



Annual Report

2025 - 2026

Kaslo Community Services works on the stolen territories of the Ktunaxa, Sinixt and Syilx nations. We acknowledge the impacts of colonization, both past and present, and we seek to deliver our services in a manner that honours the land and the Indigenous peoples living here today.



*Serving the communities of
North and Central Kootenay Lake
and the Lardeau Valley*

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Kaslo Community Services (KCS) is a registered charity and non-profit society.

Donations to KCS are tax deductible

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Leadership Team

What an exciting year. After many years of exploring options for more space, we took possession of our new building at 330 B Avenue, right next door! A year of fun fundraising events brought out a heartwarming response from the community and many hours and a few late nights of grant-writing brought in significant grants from funders. With renovations confined to the new building, we have been able to continue uninterrupted with services to the community.

Annual Highlights

In alignment with KCS's priority actions, highlights from the year include:

■ Securing Appropriate Space

We are grateful to our local and regional donors who helped us reach our \$1 million dollar fundraising goal, allowing us to complete the purchase of our new building at 330 B Avenue, The House Next Door. Peter Chomitz of Pete's Carpentry has been hired as the general contractor and significant renovations are now underway, to meet KCS

program needs for additional office space and 2 meeting rooms.

■ Access to More Funding:

We engaged consultant Phoebe Sutton to help with fundraising and communications for the building project. Phoebe has provided energetic support to all our fundraising events and has kept the community informed through social media posts and a monthly newsletter.

■ Expanded Seniors' Programming

We secured a new contract to hire a Community Connector to support seniors to stay connected in the community and take advantage of available supports. We also hired a Seniors Discussion Group facilitator who provides weekly discussion groups exploring the joys and challenges of aging.

■ Child Youth Mental Health Outreach

With funding from the Federal Youth Mental Health Fund, we now offer outreach support for children and youth. This supports the

Counselling program to reach more children and youth and is also providing group programs.

■ Program and Service Delivery

We successfully negotiated an increase in hours for the Adult Mental Health programs, to better serve our community.

■ Highly Effective Partnerships

We are working with Kootenay Boundary Community Services Co-op to develop a rural model for Foundry services in the West Kootenay, providing increased mental health supports for youth. We also delivered a collaborative food skills series in partnership with Nelson and New Denver organizations.

■ Staffing Solutions

- A huge appreciation to each member of our compassionate and dedicated staff team here at KCS.
- Two successful staff retreat days fostered connection and renewal. We also completed our second year of Anaya Lambert's 6-part EDI and Anti-Racism training series.
- We said a sad goodbye this year to Co-Executive Director Jana Gmür. We are working with a consultant to restructure the organisation to maintain our collaborative leadership model, while also paving the way for

continued expansion of services. We thank Jana for her service and wish her all the best as she pursues further education.

■ Infrastructure & Comfort Enhancements

The new building will decrease the pressure on office space and provide a meeting room for staff meetings, group programs, and board meetings.

Patrick Steiner

Co-Executive Director - Food Security, Seniors, Community Engagement

Jane Ballantyne

Co-Executive Director - Finance and Administration



Board

Message from the Board Chair

I must start this message by addressing the most significant accomplishment of Kaslo Community Services this past year, the successful purchase of The House Next Door. Our Board has been proud to support this once-in-a-generation expansion of the Society's physical space, creating exciting opportunities to grow KCS programs and services for our community for years to come.

Another major undertaking this year was a comprehensive 360-degree performance review of our three Co-Executive Directors. Drawing on feedback from Board members, staff, and community stakeholders, we assessed their accomplishments, strengths, and opportunities for growth—both individually and as a leadership team. The results affirmed the exceptional leadership they provide to the organization while also offering valuable insights to support their continued professional growth and strengthen their collaborative work.

Building on this experience, the Board

also introduced an annual self-evaluation process to assess our own effectiveness in providing strong governance and strategic leadership. We are committed to continuous improvement and to ensuring that our governance practices evolve alongside the organization.

Boards and organizations naturally change over time. This past year, we thanked outgoing Board member Derek Apple for his service and welcomed Jabeen Quadir to the Board. We also said farewell to Co-Executive Director Jana Gmür. Jana brought warmth, enthusiasm, and outstanding management skills to KCS, and her contributions have left a lasting impact. She will be greatly missed.

Following Jana's departure, the Board and Leadership Team began an in-depth review of KCS's leadership structure to determine the best path forward for the organization. This thoughtful planning is already leading to exciting developments, and we look forward to sharing more in next year's *Message from the Board Chair*.

Our Board committees remained

actively engaged throughout the year. One notable accomplishment was the development of new food security and food safety policies for our Food Cupboard program as part of KCS's accreditation through Food Banks Canada's *Standards of Excellence*.

Community connection continues to be at the heart of everything we do. We were deeply encouraged by the tremendous support shown during our fundraising campaign for The House Next Door. The generosity and enthusiasm of our community made this milestone possible, and we look forward to welcoming Kaslo and area residents into this new space when it opens in 2027.

Thank you to our dedicated staff, volunteers, donors, partners, and community members for your ongoing commitment to KCS. Together, we are building a stronger, more connected future for our community.

Janet Mayfield
Board Chair

Boad of Directors:

Janet Mayfield - Chair

**Lynn Gouldsbrough -
Vice Chair**

**David McCormick -
Treasurer**

**Kim Lafortune -
Secretary**

Harel Challmie

Jabeen Quadir

Rodney Arnold



Finance

March 31, 2026

- Income \$1,712,437
- Expenses \$1,638,534
- Surplus \$73,903
 - Added to Reserves \$31,639
 - Invested in Capital Assets \$28,394
 - Carried forward for future needs \$13,870

With the purchase of The House Next Door, our additional building at 330 B Avenue, plus some new computers, we also had an increase in Tangible Capital Assets: of \$531,283

We raised a total of \$1.1M for the building project, which will cover both the purchase price and renovations. A special shout out to Columbia Basin Trust who put up almost half of that \$1.1M, helping us to also secure a major contribution from the Province.

Thank you to all of our funders and donors. A special thank you to each of our individual donors, who continue to provide generous support for Community Service programs, including

the Food Cupboard, and this year for our capital project, The House Next Door. Thank you for your generosity!

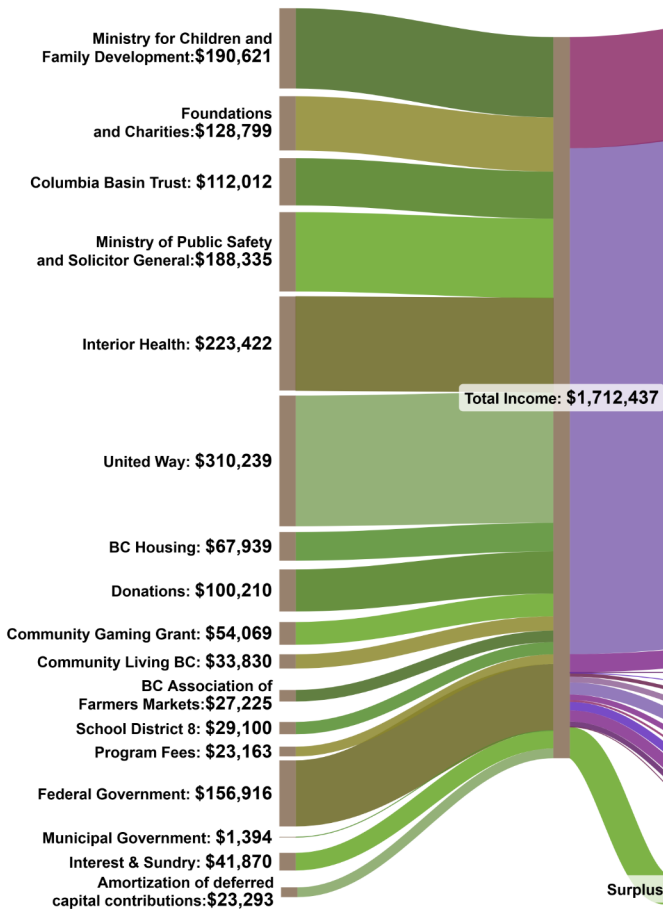
Jane Ballantyne, MSc. CNAP

Co-Executive Director – Administration and Finance

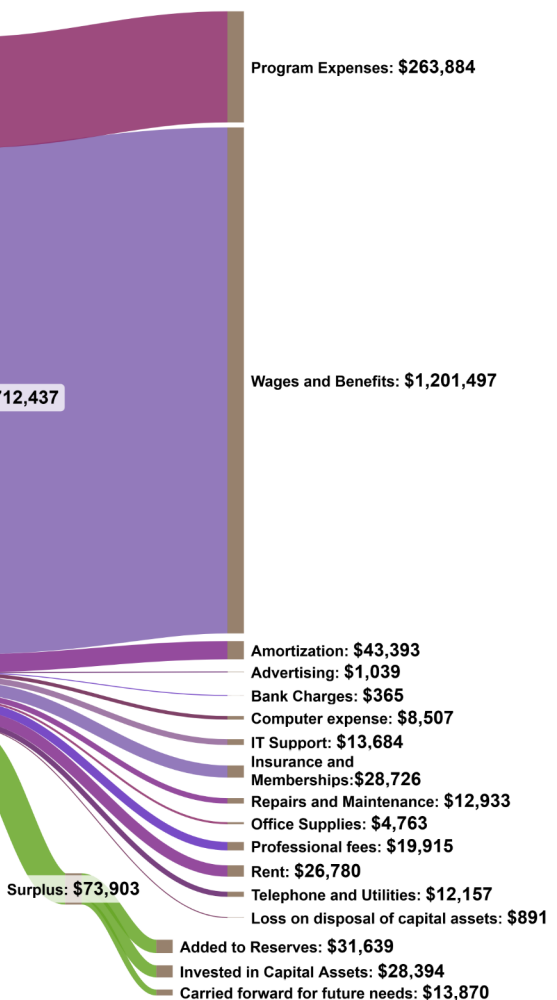


Terry Marshall and Rob Danby raised more than \$8700 for the Food Cupboard since 2021.

Income



Expenses



Capital Project - The House Next Door

2025-26 Capital Funds Raised:

Grants:

- Columbia Basin Trust \$510,000
- Province of BC \$250,000
- United Way BC \$20,000
- Regional District of Central Kootenay \$10,000
- Village of Kaslo \$10,000
- Foord Family Foundation \$6,000
- Community Fund of North Kootenay Lake \$4,000
- Kootenay Savings Community Foundation \$2,500
- Victorian Hospital of Kaslo Auxiliary Society \$1,000
- Kootenay Coop \$1,000

Total Grants: \$814,500

KCS Building Fund: \$236,231

Donations and Fundraising: \$34,115

Total as of Mar 31 2026: \$1,084,846

2025-26 Expense:

Property Purchase price: \$525,000

Renovation expenses: \$16,178

**Remaining Funds for ongoing Renovations:
\$543,668**



Youth

Kaslo & Up the Lake Youth Network

Kaslo & Up the Lake Youth Network (KULYN) is one youth network out of 27 making up the Basin Youth Network. We acknowledge that we live and work on the unceded territory of the Ktunaxa, the Sinixt, the Syilx, the Lheidli T'enneh, and the Secwepemc peoples.

KULYN provides youth ages 12 – 18 opportunities to participate in programs, events and activities taking place in the community and at the Kaslo Youth Centre, Kaslo & District Public Library, Columbia

Basin Alliance for Literacy, and The Lardeau Valley Community Center.

Youth Volunteers of

Honour: Atlanta Bekker, Lachlan & Kaeda Dube, Alex Harvey, Ben Brown, Mael O'Brien, Edi Thomson, Kaydance Hoppenbrouwers, Gabe Speirs, Bodhi Stewart and Solstice Constantine.



KULYN offers youth volunteer opportunities, and we have established a JVH School student liaison to deliver weekly program, activity and event updates.

Participant comments:

"I really appreciated playing music trivia and singing and dancing on Friday night. It was really cool how it brought everyone in the room together, even as there were smaller groups doing their own thing."— Youth Program Leader

"I have no idea what my life would be like without this girl's group. I love it so much. I love coming here and just chilling out."— Youth participant from Self Identified Girls Group Drop In.

Kaslo Pride Celebration

KULYN and Kaslo & Area Youth Council (AKA KAYC or Kaslo Youth Centre) and Kaslo Pride Committee partnered up for Kaslo Pride Celebration 2026. It was a



success! There were about 50 community members who painted the Pride Crosswalk, and about 20 people showed up for the celebration. We were honoured to have Councillor Matthew Brown speaking to the importance of inclusion and nurturing difference in our community.

KULYN hosted Under the Umbrella to encourage inclusivity for all genders, spectrums, sexualities and cultures. We met once a month on Tuesdays from 3 – 5pm. We had consistent participant attendance for each drop in (7). This provided youth an opportunity to socialize, be creative, and be themselves in a safe space where difference is nurtured.

Youth Art and Culture (YAC) hosted 3 Baking Sessions w/Steph at JVH School. Youth love baking! We offered a spring session with a total of 12 youth participants. The youth learned to bake a variety of goods to share with family and friends.

KULYN, YAC AND KAYC collectively purchase **art supplies** accessible to all youth during activities, programs and events throughout the year.

Kaslo Youth Centre Programs - KCSS provides financial support to KAYC Operations & Management.



- **Self-Identified Girls Drop-in** is co-hosted with Lisette McCracken Freedom Quest Youth. There were 220 youth visits during the year.
- **Friday Night Drop-in** - wow what a year it was. Our Friday night is our busiest drop-in and we had a total of 394 youth participants visits on Friday. Sadly, due to lack of staffing we had to reduce the frequency of the program to one drop-in per month.
- **Dungeons and Dragons Adventure Club** – We had increased attendance with 113 youth visits during the year, steady programming, and offered part-time employment.
- **Deep Dive Art Sessions** happened one time per month on Thursdays 3-5pm. We had a total of 50 youth

attend over the year. *New program funded by the Vancouver Foundation.*

- The number of participant visits to all programs increased from 711 last year to 777 this year. Eight new youth participated.

KAYC - Community Events

- Kaslo Light Up – Santa’s Workshop hosted by 5 youth volunteer elves.
- Winter in the Forest Festival – hosted by 1 KAYC employee.
- Kaslo May Days - Cotton Candy Youth Booth – 8 youth and 4 adult volunteers, and 2 employees raised \$1200 for the Kaslo and Area Youth Center.

- De-structing T-Shirts
- Perler Beads
- Make a Mug!

Outcomes included: team building, decision making, building relationships, community engagement, navigating social situations, building patience and fostering a sense of accomplishment.

Looking Forward – Next Year’s Adventures

We are excited to head into the mountains this summer with our very first Youth Hiking Club!

Shannon Isaac
Kaslo & Up The Lake Youth
Coordinator

Kaslo District Public Library

At the library we like to create a welcoming, inclusive, and engaging environment for all youth programs, with the goal of ensuring every participant feels comfortable being themselves and has opportunities to thrive.

A simple but impactful addition has been the use of the Bluetooth speaker. Music helps transform the library space into one that feels inviting, energetic, and youth-centered.

Events this year:

- Slime and Potions
- Candle Making
- Bingo



Kaslo Food Hub

The Kaslo Food Hub remains an essential resource for our friends and neighbours in need. Our space provides emergency food hampers, distributes surplus produce from local growers, offers meaningful volunteer opportunities, and, at times, simply serves as a welcoming place to pause, connect, and be heard.

As a true food hub, we play an important role in the local and regional food system by connecting producers with consumers and helping ensure that locally grown food reaches those who need it most. Our work focuses on supporting families, seniors, and individuals facing food insecurity, while also recognizing that many people experience overlapping challenges such as mental health concerns, trauma, and social isolation.

Whether responding to emergencies, disruptions in food supply chains, or the ongoing impact of rising food costs, the Kaslo Food Hub remains a vital link in the procurement, distribution, and stewardship of local food. By strengthening partnerships and expanding access to nutritious, locally produced food, we continue to advance a more

resilient, connected, and food-secure community for everyone.

Food Hub Stats

- 887 volunteer hours
- 2,911 individual visits
- 284 unique individuals accessed services
- 260 (avg) visits per month
- 104 (avg) unique individuals permonth
- 92 holiday hampers distributed in 2025
- The 2025 farmer's market coupon program had 62 people/households participate. Over \$26,000 of coupons distributed.
- Incredible Garden Tour 2025 – 90 tickets sold, 10 garden sites to explore, \$1960 income generated for food cupboard.
- Food Recovery: 48,750 pounds with a value of \$180,862

Meadow Creek Food Cupboard

Each week we bring food to roughly 20-30 people living in this rural area, many of whom are seniors. Some live on fixed incomes and don't drive making this an

important asset for their household food security. We've partnered with other service providers like a doctor, public health nurse, social worker, and digital literacy support to provide a fuller suite of supports co-located at the Lardeau Valley Community Centre. Local volunteers help us unload and set up the food supports we bring and provide meaningful assistance to our staff.

Food Recovery

Food recovery is a partnership between our Food Cupboard and food retailers like grocery stores, restaurants, farms, bakeries, etc. Unsold or unusable food is donated to the food cupboard where we redistribute it or process it to make value-added food items. Our Harvest Share Food Recovery program received 48,750 pounds donated for a value of \$180,862 (valued at \$3.71/pound by Food Banks Canada food valuation guide 2025.)

Kaslo Saturday Market

The Kaslo Saturday Market had another great year in 2025. There were a total of 66 different vendors. We had our first ever night market and it was a great success, an opportunity to create community connections and showcase our amazing vendors. We partnered with the North Kootenay Lake Arts Council who planned music and art offerings throughout the season. Our market is a part of the BC Association of Farmers' Markets and the Farmer's



Market Nutrition Coupon Program which provides market coupons for low-income individuals and families. We worked hard to ensure that we had a variety of fresh vegetable and meat vendors where the coupons could be spent.

Food Pathways of the West Kootenays

This series of food skills workshops was a collaboration with Nelson Community Food Centre and Fireweed Hub (New Denver). We delivered over a dozen food skills workshops, community meals, and food festivals in our three communities. Each workshop featured a food artisan teaching their craft and a delicious community meal, often made during the workshop. Kaslo hosted workshops on mushroom foraging, sauerkraut fermentation, bannock making, and healthy beverages like bone broth, fire cider, and kombucha.

Staff:

- Patrick Steiner, Executive Director
- Erin Carr, Food Cupboard Coordinator
- Kathy Allaire, Kaslo Saturday Market Coordinator
- Krista Robson, Food Hub Outreach Support Worker
- Keefer Barnes, Food Recovery Assistant 2025



Seniors

Our Seniors' programs focus on light physical activity, social connection and resource referrals. This includes both group programs and individual support for older adults in our community.

This year some activities included:

- A weekly walking group
- Bowling
- A 'Life Writers Weekly Workshop'
- Environmental Water Monitoring
- Weekly meals delivered to 60 seniors, providing an opportunity for check-ins and information sharing with each participant or couple.
- Monthly social luncheons at Heritage Hall.

It is important to be available to seniors by phone or email when they have questions, needs, or issues that require assistance. Availability needs to be flexible to help reduce anxiety and isolation. Our Seniors' Coordinator and Seniors Community Connector are just an email or phone call away.

Several feedback comments from the lunches and activities are:

"What I liked about senior's lunches. Great menu – nutritious food - Socializing with other seniors adds a lot to my life -resource materials are available and announcements are made about community events."

"The social connections between people are part of the foundation society requires for mental and spiritual health. The meals are excellent, are well prepared, and well served."

Social Meals

Our monthly senior's social meal is a popular event that provides a hot meal, social opportunity and provides information of interest to seniors. Guest speakers presented on emergency preparedness, travel for seniors, exercise routines for strength & mobility, advanced care planning, and more. 204 meals were served to 51 unique individuals. The number of smiles and good feelings? Countless!

Senior's Discussion Group

This weekly program gives seniors an opportunity to come together and discuss

issues we face as we age. Using a program called Java Social participants explore weekly themes like *Receiving Support, Overcoming Isolation, Mentoring Others, Living in the Present, Relationships and Trust*, and many more. Guided by our facilitator, group members share personal thoughts and feelings while enjoying each other's company and light snacks. 11 seniors are registered in this program.



Quotes:

"I am meeting new people and have made some connections I would not have made before."

"This is my weekly escape from reality!"

"I feel confident and comfortable in sharing my thoughts and vulnerable feelings."

"I love the icebreaker games!"

Seniors Community Connector

The social prescribing program has provided ongoing 1 to 1 support to ~15 seniors in the past year, and even more on a one-time basis. Supports include connecting seniors to meal programs and social events or creating weekly schedules, as well as helping navigate complex medical needs, end of life

planning and other challenges that come up where seniors are finding they need support. Our seniors community connector is someone to talk to confidentially who provides practical support to help older adults improve their well-being.

Seniors Community Collaborative

We convene quarterly meetings of organizations

in the Kaslo area who serve seniors. These meetings let staff and volunteers inform each other about the services they provide in our community, look for ways to collaborate, and reduce duplication of services in our community. One example of collaboration is the planning of "Aging Together" a senior's fair that was held in April.

Staff:

- Elizabeth Brandrick, Seniors' Coordinator
- Krista Robson, Seniors' Community Connector
- Donna Cormie, Cook
- Maureen Leathwood, Discussion Group Facilitator
- Kathy Allaire, Program Intake



Support & Outreach Programs

Child and Youth Mental Health Outreach Program

The Child and Youth Mental Health Outreach Program supports children and youth through relationship-based outreach in homes and community settings, helping them work toward goals identified by themselves and their counsellors. The program focuses on building trust, strengthening connections through community and other local organizations, and fostering resilience through individualized support. In the coming year, the program will offer one-to-one outreach services while also co-facilitating a neurodiversity-affirming group for children ages 6–10 and an emotional regulation group for youth. These group initiatives create opportunities for skill development, belonging, and positive peer connections that support overall mental wellness.

- 17 visits with three consistent clients.
- 3 new clients incoming into the program.
- 1 volunteer
- 5 volunteer hours supporting our neurodiversity group.

Nikita Panousis, Child and Youth Mental Health Outreach



Child and Youth with Support Needs

Support and Outreach Worker

Funded by: Ministry of Children and Family Development

- Currently supporting 3 families
- Providing goal-oriented assistance to children with diverse abilities and their families or care providers

Focus Areas:

- Goals are collaboratively developed with families
- Support is tailored to enhance:
 - Social skills
 - Life skills
 - Other specific skills identified by the family

Community Living BC

Support and Outreach Worker

Hours Worked: 15 hours/week

The Support and Outreach Worker provides person-centred support to adults with developmental disabilities, including individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) who face significant challenges in daily functioning.

- Promotes the overall health and well-being of individuals.
- Stabilizes the living environment to foster safety and consistency.
- Encourages active participation of clients in designing their own services and supports.

Services are tailored to meet the unique needs of everyone with emphasis being placed on empowerment, autonomy, and collaboration.



Early Years

Strong Start Parent & Child Time

This year we welcomed Heather Stark and Jenn Berg to our team of Early Years facilitators. They join Barb Cyr, Nicole Brown, and Sarah Evans in facilitating programs for families and caregivers with young children. We also have a dedicated team of childminders and volunteers. We provided 5 days a week of programs in the Kaslo Family Centre, and 1 day a week in the Meadow Creek Family Centre. The Family Centre programs were well supported by our program partners, JVH and Jewett schools, where we were given dedicated spaces to offer our programs to families.

Sarah Evans, BA, Early Childhood Resource Consultant
Early Years Coordinator

Strong Start comments:

"We're so extra grateful for the amazing snacks. It's the best we eat all week!"

"The facilitators are all very welcoming and friendly. Their calm demeanor works well in

the busy room. Each brings something special and unique to the program"

"The location works very well, and the resources give the children a chance to experience things they don't have at home"

"Really appreciate the healthy snack choices, and the craft activities. Gym time is a big hit too!"

Meadow Creek Strong Start:

- 19 adult participants
- 19 child participants
- 29 sessions over the year
- 222 visits over the year

Kaslo Strong Start:

- 96 adult participants including 20 fathers
- 72 child participants
- 168 total participants
- 61 sessions over the year
- 1659 total visits over the year
- 1 Volunteer
- 59.5 Volunteer hours

Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program

- 6 sessions offered in Meadow Creek
- 6 sessions offered in Kaslo
- 15 parents registered

Nobody's Perfect comments:

"Lots of tools and resources for our children, parenting and taking care of ourselves"

"Full of good info, positive vibes and learning"

"I really looked forward to coming and being part of group each week"

Parent Support

It's been a wonderful year for the early years programs. Parents are engaged and many connections are being made that are carried into life outside the programs. I am very grateful to JVH principal, Tara Holt, for allowing us regular access to a second room in the school. This allows us to offer programs that involve



childcare in one room and parents in another which is important for parent education and support groups. I am also grateful to our wonderful childcare staff who bring compassion, reliability and joy to their work and who build such beautiful relationships with the children.

Talking Circle

One of the top highlights this year has been introducing "Talking Circle", a support group for parents of children 0-5 years. Some Indigenous cultural elements provide a safe container for this group including the use of a talking stick, an opening cleansing ("smudge") ceremony and drumming. Everyone is welcome and we have a committed core group of parents attending. Each parent takes a turn sharing how they are doing and it is always an option to participate by just listening to others. Childcare is provided in another room and snacks are provided for all. Participant feedback confirms my hope that this group provides a space for people to be themselves, to find support and belonging.

- 25 sessions offered this year
- 19 adult participants
- 23 child participants
- 42 total participants
- 249 participant visits

Participant Comments:

"This program is like a safe haven. It is a judgement free, very supportive, come-as-you-are place to be. Hearing other parents,



sharing what's on my mind, or not, always reminds me that we share so much in common and that we are not alone in this journey as parents and community members”

“You can show up as you are... unraveled, exhausted, enthusiastic, empowered, and any other feeling and gain so much value from hearing from others.”



Speaker Series for Parents

Parent education sessions are offered along with childcare, snacks and good coffee!

Topics Chosen by the Parents this year:

- Family Plant Walk
- Herbal Medicine Making
- Making Sense of the Early Years
- Winter Wellness
- Mindful Parenting
- First Aid for Parents
- “Early Years Parenting” Series



- 9 sessions offered this year
- 32 adult participants
- 36 child participants
- 68 total participants
- 173 participant visits

Participant Comments:

“Very safe, open environment. Presenters are very relatable!”

“Clear, encouraging way of teaching”

“Great to learn practical activities to activate parasympathetic nervous system”

[As a result of this program, tomorrow I will...]

“Be more compassionate with myself”

“Use repair and connection if a [relationship] rupture happens”

“Embrace all feelings”

Growing with Baby

Growing with Baby is a program for people expecting a baby or parenting a baby up to 9 months. We offer emotional, practical and group support, hot lunch, food vouchers, parent education, breastfeeding support, referrals, and more.

- 30 sessions offered this year.
- 26 adult participants
- 26 child participants
- 52 total participants
- 319 total participant visits
- 41 food vouchers issued

Participant comments:

"This program was a lifesaver for my mental health, allowing me to connect with other moms in the same stage as me and giving me so many learning opportunities, which were so incredibly valuable as a first time mom. Words can't even express how wonderful this program has been."

"I will not be able to properly articulate what the involvement in this program has done for me. Without it I wouldn't have social time. I feel comfortable there to socialize. The staff also has helped me tremendously. As a single mom with low income I was helped towards many supports that have helped me greatly through this pregnancy."

Barb Cyr, BSW, Parent Support Coordinator



Youth Art and Culture

The Youth Art and Culture Program (YAC) offered a series of programs for 5-11 year olds in Kaslo and Meadow Creek this year.

The children in Meadow Creek were joined by Jenn Berg to learn about uses of local plants and make body products with the plants they learned about. In Kaslo, children were joined by Emily Barber to learn how to use sewing machines and make their own bags.

- 4 sessions offered in Meadow Creek
- 4 sessions offered in Kaslo
- 31 children registered
- 56 visits
- 2 Volunteers
- 6 volunteer hours

"My child loved trying out sewing in this program, and it sparked her interest to keep sewing at home. She's so proud of the projects she made."

Sarah Evans, Youth Art and Culture Coordinator



Counselling

Stopping the Violence Program

The Stopping the Violence Program provides both psychoeducational and trauma-informed counselling to women who have experienced violence in intimate relationships and/or have experience childhood trauma/abuse. The program is staffed by a Registered Clinical Counsellor with extensive training in the treatment of trauma, PTSD and Complex PTSD. STV offers both in person and online appointments. This hybrid approach has been effective at providing a continuity of care and has helped increase client outcomes by reducing barriers to attending appointments given our rural location. The program uses an integrated approach to counselling which includes specialized evidence-based therapies such as EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing), Cognitive Processing Therapy for Trauma, mindfulness and Somatic or body-based therapy.

The staff participated in ongoing Professional Development over the past year including trainings in Flash Technique for Trauma by the Trauma Institute, Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) for PTSD and Anti -Racism Training.

The program offered individual counselling sessions and hosted 7 women in a 6-week group on Healthy Boundaries in Relationships.

Client feedback: *"I feel a lot calmer and more confident"*

"I feel sturdier"

"I like who I am more now"

- 18 clients
- 159 counselling sessions
- 255 client contacts

Laurie Holton, Women's Counsellor

Family Support

The family support program's main goal is to preserve and promote healthy relationships within the family unit. Empowerment of caregivers strengthens the family unit and, most importantly, the children can have the opportunity to thrive. Every family system is unique and the family support program has the flexibility to meet families where they are at in their lives and to find creative ways to support them. The program provides home visits or in person office sessions as well as collaboration with other service providers. The relationships built with our regional MCFD social workers has been incredibly successful and enhances client experiences within systems and opens opportunities for advocacy and change.

Client quote: *"I really appreciate the collaboration you have with the social workers; it helps me with my story of domestic violence and your advocacy makes a difference".*

- MCFD referrals increased by approximately 50% this year.
- 80% of families served have at least one child with unique needs such as Autism and/or ADHD.
- 80% of families served are living in a domestic violence relationship.
- Total of 17 families with children ages 0-19 years received support

Liz Ingles, Family Support Counsellor

Safe Homes

The Safe Homes program had a significant increase in service provision for this annual report period. The safe homes program housed five families fleeing violence and provided approximately 11 women with assistance and referrals for domestic violence support services and safety planning. The safe homes program at Kaslo Community Services provides immediate support and a temporary space for up to ten days for women and their children who are fleeing any form of violence with the goal of a transfer to a transition house, or a safe family or friend. The program provides financial support for food, gas, and laundry and daily check ins for emotional support and safety planning if needed. The Safe Homes and Transition Houses in the Kootenays collaborate beautifully in supporting each other to find the best place for woman to be supported in their unique situation. This year the Safe Home coordinators attended a conference for Safe Home and Transition House staff to develop an Emergency Management Continuity policy for their agency in order to continue the service during a natural disaster, specifically wildfires.

- 11 women served.
- 5 women and 6 children were provided short-term safe accommodation

Liz Ingles, Safe Home Coordinator



Sexual Assault Services

The Sexual Assault Services program (SAS) provides free counselling services to anyone over the age of 19 who has experienced any form of sexualized violence around their gender, sexual identity, sexism, coercive control or sexual abuse. Counselling aligns with various trauma theories, while also naming the social phenomenon that is men's violence against women and incorporating psychoeducation pertaining to power and control, gender analysis, and a non-pathologizing approach to services.

The SAS Coordinator role focused on building a coordinated, service-led response for individuals who experience sexual assault in Kaslo. This collaborative initiative brings together the Kaslo Hospital and its staff, the RCMP, CBVS, and SKY. The response team continues to meet quarterly and several important developments have been achieved, including the approval of third-party reporting and the near completion of a community response agreement. Together, partners remain committed to providing a timely, coordinated, and trauma-informed response for survivors.

Looking ahead, priorities include offering support groups for survivors, continuing efforts to provide free counselling services, and expanding community education opportunities and in-school

programming to increase awareness, prevention, and support.

Sexual Assault Services are available to men, women, LGBTQIA+, and people of all genders and sexual identity.

- 9 individuals participated in individual and group sessions
- 10 individuals participated in coordinated response meetings
- 13 individuals participated in training.

Natalie Forsyth, SAS Counsellor

PEACE Program

The PEACE program's main purpose is to support children, youth, and mothers who have been impacted by domestic violence. The PEACE program defines violence as any form of control in a relationship including emotional, spiritual, physical, sexual, and financial abuse. The program offers one on one sessions to children and youth and includes building emotional awareness, promoting peaceful communication, and learning about healthy relationships. Building a trusting relationship with a safe adult through art, play, and activities supports children and youth to build self awareness and confidence. The program emotionally supports mothers and women are provided with psychoeducation on how to best support their children who have witnessed domestic violence.

Client quote: *"I hope you can come to the school and work with me forever, I love coming and learning about feelings and playing"*.

The PEACE program steadily holds between 7-9 clients and their caregivers. In Kaslo we have the flexibility to hold clients in the program for longer periods due to community size. This enhances trust and relationship building and gives the child or youth the opportunity to gain skills at their own pace. Positive collaboration with our local school and other service providers, such as MCFD and BCSTH transition homes, strengthens the client's experience.

The PEACE program counsellor ran two PEACE groups this spring. A younger group and an older group of three boys.

- 11 children and 5 caregivers accessed the program
- 172 total visits

Liz Ingles, PEACE Counsellor

Child and Youth Mental Health

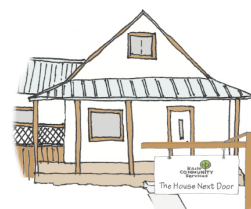
The Child and Mental Health (CYMH) caseload (ages 0-18) is roughly comprised of 50% children ages 12 and under, and 50% teens. Clinical interventions are tailored to each child's unique skills, goals, and interests with most younger children preferring various

forms of art/play therapy and emotionally-focused talk therapy seeming to be a good fit for adolescents. The CYMH clinician continues to explore best practices for involving caregivers in their child's mental health treatment, including dyadic family sessions as appropriate.

New this year, the CYMH counsellor and CYMH outreach worker collaborated on a weekly after-school group for self-identifying neurodivergent (ADHD, ASD, OCD, sensorially challenged) children ages 6-10. Direct feedback from caregivers on this pilot program have included *"I think my child is more grounded, and able to use their words and find ways to comfort themselves more in distressing moments,"* and *"It's hard to get support with neurodivergence in such a small town, and we are so grateful."*

- 14 unique clients
- 71 client visits (child alone, caregiver-child, or caregiver alone)
- 9 new clients accessed the program this year
- 4 clients who carried over from previous counsellor to new counsellor
- 1 volunteer
- 8 volunteer hours

Claire Arrowsmith, CYMH Counsellor



Kaslo Community-Based Victim Services

Kaslo Community-Based Victim Services (CBVS) responds to any crime or tragedy, providing trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and non-judgmental support. The program supports individuals in navigating community resources, provides emotional support, and walks alongside individuals as they move through the legal system.

Our service area spans from Meadow Creek to Balfour.

Referrals come from the RCMP, the hospital, community agencies, or self-referrals. The worker provides emotional support, referrals, pathways to obtain legal information, and support navigating and facilitating communication with local RCMP and various other local service providers.

Beginning in March, Chantal Déry took over as the primary CBVS worker in our rural community. The CBVS worker's role in our rural community has a larger scope of services:

- Emotional support and active listening, accompaniment to court, mediation, or related appointments.
- Safety planning and coordination with police, Crown, court services, shelters, transition homes, and other supports.

- Justice system information and navigation (criminal and family law) and connecting clients to local Legal counsel, justice counsellors, lawyers, CVAP, Salal, Intimate Imaging Services, etc.
- Referrals to legal, housing, Employment Services, Community Integration Specialist, medical, and mental health services.
- Supporting clients with Third Party Reporting and SKY referrals.
- Maintaining client confidentiality and ethical standards.
- Reporting monthly statistics to Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (the program funder.)

The program recognizes the ongoing need for victim services to best support community members with prompt, culturally responsive services that empower each client's autonomy in their journey toward healing, growth, and justice.

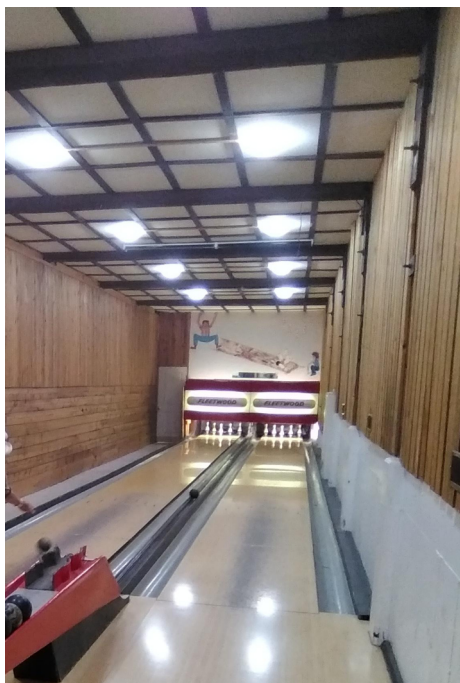
Thank you for your continued support in making our community safer.

- 41 unique clients
- 10 group participants

Chantal Déry, Victim Services Worker

Adult Mental Health and Substance Use

The Adult Mental Health and Substance Use (AMHSU) program supports individuals facing mental health and/or substance use challenges by offering skills-based sessions grounded in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT) in collaboration with medical and community partners. The program also provides clients with tools to manage substance use and facilitates referrals to appropriate treatment centers when needed.



Clients experience the benefits of integrating their work with the AMHSU program in the community with the Mental Health Outreach Worker through applying skills learned in sessions within real-life settings, working together in the home, connecting to resources, and practicing mindfulness. The Kaslo Clubhouse, co-facilitated by the Mental Health Outreach Worker, also offers client opportunities for social connection and community engagement. (See attached photo for activity example - bowling at Lardeau Valley Community Centre.)

AMHSU stats

- Over 1600 client interactions including sessions, text and phone calls
- 117 unique clients
- 29 new Kaslo and area referrals
- 20 new East Shore referrals

Outreach stats

- 18 unique Kaslo clients
- 10 unique east shore clients
- 6 individuals participated in the Clubhouse group

Arielle Shuman, AMHSU Case Manager

Natasha Edmunds, Mental Health Outreach Worker



Staff

Current Employees (as of September 1, 2026)

Violet Johnson - Childminder

Shannon Isaac - KULYN Coordinator

Sarah Lawless - Childminder

Sarah Evans - Early Years Coordinator, YAC Coordinator

Rae Thomson - Childminder

Patrick Steiner - Co-Executive Director - Food Security, Seniors, Community Engagement

Nikita Panousis - CYMH Outreach Worker

Nikita Bouwmeester - Support & Outreach Worker

Nicole Brown - Program Facilitator

Natasha Edmunds - Mental Health Outreach Worker

Nat Forsyth - VS Counsellor, SAS Coordinator

Melissa Redpath - PEACE Counsellor

Maureen Leathwood - Community Outreach and Support — CLBC, Seniors Discussion Group Facilitator

Maddy Maxinuk - Child & Youth Mental Health Counsellor (on leave)

Liz Ingles - Family Support Worker, AMHSU Counsellor

Laurie Holton - Women's Counsellor

Krista Robson - Food Hub Outreach Support Worker, Team Lead - Seniors' Programs

Kathy Allaire - Reception, Market Coordinator, TAPS Assistant

Jenn Berg - Family Centre Facilitator

Jane Ballantyne - Co-Executive Director — Finance and Administration

Heather Steinmann - Family Centre Assistant

Heather Stark - Program Facilitator

Heather Hamilton - Office Manager, IT Support

Erin Carr - Food Cupboard Coordinator

Elizabeth Brandrick - Senior's Coordinator

Donna Cormie - Clubhouse Coordinator, Lifeline Coordinator, TAPS Cook

Dana Cornea - CLBC Outreach Worker, Policy Writer

Chantel Henschel - Food Hub Assistant

Chantal Dery - Victim Services Worker

Barb Cyr - CAP-C Coordinator, Growing with Baby Coordinator

Arielle Shuman - AMHSU Counsellor, Team Lead - Counselling

Andrea Alinott - Childminder

Aly Vlahovich - Childminder

Employees who left during the last year

Roxanne Korobko - Child & Youth Outreach Worker

Lisa de Valk Mooney - PACT Facilitator

Keefer Barnes - Program Assistant - Food Recovery Program

Julie James - Victim Services

Juanita Kiff - Sexual Assault Services Counsellor

Joshua Imada - Food Recovery Assistant (Canada Summer Jobs)

Jana Gmür - Co-Executive Director - Counselling and Early Years

Dannika Neville - School Works Program Assistant

Claire Arrowsmith - CYMH counsellor



Funders

BC Association of Farmers Markets

BC Council for Families

BC Housing

Bluebelle Bistro

Columbia Basin Trust

Columbia Power

Community Food Centres Canada

Community Foundations Canada

Community Fund of North

Kootenay Lake Society

Community Living BC

Ending Violence Association of BC

**Federation of Community Social
Services of BC**

Food Banks BC

Food Banks Canada

Front Street Market

Foord Family Foundation

Government of Canada

Individual Donors

Interior Health

**Kootenay Boundary Community
Services Co-op**

Kootenay Coop

Kootenay Kids Society

**Kootenay Savings Community
Foundation**

Living Lakes Canada

**Ministry of Children and Family
Development**

**Ministry of Public Safety and
Solicitor General**

Osprey Foundation

Province of British Columbia

**Regional District of Central
Kootenay**

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 74

School District 8

United Way BC

Vancouver Foundation

**Victorian Hospital of Kaslo
Auxiliary Society**

Village of Kaslo

**Western Financial Group
Communities Foundation**

West Kootenay Toy Run