

End of Year
Newsletter
December 2019
Vol.40, #2

Parent Support Services Society of BC



Happy Holidays to our wonderful families, volunteers and partners!

Message from Us

It has been another busy year at Parent Support Services Society. Throughout 2019, we have been working hard to support families and kinship caregivers around the province.

The holiday Season can be both a joyous time and challenging time for families.

We hope this coming year will prove to be a year full of joy and happiness.

Best Wishes to our extended family of parents, caregivers, and our wonderful volunteers and agency partners!

Happy Holidays!

Carol Madsen and the Staff of PSS of BC



Learning about Kinship Care Families, Working for Change.

Parent Support Services Society of BC has been conducting research on the state of grandparents raising grandchildren and other kinship families, in partnership with the University of Northern BC. Through surveys, focus groups and interviews, we have been gaining insight into the challenges faced by kinship caregivers across BC.

We have heard about challenges, such as poverty, difficulties accessing legal systems and government supports, feelings of stress and isolation, and the complex and unique needs of children. We have learned of additional barriers, such as racism and the ongoing legacy of colonialism, faced by Indigenous kinship caregivers.

If you are a grandparent, auntie, brother, or other relative or close friend raising children when their parents are unable, we want to hear from you. We are also interviewing adult youth raised in kinship care. There is still time to participate.

Our research will be winding up in February. Watch for our final report, with its recommendations for possible legal, legislative, and policy changes in March/April.

Next steps...find out how you could be involved in the next stages of our work, taking these recommendations to government, and creating a network of kinship caregivers.

For more information: Contact our research project manager – Jane Bouey at 1-877-345-9777 (press 1) Extension 110 or email research@parentsupportbc.ca



**Are you a grandparent raising a grandchild?
Are you someone raising a child or children of a
relative because their parents are unable?**

If you are, we invite you to participate in our research being conducted by Parent Support Services Society of BC and the University of Northern BC.

This research is funded by



PSS works hard to make sure kinship care voices are heard.
Your input is important – together we can make change happen.

Welcome New Staff

This year, we welcomed several new staff members on board. Please give a warm welcome to:

- Christa Martel – Program Coordinator Victoria
- Kim Brown – Program Coordinator Prince George
- Danella Angus – Program Coordinator Indigenous Circles
- Jacob Huang – Executive Assistant and Communications

You can read more about them at our website, parentsupportbc.ca/staffs.



We are happy to announce that one of our new Program Coordinators, Danella Angus, is in the process of organising and starting our new Indigenous Circles program. Follow us for periodic updates!

Donate or Volunteer

Parent Support Services Society of BC is extremely cost effective. We have a very small staff and rely on our highly trained volunteers who run our Support Circles, as we all work together to make a meaningful difference in the lives of BC families.

Only with our volunteers and donors can we fulfil our ongoing mission of protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and promoting the health of all families in BC.

To volunteer: <https://www.parentsupportbc.ca/volunteer/>

Or if you don't have time to volunteer, please consider donating:

<https://www.parentsupportbc.ca/donate/>

or mail a cheque to:

Parent Support Services Society of BC 204-5523 Imperial St, Burnaby BC V5J 1G1

Your contribution makes a great difference and goes a long way to support the families in your community.



Books for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, other Kinship Caregivers and those wanting to understand.

Order at your local bookstore or library. Exciting and new:

Whoopee, I'm a GRG – Reparenting at Age 71 by Joy Sheldon. Published 2019. Paperback \$15.71 on Amazon. ISBN 9781098768300 Independently published. Canada Local Vancouver

Island author.

A light hearted book, which recounts the ups and downs of being a grandparent raising grandchildren. Humorous and touching, Joy shares stories, like when the kids plugged the toilet on Christmas, or the day one goes missing and she has to call the RCMP (yes, this is a funny story). Some earlier versions of these stories were printed in the PSS Newsletter.

A Grandfamily for Sullivan, by Beth Windler Tyson . Published 2019. Paperback \$17.28 on Amazon. ISBN 9781706794660 Independently published. USA

A beautifully illustrated children's book, that tells the story of a koala named Sullivan, who is suddenly living with his grandma. He doesn't understand why, and his emotions take over. With the help of a friend, and his grandma, he finds a way to deal with his feelings. The author has a master's degree in counselling psychology, yet the book is not heavy handed. This book would be a great gift for any child, someone parenting a child, or any caregiver who experiencing anxiety about changes in life.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Expanding Your View, by Linda L Dannison and Andrea B Smith. Published 2018 \$15.70 on Amazon. ISBN 9781717393197 Independently published. USA

This little book includes: short readings, creative activities, relevant examples, and personal reflections. A wonderful gift for GRG, who want a fast paced book that provides insight, and affirmations for the critical job of raising grandchildren. Authors have Ph.D's and over 20 years of experience working with GRG in the USA.

The Grandfamily Guidebook: Wisdom and Support for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, by Andrew Adesman, and Christine Adamec. Paperback. Published 2018 \$21.95 on Amazon. ISBN 9781616497576 Hazelden Publishing. USA

Co-authored by a pediatrician and a health and wellness writer, this is a hefty guidebook. It is chockful of practical advice and resources for kinship families. It covers the complex issues, kinship caregivers face - like trauma, FASD, and challenges of raising children with unique needs, and maintaining relations with parents. Yet it also reflects the joy that kinship caregivers experience. Well researched, it is inspiring and practical. One drawback, it is very

American, with US laws, educational systems, social service systems referenced throughout. In particular, Part 3 of the book (Legal and Financial Resources) and the resources listed in the back are not relevant for Canadians. However, despite this significant limitation, much of the book is extremely useful for kinship caregivers in Canada, so for the price, it may be worth getting.

Raising Grandkids: Inside Skipped-Generation Families, by Gary Garrison Paperback. Published 2018. \$19.95 on Amazon. ISBN 9780889775541 University of Regina Press. Canada

This book is a collection of stories from grandparents raising grandchildren, and reflections of the author. These true life stories are raw and powerful. It is an excellent resource for professionals who work with these families, helping them understand the complex challenges kinship care families face. Grandparents and other kinship caregivers may find stories in this book that reflect their experiences.

Our Grandfamily: A Flip-Sided Book About Grandparents Raising Grandchildren by Sandra Werle. Published 2016. Paperback \$16.78 on Amazon. ISBN 9781460275504. Friesen Press. Canada.

If you are looking for a book for kids who are feeling like no-one gets that that their grandparents are raising them, this children's book may be the answer. With engaging illustrations, it tells a story of children who are living with grandparents. When you flip it over, it tells the story from the grandparents' point of view. GRG may also find it affirming.

Other recommended books for GRG:

Raising Our children's Children, Deborah Doucetter-Dudman. Deborah is a journalist and a GRG. While published in the US, the varied family stories, give insight and perspective;

To Grandma's House we Stay, written by Sally Houtman. Sally was raised by her grandparents and worked for many years as a therapist at Kaiser Permanente;

The Scared Work of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, Elaine Williams;

Grandparents as Parents Sylvie de Toledo and Deborah Edler Brown.

Circle Updates

We are happy to report that our Circles are going strong, and we periodically have new ones forming as well. Please see the next page for two of our new Circles in the Vancouver Island region. As well, we are having focus group discussions for GRGs coming up in January.

For more information on these, please visit parentsupportbc.ca/updatesvanisland

PSS Parent Support Services
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Nanaimo Single Parent Support Circle



We believe that every parent is the expert of their own family. Sometimes it just takes a bit of space to hear yourself and the voices of other parents to find your way through. Parent Support Circles provide a safe, supportive place to share ideas and information with others who are parenting on their own.

Monthly on Wednesday evening from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm.
For information and to register call Kimberlee at 250-753-0251 ext 259 or email: kimberlee@nanaimocdc.com

Our Circles are free and confidential. Refreshments & Childminding are provided.

We thank the Province of British Columbia for their financial contribution along with our additional supporters.

United Way Central & Northern Vancouver Island
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CHILD DEVELOPMENT
THE HOPE CENTRE
United Way Central & Northern Vancouver Island

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Parent Support Circle Gabriola Island



We believe that every parent is the expert of their own family. Sometimes it just takes a bit of space to hear yourself and the voices of other parents to find your way through. Parent Support Circles provide a safe, supportive place to share ideas and information with others who are in a parenting role.

Starting Tuesday, January 14th, 2020 - 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm.
For information and to register call
The Hope Centre at 250-247-8020 or email: berniceathope@gmail.com

Our Circles are free and confidential. Refreshments are provided.

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THE HOPE CENTRE
United Way Central & Northern Vancouver Island

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because their parents are unable?**

(The child lives in your home but the parents do not.)

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by Parent Support Services Society of BC and
the University of Northern BC.**

Focus Group Discussions: Nanaimo
Tues. January 14th - 2, two times available

Morning: 10 am—11:30 (no childminding on site - subsidy available)
Nanaimo Aquatic Centre: 741 Third St.

Evening: 6:30-8 pm Nanaimo Child Development Centre 1135 Nelson St.
(Childminding on site - registration for childminding is required)

Register:
Contact research manager Jane Bouey at 1-877-345-9777 extension 110 or
research@parentsupportbc.ca or <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/grg-research-project-focus-group-discussions-nanaimo-bc-tickets-85566274029>

- General information at www.parentsupportbc.ca

This research is funded by

THE LAW FOUNDATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
PSS works hard to make sure kinship care voices are heard.
Your input is important - together we can make change happen.



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