



## Kitsumkalum Gila Kyew Nluulk Head Start and Daycare

### Annual General Meeting 2020-2021

In March 2020 we had a team of 5. Myself, Barb Niemi Manager and ECE on the floor , Pam Guno our amazing ECE assistant on the floor, Millie Roberts our cook, tech support, responsible adult and all around helper, Verna Inkster our Elder, and Sandra Wesley out janitor.

We chose to support Verna and Sandra until the end of the regular year and encouraged them both to stay home so they could be safe and healthy. Aly Guno joined us as support and in September of 2020 became an addition to our team.

The following is the story of our year. We have learned so much over the past year, most of all that when we work together we can do anything.

As of April 1, 2020 Kitsumkalum Band closed our entire community down to assist CDC BC Doctor Henry's plan to lower the curve of COVID-19 transmission. Our community moved into a remote working environment shortly after. Our regular program was closed to the public.

Within the first few days of being at home our staff started to communicate. We are not the type of people to wait and see what happens, we are doers. We brainstormed ideas about how we could get supplies and activities to our 12 Head Start Children.

We had already planned an Easter bucket and decided to make a quick outreach bag of arts and crafts to keep the children busy for the two weeks at home.

We met at our Head Start building for a limited time visit and created a care package and delivered it to the children.

Pam, Millie and I are a close team and texting, and messaging ideas is our normal. We all decided we could work safely, physically distancing, washing hands and if needed wearing masks within the building and do more care

packages for the children. Who knew that these beginning ideas would be the start of our Outreach journey.

Pam and Millie are far from “ordinary” co-workers. They are AMAZING! Not many people can switch gears at work. It can take some people months to learn new skills and to build confidence in a new role at work. These two were instant super stars.

When we realized, we were not going to be very good at staying home, we knew we had to do another outreach package. We needed supplies and ideas. We also needed support from Kitsumkalum, FNHA and TRICORP. I emailed Steve Roberts and proposed our idea, he asked for a work plan and then gave us his support. At first we asked if we could use our surplus money and then as we connected with our funding agents we discovered they were in full support of us doing outreach for our community.

Millie is the master of ideas; Pam is the expert at adding culture and language and I am a good shopper. All three of us could assemble and package up these bags safely and get them delivered to the homes of our children.

If anyone knows the three of us, then they know we don't like to leave anyone (child) out. Millie and Pam took our community map and started to make a list of all the children. We quickly added more children to our list of care package deliveries and expanded it to include all children on reserve 0-6 years. This number was approximately 36.

We of course could not stop there and decided we needed to do a family care package as well and by the end of May we had 105 children on our list of to be included in our COVID-19 outreach program.

Our team worked by text, phone, video, messenger and in our building. While we practiced physical distancing and hand washing, we as a team of three, shopped for, created, and delivered these care packages. We alternated the care packages to be focused on 0-6 years old one week and family to include all ages of children the next week.

While we were busy doing our work, Kitsumkalum also developed an Emergency Operations Centre with Crisis Manager Fletcher Havelaar. Fletcher

was helpful in supporting our program in doing outreach. Kitsumkalum received funds that Fletcher helped allocate into the proper channels of use. Food security, electronics to work remotely and multiple other items.

Our team joined the Food security team right away. We were willing, able and wanted to get food to our families. We needed a master list of our community. Millie, Pam, Andrea, Heather, and Cynthia created a master list of community members, from the newest to the oldest member living on our reserve. We knew who you were, where you lived, and we knew we wanted to keep you all safe!

Our Staff assisted with the Food security at the same time as running our weekly outreach program until we reopened to children in September of 2020.

Here are the outreach packages we handed out from April 2020-September 2020

The following is a list of our outreach weekly bags.

April 2020

Arts and crafts bag, paper, glue, and more

Easter bucket with sea life puppet, stickers,

Earth Day

Hearts for the Window colouring,

THANK-YOU to Frances Sam! You're design and donation was perfect!

Seed planting for the family

May

Mini sandbox with bucket, shovel, treasures, and crafts

Mother's Day movie snacks. Mother's Day Card designed by Frances Sam.

Bent Box colouring, designed by Frances Sam

Baking video with recipe, Pam and Aly

Painting bag with paints, brushes, paper, and art smock

Literacy bag, board books and Sm'algyax word translation

June

Glitter emotion shaker kit, Lego emotion, inside out emotions

Surprise Graduation for Tayenna and Connor

Newborns diapers, books, toy, and blanket

Father's Day Smores kit, Card designed by Frances Sam

National Indigenous Day have pride bag, cultural books, tattoo, and crafts

July 2020

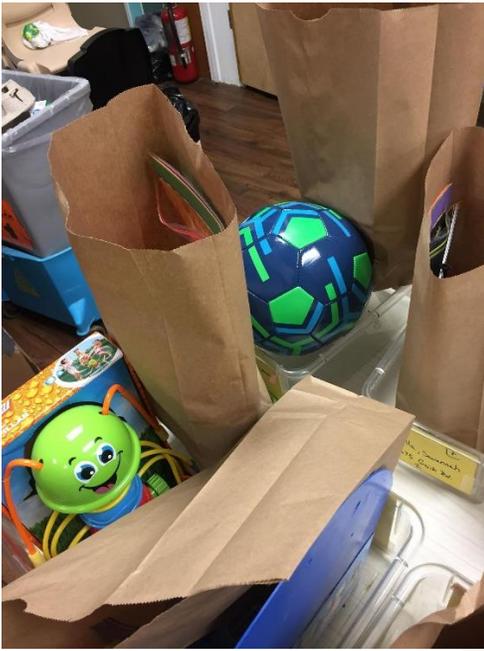
Forest Animal Cookie decorating kits

August 2020

Summer Activities

September 2020

T-shirts for all 105 of the children and our support team. This shirt was designed by our staff and Frances Sam. We wanted every child to have something that represented their survival of the pandemic.







## Part Two!

As we reached what we all believed was the end of COVID-19 pandemic we followed the public schools lead and reopened our Head Start and Daycare in September 2020.

Before we reopened, we hired Aly Guno as our official janitor, and she had been helping us with Sm'algyax. Thank-you Aly for joining our team.

Our staff spent a lot of time preparing our indoor classroom for social distancing, sanitizing and in general COVID-19 transmission reduction tweaks. This was not easy as we needed to remove hard to clean toys, books and activities from our regular program. We came up with solutions to many issues. We made activity trays for each child with their own playdough tools and playdough. We also created art baskets for the children to have their own crayons, markers, papers, and stickers. We reduced how many children sat at a table and at meal time we provided all their meals and served them. We installed hand sanitizing pumps for alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and one child safe hand sanitizer. We washed and sanitized often.

Developing policies from scratch about a virus we knew very little about to keep children safe was intimidating. Thankfully BC Aboriginal Child Care Society had created templates that we could add, edit and create our own policies from. We used Work Safe BC, CDC BC's recommendations, FNHA had a few tips for community and BC's Child Care Regulations. We developed policies, procedures and made as many plans as we could think of. Was it going to be enough? This was the question we sked ourselves every day. Could we keep transmission low?

We chose to follow the highest level of COVID-19 prevention that was "recommended" We staggered pick up and drop off times. We started and ended outdoors each day to prevent adults from entering the classroom. We signed the children in and out, we asked each day of their child was healthy and if the parent had done the daily health check.

As a staff we did a daily health check before leaving home each day. We also made a team commitment to be safe for our children and our community. If we were not sure of our symptoms we could stay home and assess them.

Next, we needed to make the outdoor play area fit for outdoor learning and teaching. We first needed a way to wash hands. Thank-fully we had already experienced running our daycare without running from previous experiences. We purchased some tables for outside, dug out the old water cooler and

started planning an outdoor wash station. We used hand soap, warm water from the spout and real towels to ensure we had dry hands. We also had a child friendly hand sanitizer dispenser installed. We had outdoor coat hooks installed spread out by 3 feet. We set up a Kleenex and garbage area as well. We provided the children with outdoor gear so they would all be warm and dry. Thankfully all our staff bought proper outdoor gear so we could stay outside and be warm and dry as well. It was the wettest year on record!

We had a few issues with starting outdoors. The number one issue, the rain. We used a few tarps to give us more area with less water. We needed to change the children when we would come in as most of the time they were soaked and we were also. As the months moved along, we started to notice the day light was fading. We were going to need more light. We still have not solved this problem. Maybe Christmas lights.

A few other issues we realized as we went along, vehicle parking and exhaust. We had to ask the parents to turn off their vehicles as our children love to run to the fences to see who is coming.

Our staff and the children adjusted very quickly. It didn't take long for us to realize how much happier the children were to be outdoors. They were thriving in this outdoor space. They were able to run, scream, jump or find a quiet space and have alone time. Our routine outdoors soon became the best change we had ever made.

Unfortunately, as we all know the case count for COVID-19 was on the rise. Our sister community of Kitselas had members falling ill and needing hospitalization. The neighbouring villages were also suffering. It had come to the point when our staff felt we could not keep the children safe.

That was a hard choice to make. We were supported 110% by Steve Roberts to do what we felt was the best thing for our community. And we quickly returned to outreach. We knew that this time we would not reopen until the level of safety was higher than it was in December 2020.

We made a master list of outreach ideas and started ordering supplies to get us through to March 2021. We thought for sure by Spring there would be a better idea of stopping COVID-19.

Here is the list of what we did next...

December 2020

Christmas bags with colouring books by Michelle Stony

Hot chocolate with marsh mellows

Craft Activity Bag

January 2021

Snack bags

We dyed white masks pink for anti bullying day

Painting kits

How to fill your bucket Book

Snack bags

February 2021

Valentine day kits and chocolate!!!

We dyed white masks pink for anti bullying day

Painting kits

How to fill your bucket Book

Snack bags

March 2021

Brain teaser, fidget activities, gifts of thoughtfulness

St. Patrick's Day Playdough

Oolichan bag!

Easter!!!

That is the end of the 2020-2021 fiscal year, but it was the not the end of our Outreach program.

Also while we were working on outreach, food security and other interesting projects, Pam Guno was making games using Sm'algyax.

Oh and while we were working remotely and doing outreach we also got to work on many funding opportunities.

We received \$10,000.00 from (BCACCS) B.C. Aboriginal Child Care Society

We received a Pandemic Wage enhancement from (FNHA)

First Nations Health Authority

<http://www.tinytap.com>

She had created three games for learning Sm'algyax, one for weather words, one for counting and one for animals.

## Preparing the outdoor space

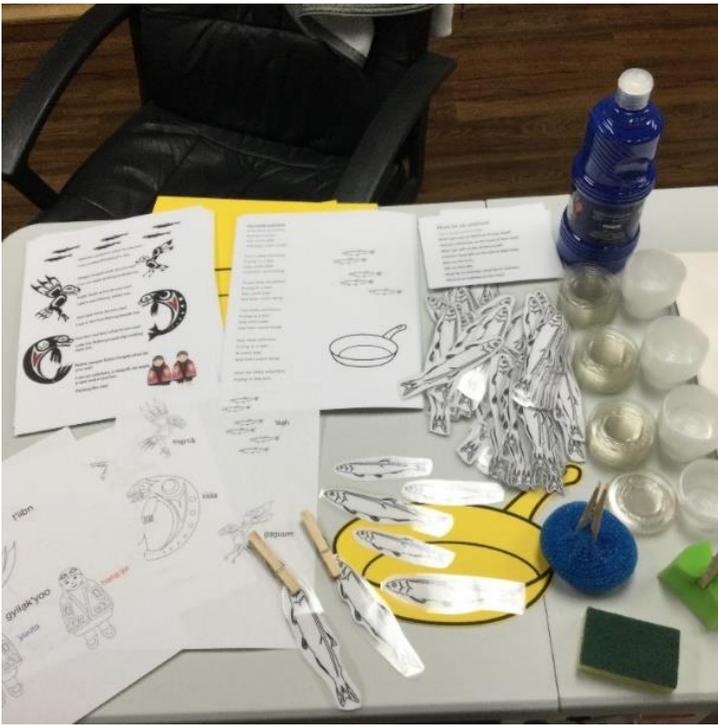
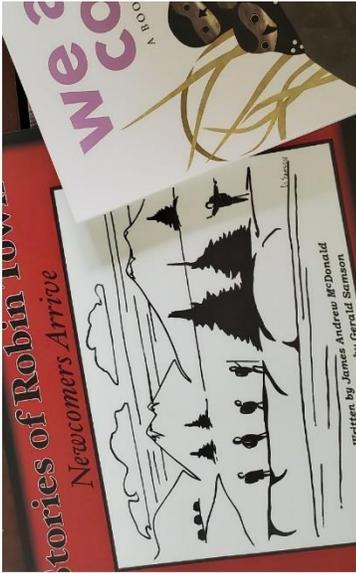


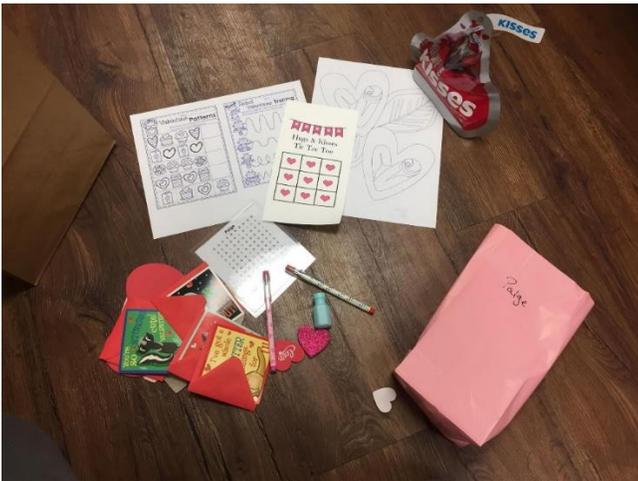
# Preparing the Indoor Space



# More Outreach















We didn't stop in March 2020, but the Fiscal year ended.

We went on to create many more outreach bags and family activity bags.

We created two more shirts and have recently transitioned back into Head Start and Daycare in person.

Covid still has all nervous and we are taking it one day at a time.

Oh and in January 2021 Barb along with ideas and support from Pam and Millie applied for a Land based learning grant. The first call out the Head Start was awarded \$43,000.00

They has a second call out and we awarded \$52,000.00

They have donated a playground to Kasiks as Kasiks will be a future land based learning opportunity for everyone in our community.