

huu ay aht

ANCIENT SPIRIT, MODERN MIND

# HUU-AY-AHT FIRST NATIONS SOCIAL SERVICES PROJECT

## Safe, Healthy, and Connected, Bringing Huu-ay-aht Children Home

Summary of 30 Recommendations Implementation
2022-2023

# STATEMENT FROM CHILD AND FAMILY WELLNESS

Huu-ay-aht First Nations Social Services Project: Safe, Healthy and Connected, Bringing Huu-ay-aht Children Home Report was released on May 31, 2017. The report highlighted the devastating reality that Huu-ay-aht children, like other indigenous children in BC, are many times more likely to be taken away from their families and placed in the foster care system than non-indigenous children. The legacies of Colonialism, Residential Schools, the 60's Scoop and the continued removal of children from their families into foster care by the provincial government have resulted in multi-generational trauma for Huu-ay-aht families.

30 Recommendations were made to ensure a focused and concerted action was made to bring Huu-ay-aht children home and to keep Huu-ay-aht children safe, healthy, and connected to their families, culture, and community. The recommendations set out concrete steps for improving outcomes for Huu-ay-aht children and families who are in, or at risk of being taken, into the foster care system. The Federal Government provided financing for a 5-year Pilot Project, and when paired with Huu-ay-aht and provincial funding, the Social Services Project was put into action. The Pilot Project ended on March 31, 2023 and Canada has committed to a 2-year Bridge Funding Agreement while a long-term, stable funding agreement can be negotiated.

In 2017, there were approximately 35 Huu-ay-aht children in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and Usma. Nine of these children were living with Huu-ay-aht families, and the remaining 26 had a varying degree of connection to the Huu-ay-aht community of culture. T the time this report was written, there were 26 Huu-ay-aht children in care, 18 of which were living with Huu-ay-aht First Nations families and are connected to family and culture.

## OVERVIEW

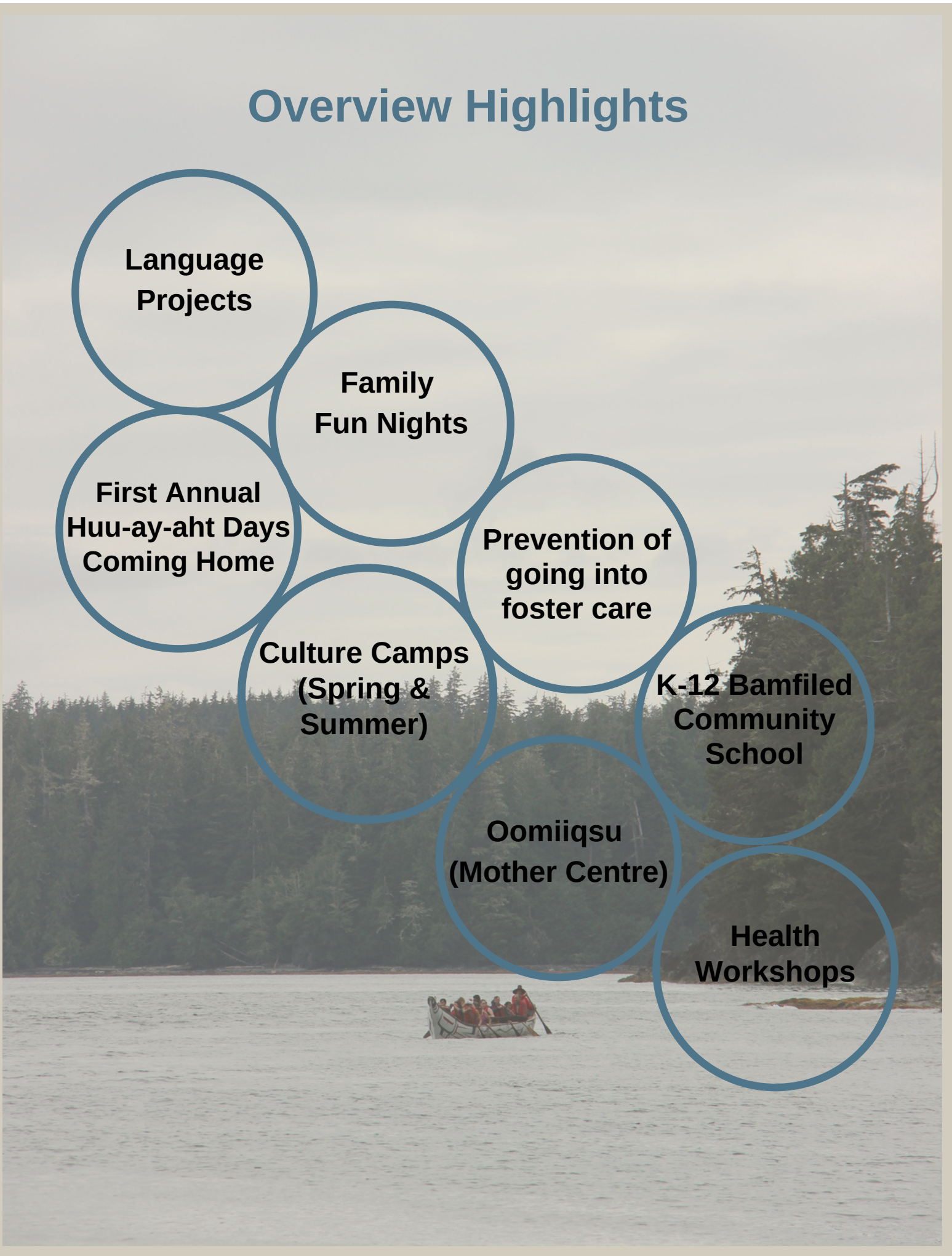
The Social Services Panel Report was tabled with Executive Council May 31, 2017. Executive Council accepted and directed implementation of all 30 recommendations.

There have been several significant points of activity and progress in implementation. The Child and Family Wellness Team, Community Services, and Culture Team worked together to implement these Recommendations. To date, 25 out of 30 recommendations have been implemented, and the final five are in progress.

**Funding for this project has been made possible by:**

- Government of Canada - $839,800 per year. The final year of prevention funding for Social Services Project
- Vancouver Foundation, Year two of three year funding - $99,780
- First Nations Health Authority
- First Nations Health Authority - Warriors Project
- Huu-ay-aht First Nations
- Canadian Women's Foundation , Girls Project - Year three of four funding, $99,600

# Overview Highlights



# 2022-2023 Department Highlights

## Child and Family Wellness

- One-to-one and group support (Protection and Family support Liaison, Clinical Counsellor)
- Annual Baby Welcoming; this past year, 11 babies were welcomed into the Huu-ay-aht family
- Family Fun Nights
- Virtual Recovery Group
- Huu-ay-aht Days (Coming Home)
- Two day Grief and Loss workshop
- Women's Circle
- Girls' Group
- Four community smokehouses built
- Citizen support for Tseshaht AIRS announcement
- Two-Thrive Family Life Parenting Workshops (facilitated by Brad and DeeAnna Dennis)
- Traditional foods provided to children in care
- Warriors Program
- Prevention of 27 children being removed from parents

## Culture and Language

- In-person Culture nights resumed
- Summer-time Culture Nights
- Spring Break Culture Camp in Anacla
- One-to-one and family brushings
- Ceremonial burnings offered to individuals and families
- Language Dinners and recordings in collaboration with First Nations Education Foundation
- Culture Camp exchange with Snunymeux
- Culture Team teaching at Anacla and Port Alberni Paawats, Bamfield Community School, and Alberni District Secondary School
- Teachings offered in Anacla and Port Alberni, alternating weeks

## Community Services

- Nursing Services (Community and Home care, Public Heath Nursing)
- In-community dental services
- Island Health Outpost in Anacla
- Grad Celebrations
- Truth and Reconciliation Day at Bamfield Community School
- Indigenous People's Day at Harbour Quay
- Summer outdoor Movie Night
- Grief and Loss Workshop
- Pharmacist to Anacla (Information session)
- NTC Services (Quůasa, Clinical Counsellor, Culture Support)
- Expanded tutoring sessions for all Huu-ay-aht students
- Vaccination Clinics
- Huu-ay-aht Staff at Bamfield Community School
- Kindergarten to Grade 12 expansion at Bamfield Community School
- Dietician programs for parents and toddlers
- Craft Nights
- Community Garden
- Four doctors and counsellors doing community visits (Specialist, addictions, AIM internal medicine)
- COVID Research Meetings (nananiiqsu and NTC Team)





# CHILD AND FAMILY WELLNESS

Working together, the Huu-ay-aht First Nations Community Services and Child and Family Wellness Departments provide health services and child & family services to Huu-ay-aht  Citizens

## Departments

### Culture and Language

**Cultural Wellness Administrator**
Cory Howard Sr.

**Cultural Wellness Worker**
Mel Edwards

**After-Hours Emergencies for Child Protection & Intimate Partner Violence**
250-731-6999

### Child and Family Wellness

**Director of Child and Family Wellness**
Shannon Zimmerman

**Team Lead Protection Family Support Liaison**
Christine Pearson

**Protection Family Support Liaison**
Kerry-Ann Collinge

**Protection Family Support Liaison**
Jennifer Hastings

**Protection Family Support Liaison**
Petra Barnfield

**Clinical Counsellor**
Rena Johnson

### Community Services

**Director of Community Services**
Coral Johnson

**Education Manager**
Brent Ronning

**Education Coordinator**
Vanessa Sabbas

**Youth Program Administrator**
Rachel Young
Temp: Andrea Lucas

**Community Services Manager**
Kristen Young

**Community Health Administrator**
Kimberly Nookemus



# SUMMARY OF 30 RECOMMENDATIONS IMPLEMENTATION

# IMPLEMENTATION BY RECOMMENDATION

Dedicated Family Support Liaisons and Protection Support Workers

RECOMMENDATION 1 AND 2

- The Protection Support workers and Family Support Liaison positions have been made into one role, called the Protection Family Support Liaison. By making this change, citizens have one support person instead of two. This helps eliminate citizens having to shift between two workers
- All staff have experience and training in trauma informed practice and cultural sensitivity

## WRAP-AROUND SUPPORTS

Ensuring Protection Family Support Liaisons and Clinical Counsellor draw upon programs and resources.

RECOMMENDATION 3

- Huu-ay-aht First Nations and Indigenous Service Canada provided the front-line staff with access to funding to support families

## BABY-WELCOMING CEREMONY HELD IN JUNE 2022

Huu-ay-aht should implement expanded pregnancy supports and baby-welcoming programs

RECOMMENDATION 4

- Huu-ay-aht First Nations provides all new parents with a welcome gift
- An annual Baby Welcoming Ceremony is held each spring

If you are an expectant parent, please contact the Child and Family Wellness Department



## Huu-ay-aht has funding in place to ensure family's basic need are being met

### RECOMMENDATION 5

- Huu-ay-aht First Nations offers support for families and individuals in crisis or during periods of transitions
- Crisis Grants are available through the Community Services Department for citizens *without* minor children
- Emergency funds are available for citizens *with* minor children in crisis situations from Children and Family Wellness Department

## Huu-ay-aht has funding and resources to ensure that citizens who are ready to choose sobriety are supported to achieve this goal

### RECOMMENDATION 6

- In 2022-2023, Huu-ay-aht citizens received funding for detox, residential treatment programs, and second stage housing after-care. Huu-ay-aht spent approximately $415,000 on mental health and sobriety supports

**HUU-AY-AHT CLINICAL COUNSELLOR**
**250-723-0100**

## Transition Support Program

### RECOMMENDATION 7

- Huu-ay-aht First Nations offers transition support services to assist citizens during stressful transitions in life

**TRANSITION SUPPORT**

- **BIRTH OF A CHILD**
- **DEATH OF A LOVED ONE**
- **CHILDREN REMOVED**
- **RETURNING FROM TREATMENT**
- **SEPARATION FROM PARTNER**

## Safety and support in Anacla

### RECOMMENDATION 8

- Community Safety Act
- Inquiry Panel
- Ongoing advocacy and recommendation to ensure safety and support in community
- Community Consultation Group (RCMP)
- Tripartite Agreement with RCMP for Indigenous Policing Services
- Work with RCMP to ensure safety of citizens of all ages

## Consistent opportunities for engaging in cultural activities for Huu-ay-aht families and children

### RECOMMENDATION 9

- Huu-ay-aht has one Cultural Wellness Administrator and one Cultural Wellness Worker providing cultural support to citizens
- Huu-ay-aht Days (Coming Home) held in August 2022
- Hosted Culture Camp Exchange with Snuneymuxw First Nations youth
- Huu-ay-aht celebrated the birth of 11 babies in 2022
- First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) funded the Warriors Program



## Parent education and support tools available

### RECOMMENDATION 10

- One-to-one parent support and education available to all parents

## Implement a strong Anti-Violence Program with strong outreach component to Huu-ay-aht people wherever they live

### RECOMMENDATION 11

- The Child and Family Wellness Department is committed to protecting individuals impacted by violence
- If a child is present and RCMP or Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD) or delegated agency (Usma) are called, contact the Child and Family Wellness Team immediately
- Development of family safety plans
- Counselling support
- Staff and Executive Council participated in Lateral Violence Training
- Three staff participated in a healing program, called *No one left behind*: Sexual Violence Training through a holistic approach

## Build an Elders Liaison and Support Program

### RECOMMENDATION 12

- Thrive Workshop (Parent skills, tools advocacy) - Elder participation
- Nananiiqsu
- Elders at Anacla Paawats

## Access to Legal Advocates

### RECOMMENDATION 13

- Supports available to access legal advocacy for child protection matters

## Implement Jordan's Principle

### RECOMMENDATION 14

- Support citizens with applications for programs and services not covered through other providers and agencies, (i.e. Occupational therapy, computers, speech therapy, medical equipment)

## Implement Family Group Conferencing (FGC)

### RECOMMENDATION 15

- This is a good option for surrounding a family with the support of extended family and is available upon request and will also be suggested by staff

## Establish a Quality Assurance Working Group

### RECOMMENDATION 16

- Working group meets as needed to discuss cases that are "stuck" with the goal of finding a path forward

## Development Officer must be appointed at all times

### RECOMMENDATION 17

- In 2022, a Community Development Officer, Miya Inster, was contracted to review Child Family Wellness and Community Services programs and services
- Survey provided to citizens and feedback identified where there are gaps, a report was created

**Citizen Development Review Report**

Scan QR code to view!

Permanency Plans

RECOMMENDATION 18

- Permanency Plans have been developed for Huu-ay-aht children and youth currently in care

Culture Plans for Huu-ay-aht children and youth in care

RECOMMENDATION 19

- A Cultural Wellness Worker works closely with the Child and Family Wellness Team to develop, implement, and monitor Culture Plans
- Input from Ḥaw̓iiḥ Council
- Children and youth gifted with regalia, drums and/or rattles

Pursue and continue significant engagement with children and youth, including the development of a Huu-ay-aht Youth Council

RECOMMENDATION 20

- Goals for 2023 is to develop a Governance Program, where our youth will be introduced to roles of leadership (Governance positions)
- Youth Administrator provides after school activities to children and youth five days per week
- Youth Administrator also works five days per week at Bamfield Community school
- Provides evening activities
- Special activities (Culture Camps, ski trips)

## YOUTH PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR - RACHEL YOUNG

Traditional House Groups, under leadership of Ḥaw̓iiḥ and matriarchs

RECOMMENDATION 21

- All citizens have been placed in a Traditional House Group
- House Groups are assigned when an individual is approved for citizenship
- Ḥaw̓iiḥ is conducting a survey to document traditional names
- The Ḥaw̓iiḥ Council meets monthly

Implementation and Oversight Committee

RECOMMENDATION 22

- Dissolved in 2022 as recommendations are being implemented

Negotiation agreements with Ministry of Child and Family Development and USMA

RECOMMENDATION 23

- Yaaʔakʷup (Coordination Agreement)

Establish committed long-term funding dedicated to Huu-ay-aht Wrap-around Lifecycle Support

RECOMMENDATION 24

- Currently in the process of working towards stable, long-term funding



## Designate a Huu-ay-aht Decision Making Body as Alternate Dispute Resolution Body

### RECOMMENDATION 25

- Work began on this in 2019 and currently in progress

## Work to establish a centre modelled on the Vancouver Aboriginal Mother Centre

### RECOMMENDATION 26

- Work to establish a Centre modelled after Vancouver Aboriginal Mother Centre
- Huu-ay-aht secured funding to build Oomiiqsu, an Aboriginal Mother Centre (BC Housing purchased land)
- Huu-ay-aht received funding from the province to support operational funds
- Huu-ay-aht is contributing funding



## Huu-ay-aht should establish a consistent community engagement to continue community engagement and receive input on matters related to child and family health and well-being

### RECOMMENDATION 27

- Hosted Community Engagements
- Communication strategies continue to be developed

## Put in place sufficient education and teacher resources in Bamfield and/or Anacla to close the resource gap that requires Huu-ay-aht children to leave the community for schooling after completing junior school grades

### RECOMMENDATION 28

- Bamfield Community School provides K-12 full-time Education Assistant
- Youth Administrator provides support five mornings a week
- Education Coordinator helps children, youth, and parents address barriers to school attendance
- Tutors are available for all ages

## Exercise Huu-ay-aht's law-making power over adoption to ensure culturally appropriate limits on adoption of Huu-ay-aht children in BC

### RECOMMENDATION 29

- Huu-ay-aht is providing input into legislative changes of Child, Family, and Community Services Act
- Customary Care Agreement, first in B.C. was signed with a Huu-ay-aht family. A child was placed with a family without the Ministry of Child and Family Development involvement and parent retains all rights for input of Child's health, culture, education, and well-being

## Huu-ay-aht Leadership Commitment

### RECOMMENDATION 30

Huu-ay-aht Leadership is committed to:

- Strong advocacy for Huu-ay-aht children, youth, and families
- Advancing strong, open, and united voice against violence among Huu-ay-aht people
- Ensuring the financial and human resources are put in place for healing multi-generational trauma
- Ensuring through community consultation and engagement, and alliance between leadership, staff, and citizens direct the path forward for Huu-ay-aht youth and families

# Next Steps: The final five Recommendations in progress

### Implement a strong Anti-Violence Program, with strong outreach component to Huu-ay-aht people wherever they live (e.g. Port Alberni, Anacla, Nanaimo, Vancouver etc.)

RECOMMENDATION 11

Implemented and being further developed

- Programs and services provided under Child and Family Wellness Department, one-on-one, Clinical Counselling and Group Sessions
- Developing Strong Anti-Violence and Outreach Programs from the Recommendations of the Inquiry Panel
- Two Protection Family Support Liaisons and Cultural Wellness Administrator took a Group Resilience in Action, a facilitator training to support citizens who are victims of sexual violence

### Build an Elders Liaison and Support Program

RECOMMENDATION 12

Currently being developed and reviewed

- Nananiiqsu provides recommendations, Elder at Paawats in Anacla
- Some Elders providing care to children and youth
- Elder participating in programming in Anacla Paawats
- Looking to Elders/ḥaẃiiḥ to assist with culture plans



### Huu-ay-aht should negotiate significant cooperation and partnership with Provincial and Federal Governments in the following areas

RECOMMENDATION 23

Implemented and ongoing

- Funding negotiations between BC, Canada and Huu-ay-aht

### Work to establish a centre modelled on the Vancouver Aboriginal Mothers Center

RECOMMENDATION 26

Huu-ay-aht has secured a location and funding for the first year of operations.

- Scheduled to open in August 2024

### Exercise Huu-ay-aht's law making power over adoption to ensure culturally appropriate limits on adoption of Huu-ay-aht children in BC. Huu-ay-aht should direct the Implementation and Oversight Committee to recommend a legal structure based on community engagement, discussions with provincial government and legal advice, within 2 years

RECOMMENDATION 29

Started implementing

- consulting with legal team

# POLICY STATEMENT: INTERNAL IMPLEMENTATION OF JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE




## GOAL

The goal of this policy is to ensure that no Huu-ay-aht citizen or family experience delay or denial of available services due to uncertainty about responsibilities as between Huu-ay-aht departments.

## STATEMENT

When there is uncertainty about which department, either the Community Services or the Child and Family Wellness, is responsible for providing a Huu-ay-aht Government service to an individual or family, the department of first contact will provide or ensure the provision of the services. Where necessary and appropriate, that department may afterward seek allocation or reimbursement of the funds from the other Huu-ay-aht department. Please note that these departments work collaboratively and confidentially and share information to provide support.



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