

Children First Society Year End report 2019-2020 Operational



Submitted by:

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Executive Summary

When I think of the staff that rely on Children First Society for Employment and the families that rely on the Centre for support and services, I feel tired. It is a responsibility that gives me that worry line on my forehead that has suddenly gotten deeper these past few weeks. Then I reflect on our moto, Helping Children Achieve Their Greatness. I am energized because I: see the babies get comfortable in the program room with their peers and start to explore their environment to develop and grow; hear the 2 year olds in their room across from my office exert their independence and check in on me throughout the day; see the preschoolers overcome the challenge of socializing with peers and share with me their latest acts of empathy and care; hear the confidence in the school age children as they continue to develop their creative problem-solving to debate with me the latest controversy in their lives. I then know the world is okay because the children are achieving their greatness.

This year has really brought us full circle. In the beginning of the fiscal year one of our biggest challenges was how to invest our rainy day fund, so it could be accessible, but still have growth. I am so thankful to the Board of Directors and Staff who have worked hard over the past six years to create financial stability. As we finish up our second strategic plan, that has guided us to this point, we are secure. Then 2020 came along and with it the concern of the COVID19 virus. Now the question that is on many minds is how long can Children First survive in this climate? We asked ourselves the same question when our building ceiling came down and we had to close the Centre. We as a team of parents, Directors and staff worked hard to ensure we survived. We can do it again. We have the determination and experience. We also have more resources this time around.

Our hands-on emergent curriculum has strengthened with exploring nature, the world around and making connections to the world and others. We have had an incredible amount of support from our funders.

We continued our out-reach program this year. This was possible thanks to funding from the GNWT Healthy Choices funds and the Anti-Poverty funds. Through the Anti-Poverty funds, we were also able to implement our tiered fee schedule and add a Scholarship program. Funding from the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) through some Federal dollars enabled us to start a Gwich'in Immersion program. It is a pilot project as we support staff to use Gwich'in with the children. Tides Canada Funding will allow us to take the program into the next fiscal year. All of this allows access for families who otherwise would not have utilized the services.

With program dollars and support from the GTC, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC) and Tides Canada-NWT On the Land Programs we could maintain a strong traditional culture base of activity. We held four sessions of on the Land Day Camps. The on the land trips with the elders is certainly one of the children's favorite parts of our curriculum. The Inuvialuit Project Jewel has helped us achieve this by offering resources and expertise to help us organize the logistics to take children out to a variety of locations, even traveling by boat. The children, staff, and elders had a memorable time learning from the land and sharing tradition.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), using Federal Early Childhood funds, remains a significant support. We work with the government of the Northwest Territories to discuss initiatives such as the possibility of changing year to year proposal/application based funds to multi-year core funding would ensure continuity on programs.

Training has lagged a bit this year. Our on-going partnership with Aurora College has dwindled as the College makes institutional changes and reflects on their Programs and how they are offered. However, our dedicated staff gave up weekends and evenings to take every available workshop and seminar offered. This included FASD workshop, Dance P3AY, Forest and Nature seminar, to High Five Training. We are looking at solutions to ensure the staff can continue to work towards professional certification in Early Childhood.

Beaufort Delta Rehabilitation Team, continue their support to the Centre. Weekly visits to assist with individualized plans and group ideas. We have also received support from Jordan's Principal. We look forward to these continuing partnerships.

It is a privilege to be a part of such a dynamic organization, that flexes and adapts to the community needs. The building is usually bustling at all hours of the day, evening and weekends. As I sit here in a very Quiet Centre as people social distance I know that we will come out the other side of this challenge. Our commitment is to provide early learning and care for families in Inuvik. In partnership with the community of Inuvik we will ensure that vision continues to come true.

Respectfully,



Patricia Davison
Executive Director



Vision

We envision a future where happy and healthy children grow up to become healthy and happy adults who benefit Inuvik and society as a whole. The Children First Society's child development services help children to achieve their greatness!



Learning about cause and effect, spatial placement, colour and turn taking

Family Participation

"Lots of physical activity Great gym A wide variety of daily activities for students Great director communication
Parent - Annual Parent Survey

"Friendly and caring staff Excellent Communication. All needs of children are met"
Parent - Annual Parent Survey

"It provides consistent childcare. Facilities are very nice, clean and regulated. My child has the opportunity to socialize.!"
Parent - Annual Parent Survey

"The staff are amazing, events such as breakfasts, dance, and out on the land are fabulous. Our child is safe and well cared for."
Parent - Annual Parent Survey

"Staff retention is improving Outreach programs are amazing No screens - active dynamic programming."
Parent - Annual Parent Survey

"We are extremely grateful for this service."
Parent - Annual Parent Survey

"Fees are too high."
Parent - Annual Parent Survey

"The fee is quite high but I do think you get what you pay for. I don't actually know the names of all the people taking care of my child in the infant room. There seems to be a lot of staff turnover."
Parent - Annual Parent Survey

Child Participation

Number of children participating in the program this fiscal year:

Under 2 years old: 31

2 years: 11

3- 4 year olds: 51

5 & Over: 67

We are fully staffed. Our daily programs remain full. We have a small waiting list. Our community drop-in programs increased this year. This meant more children and families are able to access the Centre. We implemented our tiered fee schedule and started a Scholarship program. The Gwich'in immersion program was an important addition to the Centre.



Checking fish nets with Jimmy Ruttan from IRC.

Through out the year we had many outings and guest speakers. Two of our most active partners were IRC Project Jewel and Aurora Research Institute



Annika Trimble, from ARI, Scary Science at the Halloween Party

Out Reach Programs

Program	# of Sessions	Average Attendance	Ages	Time
Kids in the Kitchen	43	7 adults 14 children	1-12	6-8 pm
Community Play Group	45	4 adults 7 children	1-4	10am-12 pm
Science Literacy	46	4 adults 6 children	1-8	10am-12pm
Painting Party	12	8 adults 14 children	1-10	6-8 pm
Rhythm and Kids	12	5 adults 5 children	0-3	10-12 pm
Cookies and Crafts	5	5 adults 8 children	Paint Party All	2-5 pm
Pancake Lunch	1	7 adults – 15 children	All	2-5 pm
Pancake Breakfast	2	51 adults 57 children	All	11am-2pm
Halloween Party	1	35 adults 95 children	All	2-5 pm
Clothing Swap	2	23 adults 10 children	All	11am-2pm
Elders Tea	3	10 adults 25 children	All	2-4 pm
Imagination Station	3	8 adults 15 children	2-10	2-4 pm
Berry Picking	3	5 adults 15 children	1-10	9am-4 pm
Sliding party	2	5 adults 15 children	2-10	2-4 pm
Cookies and Crafts	6	6 adults 10 children	All	2-5 pm
Family Dance	1	70 adults 145 children	All	5-9 pm
Evening Gym	10	4 adults 10 children	2-10	6-7 pm
Baby Moving	47	6 adults 8 children	0-2	1:30-2:30pm



Family Participation

The families of the children are our primary partners. From the 2019-2020 annual family survey: 96% indicated as satisfactory or above, "My child is happy at the centre"

100% indicated, "I feel welcome at the Centre and find it an inviting atmosphere."
." as satisfactory or above.

100 % indicated as satisfactory or above "My child enjoys the food served at the centre," with over 72% stating it exceeded expectation or was exceptional.



Community Play Group



Dental Therapist Visit

Community Participation

Currently we have the following involved in the project:

- 8 Children First Board of Directors
- 1 Executive director
- 1 full time Accountant - Office Administrator
- 6 full time Early Childhood Practitioners
- 7 Early Childhood Supports
- 1 full time Language Keeper
- 1 Part time language Keeper
- 1 full time Developmental Support
- 1 full time Facilities Manager
- 1-part time kitchen staff
- 1 Full time custodial position
- 2 Part time outreach
- Parents
- Elders
- Community members



The Bus taking us out on the land



The Wheels on the Bus Play

We continue to develop many strong partnerships with various organizations and departments. The following is a list of some of our ongoing partnerships. These too will increase as we continue to grow and strengthen our program.

This year we held

Community events:

International Mud Day
Community Picnic
Mental health event
National Child Day
Children's Christmas Party
National Literacy day
Children's Halloween Party

Annual Family Dance

Science Rendezvous

Get active Events: x 2

Across generations and cultures

Family Yoga

Community sessions x 244

Visits to Elders = 4

Elders visits = 27

On the land = 14 days

Partnerships		
Organization	Description	Goal
Beaufort Delta Health and Social Services	Foster Families utilize our service. Children with Disabilities	Ensure all families have access to safe, reliable early learning and support programs.
Community Health Representative	Presentations on Hand washing, nutrition, healthy hears, personal safety etc.	Children, staff and families have the information and know of local resources they need to be safe and healthy
	Handouts on health issues, diseases, safety and nutrition	
	Public displays on health safety and nutrition topics	
Healthy Families	Co-sponsor community events, including Baby Get Active Network and share ideas and resources.	Support pregnant women, families with infants in healthy choices
Aurora College	Shared Resources and events	Tea and Bannock in the tents.
Aurora Research Institute	Presentations on current research and work	Children are informed about their surroundings and impacts of decisions regarding environment and social issues. Children have a basic understanding of people in the community and the work they do
	Visits to the research facility	
Inuvik Fire department	Fire hall visits	Children have a solid understanding of fire safety and people in the community and the work they do
	Presentations on safety	

Partnerships Continued		
Organization	Description	Goal
Town Of Inuvik	Use of MSRC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Swimming - Play zone - Racquet courts - Ice rink 	Children are exposed to a variety of environments and participate fully in the community
	Sharing of equipment and resources	
	Visits to public library	
	Jim Koe park sliding hill	
	Parks and walk ways	
	Back up emergency facility	
Inuvik Interagency	Member Co-sponsor community events Network and share ideas and resources.	Develop a strong foundation for community life
Government of the North West Territories	Funding from: ECE MACA Health and Social Services	Provide child development services help children to achieve their greatness!
Inuvialuit Regional Corporation	Funding On The Land expertise and resources	Traditional culture and language programs to rejuvenate the local culture and language and increase wellness and empowerment.
GTC Funding	Funding	services help children to achieve their greatness!



Universal Children's Day –Making slime with the Mayor

Learning Fun:



How were the requested funds used?

The money that we received went directly to wages, rent, utilities and supplies, all the things needed to implement an accessible quality program. Attached you will find a detailed financial statement as well as a proposed budget for moving forward.

A facility this size has a large operating cost, to staff the building and keep it warm and secure. We were responsible for the day to day maintenance costs as well as all utilities. This year, once again, Children First Society maintained a balanced budget. If funding remains the same, we anticipate a balanced budget in the next fiscal year as well. There are some uncertainties with the COVID19 virus; we feel we can manage these challenges. At this point we plan to increase staff wages slightly to get them closer to a Living Wage, using the calculated by Alternatives North in their 2019 report. We will do this by identifying ways to cut costs, such as using ideas identified in our energy audit and suggested by staff.

Using the 8 points from our service vision we strive to provide accessible quality care and learning for children birth to 12 years of age. We have a strong emphasis on learning through play that naturally incorporates culture, STEM and nature learning.

