



A quarterly publication brought to you by the Caring for First Nations Children Society

# Caring Network News



Fall 2008

## Update from CFNCS ...

*Submitted by Linda Lucas*

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It has been an exceptionally busy summer with the addition of the extra eight week session of the Aboriginal Social Worker Training Program. As well, we are planning the delivery of Out of Care Options Training and it has proven challenging to organize this regional initiative.

The Policy area also remained busy with finalizing the Operational Standards and one of the outstanding issues is the caseload size. This is due to issues around file transfers from MCFD as their average caseload is 35 per social worker. The committee continues to work on this issue. As well, the Practice Standards review will begin in the fall so we'll be looking for agency staff feedback on the standards. Stay tuned!

The Society is undergoing a variety of changes on the staffing front with the resignation of Grace Atkinson (Training Manager) and Cheryl Ward (Instructor). Both of these warrior women have contributed immensely to the development of training and enhancing the credibility of the society training programs. During her tenure with CFNCS, Grace managed the "Curriculum Revision Project" which included a rewrite and new curriculum for the eight weeks of delegation training, as well as the development of Supervisor Training. Cheryl brought a great deal of insight and knowledge into cultural competency and diversity training and her expertise and skills in this area will be missed. Cheryl was also primarily responsible for the delivery of the Cultural Awareness Training. We wish them both well in their future endeavours and they will be missed by CFNCS staff as well as our community partners.

### Announcement

**Caring For First Nations Children Society  
Annual General Meeting will be held on:**

Date: December 8, 2008

Location: Marriot Residence Inn  
1234 Hornby Street, Vancouver BC

Phone: 1 604-688-1234

Time: 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm

All seats on the society Board of Directors are up for nomination.

For membership applications, please visit  
[www.cfncs.com/about-cfncs/membership](http://www.cfncs.com/about-cfncs/membership)



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# Training Report

*Submitted by Grace Atkinson*

**ABSW:** As I prepare my final contribution to the CFNCS newsletter, I reflect on all that has transpired these past five years. We have moved from a training team of four to a training team of seven; from two sessions of delegation training to three sessions; from no supervisory training to delivery of two of the three modules per year. We have trained nearly 1000 people in CAT in this time; hundreds of agency social workers; nearly 200 Board members and nearly 100 supervisors. This is quite an accomplishment and I thank all of the people who have helped to make this possible over the years.

The winter/spring session ended June 6th and the summer session began June 16th so the instructors have been extremely busy.

Carol McFadden joined the training team in June and Melanie Scott joined the training team in August. Both are very welcomed additions and I am sorry I will not work with them for a longer period of time.

**BOARD:** The Chilliwack and Bella Bella sessions both went very well with 10 participants from two agencies in both training sessions.

**SUPERVISORY:** Module II was delivered in Mission to the Xyolhemeylh staff with 16 participants from Xyolhemeylh, Ayas Men Men and the Ministry. The two groups will now join for Module III scheduled for September 23-25, 2008 in Abbotsford.

Module III is now written and ready to go for formatting.

**ADOPTION:** The on-line program will be run in the fall with one group of adoption/guardianship workers and one group of adoptive parents who are currently caring for Aboriginal children. The interest in this program is both overwhelming and encouraging and it is hoped this will become a regular training program for adoptive parents who are interested in adopting Aboriginal children.

So I bid you all adieu as I venture down a new pathway. I am sure this pathway will not be straying too far from the current one and I look forward to our next adventure together! Take good care everyone and thank you for all of your support over these past five years. It has been a blast!

## Become a Member of CFNCS!

Corporate and Individual memberships are available and entitle the member to benefits such as:

- reduced registration fees for conferences
- quarterly newsletter
- access to the resource centre
- access to message posting

### Membership Fees

Annual Individual Membership Fee is \$20  
Annual Corporate Membership Fee is \$200  
Please make all cheques payable to:  
Caring for First Nations Children Society  
3rd Floor, 7728 Tetayut Road  
Saanichton BC, Canada V8M 2E4

To join online please go to:  
[www.cfncs.com/membership.htm](http://www.cfncs.com/membership.htm)

# Human Resource Corner

*Submitted by Lori Fitzgerald, CHRP*

This new column in the Caring Network News will attempt to respond to your Human Resource issues, and provide you with updates to legislative and legal decisions affecting HR.

My company, HRG Human Resources Group, was conceived from the idea that human resource services should be available to all organizations, regardless of size. Our specific focus is on companies who either do not have a human resource department or have limited human resource expertise on staff. Typically, a smaller organization can't justify the overhead of having a person on staff dedicated to HR so this task often falls on the corner of someone's desk who truly doesn't have the time, motivation or training to focus on it. The tasks sit on the back burner, and instead of being proactive in dealing with employee issues or programs, employers can end up being reactive in times of crisis.

The benefits of hiring a specialist include: receiving unbiased recommendations and objective perspectives on issues; freeing up manager's time so they can focus on activities for their organization; continued access to a Human Resource professional without the added expense of full-time staff or overhead; and customized, flexible, service to meet the needs of your organization.

At HRG Human Resources Group, we provide a full range of human resource services. If you would like to consult with us on an HR issue please contact me at 250-655-0474 ext. 222. Alternatively, if there something you've always wanted to know about HR, but have been afraid to ask just email us a question and we'll pick one or two questions to respond to in the winter newsletter. The deadline for your email will be November 1, 2008. All questions are handled confidentially and your name will not be published.

So this month's topic is Discipline – a topic that comes up regularly with our clients, regardless of the size of the organization, or if they are in the private, public or non-profit sector. By nature we tend to avoid this topic, however, avoidance is what causes problems for an organization.

## **Discipline: The Most Dreaded Management Task**

Do you regard discipline and punishment as one and the same? If so, that may explain your uneasiness at the thought of disciplining employees who exhibit substandard conduct or work quality – particularly those who fail despite their best efforts. At some point, unfortunately, you will probably be faced with unacceptable on-the-job behaviour or performance. Resist the urge to ignore these problems, as the long-term effects of doing so can be much more devastating than your short-term discomfort with confronting them.

The reality is that discipline – when administered properly – is not as unpleasant as you might think, and “progressive discipline” is a process for correcting problems in a positive, non-punitive way. Discipline that is administered in stages gives the employee ample opportunity to turn their performance around. It also helps maintain the morale of other staff members who may be watching the situation unfold: It is demotivating to see the poor performance or behaviour of others ignored, yet comforting to know that it is dealt with in a fair manner.

While the stages of progressive discipline may vary slightly from one company to another, the most common ones are verbal reprimand (or “warning”), written reprimand (or “warning”), unpaid suspension, and termination. It is important that, at each step along the way, the troubled employee knows exactly:

- what is expected of them;
- how their actual performance falls short of this standard;
- what effect this gap has on the operations of the department; and
- what the consequences of a failure to improve will be.

While progressive discipline is generally the most effective method of dealing with problematic workers, it must be practiced within a larger framework. To increase the likelihood of positively influencing employee performance and protecting against legal action, keep Douglas McGregor's “hot stove rule” in mind:

- Foreseeable – just as the red coils provide warning that you will be burned by touching the stove, your employees should know in advance that poor conduct or performance will result in specific, pre-determined consequences.
- Immediate – when you touch a hot stove, you know instantaneously that you have done something wrong. Similarly, an employee should be quickly told if they are failing to meet expectations.
- Impersonal – the fact that you are burned is a function of the stove, not who you are. Likewise, the discipline applied in a particular situation should reflect the offense, not the person who committed it.
- Consistent – regardless of who touches a hot stove, the result will be the same each and every time. This is also true of discipline; it should not be applied arbitrarily, nor should it differ, for the same offense, from one person to the next.

Adherence to your organization's written disciplinary policy (or, in the absence of one, the guidelines listed above) will facilitate the smooth operation of your workgroup, help employees correct problems with no “hard feelings,” and strengthen your organization's defense against lawsuits.

# The Representative's Quarterly Update



*A message from Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond,  
B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth  
August 11, 2008*

Hello all and I hope you enjoyed your summer. Since opening my office in April 2007, the RCY team has been working hard on behalf of B.C.'s vulnerable children and youth and I am pleased to have this opportunity to provide you with an update. While this is only snapshot of our work, it will give you a sense of both where we've been and where we're going.

## **The Champions for Children and Youth 2008 BC Summit**

Over the past few months, my team has been focused on the organization of our upcoming Champions for Children and Youth 2008 BC Summit, on October 20-21 at the Sheraton Wall Centre in Vancouver. The Summit will include inspirational keynote addresses from Romeo Dallaire and Stephen Lewis, as well as thought-provoking panel discussions on child rights and safety, preventative practices, mental health, education, and international success stories. There will also be a panel focused on Aboriginal perspectives, and discussions led by youth who have been or are presently living in care. We will be joined at the summit by children's commissioners from Scotland, Finland and New Zealand, Aboriginal leaders from BC and elsewhere, and Canadian and world leaders in the child serving field. The 2008 Summit will inspire us to shape a vision of the future that improves the lives of children in B.C. who are most in need of society's support and protection.

The first-ever Representative's Awards of Excellence will also be presented during the Summit. They will recognize leadership and action that improves the lives of vulnerable children and youth. It's important that those making a difference every day are honoured and that they be encouraged to continue

their good work. In doing so, we not only begin to build a better path for our young people, we take their hands and walk it with them.

To register for the Summit or to nominate an individual or an organization for one of the Representative's Awards of Excellence, please visit [www.rcybc.ca](http://www.rcybc.ca).

## **Advocacy**

Advocacy is a key focus for me because of its ability to give hope, courage and strength to children and youth dealing with abuse, addictions, poverty, or other challenges. Between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008, RCY Child and Youth Advocates opened 1,190 new cases. Each was handled in the non-partisan and independent way our legislation demands. With offices in Prince George, Burnaby and Victoria, we are able to ensure that more vulnerable children and youth in B.C. have easier access to the services and support of my office. While the workload can often be intense, my team of experienced advocates is deeply committed to ensuring the voices of our most vulnerable young citizens are heard by those making decisions about their lives.

## **Committee against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth**

In June 2008, Deputy Representative Andrew Robinson and RCY advocate Melanie Mark made a presentation to the Committee against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth in Ottawa, chaired by Romeo Dallaire. Their presentation focused on the role of community supports in the fight against the commercial sexual

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exploitation of Aboriginal children and youth in B.C. This presentation was a wonderful opportunity to bring the voices of B.C.'s sexually exploited young people to a national roundtable and we're confident it will have a positive impact on multiple levels.

## **Reviews and Investigations of Critical Injuries and Deaths**

My office is also responsible for conducting reviews and investigations on critical injuries and deaths of children in care or who were receiving reviewable services at the time of the incident, or in the year previous. As you may know, in April 2008 my office released its investigation into the deaths of four children in the North - *Amanda, Savannah, Rowen and Serena: From Loss to Learning*. This report was an independent and comprehensive investigation of the variety of services received by the children and their families, and the circumstances of their short lives and deaths. The goal of this report was to illuminate the necessary steps to help prevent such circumstances in the future. I will continue discussions with the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth and MCFD regarding the recommendations I made in this report, and I am hopeful that they will spark even wider discussions throughout the province. You may view this report, and others, at [www.rcybc.ca](http://www.rcybc.ca).

## **Monitoring, Evaluation and Research**

My office also monitors and evaluates designated child and youth services and makes recommendations to improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of these services. We have issued a number of reports in the past year on such topics as services to children and youth with special needs, government's progress on implementation of the Hughes Review recommendations and on the health and educational outcomes of children in care. I am actively assessing progress made on all recommendations made in our reports and am committed to reporting regularly on that progress.

In the coming months, I will also present reports on Youth Justice Outcomes for children and youth in care, and on the Child in Home of a Relative (CIHR) program. Also of note is an upcoming evaluation report on the Sexual Abuse Intervention Program, as well as a joint report with the Ombudsman of B.C. regarding the complaints process related to services for children and youth.



## **In closing**

Over the B.C. Day long weekend, I was very pleased that an RCY booth was part of the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) cultural village, on the traditional lands of the Cowichan Tribes. While youngsters coloured and did crafts, staff shared information with them and their caregivers and parents about what my office does, and about the child serving system here in B.C. Our presence at NAIG was a great opportunity to share information about our independent advocacy on behalf of children and their families. Just as important was the joy in the faces of the children, a reminder of why we must continue to work every day to ensure they have the lives they deserve.

I thank you all for your individual dedication and commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable children and youth in B.C. I have been invited to provide an update for your newsletter on a regular basis and I look forward to sharing some of my office's successes and challenges with you, while exploring ways we can all lend a hopeful and helping hand to those who need it most.

Thank you.

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond  
B.C.'s Representative  
for Children and Youth

# The Money Corner

*Submitted by Frances O'Donovan, CGA*

The audit is over, and the current fiscal year is approaching the half-way mark. It's time to perform your half-yearly comparison of actual expenditures to budgeted expenditures. But how useful is this comparison? It is only as valuable as the accuracy of the budget itself. In a perfect world, the annual budget is given material time and attention, and is prepared at least three months before the commencement of the fiscal year in question. In reality, budget preparation all too often is relegated the status of an "off the corner of your desk" task that in turn frequently produces a titular rather than functional, useless rather than useful, product or tool.

I think of budgets as "unsung heroes". A budget is the financial expression of one or more projects or programs, conducted under the direction and control of an agency. If sufficient attention is given to the various factors that inform the budget values, the budget can be one of the most important tools in your business "tool-bag".

When preparing a budget, the impulse to focus on incremental considerations only is strong. By this I mean that there is an implicit acceptance that what was spent last year is a given, and the preparer need only identify and justify costs that are in addition to the prior year's budget. However, given the sometimes capricious nature of government funding, focusing on incremental costs could prove disastrous to the stability of the entity as a whole.

A viable alternative to the incremental approach to budgeting is Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB). ZBB is a method of budgeting which requires you to justify all planned expenditures for each new business year.

For example, if your agency used ZBB, each department would have to justify its funding every year. That is, funding would have a base at zero. A department would have to show why its funding efficiently helps the agency toward its goals.

## Unique characteristics

- Requires you to justify and prioritize all activities before allocating any resources.
- All your program forecasts should start from a zero base by justifying all expense requests in complete detail. The zero base is indifferent to whether the total forecast is increasing or decreasing.
- Requires you to group all relevant activities into decision packages. You justify each in terms of the agency's overall program objectives.

- Requires you to rank packages in order of priority.
- Zero-Base Budgeting is a technique that helps to enhance good planning and decision-making for your agency. In other words, it reverses the working process of the traditional forecasting methods you may have been accustomed to.
- In the traditional incremental approach, a manager/director needs to only justify increases over the previous year's projections. This means, what has been already spent is automatically sanctioned. In the case of ZBB, you do not make reference to the previous levels of expenditure. You must review every program function comprehensively and all associated expenditures rather than approving only increases.

The term "Zero-Based Budgeting" is sometimes used in personal finance to describe the practice of planning for every dollar of income that you receive, and then adjusting some part of your plan downward for every other part that you may need to adjust upward.

## Advantages

1. Results in efficient allocation of resources as it is based on needs and benefits.
2. Drives managers/directors to find cost effective ways to improve operations.
3. Helps detect inflated forecasts.
4. Useful for service delivery entities where the output is difficult to identify.
5. Increases staff motivation by providing greater initiative and responsibility in decision-making.
6. Increases communication and coordination within the agency.
7. Identifies and eliminates wastage and obsolete operations.
8. Identifies opportunities for outsourcing.
9. Can encourage managers/directors to look more critically at the way in which services are provided.
10. Forces cost centres to identify their mission and their relationship to overall goals.

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# Policy Update

*Submitted by Shawn Hoey*

Despite the hopes and desires of many to relax and enjoy the summer, it was an eventful period for most of us.

We are grateful to have Candace McKivett join the Society as the new office assistant. Candace brings a varied background including stints with the provincial government, but is happy to return to the kinder, gentler world of non-profits. We have already put her experience and fantastic organizational skills to use in organizing our resources, planning for meetings and keeping my calendar up to date.

On the work front, the second Indigenous Child at the Centre Forum took place July 21-23rd. A statement of commitment titled "One Heart, One Mind" was endorsed by the Chiefs remaining at the end of the three-day forum. In addition, they have struck a committee to develop the Chief's Action Plan and are still looking for representation from Vancouver Island. It is hoped there will be someone on the committee with a background in First Nations delegated

child and family service delivery, as there is presently a void in that area amongst the committee representatives. More information can be found at [www.fns.bc.ca/pdf/LCInfoBulletin3\\_5July08.pdf](http://www.fns.bc.ca/pdf/LCInfoBulletin3_5July08.pdf) or at [www.ubcic.bc.ca/](http://www.ubcic.bc.ca/).

The Operational Standards continue to be a work in progress. Another teleconference and a few more tweaks should result in the document being ready for Assistant Deputy Minister Deb Foxcroft's signature.

The Practice Standards revisions should commence this Fall with the hope that we can proceed differently. Rather than shaping the standards based on a novel approach to the existing MCFD standards, we hope to create innovative standards shaped by an Indigenous world view. The goal is always to raise the bar and protect and promote the well being of First Nations children and families by respecting and reaffirming traditional values and beliefs, encouraging innovative and quality child and family service delivery

and empowering the voices of First Nations peoples.

Continued optimism surrounds the Preventative Service Roll Out. A presentation by INAC at the last Steering Committee meeting created a feeling of legitimacy that this will be new money for all agencies regardless of size. The costing out exercise is complete and the agencies are anxiously waiting to see what the numbers will actually look like. External processes such as the recent Canadian Human Rights Commission accepting jurisdiction for the complaint filed by the Assembly of First Nations and the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada respecting the under-funding of First Nations child welfare on reserve further bolsters the BC agencies' Directors bargaining position in this process.

We all look forward to the exciting and innovative changes for First Nations child and family service delivery that are taking place on a number of different fronts.

## The Money Corner

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### Disadvantages

1. Difficult to define decision packages, as it is very time-consuming and exhaustive.
2. Forces you to justify every detail related to expenditure. As a result, activities like research and policy analysis are threatened whereas activities like production benefit.
3. Necessitates training of managers/directors. Zero based budgeting should be clearly understood by managers/directors at various levels otherwise it cannot be successfully implemented.
4. In a large entity, the volume of forms may be so large that no one person could read it all. Compressing the information down to a usable size might remove critically important details.
5. Honesty of the managers/directors must be reliable and uniform. Any manager/director who is prone to exaggeration might skew the budget results.

I hope you found a nugget or two of useful information in this article. Next issue I will explore nuances of budget line item valuation factors.

# Upcoming Conferences

## **Developmental Disability, Health and Well-Being Conference**

“Health and Well-Being in Persons with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities” takes place September 25-26 with a pre-conference workshop September 24 at the Coast Plaza Hotel in Vancouver.

Sponsored by Interprofessional Continuing Education at UBC and Community Living BC, this conference is focused on education to recognize the interrelatedness of physical and mental health.

When: September 25 – 26, 2008  
Where: Vancouver, BC  
Find out more at [www.interprofessional.ubc.ca](http://www.interprofessional.ubc.ca)

## **Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges Youth Health Conference**

The B4 conference is a skill-building and leadership conference for youth 15 years of age and older organized “for-youth, by-youth” by the McCreary Centre Society’s Youth Advisory Council (YAC). The B4 is an opportunity for youth to enhance their leadership skills and learn about issues important to them and their peers. Workshops will be offered on topics such as healthy relationships, community development and the environment. In addition to workshops there will be lots of time for youth to meet new people, participate in social activities including a dance, network, and express themselves creatively and artistically.

When: October 3 – 5, 2008  
Where: Evans Lake in Squamish, BC

If you would like to attend, please contact Stephanie Martin at [Stephanie@mcs.bc.ca](mailto:Stephanie@mcs.bc.ca) for a registration package or call at 604-291-1996 ext. 222

## **2nd Annual Creating Hope for the Future Gathering Theme “Remembering, Honoring our Past”**

We are calling out for presenters for the 2nd Creating Hope for the Future Gathering based on the 50’s, 60’s and 70’s child welfare scoop. The theme is “Remembering, Honoring our Past”:

- Gaps in Relationship
- Impact of Intergenerational effects of Adult Children of child welfare and the next generation...
- Overcoming Sexual Abuse
- Resiliency and Strength
- Adoption Breakdown
- The Child Welfare Syndrome – effects of child welfare
- Self Care and follow-up

When: October 15 – 18, 2008  
Where: Sawridge Inn Conference Centre  
Slave Lake, Alberta  
[www.creatinghopesociety.ca](http://www.creatinghopesociety.ca)

## **Transforming Services for Children and Youth: Turning Our Thinking Inside Out**

This symposium promises to be highly interactive and energetic, providing a unique opportunity to listen, share and learn from internationally renowned child and youth health champions. Presented by the Canadian Association of Paediatric Health Centres.

When: October 19 – 22, 2008  
Where: Edmonton, AB  
Information available: <http://caphc.org/annual.html>

## **Champions for Children and Youth: the 2008 BC Summit**

Conference will examine collective responsibilities as adults, parents, guardians, communities and government and look closely at practical ways we can move towards a future focused on the safe and healthy development of BC’s children and youth.

Presented by BC’s Representative for Children and Youth

When: October 20 – 21, 2008  
Where: Vancouver, BC  
Information available: [www.pacegroup.com/conf/index.php?mID=51](http://www.pacegroup.com/conf/index.php?mID=51)

## **International Conference on Child Abuse “Child Sexual Abuse Symposium: Advances in Specialized Intervention”**

This international conference, presented by the Mary Manning Centre and Pacific Centre Family Services Association, offers treatment and assessment workshops to professionals working with victims and offenders in the fields of child sexual abuse assessment, investigation and treatment. Presenters include Representative for Children and Youth Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, and Dr. Toni Cavanaugh Johnson discussing what we have learned in the last 23 years about children with sexual behaviour problems.

When: November 19 – 20, 2008  
Where: Victoria, BC

Visit [www.csasymposium08.ca](http://www.csasymposium08.ca) for more information.