

Update on Practice Standards Redesign initiative

As reported in the Fall Newsletter, the Practice Standards redesign initiative continues to unfold with positive response from around the province. In the Lower Mainland Ayas Men Men Child & Family Services, Xyolhemeylh Child & Family Services, and Vancouver Aboriginal Child & Family Services Society came together to host an information exchange session on November 18th, 2009, which was held on Squamish territory at the Chief Joseph Mathias Centre. Seventy people attended the event, which began with an opening prayer, followed by lunch. Then we broke into small groups to talk about traditions related to caring for children and supporting families and the principles and values underlying these practices. Identification of key themes based on notes from the event has just been completed and will be sent back to the communities that participated in the event.

One week later, on November 25th, Ktunaxa-Kinbasket Family and Child Services hosted two focus groups, one for Elders and community leaders and one for agency staff, where similar discussion was held. About 30 people took part overall. Another two community focus groups are scheduled for the Interior for May – one in Kamloops on May 12th and another in Williams Lake on May 13th.

More recently the Métis community met in Surrey on February 8th to discuss practices, values and beliefs that are important in caring for children and families.

On Vancouver Island, the Delegated agencies' Directors have decided to hold a large gathering on March 4th, which will be hosted by Cowichan Tribes with invitations extended by representatives of the six delegated agencies on Vancouver Island. Approximately 125 people are expected to attend. Discussions for a process for the North are still underway. In the meantime a member from the Project Lead team will be attending the Touchstone event in Prince George to see how that process and AOPSI can inform each other. As well, we have been talking with a community member in Burns Lake about possibly holding a focus group there. Another one is tentatively planned for Ft. St. James, with other communities to follow.

Thank you to everyone who has participated in planning and discussions and who continues to stay involved throughout the process.