



# Northern Rockies Child Development Association

(Formally the Fort Nelson Family  
Development Association)

# IMPACT REPORT

Highlights of 2022-2023

**AGENDA November 19, 2023**

| Agenda Item   | Presenter                             |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Welcome</b>  | Monicque Jacobs<br>Board President    |
| <b>Land Acknowledgement</b>   | Monicque Jacobs<br>Board President    |
| <b>Call to Order (Confirm quorum)</b>   | Monicque Jacobs<br>Board President    |
| <b>Review and Passing of Agenda</b>   | Monicque Jacobs<br>Board President    |
| <b>Review and passing of Minutes from previous AGM - November 20, 2022</b>  | Monicque Jacobs<br>Board President    |
| <b>Board President's Report</b>   | Monicque Jacobs<br>Board President    |
| <b>Executive Director's Report on Operations and Impacts</b>  | Cindy Southwick<br>Executive Director |
| <b>Finance</b><br>-Approval of 2022/2023 financial statements<br>-Appointment of the Accounting Firm for the 2023/2024 financials | Monicque Jacobs<br>Board President    |
| <b>Adoption of Membership Dues</b>  | Monicque Jacobs<br>Board President    |
| <b>Board Nominations</b><br>-Presentation of the slate of nominations -Election of Directors                                      | Cindy Southwick<br>Executive Director |
| <b>Question &amp; Discussions</b>   | All                                   |
| <b>Closing Remarks &amp; Motion to Adjournment</b>  | Monicque Jacobs<br>Board President    |

Board Nomination List for 2023-2024

|                         |  |          |  |
|-------------------------|--|----------|--|
| President               |  | Director |  |
| Secretary/<br>Treasurer |  | Director |  |





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| <p><b>Adoption of Special resolutions:</b><br/> <b>Special Resolution #1: for an updated Constitution</b></p> <p><b>Special Resolution #2: for an update to the FNFDS By Laws</b></p> | <p>Motioned: L.Lopez , Second:K.Xu.<br/> Third: A. Neville, Passed</p> <p>Motioned: L.Lopez , Second:K.Xu.<br/> Third: A. Neville, Passed</p>  |
| <p><b>Adoption of Membership Dues</b></p>   | <p>To encourage an increase in memberships under the new FNFDS Bylaws the membership dues have been waived for the 2022/2023 year.</p> <p>Motioned: K. Xu , Second: L. Lopez.<br/> Third: A. Neville, Passed</p>   |
| <p><b>Board Nominations</b><br/> <b>-Presentation of the slate of nominations - Election of Directors</b></p>   | <p>Presented by C. Southwick: Executive Director</p> <p>Due to only K.Xu and M. Jacobs in attendance a vote for Board Roles will be deferred until November 29, 2022 when an email vote of all voting members can be completed.</p> <p>( RESULTS ATTACHED)</p> |
| <p><b>Closing Remarks &amp; Motion to Adjournment</b></p>   | <p>1:59pm<br/> M. Jacobs</p>   |

Board Nomination List for 2022/2023

|                         |                 |          |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|
| President               | Monicque Jacobs | Director | Antonia Neville |
| Secretary/<br>Treasurer | Kevin Xu        | Director | Joan Kinzett    |

## **MISSION**

Through family partnerships and community collaboration, we provide inclusive, innovative services and supports to create environments that enable children and their families to achieve optimal potential.

## **VISION**

1. To build, educate and create an inclusive community through collaboration, inclusive childcare services, early education and individual support programs.
2. To identify children and families that require support.
3. Empower families through information and education to meet their children's immediate, transitional and long-term goals.
4. We take a family centred approach to supporting individuals and the development of their services.

## **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We would like to gratefully recognize and acknowledge that we live, work, learn and play on the Traditional Territory of Fort Nelson First Nation, Prophet River First Nation, Kaska Dena Council and Dene-thah people whom are part of the Treaty Eight First Nation.

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

I am thrilled to present the first, Annual Accreditation Impact Report for the Northern Rockies Child Development Association, formally known as the Fort Nelson Family Development Association.

We have had another exciting year at the Child Development Association. In 2022-2023, we continued to build on our reputation as a center of quality through innovation and developing partnerships. We know that when we work together as a community with our funders, our clients, their families, our stakeholders and our community we can achieve great things.

The Northern Rockies Child Development Association believes in an inclusive, family led, family focused community where everyone thrives. We believe that every child and family deserves the opportunity to reach their full potential. Through our services and supports, we strive to break down barriers, promote diversity and inclusion and ensure equal access to quality care and support.

Over this year, the Northern Rockies Child Development Association has increased our advocacy for increased hours and increased services for individuals waiting on assessments, diagnosed with support needs, and mental health challenges. The ever-growing list of children waiting on developmental and autism assessments in our community is long as is the growing number of children requiring mental health supports. The number of children with support needs is bringing increased requests from community organizations, daycares, preschools, schools and the recreation centre for extra in person supports for program attendees, extra school age programming, mentorship, and training for staff to become more inclusive for all children. In July 2022, an increase was provided by MCFD to our Supported Child Development Contract allowing our Navigator to input more community supports for in person services and increase community engagement to begin to meet the requests coming in from the community. Advocacy is an ongoing project in our organization with a hope to bring increased supports and services in the coming years.

In June 2022, the Northern Rockies Child Development Association completed our first CARF Accreditation Survey, receiving a three year Accreditation Standing. This is an international standard in quality and service provision. The CARF Accreditation Survey Team evaluated our programs, services, organizational practices, community engagement and ensured we met or exceeded international benchmarks for quality and efficiency. This was a huge achievement for our Association and demonstrated many years of hard work and dedication to the children and families in our community.



Lastly, I would like to send my deepest appreciation to our Board of Directors and all of our amazing and supportive team of employees. The stories from families that have been supported by the Northern Rockies Child Development Association are inspiring and demonstrate the importance of the work we do and the need to continue our mission to help children and families to reach their full potential in life.

Cindy Southwick  
Executive Director





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Monicque Jacobs Board President  
Kevin Xu Secretary/Treasurer

Antonia Sheppard Director  
Joan Kinzett Director

I would like to thank our Board of Director for their amazing dedication to the community and our organization.



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Parents, Guardians and Community Partners,

It is my pleasure to write this annual letter and provide an update on our Northern Rockies Child Development Association and Childcare services. We have had a wonderful year filled with learning, growth, and development, and we are proud of all that our children have achieved.

As the President of our Association, I am grateful for the hard work and dedication of our staff who work tirelessly to provide the best possible care, services, and education to our children. They are committed to creating an inclusive, nurturing and stimulating environment that promotes growth, learning, and development. Our programs are designed to be age-appropriate, engaging, and fun, while also challenging our children to reach their full potential.

I am especially grateful and proud of the achievements our Association has accomplished this year following the challenges of the past few years. Thanks to our team's commitment to quality improvement, with a focus on the unique needs of each person we serve, I am pleased to announce that we have achieved CARF accreditation for our Association. In addition, our team has focused on further deepening and expanding our relationships and partnerships to provide the best possible services and programming for our community as we look towards the future.

We believe that understanding community needs, collaborating and communication are essential to providing the best possible supports and programming for all our children and families in the community. We encourage our parents, family members and community members to connect with us to see how we can work together in meeting those needs. We are always available to discuss any concerns or questions you may have.

In addition to our Child Development Centre, we also offer a childcare program that provides an inclusive, safe and stimulating environment for your child while you are at work. Our team of staff work closely with parents to ensure that your child's needs are met and they receive the highest quality care.

As we look to the future, we are committed to continuing to provide the best possible care and services for our children and families. We will continue to invest in our staff, our programming, and our facilities to ensure that our children have the best possible development environment. We are grateful for your trust and support, and we look forward to working together to support all our children in reaching their full potential.

Sincerely,

Monicque Jacobs  
Board President

# HUMAN RESOURCES

This year has continued to present challenges and uncertainty to our workforce at the Northern Rockies Child Development Association. Staff have worked hard to create caring, supportive programs that show their dedication for helping children and families in our community. Our staff have worked hard to create a supportive team that has been committed to find their way down the often-difficult path that the Global Pandemic and hiring challenges have created. Our amazing teams of staff have shown their incredible resilience and adaptability to engage, train and support our community.

Hiring qualified staff was extremely challenging for our organization this year. A number of job ads were run for key positions with very little external applicants. Internal staffing was used to fill client services when possible and a number of our community support workers moved internally to program manager positions, at time creating challenges to continue to provide individual community support services

Over the past year, the NRCDA Staff have participated in a wide variety of education sessions developing their skill sets to better serve this community and meet CARF Standards. Most of our support team, childcare and Navigators have participated in the Stuart Shanker Self-Regulation Training offered online and have implemented it into all of our programs and services. Our Family Navigator has taken the Self-Regulation Facilitator’s Certificate to bring into our community training.

Recruitment and retention funding allowed our organization to provide more specific training for staff to better meet the needs of their clientele.

I would like to thank our staff for their amazing dedication to the community, the goals and mission of our organization.

|                               |                         |                            |                             |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 22 Years<br>Deborah Humphries | 21 Years<br>Graham Lees | 20 Years<br>Sharon Gregory | 11 Years<br>Cindy Southwick |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|

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|---|--|---|--|
| 5-10 Years<br>Tina Gregory<br><br>Victoria Clark<br>Tabatha Jacobs<br>Jade Whittaker<br>Heather Sawin<br>Joline Kitchen | 2-3 Years<br>Carol Vincent<br><br>Ilona Fee<br>Primrose Kurenyi<br>Kayla Morey<br>Sherice Samuel | ➤ 1 Year<br>Wayne Kushamba<br>Rebecca Podaima-Morin<br>Michelle deBerzsenyi<br>Tracey Muise<br>Michelle Lundrigan<br>Karen McLeod<br>Stacey Haayer<br>Andrea Senk | Saber Hansen<br>Jenna Bauer<br>Liam Callan<br>Aillen Odavar<br>Tricia Odavar<br>Roy Tavuyanago |
|---|--|---|--|

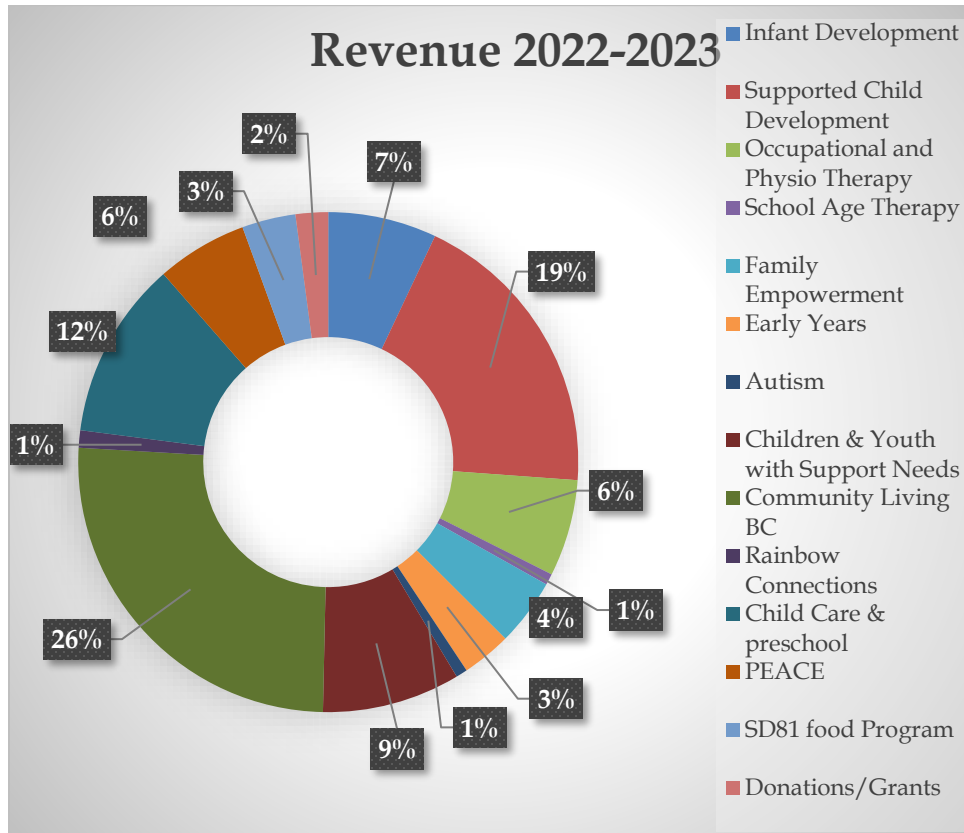
# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

The Northern Rockies Child Development Association continues to operate within a well-managed financial environment thanks to a combination of funders that includes the Provincial Government, Parent fees, several corporate donors, and a host of community supporters. We are fortunate to have a skilled Finance Manager that works in partnership with our Executive Director and reports to the volunteer Board of Directors regularly.

This year, ended March 31, 2023, with an excess of revenues over expenses. The opening and expanding of our new Kidz Klubs and Preschool contributed to the excess revenue. Although we experienced another year without any fundraising events due to the ongoing global pandemic, we were able to offer our annual Christmas toy drive and food baskets. We received several generous donations to support our organization in rolling out those two drives.

During another year filled with uncertainty, we are grateful for our Government funders, families, corporate donors and community contributors, who continued to support our growing organization.

– Thank you!



# INFANT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (IDP)

The Infant Development Program provides support to infants and toddlers 0-5 years of age and their caregivers who are at risk of a developmental delay or have a diagnosis and are in need of support.

During the 2022-2023 year, the IDP Consultants continued to provide flexible, client and family led support with a focus on services being offered in-person, in a group setting, by phone and virtually. The ability to offer phone and virtual services resulted in minimum gaps in service when clients or staff were sick and unable to attend in person.

With the global pandemic still a fear for many families with young, vulnerable children, we experienced very low attendance at the beginning of the fiscal year, through the summer and fall. By winter 2023, the numbers of attendees in our groups increased and new group programming was introduced to the community.

## Highlights of the Year

- 135 families received supports from the IDP program this year. 56% of them were new referrals and group attendees for this year.
- 26 families and infants attended individual services and 109 attended group programs.
- 38% of hours provided were direct services, 34% was group programming and 28% was indirect services.
- This program had a staffing shortage for 6 months. With the support of other NRCDA Coordinators, services and supports were provided until a permanent IDP Consultant could be hired.
- Over the past fiscal year, the Association has identified an increase in family engagement in accessing in-person services and attendance at community playgroups.
- The IDP Consultant has worked in partnership with the Early Intervention Therapists to provide supports to families who attend EIT services with the Occupational and Physio Therapist Team who travel to the community
- Partnerships have been made between the IDP Consultant and local preschools to provide mentorship and supports for clients, families and staff while attending the preschools.
- Staff took training for 'Parent Child Mother Goose' Training and in partnership with the Early Years Navigator; a Parent Child Mother Goose Playgroup was started.
- The IDP Consultant also has been taking training in Newborn Mental Health
- Playgroups were provided in a variety of locations throughout the community: Library, Literacy Association, NRCDA office.
- The Infant Development Consultant provides mentorship in the Chalo Preschool and Northern Rockies Preschool supporting the groups with culturally sensitive materials and inclusive practices

# SUPPORTED CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (SCD)

The Supported Child Development Program provides a wide variety of support to children who are 0 to 19 years of age, attending community preschools, childcare, out of school care and community programs. Additional supports are provided to these groups to create inclusive, family friendly environments.

## Highlights of the Year

- 139 families received supports from the SCD program this year. 59% of them were new referrals and group attendees for this year.
- 13% of the hours provided under SCD were for individual services and 75% were provided group services for 2 or more children in one setting.
- 31% of families receiving supports under SCD identify as Indigenous.
- 562 hours were provided by the Family Navigator for linkage and brokerage in the community.
- An additional 177.5 hours of one time only funding remaining from the previous year, was utilized to support an additional 34 children in the first part of the fiscal year.
- Through early fall our program had a larger presence in many community locations.
  - In person, supports were provided to children in the Chalo Preschool, Northern Rockies Preschool, GW Carlson Kidz Klub, JS Clark Kidz Klub and NRCDA.
  - Social groups were created and provided at Chalo School, GW Carlson School and JS Clark School.
  - A speech and language development program was created.
- The SCD Consultant supports the community by providing supports in building an inclusive community
- The SCD program provides training to recreation staff in inclusivity, self-regulation and supports for youth attending their programs.
- The SCD Consultant provides supports and mentorship to local organizations to better meet the needs of children and families with supports in the community
- Families completing assessments are supported in consultation with transitions to the CYSN program
- Social skill groups were provided at Chalo School, Fort Nelson First Nation outside of class time. These social groups were to support school age children in building social skills in-group settings. These groups were provided through a grant secured by NRCDA and one time only funding provided by MCFD. SCD Supports were put in place to support youth in attending.
- Increasing numbers of families seeking supports in accessing an Autism or Complex Developmental Assessment is growing. Many families on our waitlists are waiting on assessments and are seeking SCD Consultant supports for the families.
- NRCDA has 14 additional children on our waitlist waiting on assessments.



## Barriers for Families

- The cost of travel to accommodate services at Fort Nelson First Nation is increasing and beginning to affect the contracts. A plan to car pool has been in place this year to balance the increasing costs.
- - Staffing: We face the challenge of low wages (based on the CSSEA grid) compared to the local School District whose wages for an educational assistant are substantially higher and Personal Assistant are extensively higher than that paid by our contracts. We often secure support staff, educate, and train them for a year and then they apply to and are hired at the school district. A difference of approximately 60% more is paid to school district staff working as personal assistants compared to our staff working as community supports. (CSSEA \$23.10 compared to \$38 SD81) and yet the role and expectations is very similar.
- Increasing numbers of families seeking supports in accessing an Autism or Complex Developmental Assessment is growing. Many families on our waitlists are waiting on assessments and are seeking SCD Consultant supports for the families. With these children waiting on assessments, the referrals for CYSN are expected to increase by an additional 5 to 7 in the coming year.



# EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES (OT/PT)

## Occupational Therapist

The Occupational Therapist works with families to build a plan to help their children do their best in all their day-to-day activities. The therapist provides support in the following areas:

- Fine Motor Skills; holding toys, building toys, holding crayons, cutting and drawing
- Feeding and Swallowing skills
- Daily Living; dressing, grooming and toileting
- Cognitive and Perceptual skills; design copying, matching, sequencing, color and number concepts, space and position concepts, memory.
- Sensory-Motor skills; body image, body concept, motor planning, bilateral integration, laterality, tactile sensitivity, sensations of movement.
- Play skills; age appropriate toys, social interaction, and functional play.
- Equipment and environment; splinting, mobility equipment, assisting devices and technology, home modifications, accessibility.
- Posture Control - positioning and posture control to increase function Splinting - fabricate splints for neurological or orthopedic concerns
- The Occupational Therapist provided 86.75 hours of direct service and 135.05 hours of indirect services. 79.5% of the indirect services were travel time.
- Received 27 new referrals this year.
- 25% of individuals served identified as Indigenous.

## Physiotherapist

The Physiotherapist works with families and their team to help children develop their development of movement skills. The therapist works in the following areas:

- Muscle strength, balance, and tone
- Range of motion of joints
- Quality of movement
- Exercise tolerance
- Motor and reflex development
- Functional abilities
- Pain (type, location, extent)
- Specialized equipment for movement or play positions (wheelchairs, walkers and seating devices)

## Highlights of the Year

- The occupational and physiotherapist team traveled to our community eight times this year.
- January the therapist did not come to the community, December's visit was cancelled due to no interest by families and they they do not provide supports through the summer months of July or August.

- When they are not in the community, the Team is available to have zoom appointments for client requests.
- Due to decreased visits in the year, the Therapists added in additional visits in November and February with a focus of children 4 to 5 years of age, supporting them in preschools and kindergarten.
- The therapists received special referrals for kindergarten children who needed some extra supports with OT/PT information and strategies to support their kindergarten skill building.
- The therapist refer families out to the seating clinics in Fort St John and Dawson Creek. The support the families providing information on the equipment and needs of the children and have zoom meetings with the individuals working with the families at these clinics.
- Therapists have joined playgroups in the community to answer questions and demonstrate techniques for tummy time (for example), and demonstrate ways in play to support development in areas such as gross and fine motor.
- The therapists have connected with services that families have in common with them such as Speech and Language services and other community and provincial services as requested.
- The therapists have invited privately funded home support workers to the children's appointments to have better support the children and families in well-rounded support services.
- The Team worked with families, community support workers, private home care workers, the recreation centre staff and school staff to best support the children in building an inclusive community
- Families were offered home visits to provide support in building skills and supports in the home
- Parents are provided with zoom appointments as needed in between therapy trips to the community

*Every child has an inner timetable for growth – a pattern unique to them. Growth is not a steady, forward, upward progression. It is instead a switchback trail, three steps forward, two back, one around the bushes, and a few moments just simple standing, before another forward leap.*

- Dorothy Corkville Briggs

# SCHOOL AGE THERAPY (OT/PT)

The School Age Therapy Program (SAT) serves school aged children, ages 5 to 19 years of age. The traveling Pediatric Occupational and Physio Therapist Team travels to the community for two School Age Therapy visits with supports provided directly to the local schools and funded under School District 81. The schedule and referrals are provided by the School District. Throughout the year, the traveling therapy team provides supports to any school age children referred directly to the program.

The Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists provide assessment, consultation, and program recommendations to parents and teachers of students, or direct intervention for students who have or are at risk for, or have an identified developmental delay or disability. It is the goal of therapists to work with school personnel, community supports and parents to enable the student to achieve their maximum potential and independence in all areas of life. Therapists work with families, teachers, teaching assistants, community support workers and other health care professionals to provide a student-centered, team approach.

## Highlights of the Year

- Nine new school age referrals directly through the NRCD office were provided.
- 18 school age youth were seen through SD81 referrals
- The Therapy team works with the Sunny Hill Traveling Seating Clinic in Dawson Creek to ensure all Fort Nelson clients receive any help and supports they may need for new equipment
- The Therapy team worked with PG Surge Med to ensure equipment was properly sized for clients
- December visits have been cancelled and an additional day has been provided in November with a primary focus on EIT and kindergarten children
- An additional day is scheduled for SD81 in February for School visits with a focus on Kindergarten children.
- Appointments for children Grade 1 to 12 are held through SD81 in October and February with an option for Microsoft Team appointments in December and January
- Support from the Therapy was provided guidance to families and personal support workers hired by families

# FAMILY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

(Home Support)

Family Empowerment Program provides parents and guardians with individual services, education and information on issues such as parenting, child development, family dynamics, family relationships and advocacy. The program strives to provide families with increased knowledge, skills and enhanced relationships. Service is provided through one to one consultation with parents and group education.

In addition, supervised visits may be provided with referrals from the Ministry of Children and Family Development only.

## Highlights of the Year

- 13 individuals received support under this program this year. 27% of them identified as Indigenous.
- 61% of services provided were direct service. Many families still limited or turned down home visits due to increased illness in the community and continuing pandemic restrictions. One family requested phone meetings.
- No group programs were provided this year due to Covid 19 restrictions remaining in place in many areas of the community.
- The coordinator position was empty for 6 months. A term position was filled and minimal services were provided.
- During year – accompanying families to meetings has often meant phone conferences and or zoom/skype meetings. The latter is dependent on the ability of the family to afford a data package or attend meetings in the FEP office with the coordinator using an office computer
- Connections were made with NENAN from Fort St John as they had staff in place to support the family
- Research and reading of other resources focusing on preteen and adolescence was done, as the teen years are a struggle for the majority of families referred.

## Goals for next year

- As of March 31, 2023, the caseload had five active families wanting to continue services with the new coordinator. The remaining families were discharged.
- After a caseload review with the new Team Lead at the local MCFD office, it was determined that only two clients on the caseload had active files with MCFD.
- To continue to provide a 70% direct service level an increase in referrals or community engagement will be needed to rebuild the program and MCFD would look at increasing their referrals to the program.
- Community engagement will continue with MCFD and a reach out will be done with local doctors, public health and community to share the openings in the program.

# CHILDREN & YOUTH WITH SUPPORT NEEDS (CYSN)

The Child and Youth with Support Needs program provides support to children and youth with support needs and their families. The program receives referrals from MCFD's Child and Youth with Support Needs Social Workers located in Fort St John, B.C.

## Highlights of the year

- 14 youth were referred for support services. An average of 9 youth a month received supports in individual or group settings.
- 32 % of individuals supported identified as Indigenous
- 63% of services provided were one on one and 7% were group services.
- The CYSN Coordinator provided supports to 15 families.
- 99% of the services provided by the Coordinator were direct one on one.
- With limited community locations to build social skills, the primary requested goal set by parents; the NRCDA has gotten creative and created numerous social groups at the schools at lunchtime, after school and at the local recreation centre.
- Still facing pandemic restrictions through the spring left families uncertain about the health and safety of their children when receiving services out in the community.
- The recruitment and retention funds helped support our Association in offering training specific to many diagnoses we see at our Association and support staff who were requesting specific training to work with children with support needs.
- NRCDA staff have worked hard to be creative with youth services under CYSN. Our role is to discover each family's uniqueness and work in partnership to develop support systems, resources, and optimal outcomes.
- Three children have received their autism assessments in the past year and been referred to the CYSN contract.
- A forecast of 6 more children scheduled for assessments for the coming year will have a huge impact on the MCFD funded hours available for NRCDA to provide in the community. Advocacy has been done with MCFD to identify this growing need in our community and a need for an increase in funding to better meet the needs in our community.
- NRCDA has 14 additional children on our waitlist waiting on assessments.
- The community has many more that we are not associated with.

## Challenges

- The seating clinics being available in Fort St John and Dawson Creek are very helpful but the families who are in need of mobility or medical equipment are challenged with the primary supplier of equipment to our community.
- The primary supplier is refusing to visit our community stating they do not have enough clients to make it feasible, thus creating an issue for our families having to travel out



numerous times throughout the year to have adjustments and sizing completed as well as to pick up and bring their new equipment back to our community.

- This issue has created a number of children/youth in our community, not receiving new, much needed equipment due to the cost and time away from work to make these numerous trips back and forth on our highway, often in undependable weather conditions.
- Four CYSN clients were attempting to receive equipment and adjustments in the past year.
- Recruiting qualified staff with education or experience from a very small pool of workers in the community is a challenge.
- We face the challenge of low wages (based on the CSSEA grid) compared to the local School District whose wages for a Personal Assistant are extensively higher than that paid by our contracts.
- We often secure support staff, educate, and train them for a year and then they apply to and are hired at the school district. A difference of approximately 60% more is paid to school district staff working as personal assistants compared to our staff working as community supports and yet the role and expectations is very similar.
- Recruitment and retention funds have supported our organization in training staff with autism training, self-regulation and trauma training this year. This has allowed staff with education to better support their clients.
- Staff turnover is a challenge in building capacity with the family. Our team of Coordinators and Navigators is stable but keeping our support team is a challenge.
- Due to the growing number of children/youth with extensive support needs in our community, the Northern Rockies Child Development Association is challenged with finding and securing trained, experienced staff to meet the needs of each youth on our contracted list.
- With lack of activities in our community that support youth with support needs, our staff have been challenged with seeking funding and designing activities that meet the needs of the youth, we support rock climbing, social groups, swimming, etc.



# PEACE

PEACE (Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment) programs (formerly Children Who Witness Abuse programs) provide group and individual counselling for children ages 3 – 18 who have witnessed abuse, threats or violence in the home.

## Highlights of the Year

- The PEACE Child Advocate left their role in November. This role was hard to fill and took approximately 40 days to fill.
- An average of 5 youth a week received individual support services with a Child Advocate. This number increased to nine individuals a week in January.
- 14 new referrals were received over the year and 12 youth were on a waitlist.
- The waitlist was reviewed in January and it was discovered that many families were on the list or over a year, they were not ready or they did not respond when contacted about supports being available. The waitlist was discharged if no contact was made and decreased to 4 youth. Information was provided to local schools and the MCFD office that there was openings in the PEACE Program and referrals were being accepted.
- 1189 hours were provided this year; 120.25 hours report writing & after session notes, 156.25 prep & planning,
- 178 Individual sessions were provided, 185 group sessions were provided
- Staff took the training in: 'Home Visitor' Training by the BC Association of Families, 'Brainstorm' created by Dan Siegel, offered by the Mindsight Institute, Anxiety & 'Stress in Teens' and 'Violence against Women' hosted by the BC Association of Transition Houses.
- A review of services was completed in January when new Child Advocates were hired. Group programming was decreased based on low group attendance numbers and an increase in requests for individual services. Increases in individual services were provided and well attended groups at the local High school and one group at the local middle school continued.

# Early Years Program (EY)

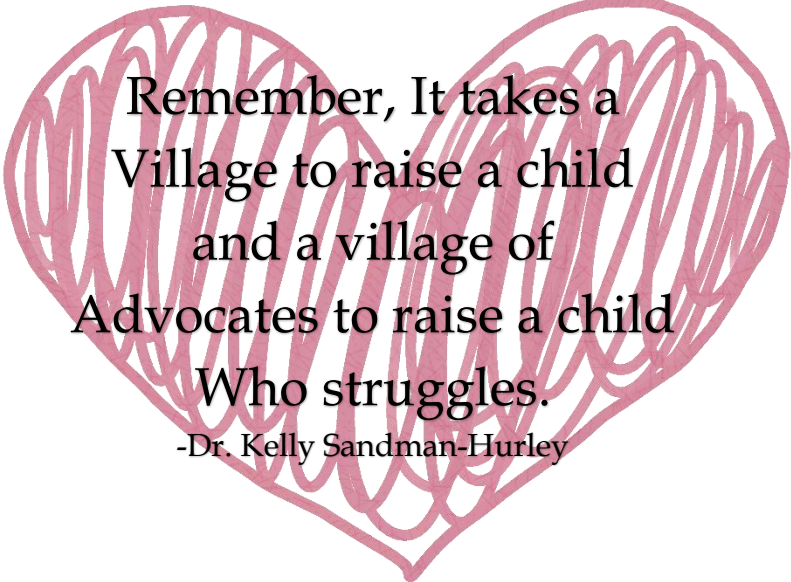
The Early Years Program was established to provide community-based services and supports to children between birth and eight years, as well as their families and communities. Recognizing the importance of the early years, the primary goal of the Early Years Program is to optimize the growth and development of children from birth to eight years of age through screening, assessment, family education, community education and support, consultation, monitoring, direct intervention, transition and community planning.

*The Early Years Program was designed around the Early Years Services Framework. The Early Years' Service Framework is predicated on the assumption that families do not fall into discrete categories of 'vulnerable' and 'not vulnerable'; instead, it assumes that the journey of parenthood is punctuated with varying levels of needs and vulnerabilities for most families. The framework acknowledges that most, if not all families experience vulnerabilities at some point during their child's early years. Services designed with these varied vulnerabilities in mind are likely to be more effective to a wider range of families who may be seeking services.*

## Highlights of the Year

- NRCDA experienced many staffing challenges in the previous three years, through the Global Pandemic
- Due to staffing challenges, the Early Years Navigator spent extra time supporting the families from the Infant Development Program.
- The Early Years Program provided support to 96 families, 57% identified as Indigenous, and 27% were new referrals or group attendees throughout the year.
- 34% of the contracted hours were provided in individual services, 35% group programs and 31% was spent on indirect services and community engagement.
- 37 children and families were provided with supports and referred to other programs within the Association and community programs.
- Six recommendations were given for child and youth mental health supports. Our programs cannot refer to this service but we share the process with the families how to access services and where.
- Staff took 'Parent Child Mother Goose' Training and with the training, they offered a weekly Parent Child Mother Goose Playgroup in partnership with the Infant Development Consultant.
- Gradual increases in services have been seen over the past year as restrictions and confidence in safety were rebuilt after the Global Covid 19 Pandemic.
- In the fall, playgroups were moved out into community locations and in our Association office playroom.

- Supports were provided this year for families attempting to access childcare benefits. There were many struggles with families attempting to not lose their childcare and preschool spaces as the delays dragged on in this process at the Government processing side.
- Advocacy has increased in childcare, preschool and community recreation programs to create a more inclusive community with training and mentorship.
- Staff have been working on training and mentoring Recreation Centre staff in supporting children with self-regulation skills, and inclusion practices.
- Supports to the schools and families who have support needs transitioning to kindergarten.
- School supports have been provided when staff were faced with challenging behaviours, need for assessments, intervention ideas and changing how things have been done to support these children. This service was provided by meetings and phone conversations from our EY Coordinator supporting the school and family in coming up with ideas and mentorship with children under 8 years of age.
- After the Global Covid 19 Pandemic, rebuilding of community and Provincial partnerships were a big focus this year.



Remember, It takes a  
Village to raise a child  
and a village of  
Advocates to raise a child  
Who struggles.

-Dr. Kelly Sandman-Hurley

# STAFFED RESIDENTIAL (CLBC)

The Northern Rockies Child Development Association Staffed Residential Program supports an adult in their own home to achieve independence and inclusivity in the community.

## Highlights of the Year

- This program is fully staffed and has three casual staff who provide coverage when needed for illness and vacation time
- With the lifting of Covid 19 restrictions the client and staff spends more time out in the community; shopping, going for walks and visits from the family

## Challenges

- The client in our Staffed Residential Program lives with limitations that require traveling, Northern Health trainers to provide annual training in gastrostomy tubes. Due to many of our staff working more than one job, their availability for training does not always work when the Northern Health worker can travel to our community for training. This has created a huge barrier to having trained coverage when our staff is ill or on vacation and unable to cover a shift. All of our staff must be trained in this item. Requests for online, zoom or teams training for staff receiving renewals has been submitted, but turned down. We have resorted at times to send staff out to Fort St John to attend the training but this has been a challenge with coordinating the Northern Health worker who is responsible for the training to work around when our staff can travel out to meet with them, it is also super costly on our Association to send staff out for this training.
- PG Surge Med is the medical, supply contactor for our community. We have had issues with the client's new chair needing adjusting and fixing and our outdated, old lift system needing repairs. PG Surge Med refuses to come to the community and often clients do without a fix on their chairs or they have to travel out to Prince George, which is an 8.5-hour drive away on a good day. The lift system is outdated and the cord often needs to be repaired. We have had to send this system out on numerous occasions and use a super old system that we have back up while our newer system is being repaired. After numerous discussions with CLBC, there is no alternative to us using PG Surge Med unless the client pays for repairs and purchases out of their own funds, which is not an alternative.

# NORTHERN ROCKIES EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM PRESCHOOL

The Northern Rockies Early Learning Preschool Programs are developmental enrichment programs for preschoolers 2 to 5 years of age with a focus on the developmental domains. Our programs are based around the Learning Without Tears Curriculum and the Early Years Framework.

## Highlights for the Year

- 32 children were registered in our preschool program: 7 two's, 8 four's and 17 three's
- Staff took the Self-Regulation course by Stuart Shanker.
- With the lifting of Covid 19 restrictions, our registration numbers have increased from the previous year. Families have more confidence in having their children attend group settings.

## Family Feedback

12% of families provided feedback on our survey this year.

- 100% of families felt the preschool staff are approachable and listen to my concerns or questions I may have about the program or facility.
- 100% of families felt their child is offered a variety of fun activities and experiences to promote their development in all areas.
- 100% of families felt as a parent, they felt welcomed when visiting the centre
- 100% of families felt the staff show warmth, caring, awareness and interest when interacting with each child.





# KIDZ KLUBS

The Kidz Klub offers a licensed, school age program designed to reflect the image of the child: one who is curious, capable, creative and confident. Our programs strive to set a foundation of Success for each child. We recognize that with diversity comes different beliefs, values and learning styles. We aim to celebrate all children for their unique abilities and contributions. We support children in the building of social skills through semi-structured social interactions and unstructured play.

## Highlights for the Year

- 40 children were registered in our school age, before and after school program this year: 17 JS Clark Kidz Klub and 23 GW Carlson kidz KLub
- Staff took the Self-Regulation course by Stuart Shanker.
- The Kindergarten age children in the Kidz Klub has qualified for the Government fee reduction initiative.
- The Association has qualified for the increase to Kindergarten and the Grade 1 to 4 fee reduction for September.
- This year the Kidz Klub offered some out in the community programming. The children attended rock climbing, swimming or indoor golf once a week. Bussing to the community location was provided in partnership with the Northern Rockies Seniors Association

## Family Feedback

100% of the families felt their children enjoyed going to Kidz Klub.

100% of families felt the Kidz Klub provides a variety of fun, engaging, activities and experiences.

100% of the families felt their child enjoyed the full day programs on non-instructional and pro-d days.

100% of families felt staff are approachable and friendly.

100% of families felt staff demonstrate a warm, caring, engaged interest when interacting with the children.

100 % of families felt when sharing information about a challenge in a child's day, staff are professional, helpful and supportive.

100% of families feel issues are addressed in a helpful manner.

100% of families feel the overall environment is clean and engaging.

100% of families felt the children enjoyed the community activities provided over the winter.

What families feel we do well:

- Lots of support to parents and kids
- Great ideas for kids to handle emotions, etc.
- Everything
- You guys are amazing 😊
- Building relationships with kids
- Thanks for all the hard work and providing fun opportunities for my child.
- Look after the kids
- Approachable, friendly, helping children with their struggles
- Everything!!

What could we do better:

- We had a couple requests to open the morning program again
- We had a number of comments on providing more staff during full days to better manage behaviours
- Managing behaviours so that the children are less distraction and disruptive to the rest of the children.





# SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD BASKET FEEDBACK

37 individual families responded to our survey. Each family provided some positive feedback on how receiving the supplemental basket helped their family.

It was helpful

It was amazing to receive this and helped us so much

It helped to have good quality food

My kids have egg and dairy allergies but I understand the food basket may not be able to targeted with allergy needs

It really helped, and it helped make for healthier eating as I hadn't used some of the meat you gave me before.

It helped us make healthier meals

eating better

it was perfect

Every bit helped to provide my family with lowering the cost of food I needed to purchase.

It helped a lot

It was very helpful

It helped greatly

Thank you so much!

It was perfect

It was a huge help

It helped so much

Great basket

Very well done

Definitely came in handy

Great job!

Meat and veggies are so expensive now that it's hard to get every grocery shop.

It was good to base groceries knowing some of the repeat items I would be getting.

We could plan healthy meals with the food provided.

We have been putting it to good use as any food helps.

Healthy food is so expensive here.

You all are amazing people for what you do for our community.

Thank you so much!

We are a large family and between my income, food bank and Family Development's program our family does not have to worry about doing without.

As I am, a single mother on assistance with multiple littles every little bit of help goes a long way and gives me a piece of mind.

We were able to do more baking and meals from scratch versus the prepackaged or frozen meals.

I found the items provided very useful, as they are fresh items I don't get through the food bank.



# SEASON OF GIVING: Toy Drive and Holiday Food Basket

In the fall of 2022, the Northern Rockies Child Development Association hosted a variety of collection events in our community. We want to thank the community for their generosity and support in donating all of the mittens, diaper, hats and toys that enabled our Association to support many families through the holiday season.

September: Diaper Drive

October: Hat and Mitten Drive

November: Toy Drive

In December, the Northern Rockies Child Development Association shared the toys, diapers, hats and mittens we had collected with families in our community. 192 children received gifts through this event. The families receiving toys did not have to belong to the Association or attend any of our programs; this event is open to every family in our community.



# Measuring Success in 2022/2023

## Employees

Always 60%

Usually 40%

Staff feel they have opportunities for discussion and feedback with their supervisor.

Agree 90%

Disagree 10%

Staff, believe there are opportunities for individual career growth within the Society and programs.

Strongly agree 40%

Agree 60%

Of staff, agree their supervisor provides the feedback and support they need to do your job?

Very Likely 60%

Likely 40%

Of staff feel, their work likely has a positive impact in the community.

Agree 70%

Neither Agree or Disagree 30%

Of staff feel, they have a good work, life balance.



# EMPLOYEE SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

The employee survey is used to gain feedback from employees on the support, employee value, they feel they receive from NRCDA.

- 45% of employees replied to the feedback survey.
- Employees generally feel they have opportunities for feedback and discussions with their supervisor
- Employees felt their supervisor provided the supports they needed to do their jobs.
- Employees felt their work likely had an impact in the community.
- Employees felt there was opportunities for growth in the organization.

## **What does NRCDA do well?**

- Puts supports in place for parents with who have diverse abilities
- Family focused services, community partnerships
- Willingness to be inclusive of all children and advocating for that.
- Offering support and help to a variety of families in our community
- Helping to so many individuals and families
- They do well in supporting families especially those in needs. Always ready to help.
- Taking care of the Clients
- Support the community

## **What could NRCDA do to increase or improve the programs already in place?**

- Provide more programs and support for children throughout summer and holidays
- Increase to SCD, CYSN & Peace FTE, plan for additional admin and management as we expand.
- Location(s) for services that is not designated for childcare/preschool. Having a space(s) for our other programming (1:1 sessions, small and large groups, meetings) would be nice.

## **What services do you feel the Association could work toward providing for the community?**

- Provide more programs and support for children throughout summer and holidays
- Youth worker, CLBC well matched clients, more childcare, more community training,
- More community training for professionals and non-professionals - Counselling services
- Have more summer programs on Weekends

## **What do you feel the Northern Rockies Child Development Association could do better?**

- Services for students aging out of school-day programs
- Wages have increased over the past few years however still remain low, this continues to be a sector wide concern.
- Vacation time is minimal for long tenured staff although understandable in challenge to provide coverage also lead to more burn out in this field and staff turnover. That being said Cindy does everything she can to meet these needs and support staff to accommodate to the best of her ability.
- Further look at policy and contracts may in the long term provide greater staff retention, work life balance, mitigate burn out, encourage self-care.

- Benefits: Look into Pension plans for employees, this would be a retainer for many and a reason one might leave as they start to think of their retirement.
- Family Development Association I think right they are providing best services in the community
- More staffing

### **Areas of Improvement**

Gaining feedback and creating plans for improvements is a priority for NRCD. This year's areas of focus for improvements are:



# Measuring Success 2022-2023

## Client Feedback

Parent/guardians, feel that they are treated as equal partners in setting goals for their child's support services and Family Plan?

Satisfied  
94.12%

Families feel that NRCDA is supporting their child's childcare setting /preschool/kidz klub or community program in being more inclusive in meeting the needs of their child and every child with diverse needs.

Satisfied  
87.5%

Families are satisfied with the timely response by the Coordinator /Navigator's to emails, messages or texts.

Satisfied  
94.12%

Families feel that their child is well supported in their program.

Satisfied  
88.24%

Families feel respected when working with NRCDA Staff and visiting NRCDA's office.

Satisfied  
94.11%

Families feel satisfied with the timely response by the Coordinator/Navigator to set up meetings and organize support.

Satisfied  
94.12%

Families feel that the supports they received from the Family Empowerment Coordinator were helpful.

Satisfied  
100%

# Fort Nelson Family Development Society Stakeholder Highlights

87.5 % of replies from Stakeholders identified they were aware of the services and supports provided by the Family Development Association.

75% of replies identified they were aware of how to refer an individual or family to a program at the Family Development Association.

87.5% felt that NRCDA Provides effective programs and services that meet the needs of the community.

- *Lots of families are facing challenging situations and need additional supports for various reasons and Family D is able to fill service voids that would otherwise leave vulnerable families without services.*

100% of replies felt that community programs provided by NRCDA had positive outcomes.

- *Great services provided.*

62.5% felt that NRCDA staff replied to emails, texts and messages in a timely manner.

- *Some have replied in a timely manner and have ran into not hearing back for days.*
- *Great communication and always willing to problem solve.*

100% of replies felt that when observed or interacted with; NRCDA Staff were respectful and professional?

87.5% feel that when providing programs and services in the community, schools and licensed centres the service is inclusive for everyone.

- *Some of our most vulnerable students - thrive with Family Development!*



# DONORS, FUNDERS & SPONSORS

Although 2022-2023 came with many changes, and challenges one thing that remained consistent was overwhelming community support. During this time of uncertainty, we have been comforted, encouraged and humbled by the outpouring of generosity and support from our community, funders and sponsors. Remarkable people, organizations, community groups, small businesses and Corporations have all shown us how much they care and support the work we do.

## Public Funders

Ministry of Children & Family Development (MCFD)  
School District #81  
Community Living British Columbia (CLBC)  
Ministry of Justice Canada  
Government of British Columbia  
Provincial Health Services Authority: Trans care BC  
BC Association of Transition Houses

## Foundations & Corporations

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| Community Foundations Grant – Canada Post | IGA                      |
| Chevron Canada                            | Save on Foods            |
| NTE Energy Canada                         | Fields Store             |
| Red Apple Store                           | BC Council for Families: |
| Mother Goose Funding                      | Autism Speaks            |
| Show Kids You Care                        |                          |

## Local Event Donation

|                                    |                         |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Angel Bandit Run: Dingwell Family  | Purdy's Chocolate Sales |
| Northern Rockies Motorcycle Riders |                         |

## Individual Donors

The Northern Rockies Child Development Association recognizes its obligation to respect and protect the privacy of our individual donors. Personal information provided by donors is not disclosed to any third parties.

Rather than listing donors individually, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all individuals for their donations they are very much appreciate.

# REPORTING OUT ON THE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Continuous Quality Improvement is a priority for the Fort Nelson Family Development Association. NRCDA is committed to ensuring that employee, client and stakeholder feedback, outcomes, and performance management are considered when planning for quality improvement. Information we receive provides our Association with the opportunity to create goals for improvement. This is a snap shot of improvements that our Association has made, moving forward over the 2022-2023 year.

| Action  | Program Area | Person(s) Responsible                                       | Timelines   |
|---|--------------|---|---|
| Increase in referrals – <i>Updated information packages including updated referral forms, were created and handed out around the community to other service providers and referral sources including all of the schools.</i>  | All Programs | Program Managers  | Ongoing outreach in the community                       |
| Increase marketing of the NRCDA- <i>A website creator has been conatrcted to create a website for the Association to be uploaded in late spring 2023.</i>   | All Programs | Executive Director  | Ongoing Forecasted completion by June 2023              |
| Technology Support - IT support to maintain / service checks and complete annual equipment, software, virus protection reviews- <i>Funding was secured through the Covid 19 Recovery Fund to update all tech equipment within the Association, purchase updated programs and hire a tech person to support in the updating.</i> | All Programs | Executive Director and Program Managers                     | Ongoing Forecasted completion by October 2023           |
| Survey stakeholders, clients and employees to record effectiveness in service delivery and employee engagement  | All Programs | Program Managers, Board of Directors and Executive Director | Implemented in December 2022 and March 2022 and Ongoing |
| Advocate for increased funding for the SCD Program – One time only funding was secured to increase services in 2021/2022 that was available for use through April to June 2022. A permanent increase was provided by an additional 1.5FTE for support and an increase to  | SCD Program  | Program Manager and Executive Director                      | Achieved June 2022                                      |

|  |              |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|
| 0.5 FTE for the SCD Coordinator with contract renewals in July 2023.   |              |   |   |
| Policies and Procedures were reviewed with employees annually – Health and Safety and all Policies and procedures were brought to each coordinator and team meeting reviewed, discussed and practiced.   | All Programs | Program Managers, Health and Safety Rep                     | Implemented in September 2022 and Ongoing |
| Critical incident Reports and reviews- Employees are trained in how to complete the incident reports, submit and what is considered in incidents. Health and Safety created a policy on analyzing critical incidents on a quarterly basis and a full analysis will be completed annually. This process allows training of our new employees as they onboard and continual training of all employees. | All Programs | Program Managers, Health and Safety Rep, Executive Director | Implemented in September 2022 and Ongoing |
| Review of Mission and Purpose- Through review it was determined that an update was required to better describe and meet the growing needs, programming and services provided by the Association.   | All Programs | Executive Director and Board of Directors                   | Approved and Completed November 2022      |
| Interpretive Summaries were added to all active files  | All Programs | Program Managers  | Implemented in September 2022 and ongoing |
| Transitions and Discharge Plans were implemented and are added to Individual Family Plans  | All Programs | Program Managers  | Implemented in September 2022 and ongoing |

**How these efforts make us better.**

The overall objective of NRCDA is to gather relevant data related to access, satisfaction, efficiency and effectiveness. It is through the gathering and analyzing of data that we make informed decisions about improvements to employee, client and stakeholder experiences and care from our Association. As we recover from the pandemic, the mental health of our staff and the families we serve continues to be an area that requires extra support. There is ongoing work to do within our client files and our Association policies and procedures to continue to keep us at CARF Standards and increase our quality of care. We continue to ask difficult questions and assess the best way to move forward collectively.



# ACCREDITATION

The Northern Rockies Child Development Association had their first accreditation survey in June 2022 by CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities). The Survey Team reviewed and accredited the following programs: Family Services, Services for Children and Youth: Child and Adolescent Services, Supported living and Early Childhood Development (Children and Adolescents).

We continue with improving our standards and services until our next survey in 2025.

**\*CARF is an international, independent, not for profit organization that accredits health and human service providers. <http://www.carf.org/home/> .**

