



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS REVELSTOKE



*Our Achievements*

# *Annual report*

2020



# ORGANIZATIONAL

*Community Connections is fully accredited by CARF (Commission of Accreditation of Rehabilitations Facilities). We are a not-for-profit agency providing a broad range of services to the community of Revelstoke and the surrounding area.*

## ***Role of the Board***

The Board of Directors is appointed by the members of the Society and is responsible for ensuring that Community Connections works toward achieving the goals and objectives established in the Strategic Plan, which is aligned with the Mission and Vision of the organization.

The Board works closely and collaboratively with the staff of Community Connections to make sure programs and services are operated effectively and efficiently and benefit the local community.

A critical role of the Board is to ensure that there is good communication between the organization and the community, particularly as this relates to identifying new and increasing needs of the people of Revelstoke.

## **Directors**

Chairperson	Aimee Schalles
Treasurer	Carol Palladino
Vice Chair	Michelle Gabriele
	Aimee Schalles
	Donnelle Lang
	Rob Lamont

# ORGANIZATIONAL

The past year was particularly challenging for many in Revelstoke. We experienced an unprecedented surge in those accessing our services: over 4500 local residents received services from Community Connections, representing approximately 57% of the local population.

We appreciate the efforts of Community Connections staff over the past year to ensure continued service delivery throughout the pandemic in a safe, effective manner. We appreciate the creative and resilient attitude that all our staff has demonstrated.

However, we also have the community to thank. Our needs as an organization were noticed by the community, and we received an incredible surge in donations which allowed us to more than meet the increased demand. We are fortunate and thankful for the strong relationships we have with community members.

We are continually impressed by the programs and services delivered by Community Connections. Newborns, children, youth, families and seniors all benefit from the services offered. Many of the people receiving services comment on the high quality of the programs and the staff, and of the important role these services play in enhancing their lives. This is a direct reflection of the skill, passion, and commitment of our wonderful staff, who remain of highest priority to us.

We look forward to continuing to serve the community with passion and creativity, but hopefully less adversity, in the years ahead.

**-Community Connections Board of Directors, 2021**



# ORGANIZATIONAL

We are continually impressed by the programs and services delivered by Community Connections - it is truly amazing. Newborns, children, youth, families and seniors all benefit from the services offered.

Many of the people receiving services comment on the high quality of the programs and the staff, and of the important role these services play in enhancing their lives. This is a direct reflection of the skill, passion, and commitment of our wonderful staff, who remain of highest priority to us.

In particular, we appreciate the efforts of Community Connections staff over the past several months to ensure continued service delivery throughout the pandemic. Our community needs our help now, more than ever, and this is evidenced through the increased need we have seen in people accessing the food bank and other direct support services. We appreciate the creative and resilient attitude that all our staff has demonstrated. Because of you, we have been able to continue operating in safe (albeit new!) ways and continue to meet the needs of our community.

## Staffing Milestones

### Family Services:

Kerstin Bell - 5 years

Chris Froehlich - 5 years

Megan Shandro - 5 years

Lindsay Oberg - 15 years

Kelly Silzer - 15 years

Karley Trauzzi - 15 years

### CLSA

Michelle Chipman - 5 years

Jaclyn Hughes - 5 years

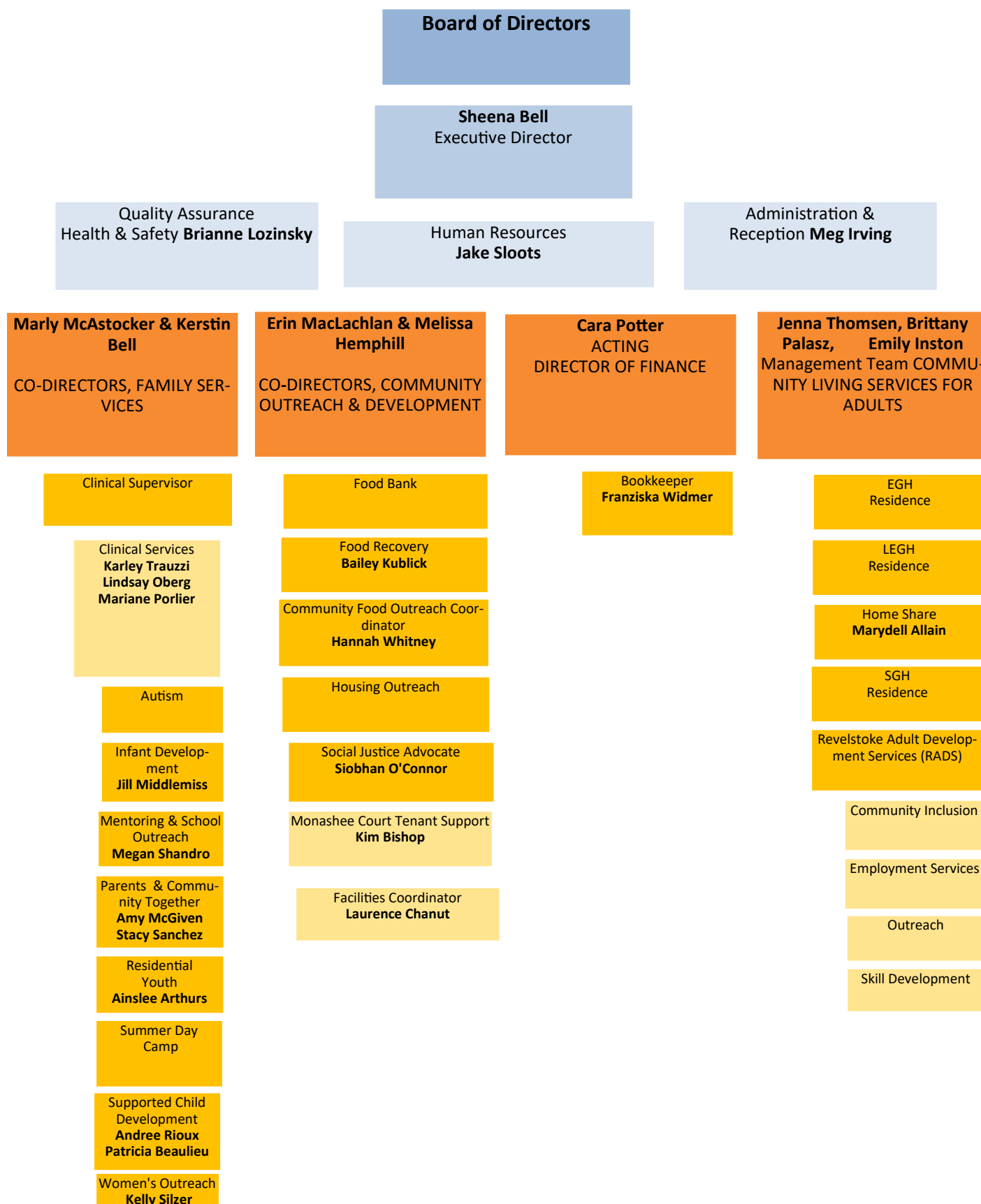
Jesse Fowlie - 10 years

### Outreach:

Melissa Hemphill—5 years



# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



# ORGANIZATIONAL

## Mission Statement

The Mission of Community Connections (Revelstoke) Society is to support individuals and families in our community by providing and advocating for accessible, responsive Social Services.

## Values Statement

In providing our services we value:

- ♦ Diversity
- ♦ Belonging
- ♦ Individuality
- ♦ Respect
- ♦ Human Dignity
- ♦ Relationships
- ♦ Connection to Community
- ♦ Individuals & Families

## Vision Statement

By 2022, Community Connections will continue to be recognized by our community, the region and the province as a leader for the provision of quality, responsive and socially just social services

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Executive Director Report

On all accounts, 2020 was an exceptional year. The world was stretched and under enormous pressure to adapt to unprecedented uncertainty; our organization demonstrated incredible capacity for responsiveness and solidarity within our work and collaboratively with community partners and people we serve. I have immense respect and appreciation for the staff and stakeholders of Community Connections who have demonstrated depth and strength of resilience and relational principles in their work and in continuity of service, while enhancing and deepening a sense of connectedness.

Our work with and for the community has been in flux and will continue to be so as we manage ongoing demands and responses to need that continues to exist and grow as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a strategic priority, we were looking at the space needs of the community and our programming and were able to take on the opportunity to increase our physical space delivery locations. In May, we purchased the building at 416 2<sup>nd</sup> Street West and began planning; fundraising, and adapting the space for immediate demands, need resulting from the pandemic, and building out the concept for future expansion and use has been ongoing since we took ownership of the space. The adaptations and flexibility that staff, services, and spaces have undertaken with continued careful review and protocols being constantly monitored has been an all-hands-on-deck effort that shows no sign of ceasing. It has been our priority to maintain safe, accessible and responsive service delivery, and in most areas we have seen expansion rather than restriction to programming and available supports. This is a testament to the truly amazing group of people who are devoted as staff and volunteers, to our mission as an organization and as a partner in our community working together to share to load. To all who have contributed to this work with us, we are truly grateful.

In a year of change with an unpredictable future, the support from stakeholders cannot go unmentioned. We cannot do what we do without you! The financial supports, donations, opportunities to expand, adapt, redirect, and stretch in all aspects of the work have been instrumental in our response and service continuity. Further, the relational commitments such as trust, collaboration, and respect have helped us grow and learn together as a team within Community Connections and across the community in partnerships with all sectors. The demand and requests for supports has also, not surprisingly, far exceeded all historical service delivery outputs. Without the ongoing support we would not have been able to adapt to meet those needs, and so again we extend our appreciation to all who have stepped up and reached out to come together for the people we serve in the community of Revelstoke.

**Continued—**



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Executive Director Report Continued

We are heading into our final year of the current 3 year strategic plan (to spring 2022) and we will look forward to engagement with the community and all stakeholders as we continue to respond and reflect on areas of challenge and growth. 2020 presented unseen opportunities and required us to dig deep into our values, mission, and vision to ensure our steps forward aligned with our priorities while meeting increasing demand and ongoing change world-wide. We will continue to work towards our objectives of taking an approach to service that is unified, thoughtful, strategic, and collaborative; to communicate clearly at all levels in the organization, with our clients, with our partners, and within the community; to be a sustainable organization; and to enhance the physical space of Community Connections to better meet service needs.

In closing, it has been humbling to be able to help so many people in so many ways this year. My deepest appreciation to our staff for the essential role you play in our community, and sincere thanks to every single person, business, funder, and partner for coming together to make it possible to continue to respond and grow to meet our community needs. We continue to be here for the residents and the community of Revelstoke and as always, encourage you to connect with us about what we do, how we do it, and of course, if you are looking for support in any way we will always do our best to offer what we can.

**Respectfully,  
Sheena Bell MSW, RSW, Executive Director**

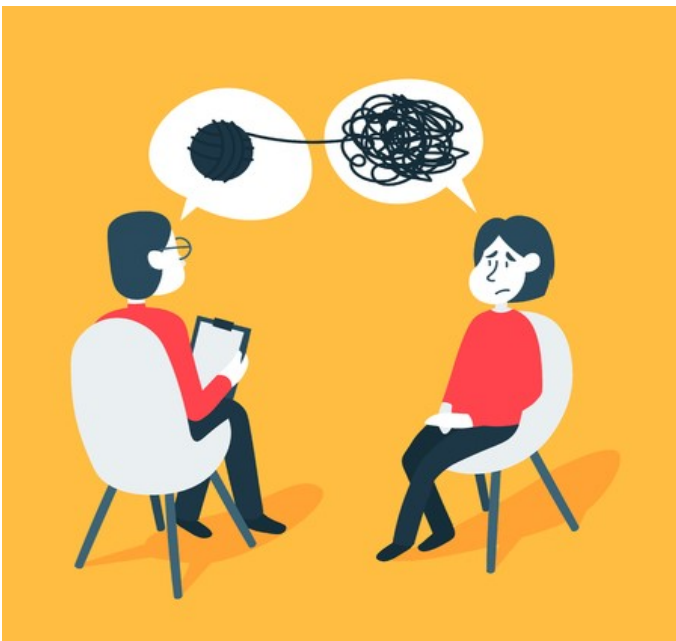


# FAMILY SERVICES

*Family Services offers a wide range of programs to the community of Revelstoke. The report below will provide a glimpse into the programs and services being provided and give a picture of the great work being done at the organization.*

## Counselling Services

The counselling program provides free and accessible individual, couple, family and group counselling to the community of Revelstoke. We have a group of skilled



counsellors who provide support to individuals and families who may be responding to a wide range of challenges. Within the counselling team, it is always a priority to offer responsive and meaningful services to individuals by working collaboratively with them toward their preferred way of living their life.

In an effort to ensure accessible services to the community during the reality of the pandemic, we adjusted our services to offer online, over the phone and in-person, indoor and outdoor services to our clients. Community Connections counselling program received over 240 referrals in 2020. Referrals have continued to be received from community partners, including health care professionals, Revelstoke Women's Shelter,

MCFD, schools and families, as well as from individuals themselves.

Through our intake process, clients are responded to in a prompt manner and are provided with information about our counselling services. This process ensures clients have an opportunity to ask any questions about the services they are accessing and engage in the therapeutic process in their preferred way. The intake worker acts as a point of contact to support clients until they are connected with a counsellor.

Responsiveness and collaboration with other programs within our organization and community has remained a priority during the uncertain times of 2020. The addition of Women Outreach Worker to our organization this year has offered the possibility to women in our community to connect during drop-in hours, in an individual or group format, to access support and have meaningful conversation with women living in Revelstoke. It has been inspiring to work closely with the Women Outreach Worker to see growth in women's services during those challenging times.

**Respectfully,  
Mariane Porlier, Clinical Counsellor**

# FAMILY SERVICES

## Youth Services

The Youth Services and School Outreach Programs provide accessible services for youth aged 5 to 18 years old. Services include community-based and school-based supports, activities and groups. Activities and services are inclusive, intentional and respond to the changing needs of youth and the community. We continue to work in collaboration with the Ministry of Children and Family Development, School District #19 and the Stoke Youth Network to ensure youth have access to the services and supports they need. Direct services include one to one counselling and intentional lunch and afterschool groups. Youth Services received 66 referrals for individual youth counselling this year. COVID-19 greatly influenced youth programming, creating fewer opportunities to gather in groups as we've done in the past; however despite this barrier we continued to respond to needs identified in the community by offering activities and support in creative and meaningful ways.

The Youth Services program saw an increase in individual counselling referrals this year. The impact of isolation and disruption to people's lives was evident in youth's struggle this year. Working in collaboration with the Revelstoke Secondary School counsellors, weekly support in the school continued throughout the year with consideration of COVID-19 protocols.

In response to the community shutdown in March 2020, the youth services program created kids activity packages to ensure families had access and support for their young children. The packages were distributed at the Food Connect program, counselling programs and by request at the main office.

Groups such as Supper Club and The Pit Stop were created in response to community concern of youth experiencing food insecurity and provided opportunities for youth to drop-in to connect with peers and adult supports. In early 2020, the youth mentoring program offered a girls group at RSS, matching high school students with elementary students and also offered a Nordic ski mentoring program. These groups were well attended with positive community feedback.

The Family Services team continues to focus on the creation of a youth specific space within the community, considering the logistics of staffing, space, demographic served and community needs. Together, with the Stoke Youth Network, a formal proposal and initial community surveys have been completed. The team intends to maintain focus on this project, while being thoughtful and intentional in the process. Our intention is to build a sustainable, inclusive and collaborative space for youth to gather.

We continue to center community collaboration and actively participate in the Revelstoke Youth Advisory Committee. Supporting local youth and families continues to be a priority for our organization.

**Respectfully,**

**Megan Shandro and Kerstin Bell**  
**Youth Service Workers**



# FAMILY SERVICES

## Parent Support Programs

The Parent Support programs offer a number of group experiences for parents where they can bring their children with them. The intent of the groups is to provide an opportunity for parents to connect with other parents as well as receive support and information about parenting and their child's development from group facilitators. Over the past year the Parent Support program has provided a safe play space to many families! A light, healthy snack is provided and families have access to information and referral resources such as IDP/SCDP, Counselling, and the Food Connect Program as well as a limited (COVID-19) children's clothing exchange which also sometimes includes diapers and formula.

### Current group experiences include:

**Bellies and Babies 1** is a group for expectant moms and families with babies from birth to 12 months. As the birth rate in Revelstoke grows, so does the number of participants wanting to attend. Because of COVID, we have limited capacity to nine families per day and require families to register through an online booking system called Appointy.

**Bellies and Babies 2** was not offered this past year due to COVID-19.

**Parents and Community Together (PACT)** is a group for parents and caregivers of children ages 0-5 in a fun, relaxed and safe atmosphere. For children, our program offers an age-appropriate play environment with dramatic play, imagination toys, and a gross motor play area. For parents and caregivers, we offer a welcoming setting where adults can connect and share their experiences and concerns around the demanding job of raising children. PACT is offered two mornings a week at the Community Connections office. Because of COVID-19, we have limited capacity to eight families per day and require families to register through an online booking system called Appointy.



**Respectfully,  
Stacy Sanchez, Family and Parent Support**

# **FAMILY SERVICES**

## **Youth Respite House**

Under a new contract, the Youth Respite House continues to offer 24/7 Respite services to children and youth ages 6-18. The mission of the Youth Respite House is to provide a safe and supportive environment for children and youth with diversabilities. Families are able to access the house for short term care, including overnights. During their time at the house, the children and youth have the opportunity to engage in life skill development and preferred activities, such as biking, skiing, art, videogames etc., all while in a relaxed home setting.

This program is individualized to adapt to unique and changing needs of the children and youth who stay at the Respite House. Our program houses one individual at a time on a rotating schedule so that the house can be modified to best meet the needs of individual staying there. This one on one environment fosters a supportive relationship and environment catered directly to the child or youth.

As an organization that puts families at the center of their practice, an essential component to developing an individualized program at the Youth Respite House is collaboration with the family. We view families as the experts of their children and modify the environment and activities based on their requests.

The program as a whole succeeds due to the ongoing support from the entire Family Services Team and collaboration with the Ministry of Children and Families, School District 19, and Behavioral Therapists. These close working relationships allow for holistic support for the children and youth we work with on a day to day basis.

**Respectfully, Ainslee Arthurs, Youth Respite Working Supervisor**

## **Summer Day Camp**

Community Connections has been running Summer Day Camp for over 20 years. It is a consistent, inclusive and much enjoyed summer program. In 2020 the camp ran for 7 weeks, from 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. Summer Camp had a total of 120 Revelstoke children attend.

Despite COVID-19 Summer Day Camp continued. The staff followed the various protocols and ran the camp successfully. The science and water themed weeks were a huge hit, each encompassing a trip to Vernon; one to the waterslides and one to the science centre. The Summer Day Camp program works hard to ensure that every child in Revelstoke that would like to attend camp has that opportunity.

The program is facilitated by local youth pursuing post-secondary education. This program offers the youth and children of Revelstoke the chance to be involved in a local community based summer activity that fosters social relationships in children and leadership skills in youth.

**Respectfully, Andree Rioux, Supported Child Development Coordinator**

# **FAMILY SERVICES**

## **Women's Support Services**

In early 2020 The Women's Support and Outreach program offered a dedicated space in a large office at the front entrance of the Main office of Community Connections. This space was to offer drop in services as well as one to one and small group meetings with women. Due to COVID-19 these services were temporarily interrupted as this larger office space was needed to support the Food Bank and Outreach out of the main office back parking lot. In an effort to move forward with women's programming and to look for creative solutions in how to offer these services we invited all CC women to join us in weekly meetings. One of the ideas that grew out of these meetings was to offer women's only programming on Friday's at the Main office including drop in hours. As the hope was to further engage women of the community and find out what programs and services would best meet their needs a survey was created and distributed throughout the community. As a part of the survey we asked women who were interested to join the newly forming Women's Collective. So far we have over 65 members who have joined the WC. The intent of the collective is to share new programming ideas and start to build connections and collaboration with community members. Women have started to come forward with ideas for programming (i.e. Co-parenting groups) and the survey is showing some clear trends identifying needed services. Our hope for 2021 is to build greater collaboration with community partners working specifically with women and to offer more programming for women by women in spaces dedicated to women. We look forward to collaborating with the architect and design teams in moving towards the Women's Collective space in CC's new outreach building.

**Respectfully,  
Kelly Silzer, Women's Outreach Coordinator**

## **Supported Child Development (SCDP)**

The Supported Child Development Program (SCDP) is a provincial community-based program that assists families of children with extra support needs to families as needed. The Revelstoke SCDP program is intended to serve children from 3 years to 19 years of age.

2020 has been an eventful year. SCDP continues to find ways to support families and children. Following the COVID-19 rules and regulations, SCDP has continued to support school aged children after school. Other ways SCDP has supported families has been by providing food from the food bank if needed.

SCDP is a family centered program. It operates under the principles of inclusion and family-centered practice and uses a multi-disciplinary team approach. The Coordinators support families in developing Family Service Plans, parent support, and support in kindergarten transition and adult transition. In January 2021 SCDP has started a diversity parent support group. This is taking place via zoom. Despite a pandemic SCDP continues to find ways to support families.



# FAMILY SERVICES

## Infant Development (IDP)

The IDP continues to offer support, developmental consultation, monitoring, and assessment to families with infant's birth to three years old. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, home visits have largely not occurred, aside from one family who is closely connected with the service and receives regular home visits. Many families have opted to receive support via phone calls, emails, and virtual meetings. We continue to link families with occupational therapists and physiotherapists who specialize in pediatrics. These visits occur out of town in the winter months, with some flexibility for virtual sessions with the therapists if families are unable to travel. From Spring through Fall, the therapists come to Revelstoke and see children at the Community Connections building. These visits are funded by the program and are highly appreciated by families. There is an average of twenty families connected to IDP per month. IDP is augmented by our drop-in parent support programs, B&B-1 and PACT.



Respectfully,  
Jill Middlemiss  
Infant Development Coordinator - Temporary

# FAMILY SERVICES

## Family Services Staff

**Marly McAstocker:** Co-Director Family Services/Clinical Counsellor

**Kerstin Bell:** Co-Director Family Services

**Karly Trauzzi:** Clinical Counsellor

**Lindsay Oberg:** Clinical Counsellor

**Mariane Porlier:** Clinical Counsellor

**Megan Shandro:** Youth Counsellor/Youth Outreach Worker

**Kelly Silzer:** Women's Outreach Worker

**Ainslee Arthurs:** Youth Respite House working Supervisor

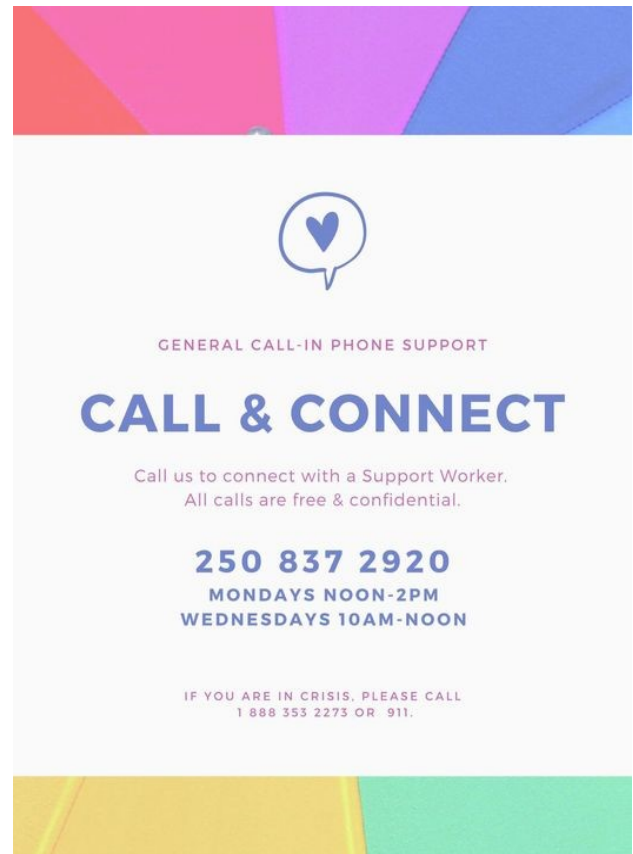
**Patricia Beaulieu:** Supported Child Development Coordinator

**Andree Rioux:** Supported Child Development Coordinator

**Jill Middlemiss:** Infant Development Coordinator

**Christine Froehlich:** Supported Child Development Worker

**Christina Davidson:** Infant Development Coordinator (On maternity leave)



**Stacy Sanchez:** Family Support Worker

**Amy McGiven:** Family Support Worker

**Olivia Brewster:** Youth Residential Care Worker

**Diego Ramdeen:** Youth Residential Care Worker

**Nathan Unwin:** Youth Residential Care Worker

**Tobias Schulz:** Youth Residential Care Worker

**Josianne Langlois:** Youth Residential Care Worker

**Steven Welch:** Youth Residential Care Worker





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT

## Food Bank

Community Connections Food Bank provides year round food assistance to children, families and seniors that are marginalized, live in poverty or that are working poor. We continue to face unique challenges and the community is heavily dependent on our services. In 2020, the Food Bank served 338 separate households that included 444 adults and 165 children. As the demand for food programs increased in March due to COVID-19 and immediate job loss, the Food Bank pivoted overnight and began providing services five days a week instead of a once a week distribution to keep up with the immediate growing demand.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted just how inadequate our current space was for the safe delivery of basic need services for vulnerable community members. The Food Bank rented venue was closed due to COVID-19 and thus we had to relocate our foods to our main office. Our main office does not have a space that was adequate to offer daily food for pick up in a safe or accessible manner, thus we were left with no other option but to go outside to our back alley, where we operated for seven months. This was only possible due to dedicated employees and volunteers, community support through a Rotary tent donation, and fortunate warm spring weather. We brought on an extra staff member to support the work of the food program. We would not have been able to offer our services during winter, should the pandemic have occurred then. We have since been able to scale back but are still distributing food at three separate distribution times to continue to meet the increased community need. In the past nine months we have had as many as 20 new applications each week. This increase in numbers is unprecedented!

This situation highlighted our challenges with handling food safely without adequate infrastructure such as industrial sinks or bin washing stations, and many of our fridges, freezers and food storage in other locations. Fortunately we have been able to move into our building at #416 2<sup>nd</sup> Street West in October and from there we continued offering a complete range of food and outreach programs. By amalgamating the Food Bank and Food Recovery programs during this crisis, we shifted the stigma of accessing charitable foods, and are currently serving approximately double our normal client load. Recovered foods are sorted, cleaned and made available to our clients on distribution days. In 2020 we received 144,000 pounds of recovered food, and to date, we have recovered over 500,000 pounds of food, which is worth over \$1.3 million dollars. The Food Programs allow us to help all those who are food insecure citizens and to bolster the nutritional offerings during distribution, while of course decreasing greenhouse gas emissions that the food would create if it were bound for the landfill. As we integrate and settle into the new space, we are making a shift towards calling the program the Food and Outreach Program rather than Food Bank/Food Recovery. This more accurately reflects the services we are providing.

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT

## Food Bank Continued

For over 20 years, the Food Bank has been the recognized program for providing food assistance in our community and one of our biggest accomplishments is never having to turn anyone away from our doors due to a lack of food. We assist individuals, families and seniors who continually struggle with the effects of poverty or those who are working poor and are unable to access affordable, nutritious food on their own. People continually struggle with rising food costs, increased rents, affordable housing and increased utility costs. As the winter of 2020 progressed, the food bank saw a big increase in the number of young adults accessing food. These folks moved to the area for the season but because of the pandemic were not provided with enough work to meet their financial needs.

The Food Bank is a recognized essential service as food insecurity is a harsh reality for many of our community members. We continue follow a Client Choice Model which allows people to choose from a wide variety of nutritious foods to meet their own personal needs. Client feedback continues to show satisfaction with this model as it provides more of a shopping experience instead of a pre-packed hamper of food. Staff and volunteers have opportunities to engage directly with clients, which encourages more social and supportive relationships.

The Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program ran again in 2020, with 72 households participating. This program resulted in \$25,000 of provincial and regional funding redeemed through coupons at our local farmers markets. These coupons allow families and seniors to access fresh local produce, meats, and dairy products, while still providing the producers with a fair income.

Our Food Programs are essential for our individuals and families struggling with hunger and food insecurity, as well it is a safe and inclusive program that provides a range of services from the annual Farmers Market Coupon program to the Christmas Hamper program. We receive referrals from many agencies in our community including the Women's Shelter, Childcare Society, Employment Services, RCMP, churches, pharmacies, private community members and from within our organization as well.

Healthy eating is the foundation of a healthy community and food is a basic need. However, more and more of our households cannot afford to buy adequate healthy food. The face of hunger is changing, no longer limited to the margins of society. In short, having access to nutritious food means low income seniors and families do not need to make difficult decisions on whether to pay the rent or buy food.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Mel Hemphill, Co-Director Community Development and Outreach**

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT

## Reflections from my past twenty years:

When I took the position of Food Bank Coordinator in September 2000 I never imagined that I would still be writing my last AGM report even as I wind up my final days with the organization! I am proud of all that has been accomplished over the past twenty years and am thankful for the many opportunities that my job has provided. This work can take a toll, because we can't fix all the things that are beyond our control, so instead I have focused on what I can provide: kindness, compassion and respect for everyone.

It's bittersweet to leave a workplace that I have enjoyed and this place, this work, and its people have meant so much to me. I am proud to have been a member of the team here, thank you for your support and your friendship. It's a pleasure to have worked alongside people who understand and know how to bring the best out in each other. Thank you to all of you who have supported the Food Bank from the very beginning, who believe in, recognize and appreciate the work that has taken place.

**Respectfully,  
Patti Larson  
Program Director (Retired)**



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT

## Food Security

The work of the Food Security Coordinator, centers on implementation of the recommendations for building our community's food security in the Revelstoke Food Security Strategy. The strategy organizes the work into five goals, which will be used to describe the 2020 work.

### ***Goal 1: Access to Food - Promote and support dignified access to nutritious, safe, affordable food as a basic human right for all residents.***

Melissa serves as the chair of the Revelstoke Local Food Initiative Farmers' Market Advisory Committee, leading this group to provide a food-focused market with broad community support. The market is a member of the Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program, providing the ability for low-income citizens to access healthy fresh foods, while also supporting local producers.

To address food access, Melissa helped to organize the Emergency Services Food Drive, publishes the *Low Cost Food Guide*, developed the *Chef Meal Program*, manages the *Revelstoke Garden Sharing* Facebook page, and has worked with the Community Outreach team to explore equitable food distribution through our programs. In 2019, we were able to partner with Community Food Centres of Canada to interview citizens for the national food insecurity survey, providing valuable insight to our client's struggles and successes. This information informed a presentation to local physicians about recognizing the signs of food insecurity and referring patients to the services we offer.

As access to food is mostly an income issue, a resolution was drafted for the Union of BC Municipalities, which was supported by the Revelstoke City Council, and adopted by the UBCM, framing food insecurity as an income-based problem that requires income-based solutions. The provincial government has committed to working on this issue as a result of the resolution.

Early in 2018, Melissa became a part of the Collective Impact project leadership team, working with the community to find solutions to Revelstoke's affordability challenges. Melissa works with the Food Insecurity Action Team for this project, providing back-ground and clerical support.

### ***Goal 2: Environmentally Sustainable Food Production - Increase access to local and regional food that is sustainably and ethically produced through personal, business and municipal government actions.***

By convening a *Farmer Network* and organizing farmer training events, Melissa supports local producers. But there are far too few local producers. The concept of an incubator farm, to train new entrant farmers while ensuring access to reasonably priced farm land, was explored extensively this year, with several partners and experts coming together to inform the project.

Melissa is a member of the *City of Revelstoke Advisory Planning Commission*, providing a food security lens to upcoming developments and buildings.



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT

## Food Security Continued

The pandemic highlighted the importance of community food security and a wealth of private gardens were developed around town as community members thought more deeply about where their food comes from. The Community Gardens were able to adapt their protocols to meet health regulations and the garden at the Arts Centre raised 75 kg of produce for the food bank. Community Connections also partnered with Revelstoke's newest farm: First Light Farm on a fundraiser that saw \$1000 raised to provide local fresh produce to the food bank.

***Goal 3: Food Culture - Promote the significance of food quality, cooking and preserving skills, food traditions and the importance of eating together to our health and wellbeing.***

In 2020, the *Chef Collective* proved to be a vital connection in making the *Chef Meal Program* a success, as well as *Chef-to-Chef* peer learning workshops. But the possibility of more events to connect people through food was severely impacted by the pandemic. *Soupalicious* did not run, but the LFI's farm to table dinner was adapted to *Harvest @ Home* and the *Community Christmas Dinner* was able to operate as a takeout meal, with support provided by Melissa for both of these events.

A *Gardening Survey* was conducted in the fall, showing that it is mostly long-term residents that own their own home that are gardening the most, as renters have little access to gardens or don't feel it's worth the effort to develop a garden without knowing if they will stay in their location. Many new gardens were established in 2020, as well as greenhouses and new chicken coops. The survey showed that gardening does not impact household food security dramatically, but it does provide mental



health and social benefits, as well as an appreciation of the challenge of growing food in our area. Tomatoes and carrots were the most popular crop and pest management was listed as the biggest challenge.

Melissa presented observations and provincial findings relating to community food security to both City Council and the Recovery Task Force to help building understanding around the impacts of the pandemic on the food system.

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT

## Food Security Continued

***Goal 4: Economic Sustainability - Support economic development opportunities related to local food production such as food production business, cooperatives, or partnerships through policy, education and networking.***

With an eye on longevity, incorporation of food security language into a revised Official Community Plan remains a key priority of our food security work. As the City prepared to initiate this process, extensive research about food policy was conducted, in addition to the *Urban Agriculture Bylaw*, drafted in 2018. Melissa hosted a *Visioning Survey* for the City, at a winter farmers' market, collecting valuable information to inform the OCP review process. Additionally, a variety of stakeholders in the community were brought together to draft a *Bee City Application* for the City of Revelstoke, which will form a platform for pollinator protection initiatives. The application is currently under review by city staff and committees.

In addition to connecting new farmers with available land, consulting new food and farm businesses, being involved in regional food hub planning, and speaking at StartUp Revelstoke's *Food Innovation Night*, Melissa currently sits on the *BC Ministry of Agriculture's New Entrant Advisory Committee*, providing input to the creation of new programs and supports. Melissa also brings a food security lens to the *Community Futures Revelstoke Board of Directors*, and serves as their representative on the *Revelstoke Community Foundation Board of Directors*.



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT

***Goal 5: Education - Increase knowledge of food security, local food systems and actions that can strengthen food security by public officials, community agencies, business owners and residents of Revelstoke.***

As education events were severely hampered by the pandemic, many online learning opportunities were shared with farmers and chefs to build their knowledge. Melissa presented to the *School District 19 Board of Trustees* about opportunities to build food literacy in their schools. Additionally, Melissa presented to a small group of teachers about food learning opportunities in a Professional Development presentation. Melissa presented observations and provincial findings relating to community food security to both City Council and the Recovery Task Force to help building understanding around the impacts of the pandemic on the food system.

Food security work is generously funded by the City of Revelstoke, Columbia Basin Trust's Community Initiative Program, and the Real Estate Foundation of BC. The position of food security coordinator not only allows our community to address household food insecurity and community food security in diverse ways, it also allows representation at regional conferences and groups. In 2020, Community Connections became a member of the BC Coalition for Healthy Schools. Our food security coordinator is a member of a provincial community of practice, which meets online monthly for education and collaboration on a broad range of food security topics, and she was included in Basin Food Talks and a BC Food System Roundtable, both in response to the pandemic.

As someone who is passionate about the importance of nutritious food as a basic human right, I am honoured to serve our community as Food Security Coordinator. I am thankful for the continued funding support that this work receives and for the collaborative home that this work has found with Community Connections.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Melissa Hemphill, Co-Director Community Development  
& Outreach**





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS  
**FOOD PICKUP**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

11 am - 12 pm  
416 Second St West, Rear Alley

Masks Required  
in Building  
(250)837-2920



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT



## Spring Food Drive

Join us for a contact-free drop-off food drive at Community Connections Outreach building! All food categories welcome with an expiry date after April 2020. Come to drop off between the following hours:

Monday - Thursday  
9:00AM - 3:30PM

Drop in the cart at the entrance of  
415 2nd Street West



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT

*As a part of the Community Outreach and Development team, the Homeless Outreach Program and Social Justice Advocate provide essential services to Revelstoke's most vulnerable populations.*

## Social Justice Advocate and Homeless Outreach Program

The Social Justice Advocate and Homeless Outreach Program have been essential services for the Revelstoke Community since their inception. These programs became even more important in supporting the community throughout the pandemic. The two programs support each other with a shared goal of assisting people to access government social welfare services and secure housing.

The population of Revelstoke is under pressure from the complications of living and working through a pandemic. Many of the struggles people faced were exaggerated over the past year; lack of work, lack of affordable housing, and social isolation. For many people, finding affordable housing is the biggest challenge. The Homeless Outreach Program works with individuals to help them find housing, or to keep housing. Through weekly attendance at the food bank, regular drop-in hours, and word-of-mouth, this position successfully supports those who are most at risk of experiencing homelessness, or who are currently experiencing homelessness. Along with direct client support, this position also informs BC Housing on the housing needs of Revelstoke, and works with stakeholders to advocate for more affordable housing in Revelstoke.

Once a person secures housing, the next challenge is maintaining it. The Social Justice Advocate position supports people to navigate the different processes for applying for social welfare services like employment insurance, income assistance, pensions, or disability assistance. The Social Justice Advocate also supports people that would like to file tenancy disputes.

**Respectfully,  
Erin MacLachlan  
Co-Director of Community Outreach and Development**

Community Connections  
Outreach Building





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT

## Tenant Support Worker

The Tenant Support Worker assists people living in subsidized housing managed by BC Housing. Many of the tenants living in subsidized housing require some support to be successful in their tenancy. This support is offered through the relationship that is built between the tenants and the Tenant Support Worker. The Tenant Support Worker creates relationships with all the tenants in the building by advocating for their various needs. These needs can be some of the following: understanding tenancy rules and regulations, accessing government social welfare supports, managing conflicts with other tenants, and supporting tenants to maintain their housing by abiding by the Tenancy Act. The Tenant Support Worker also connects tenants to other community supports like the Social Justice Advocate, Interior Health, the food bank, the volunteer tax program, the seniors program, and/or counselling.



BC

Our current Tenant Support Worker worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic. She continued to advocate for tenants with complicated health care needs despite many of their health care needs being over the phone, or through telehealth. The Tenant Support Worker typically provides recreational activities, but these had to be paused or adjusted to accommodate changing physical distancing regulations.

**Respectfully,  
Erin MacLachlan  
Co-Director of Community Outreach and Development**



# COMMUNITY LIVING PROGRAM FOR ADULTS

Community Living Service for Adults provides programs for adults with disabilities within Revelstoke. CLSA has three residential programs with eight individuals residing.

This past year our residential programs have grown with a new space being renovated at Eighth Street Group Home to service one of our individuals. CLSA also runs the RADS program which provides inclusion and employment services for our individuals. This program continues to grow as we expand our services to more individuals in the community.

Although this year our programming has been modified due to COVID-19 concerns, the past year there have been many fun events that our individuals have participated in. RADS ran a camping trip last year that was a success and many individuals attended. Many of our individuals have taken up skiing and snowboarding weekly and participate in the Special Olympics programs.

The past year has seen a lot of growth with an increase in individuals accessing our services and an increase in staffing. The CLSA team looks forward to continuing to expand our services, while working with the community to support the lives of the individuals so that they can live their lives to the fullest.

**Respectfully,**

**Jenna Thomsen, CLSA Co-Director**

## **RADS—Community Inclusion**

At the Revelstoke Adult Development Services Program we aim to support and enrich the lives of the people we work with and help build their best quality of life. We provide inclusion services, activities and outreach to our individuals.

We believe improving social inclusion for people with diverse-abilities starts with increasing their independence and confidence-strengthening their support systems and establishing routines and life skills. Activities are based upon the individual's needs, wants, goals and preferences. Inclusion gives a sense of belonging, develops valued roles and creates social relationships in the community.

**Respectfully,**

**Jesse Fowlie, Community Support Worker**

**‘We want a culture that is inclusive of everyone and where everyone who joins feels they have opportunity to succeed and grow’**

**-Nellie Borrero**

# COMMUNITY LIVING PROGRAM FOR ADULTS

## RADS– Employment Services

The Revelstoke Adult Development Services (RADS) Employment Program structure and strategy supports adult individuals with diverse abilities in securing and maintaining employment and develops inclusive workplaces in our community.

Our program structure provides individuals with: specialized job development, one to one job coaching, work skill development and individualized action planning in efforts to secure and maintain meaningful employment positions.

Our program strategy is to: create awareness and understanding about our program, to continue to connect and support inclusive workplaces and to increase employment capacity for individuals with diverse abilities in our community.

Inclusive employment benefits both the individuals and workplace. Employment offers individuals with diverse abilities a means to reduce poverty, decrease social isolation and provides a sense of identity. Employment offers inclusive workplaces new growth, a variety of perspectives and a committed workforce.

The RADS employment program aspires to secure and maintain employment for individuals and continues to build a more inclusive workplace culture in Revelstoke.

## Eighth Street Group Home

This year at the Eighth Street Group Home has been an eventful one! One of our clients moved back to Salmon Arm, while another moved into the Eighth Street Home from the Second Street Group Home. This has done wonders for the clients in our home. It has given everyone a chance to build a strong relationship with one another.

Everyone at the home enjoys a variety of things. This past summer they enjoyed a camping trip with other clients in our organization up past the dam. The clients also spent the day at the IPE in Armstrong with the RADS group. Others enjoy their weekly coffee with their friends and family. The ladies of the house enjoy their spa days at the RADS inclusion, painting together and having a cup of tea while watching a movie.

We also have a few skiers in the house that enjoyed the adaptive ski program this winter. Special Olympics Bowling and Curling is a big part of one individual's life. These past few months have been a period of adapting to a different type of normal with the pandemic going on. We look forward to brighter times ahead!

**Respectfully,**

**Michelle Chipman**  
**Residential Care Worker**



# COMMUNITY LIVING PROGRAM FOR ADULTS

## Lower Eighth Street Group Home

Lower Eighth Group Home (LEGH) is a program that has been supporting an individual for the past 24 months. The program focuses on improving the quality of life of a fun loving, kind and energetic young woman. Development of consistent programming and implementation of structure and routine in her daily life has allowed for further growth and engagement in a variety of activities. Consistency of staff has also been extremely helpful in building rapport and therapeutic relationships which have enabled her to step outside her comfort zone and engage in activities for longer periods of time.

Over the past 12 months the individual has settled into life in her new apartment. It appears she thoroughly enjoys having her own space and feels comfortable in the environment. Staff and the individual have been working with an Occupational Therapist to enable her to better regulate her sensory needs by implementing a variety of sensory activities throughout her day. She has not only been working on her sensory skills and ability to regulate same but also engagement in a number of activities that support small/gross motor function, memory, focus, exercise and basic life skills.

In the winter months the individual enjoys going out for car rides with the windows down and the music on. We often stop to go for a walk and to throw some rocks down by the river. In the warmer months she can often be found enjoying bike rides along the greenbelt, swimming at local lakes and going on walks to see a variety of local treasures.

The staff at LEGH are committed to supporting this individual to achieve her goals and reach her full potential.

**Respectfully, Julia Tattersall, Support worker**

## Second Street Group Home

2020 started out as usual. One of the individuals was busy Skiing and Curling, having a good time doing this activity. The other Individual enjoyed watching the Curling and chatting with some coaches and players.

By March everything changed due to COVID-19. Everyone made the best out of it during lockdown. They went for walks in our small group and enjoyed having meals that were delivered as a treat. Everyone had fun playing Basketball or drawing on the patio floor with chalk.

Once the restrictions were lifted, it was possible to go and have a coffee inside Tim's. This was a big joy for some of them. One of the individuals was able to go for an out of town visit with his parents. This made him a very happy man.

The other roommate was able to have visits with her family. In October a new roommate moved in to the home. He adjusted well and is engaged in many activities. He especially likes to go on the Gondola.

**Respectfully, Marianne Marolf, Residential Care Worker**

# COMMUNITY LIVING PROGRAM FOR ADULTS

## Community Living Services Staff 2020

Marolf, Marianne  
Edmondson, Cathy  
Donovan, Dayna  
Peterson, Raymond  
Holmes, Erika  
Faurot Maralee  
Fowlie, Jesse  
Moores, Will  
Chipman, Michelle  
Hughes, Jaclyn  
Whitty, Sandy  
Newbury, Michael  
Muirhead, Phyllis  
Condello, Lauren  
Francoeur, Chantal  
Martin, Michelle  
Gelineau, Emilie  
Ploeg, Merry  
Buchanan, Erin  
Stuart, Kathy  
Reimer, Marc  
Schiller, Danica  
Savoie, Myriam  
Konecna, Lenka  
Martin, Brittany  
Davies, Andrew

Poitras, Elyse  
Griffith, Christina  
Richardson, Megan  
Guzzi Jaimee  
Tattersall, Julia  
Bickford-Smith, David  
Wallach, Breanne  
Conn Rhyanna  
Golding, Selena  
Fowlie, Tiffany  
Horton, Lyall  
Greenwood, Maddy  
Sturdy, Anne  
Thompson, Lewis  
Thomas, Sidanny  
Lord, Thelema  
Bryant, Rachel

### ***CLSA Management Team***

**Brittany Palasz**

**Emily Inston**

**Jenna Thomsen**

**Marydell Allain**

# FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

*The Finance and Administration department provides support and financial guidance to the entire organization. We work in collaboration with Program Directors, Funding Partners, Community Partners and staff to ensure all reporting and contractual obligations are met and within funding guidelines. We provide staff with dedicated Human Resources, organized recordkeeping and all manner of financial and administrative support.*

## Human Resources

2020 was another dynamic year for Community Connections. Staffing needs were in constant movement across the Organization which reflected the evolution of the programs and services we provided. We welcomed 29 new hires and had a total of 105 individuals on payroll throughout the year. This high number reflects a number of factors; employees retiring, seasonal programs, programs starting/ending, and turnover. With the unique challenge of the global pandemic, the staff at Community Connections were supported and given up to date information. We couldn't be prouder of our dedicated staff during this last year. We continued to support our staff with permanent full time and part time positions, a Group Health Benefits Plan, and an optional Pension Plan to join when eligible. We will remain responsible and fair with our staff going forward, as we truly believe they are our greatest asset.

## Finance

In the face of uncertainty related to the global pandemic, Community Connections secured additional funding to ensure we could meet our service obligations safely and provide enhanced services to meet the community's changing needs. This funding was generously offered through a variety of local, provincial, and national funders. We were overwhelmed by the generosity of others and saw an increase in donations of \$230,000 from the prior year, with a large portion coming from the local community.

This was an unusual year of funding and has resulted in a surplus of approximately \$300,000. Given the large amount of uncertainty that exists, Community Connections intends to continuously re-assess our operating performance and budget for the specific use of this surplus as we gain a clearer understanding of the community's evolving needs

Highlights of the year include the start-up of the full-time Youth Respite House in July which is funded by the Ministry of Children & Family Development, and the purchase of the Outreach Building at 416 Second Street West. Significant renovations are planned for the coming year with a significant portion of the funding already secured in 2020 for Phase 1 (Food Bank and Food Services, Drop-in Space, and Commercial Kitchen) from Columbia Basin Trust (\$250,000) and an anonymous donor (\$240,000).

The programs we offer continue to be stable and strong, with minimal changes from year to year. Our funding partners recognize the stability of the programs and services we offer and continue to commit to our success.

**Respectfully submitted, Cara Potter, Director of Finance**



## Administration

In 2020, the department welcomed two new staff members; Cara Potter was appointed Finance Director while the previous Director is on leave, and Meg Irving joined as receptionist.

On behalf to the organization we take this opportunity to thank the Finance & Administration team for their dedication and hard work.

Our team:

Meg Irving  
Fraziska Widmer  
Human Resources Specialist

Administrative Assistant & Receptionist  
Bookkeeper  
Thomas Zuliniak, Jake Sloots

Siobhan O'Connor  
Mason Blackmore

Past Administrative Assistant & Receptionist  
Past Bookkeeper

# FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
Community Living BC	2,224,301	2,004,106
Ministry of Children & Family	866,082	726,317
Donations & Donations In Kind	365,970	132,113
BC Housing	304,043	172,865
CBT funding	296,815	109,000
Rent - Monashee Court	204,394	205,741
Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General	192,235	176,161
Grants - One Time Only	151,031	29,901
Pandemic Wage Subsidy Programs	127,962	-
BC Gaming	97,000	70,500
Rent Group Home Residents	73,312	73,177
Fees	63,212	57,753
United Way	54,811	7,777
Whitevalley	24,227	20,611
Canada Summer Jobs	18,459	-
City of Revelstoke	16,215	8,095
Revelstoke Community Foundation	8,253	4,500
Revelstoke Credit Union	8,250	4000
Autism Revenue	6,735	32,468
Interest	5,793	4,465
BC Housing - 8th St	3,060	3,060
Other	30	30
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$5,112,189</b>	<b>\$3,842,640</b>

# FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

## Program Expenses

Residential Group Homes	1,790,852	1,543,975
Monashee Court	376,842	312,485
Community Inclusion & Supported Employment	316,778	323,022
Pandemic Program expense	312,378	-
Family Enrichment	290,233	262,643
Outreach (Food Bank)	228,957	212,144
Supported Child Development	192,667	189,607
Homeshare	177,272	190,253
Staffed Youth Residential	150,013	98,550
Pandemic wage subsidy	127,962	-
Housing Outreach	118,274	99,194
CLS for children	82,324	71,667
Respite Parent Support	78,787	60433
Stopping the Violence	78,786	72,671
Food Security	75,077	49,194
Infant Development	67,719	67,400
Children Who Witness Abuse	63,111	56,086
Summer Day Camp	60,330	49,957
Family Services (Youth Services Program)	54,756	39,939
Women's Outreach	49,529	46,781
Parent Support Services	26,330	22,055
Social Justice Advocate	24,560	14,873
Cap-C	24,227	25,619
Parents and Children Together	11,479	9,587
Autism	6,869	23,647
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,786,112</b>	<b>\$3,841,782</b>
<b>Surplus (Deficiency) of revenues over expenses</b>	<b>\$326,077</b>	<b>\$858</b>

# PARTNERS & CONTRIBUTORS

**Community Connections receives funding, community support and partners with various individuals, businesses and agencies, including but not limited to, the following:**

BC Association of Farmer's Markets  
BC Gaming Grants  
BC Housing  
Canada Summer Jobs  
Canadian Pacific Railway  
Canadian Women's Foundation  
City of Revelstoke  
Columbia Basin Trust  
Community Living British Columbia  
Community Food Centres Canada  
Community Foundations of Canada  
Food Banks BC  
Food Banks Canada  
Interior Health  
Ministry for Children and Family Development  
Public Safety & Solicitor General  
Real Estate Foundation of BC  
Revelstoke Community Forest Corporation  
Revelstoke Community Foundation  
Revelstoke Credit Union  
Revelstoke Hospital Auxiliary Society  
Revelstoke Mountain Resort  
Royal Canadian Legion Branch #46  
School District #19 (Revelstoke)  
United Way  
Whitevalley Community Resource Centre  
Downie Timber and Selkirk Cedar  
Take to Heart Sawmill  
Real Estate Foundation of BC  
United Way  
Numerous community and corporate grants

Community Connections staff also sit as members on various steering and community planning committees



## **COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS (REVELSTOKE) SOCIETY**

**314 Second Street East—Main Office**

**416 Second Street West—Outreach Building**

**PO Box 2880**

**Revelstoke, BC V0E 2S0**

**(Tel) 250-837-2920**

**(Fax) 250-837-2909**

**Email: [info@community-connections.ca](mailto:info@community-connections.ca)**

**[www.community-connections.ca](http://www.community-connections.ca)**

### **Main Office Hours:**

**8:30am—4:30pm Monday - Thursday**

**8:30am—12:30pm Friday**

**Closed Statutory Holidays**