



# 2020 – 2021 Annual Report

*Connection and collaboration in uncertain times*

We Envision

A compassionate & empowered community where families, youth, & individuals receive the supports & services they need to live dignified, resilient & hopeful lives.

# Message From The Board Chair & The Executive Director

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It comes as no surprise that the past year has been one of the most challenging ones yet - for the social service sector, and for the most vulnerable members of our community. We want to take the time to acknowledge the efforts of our staff team who, despite the challenges and uncertainties of operating in a global pandemic, have continued to provide essential services to those members of our community that require help during this time. Your passion and compassion for our community does not go unnoticed. We thank the Board of Directors for their support and dedication to NCS's future sustainability.

COVID-19 reaffirmed the importance of flexible funding that allows for an agile and efficient response while sustaining essential longer-term programming. With the support of funders and donations from the community, we have been able not just to respond to need, but also adapt and develop to continue to meet the short-term and long-term needs of our community. This annual report outlines some of those innovative services and partnerships we have delivered this past year.

Moving into another uncertain year, we will continue to focus on the issues that are most pressing and will do so, as we always have, by leading, connecting and collaborating with others. We look forward to the opportunities that lie ahead.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we want to commend Kathleen Newson and the leadership team for steering the agency during this past year. Starting a new position always brings its challenges, but to do so during a pandemic displays a special fortitude and moral purpose.

The Board is grateful and appreciative to the Leadership team and all the staff.



Cathy Leugner, Board Chair



Kathleen Newson, Executive Director

# Innovative Services & Partnerships Delivered This Past Year

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1,190

In 2020 -2021 we served 1,190 clients (families, youth, individuals) across 13 programs.

## Technology for Safety

A shadow pandemic emerged during the early months of COVID-19, an increase in cases of domestic violence ran in parallel with a decrease in access to services. It became clear that we needed to increase accessibility to our program for women needing support and isolated during the pandemic. In December 2020 with funding from the Columbia Basin Trust we enhanced our existing 24/7 crisis line at the Transition House with a SMS chat line and text enabled service that can be used by women who are without internet connection. It allows for discreet and secure communication where phone use is unsafe.

## Traditional Healing

The provision of Indigenous Elder Support was piloted during the first months of the pandemic in an effort to increase accessibility of our program for Indigenous women. During the pilot, Elder support was adapted from in-person to virtual and still allowed the opportunity for sharing knowledge and traditional healing connections like singing and drumming. The pilot was successful and at one point in the pandemic, 100% of residents were accessing the Elder Support.





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Thank you for your support, working with this team was one of our more positive experiences.

I've been really happy with the coordination and collaboration of services.

- NCS Client Feedback

## Honour & Connection

The Four Feathers Project is funded through the Civil Forfeiture Office. The Project supports women (and their dependent children) who are healing trauma from domestic and sexual violence. It interconnects culturally traditional healing practices and Elder Support into various aspects of the Transition House Program, a natural next step following our Elder Support Pilot.

The sacred Four is symbolic of the four quadrants of the medicine wheel, and the four traditional healing medicines. It is representative of the four key elements of this project: Ways of being; Ways of doing; Ways of knowing and Ways of relating. Our four goals of the project are: To improve supports to indigenous women; To create a culturally safe environment; To decrease colonization and racialization and; To increase accessibility and utilization of our program by Indigenous women.

Feathers were chosen to represent the project as they signify honour and connection. The feather also symbolizes trust, strength, wisdom, courage, power, hope and freedom; all values and tenants that are key underpinnings of the project.

## Courageous Connections for Men

The goal of the program was to decrease the incidence of intimate partner violence. The program specifically targeted men who are identified by our community stakeholders (police, MCFD, other service providers) or those men who self-identified as those whose relationships regularly cross the line into abuse and violence, and are in pre-charge situation. The curriculum-based program exposed participants to a broad range of topics that encouraged full exploration of abusive behaviour patterns and supported new decisions for behaviour change. There was a significant focus on building healthy relationships. An important part of the program was support for women impacted by participants. We received pilot funding from the Civil Forfeiture Office for this program and successfully worked with 22 men over the year.

## Counselling in Lockdown

With funding from the Osprey Community Foundation we supported 60 adults with a brief counselling service of 2-3 sessions through the initial lockdown period of the pandemic. The counselling helped to identify participant's most challenging issues, helped to find solutions, ways of coping and adapting, and provided access to relevant resources.

## No Stopping for Street Outreach

The Street Outreach Team continued to work on the streets supporting our most vulnerable community members through the pandemic. As part of the Nelson Committee on Homelessness team, Street Outreach worked with our partners to provide support to clients at the Warming Centre which ran from November 2020 to March 2021 and provided service to 128 community members.

## Stop the Violence

With support from the Osprey Community Foundation we were able to provide an additional 7 hours a week of counselling for a period of 6 months. This free, community-based, 1:1 counselling service was designed to support women who were experiencing intimate partner violence/abuse and who were finding that the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic were increasing their stress, triggering past traumas, and leading to a decrease in their mental health.

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[My counsellor] has been fantastic for me - I am so grateful for his skills, passion, overall presence and availability...I have thrived and grown a lot under his guidance.

- NCS Client Feedback





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Offering online and in person service going forward would be beneficial. Our [child] was able to be a little bit more open during the online sessions.

- NCS Client Feedback



## Fun & Connection for Youth

During the early days of the pandemic the residents were feeling isolated with raised levels of anxiety, depression, aimlessness and suicidal ideation. With support from the Osprey Community Foundation we were able to provide much needed social support to our young residents at Cicada place to help meet their needs for social support, positive and safe activities and having some fun. The project enabled the youth to be in a safe groups of three with the Activity Coordinator and cooked meals together, made things for their apartments, learned new skills, had movie nights and trips to the local DQ for ice cream.

## Partnering for Mental Health

NCS was approached by W.E. Graham Community Services to partner and provide Program Development and Clinical Consultation for a pilot project for Youth Mental Health Support Worker in the Slocan Valley. There was a significant need identified by the community and a grant was obtained through the Osprey Community Foundation. The project's goal was to address immediate need by providing access to mental health services and looking after the well-being of vulnerable community members. The project was a success and W.E. Graham is submitting for another round of funding for the project.



# Financial Breakdown | 2020 – 2021

## 2020 – 2021 Revenue

Ministry for Children and Family Development	846,250
BC Housing	988,476
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General	325,074
Street Outreach/Reaching Home Funds (via NCOH)	67,054
Columbia Basin Trust	56,000
Interior Health Authority	39,067
Osprey Community Foundation	24,150
Civil Forfeiture Office	30,000
Other Grants	98,224
Donations	65,861
Interest/Sundry	19,695
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,559,851</b>

## 2020 – 2021 Expenses

Administration	51,070	2% of budget
Building Expenses	133,741	5% of budget
Program Expenses	298,818	12% of budget
COVID Adaptations	70,569	3% of budget
Salaries/Benefits	1,999,293	78% of budget
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,553,491</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Our Program Funders

BC Ministry of Children and Family Development, Public Safety and Solicitor General, BC Housing, Interior Health Authority, School District 8, Kootenay Career Development Society, Vancouver Foundation, Osprey Community Foundation, Columbia Basin Trust, BC Society of Transition Houses, Reaching Home Funds via NCOH, Women's Shelters Canada, Civil Forfeiture Office

## Our Donors

A huge thank you to all our donors this year. We saw a significant increase in donations this year in response to the pandemic and its effects on our community.

## With Gratitude

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We could not do all we do without the generous support and donations from our community. We are grateful for our community partners and stakeholders who collaborate with us in this important work.

Nelson Community Services acknowledges that the land upon which we offer our services is the traditional territory of the peoples who have lived here for thousands of years - the Ktunaxa, the Sylix, and the Sinixt. We respect and honour all our relations.



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