or aging out of permanent care. The role in all programs is to facilitate meetings that involve immediate family, extended family, supports and community.

*Transfer meetings were added in 2018. The purpose of a transfer meeting is to share information between the intake social worker and the incoming family service social worker, as well as the family and their supports.

Challenges: Finding space continues to be challenge. The MCFD boardroom is extremely busy, as well as finding administration/practicum students to record the notes, which assists this coordinator to be able to focus on the facilitation. If MCFD funding could be made available for another staff member, this would alleviate many of the challenges noted above around increase in service level and managing more aspects e.g. now doing Transfer Meetings.

Successes: Being co-located in the MCFD office is very beneficial for our worker; from both a referral (access) and collaborative approach. It also makes in convenient to schedule meetings and for MCFD social workers to ask questions which process would work best for a particular family.

2018-2019 Year End Stats

Family Case Planning Conference	139	(32 Self-identified Aboriginal)
Transfer Meetings	28	(6 Self-identified Aboriginal)
Youth Transition Conference	16	(4 Self-identified Aboriginal)
Family Group Conference	3	(3 Self- identified Aboriginal)

Note: In the new fiscal year April our CPP Coordinator for more than 13 years will be stepping down to take on the role of 'Family Finder' with Ministry of Children and Family Development.



Community Based Victim Services (CBVS)

There are two aspects to this program, however workers can do both aspects.

Domestic Violence (DV) Section/Intimate Partner Violence: provides crisis and emotional support, information, risk recognition and safety planning, assistance with understanding the justice system and accompaniment to court to victims of domestic (gender) violence.

Sexual Assault (SA) Services: serve all victims of sexual crimes, recent and historical, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation. They accept self-referrals, community referrals and police based referrals.

Both programs offer support, court and RCMP accompaniment, and court orientation, liaison with RCMP, Crown and Probation, and assistance with victim impact statements and crime victim assistance forms.

Challenges: Referrals are still busy. Since October 2018, Melissa (DV) received 45 referrals. Since October 2018, Isabel (SA) received 26 new referrals. And for referrals for counselling, waitlists present a challenge e.g. Sexual Abuse Intervention program (SAIP) and Stop the Violence Counselling. During the last quarterly reporting period, there were 4 new male referrals to do with Domestic Violence/Intimate partner violence.

Successes: Additional funding from Victim Services & Crime Prevention, of the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, which helped address an increase demand in services. It allows us to have coverage monies for overlap/orientation when DV worker goes on maternity leave in 2019 period. We were able to make up and distribute 20 'self-care' kits to victims. These kits contain things like soothing stone, coffee card, etc.

New: CBVS is now using CAMS (Case Administration & Management System) to help track clients and reports.

2018-2019 Year End Stats

Domestic Violence (DV)	76 in total: 1 Indigenous <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 66• 10 (served by part time workers)
Sexual Assault	50 in total: 5 Indigenous <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 48 Sexual Assaults• 1 Sexual Exploitation• 1 Sexual Harassment

For 2019-2020 reporting period the DV worker will be on maternity leave and coverage is being done by employee who has been a part time worker with this program.



‘Creating Calm’: Therapeutic Anxiety Group

Creating Calm’s goals and objectives are the following: provide children and their parents with some practical coping methods to manage anxiety and fear; educate parents about the signs and symptoms of anxiety in children; offer parenting options to encourage greater self-reliance in children; help children develop self-awareness about personal anxiety triggers; and help children experience positive relationships with other group members.

Creating Calm utilizes a combination of therapy approaches such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Narrative therapy techniques, mindfulness meditation, and expressive arts. These approaches are delivered in a developmentally sensitive way that combines games, exercises, role-plays, discussion, and arts/crafts activities. The emphasis is on learning skills in playful, fun ways.

Children came away from group with a better awareness about their own anxiety symptoms, a toolbox filled with ideas in how to cope more effectively with anxiety, more confidence about their own capabilities, and in many cases, a positive connection with other children.

Challenges: With the increase of funding (see successes) we are able to offer an additional group. It would be good to have ongoing funding for 13-15-year-old group and more Parenting Through Anxiety groups in order to meet the community needs around this well used program.

Successes: MCFD now funds two groups for 7-9 year olds and two for 10 – 12 year olds. Program now includes two extra sessions for parents alone. External funds through First Credit Union: we delivered an eight-week teen group for 13-15 year olds in October 2018. Two youth dropped out for personal reasons, but a core group of 5 remained. The group was cohesive and supportive of members. We have enough funds to run one more group in this age category fall of 2019.

2018-2019 Year End Stats: 2 part-time staff (3-5 hours a week during groups)
4 therapeutic groups a year: two 7-9 year olds and two 10-12 year olds

	Total	Male	Female	Self-Identified Indigenous
<i>Number of those served:</i>				
7-9 Year Olds (Oct 2018 & January 2019)	12	6	6	0
10-12 Year Olds (January 2019 & April 2019)	11	0	11	0



Family Development Program

Participants accessing these services are referred by the Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD). This program is a 'protective' family service program serving families and youth who require support, guidance, feedback and skill development to improve functioning and ensure safe and healthy living environments.

Family Development workers actively involve clients in addressing MCFD concerns and in all areas of service planning to reduce risk to children and improve family functioning and parenting capacity. The goal is to help children/youth, who may be at risk of being taken into care, to stay with their families. Family Development Program works collaboratively with MCFD social workers, other involved professionals, families, children and youth in service planning.

Progress of the work is reviewed on a regular basis and communicated to MCFD social worker as appropriate to ensure service objectives are being met. Depending on the situation, referrals to other services will be made as appropriate.

Note: The former Family Development Program Manager took a position in the Nanaimo area and a new Family Development Program Manager was hired September 2018.

Challenges: The numbers of supervised access visits requested by the court/judge is definitely difficult to fulfill, as we do not always have enough staff to cover the requests. Services for activity work (under 12) and transportation is needed, but we are unable to fill in this gap now due to high referrals for Family Development work. Housing and homeless is an issue' the lack of affordable housing for youth and some of the families we work with.

Successes:

Program Manager and one Family Development Youth Worker are members of the Comox Valley Homelessness Coalition and attend monthly meetings.

We have a Family Development Youth Worker on the MCFD Aboriginal Advisory Committee. The Family Development program is now a "Local" through the BC Federation of Youth in Care Network.

2018-2019 Year End Stats: 1 Program Manager and 9 team members; some are part time.

Total Number of Families served (under 12's cases)	127
Total Number of youth/individuals (youth focus)	114
Self identified Indigenous clients	87
Supervision/supervised Visits	78



Healthy Families Program (HFP)

This program offers free support groups for pregnant women and families who are parenting children from birth to 5 years, creating opportunities for social networking in a safe and supportive environment. Staff and community partners provide educational information, support and advocacy for families living in conditions of risk. We are committed to promoting positive birth outcomes and contributing to the healthy development of children in the early years.

Staff are all part-time and consists of 1 program manager plus 3 staff, 5 contract staff; plus 3 volunteers who assist with cooking and childminding during groups.

Weekly family centered drop-in groups are offered in various neighbourhoods of the community as families move through a continuum of services. Our pregnancy outreach program, Healthy Babies, provides support and information about pregnancy, breastfeeding and newborn baby care. One-on-one support, including home visits, is an important aspect of programming, to meet the needs of individual participants and to offer resources to address many of the unexpected challenges in the perinatal period.

Specialized programs are also available including the Nobody’s Perfect Parenting Program, Food Skills for Families cooking sessions, Farmers Market Nutrition and Coupon Program, Friendship Community Garden, Food Outreach Program, “Walk to Quit” smoking cessation program and Lions Valley View Estates evening socials. This year we were also selected to participate in the Healthy Together Program, to promote opportunities to learn about healthy eating, physical activity and community engagement.

Healthy Families Program is an active participant in the Comox Valley Early Years Collaborative and works closely with partner organizations to meet the goal of enhancing services through collaboration. Many community partners (public health nurses, early childhood educators, mental health clinicians) contribute valuable *in-kind* services to the management, coordination and/or delivery of services in the Healthy Families Program. Community members donate 1000 volunteer hours annually.

In the past year 2018- 2019 we served 43 pregnant women, 106 parents and 114 infants/children in our core programs funded by Public Health Agency of Canada.
Approximately 25-30% of participants enrolled in the Healthy Families Program are of Aboriginal (Indigenous) ancestry.

Additional families are also served in the specialized initiatives listed above, their stats follow. Challenges: United Way funding is no longer available for any programming for birth to 6 years and this deficit will impact our scope of programming in the upcoming year.

Successes: In the past year, we have seen the beneficial impact of increased outreach efforts utilizing cell phone texting and face book messaging (via our closed face book site - available to families enrolled in our program). Staff effortlessly stay in touch with at-risk participants on a daily/weekly basis (as needed) which in turn becomes instrumental in determining when an in-depth phone call or home visit would be most beneficial. In the past, we scheduled routine visits that often were not timely because visits were based on outreach worker availability; we now recognize that outreach efforts can be tailored to address situations when participants are most likely to desire support and services, to maximize outcomes.

This outreach awareness has improved staff availability to provide support when challenges arise and also reduces that number of “no-show” appointments, which so often contributes to lost outreach availability for other participants.

Healthy Families has applied for and will be receiving funding for 3 years, starting 2019 fiscal year under Valley Families: Early Years Collaborative.

2018-2019 Healthy Families: Specialized program participation

BC Association Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program (BC Assoc. Farmers Market)	100 families/seniors participated for 16 weeks (121 children <19 yrs.)
HOP With Me Summer Picnic (5 sessions)	76 adults and 108 children participated; 19 new adults & 29 new children were referred
Food Hamper Outreach Program	110 food bags delivered on average per month; 61 families registered currently
Fanny Bay Parents & Tots Play Group	41 parents and 56 children attended groups



Sexual Abuse Intervention Program (SAIP)

This is a specialized treatment program offering counselling and psycho-education for children and youth aged 3 to 19 years. A main goal is to lessen the impact of trauma and emotional distress for the referred children and their families. We also provide therapy support for children who have sexual behavior problems (up to 12 years old).

Our two SAIP counsellors (Leslie Fletcher and Danyel Knapp-Fisher) each work 21 hours per week. We provide assessment, therapy, education, and support for families where sexual abuse or inappropriate sexual behaviors have occurred. There are three (3) main service areas: 1) therapy for victims of abuse or assault 2) therapy for children (12 and under) who are sexually intrusive or display sexually inappropriate behaviours, and 3) family and community education/consultation.

Challenges: Our waitlist started to build in the fall of 2018 with 8 families awaiting service over a period of several months. The other change was staffing when Sarah left to pursue private counselling. Danyel was hired spring of 2019, and will also take on a few extra hours to address the waitlist.

Successes: We have good working relationships with MCFD social workers, school counsellors and CBVS Victim Service Worker Isabel McKinnon.

One counsellor (Leslie) will continue to be supported to use the Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics (NMT). This specialized assessment has informed treatment goals and interventions, and has allowed SAIP to offer some clients and their supports a deeper understanding of the specific impacts of early trauma on brain development.

Other: Leslie completed an 8-hour online training course through the Jack Hirose Group for working with depressed and anxious adolescents. The play therapy room has had a number of upgrades (new shelving unit, lights, and therapy tools) to enhance clients' learning and add to the comfortable welcoming space.

Year-end Stats 2018-2019: 2 counsellors at 21 hours per week

Number of children/youth	36
Indigenous	4

Additional Programming- Groups/Anxiety:

1) Y Mind (Mindfulness Anxiety Group): Sarah Hoffman and Michelle Guthrie

In August 2018 CVFSA applied for and received funding from Y Mind, the 7 week YMCA/YWCA Mindfulness program for youth 18-30 who experience anxiety. Mindfulness groups are open to young people between 18-30 years' old who are experiencing mild to moderate anxiety. There is no cost to participate and referrals are not required. The group provides a safe, supportive environment where youth can meet others who have had similar experiences and includes:

We launched the group in the fall of 2018. However, we did not end up with enough referrals to start so the program was postponed and offered again in January 2019. The challenges experienced by implementing this program were its heavy admin load at the outset, and the difficulty of engaging youth whose anxiety might serve as a barrier to attending such a group. The programming though was easy to implement with a clear curriculum and is hoped that attempts to offer this program again in Fall 2019 will garner more participants.

2) Parenting Through Anxiety: Sarah Hoffman and Michelle Guthrie

The main purpose of the group is to reduce the impact of parental anxiety on the development of childhood anxiety symptoms, and to better equip parents to support their child experiencing anxiety. This was to be achieved through enhancing parents own self-awareness and self-regulation skills, as well as giving them hands on exploration of tools and strategies.

The hope was that in providing parents with the skills to recognise and manage their own anxiety symptoms, it would enhance their emotional awareness and directly lead to an increased ability to model adaptive self-regulation. Further to this, it was hoped that as parents become better able to manage their own emotional state, their ability to access tools and strategies to support their child when anxiety showed up would be increased. To this end, based on parent feedback, it appears that Parenting through Anxiety was successful in achieving its objectives.

The first group had 12 participants and there was a waitlist of 31. This group will be run in late spring of 2019, with an additional 2 groups in 2019 - 2020 with agency funding as approved by the Board in recognizing the need.

Our Financial report is a separate document submitted at the Annual General Meeting. We have a staff and volunteer component of approximately 25.

The CVFSA Board as of March 31, 2019

1. Lisa Iverson	Board President
2. Brett Walker	Board Treasurer
3. Janet Murphy	Board Secretary
4. Karen Chrysler	Board Member
5. Georgette Whitehead	Board Member
6. Dan Alexander	Board Member
7. Tracey Lawrence	Board Member
8. Suzanne Grant	Board Member