

# WEEKLY *Communique*

STFC Supporting Caregivers throughout BC's Interior



**IN PERSON**  
**KAMLOOPS**  
**FOSTER PARENT**  
**DROP-IN**  
**Wednesdays**  
**9:00am - 10:00am**  
**At the Loft**  
(2nd Floor of grey building)

**VIRTUAL**  
**WEST**  
**KOOTENAY**  
**FOSTER PARENT**  
**DROP-IN**  
**Fridays**  
**11:00am - 12noon**  
**Zoom ID: 250 608 7674**

**Learn and Connect** for New & Potential Caregivers  
**Workshops**  
**Last Monday of the Month**  
**9:00 am**  
**Zoom ID: 878 8822 2406**  
Don't miss this chance to  
**CONNECT**  
with other caregivers  
**Monday, January 26**  
**Responding to Children in Crisis**

Check with your Network Facilitator to see if there is an in-person viewing in your area.  
In person viewings in Kamloops, Castlegar, Cranbrook and the Cariboo



## CAREGIVER SPOTLIGHT: COLLEEN HODGE

Colleen started as a foster parent in 1997 and then changed over time to be the emergency care and relief home caregiver offering over 100 children of various ages a safe place to stay in their time of need. Colleen is in a unique situation as some of the children stay a very short time and others stay for several months and the emergency calls come at anytime of the day or night, so she has to be prepared for any age and sometimes a family group of siblings.

Colleen has been honored to receive Diana Gyorfi award twice once in 2018 and now in 2025 for making a difference in the life of youths. She finds being a caregiver very rewarding and has made many strong connections with youth, that often come back to visit and thank her for being there when they needed care.

Colleen would like new caregivers to know that it may be quite different from what you anticipated and to be patient and to meet the child/youth where they are, as it takes time to make a connection and earn their trust. It's also recommended to connect with other foster caregivers for support as they have wonderful insights through experience and can help encourage you on your caregiver journey.

 **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4 2026**  
9:00am to 12:30pm (PST)  
**LEN PIERRE**  
**LEADING WITH EMPATHY:**  
MOVING BEYOND TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE TO TWO-EYED SEEING & DIGNITY-INFORMED PRACTICE  
**REGISTER NOW**  
This training is open to all registered members of the CLN!

**AUDIO CAREGIVING CONNECTION**  
*Why it's Hard for Your Child to take Responsibility with Robyn Gobbel*  
**WEDNESDAYS**  
**10:00-12NOON OR 6:30-8:30 PM (PST)**  
**Zoom ID: 832 4280 1289**



## CHILDREN'S AID FOUNDATION OF CANADA

### CAFC SCHOLARSHIPS 2026-27 FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR YOUR EDUCATION!

#### Applications are Now Open!

A scholarship supports your post-secondary goals until your program is complete.

Apply between December 22, 2025 and February 9, 2026

**One application.** Four pathways."

#### Eligibility Checklist: You can apply if you:

- Are not currently receiving a CAFC Scholarship\*
- Have been in government care:
  - Temporary or permanent care up to your age of majority, or
  - Permanent care for at least 12 months
- Are under 30, or over 30 and have not previously received CAFC PSE support

#### Path One:

You're building your future through full-time studies.

Award: \$5,000 per year  
• Renewable

#### Who This Is For:

Students beginning or returning to a post-secondary program longer than one year on a full-time schedule (or a reduced course load with academic accommodation).

Start Dates: September 2026 or January 2027

#### Path Two:

You're ready to advance with graduate-level learning.

Award: \$5,000 per year  
• Renewable

#### Who This Is For:

Graduate students (Master's, Juris Doctor, or Doctorate) studying full-time or with an approved reduced course load.

Start Dates: September 2026 or January 2027

#### Path Three:

You're pursuing your goals through part-time studies.

Award: \$2,000 per year  
• Renewable

#### Who This Is For:

Students enrolled part-time in a post-secondary program longer than one year.

Start Dates: September 2026 or January 2027

#### Path Four:

You're moving ahead with a short-term program.

Award: \$2,000 (one-time)

#### Who This Is For:

Students enrolled in a program under one year in length.

Start Date: Around September 2026

\*If you are a current CAFC Scholarship (\$5000) recipient, you do not need to make a new scholarship application unless advised otherwise.

For more information and to apply, visit:

**CHILDREN'S AID FOUNDATION OF CANADA**

## SCREEN DEEP PODCAST ARE YOU REAL? ETHICS OF AI CHATBOTS AND CHARACTERS FOR CHILDREN

"Children are increasingly encountering AI characters for both educational and entertainment purposes, but many of the chatbots and other AI products they interact with are not designed with child development and safety in mind. On this episode of Screen Deep, host Kris Perry pulls back the curtain on AI and child-centered design with **Dr. Sonia Tiwari**, a children's media researcher and AI design expert. Drawing on her experience in game character design and her work bridging industry and academia, Dr. Tiwari explores how children think about and are drawn to AI characters, why AI products commonly used by children and adolescents today often fail at prioritizing child development, and the primary risks of child interactions with AI characters. She also offers insights on how products can be better designed to meet children's and families' needs, and what kinds of uses of AI characters might be helpful for children."

## Connect with us... SUPPORT TO FAMILY CARE NETWORK PROGRAM

**Program Coordinator: Kari Beppe**  
[kbeppe@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca](mailto:kbeppe@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca)  
Cell: (250) 819-1919

Office: (236) 421-0031 Toll Free: 1-877-376-3660

#### Network Facilitators:

Renata Bonthoux (250) 319-6557  
[rbonthoux@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca](mailto:rbonthoux@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca)

Jessica Galbraith (250) 819-5819  
[jgalbraith@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca](mailto:jgalbraith@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca)

Marna Forsyth (250) 609-2017  
[mforsyth@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca](mailto:mforsyth@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca)

Jane Wesko (250) 608-7674  
[jwesko@arcprograms.com](mailto:jwesko@arcprograms.com)

Tabitha Fournier (250) 320-4603  
[tfournier@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca](mailto:tfournier@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca)

James Weir (250) 426-6013  
[jweir@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca](mailto:jweir@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca)



Enriching Lives. Strengthening Communities

### Need resources or information? Check out our website!

Are you wanting more information about upcoming training in your area, helpful resources or information about our program? Find all this and much more at our website:

**[www.icsfp.info/resources](http://www.icsfp.info/resources)**



### Find us on Facebook!

Connect with us on our 'ICS Support To Family Care Network' Facebook page and our agency's 'Interior Community Services' Facebook page.