



huu ay aht

ANCIENT SPIRIT, MODERN MIND

**Huu-ay-aht**

**Social Services Project Evaluation 2020**

Submitted to  
HUU-AY-AHT FIRST NATIONS  
GOVERNMENT

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**“[Being] able to ask  
and reach out for  
help when needed,  
knowing I’m not alone  
and have support gives  
me the ability to use  
tools to not just react  
to life but to learn.”**

**– Huu-ay-aht caregiver/parent**



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation report presents the results of first evaluation of HUU-AY-AHT'S Social Services Project that directly reflects the 30 Recommendations of the 2017 HUU-AY-AHT First Nations Social Services Project Report. The goal of this evaluation was (1) to report on the effectiveness of the implementation of the HFN Social Service Panel recommendations so far, and (2) to serve as the first benchmark upon which future years of the Social Services Program can be measured. This evaluation report summarizes the results of the 2020 evaluation of the HUU-AY-AHT Social Services Project with feedback provided by HUU-AY-AHT citizens, staff, Directors, Executive Council, and the Social Services Task Force.

Despite the fact that COVID-19 prevented all planned in-person engagement with HUU-AY-AHT citizens for this evaluation of the HUU-AY-AHT Social Services Project, 169 HUU-AY-AHT citizens generously gave their time to fill out an online survey with their input on the Project. In addition to this input, selected staff members within the Community Services and the Child and Family Wellness Departments completed a staff survey providing further insights for the evaluation. Finally, Directors of the Community Services and the Child and Family Wellness Departments, in collaboration with the Executive Director, provided responses for an administration-dedicated questionnaire and so too did the HFN Executive Council and the Social Services Task Force for a leadership-dedicated questionnaire.

The results of this evaluation relate directly to the central principles from which the 2017 HUU-AY-AHT First Nations Social Services Project Report was borne: "Safe, healthy, and connected, bringing HUU-AY-AHT Children Home". These results presented in this report are divided by respondent types (citizens, staff, Directors, Executive Council, and the Social Services Task Force) and demonstrate the resulting quantitative data (through infographic charts) and qualitative data (through anonymous quotations).

Overall, the data from this 2020 evaluation indicated many successes in the work by the Community Services and the Child and Family Wellness Departments teams and HFN as a whole.

**“I understand things take time to implement.”**

– HUU-AY-AHT Elder

**The results point to some areas that would be worth HFN focusing on. These include:**

- 1. Secure Oomiiqsu (Mother Centre) Funding:** Huu-ay-aht should secure operational funding for the Oomiiqsu (Mother Centre).
- 2. Housing:** There is a stated need for more housing, in particular, affordable housing.
- 3. Staff Fatigue and Burnout:** Staff from both the HFN Community Services and Child Family Wellness and Departments need continuous support for the vital services they are providing.
- 4. Staffing:** There was a need indicated by citizen respondents and staff for more social services staff, as well as more support and training for staff.
- 5. Cultural Events:** There is a keen interest in more cultural events and programs, and in greater language and cultural education.
- 6. Atmosphere at Huu-ay-aht Cultural Events:** Every effort should be made to make cultural events welcoming to all ages of citizens for whom (re)learning, (re)invigorating, and expressing Huu-ay-aht culture and language can feel vulnerable.
- 7. Food:** There is a notable appetite for learning and programming related to food and cooking.
- 8. Communication with Citizens:** Some respondents to the survey consistently indicated that they want to be better informed about programming and available supports.
- 9. Internal Communication:** Internal communication among Directors, HFN Executive Council, and the Social Services Task Forces should be regularized.
- 10. External Communication:** Externally, there is a need for improved communication protocols among parents, Huu-ay-aht, Directors/staff, and MCFD/Usma.
- 11. Transportation:** Some survey respondents pointed to the need for better transportation.
- 12. Additional Project Capacity:** HFN Executive Council and Social Services Team needs to build additional capacity in several areas of program delivery and advocacy.
- 13. Engaging with Youth:** The lack of youth responses in the citizen survey points to the need to engage with youth to assess and be informed about their programming and support needs.
- 14. Check-in with Elders:** Respondents indicated that Elders are isolated and would benefit from more check-ins.
- 15. Safety Programs & Education:** There is a desire for some additional programs and education related to safety.
- 16. Strategy on Addressing Violence:** In order to protect victims and to build safer Huu-ay-aht communities and households, now may be a good time to come together and address the topic of violence head-on.
- 17. Physical Health:** There is an interest by respondents for more opportunities related to physical health and exercise.
- 18. Additional Mental and Emotional Health Support:** There is a need for additional mental health support.
- 19. Access to Equipment:** Respondents noted some equipment access that may improve citizen's wellbeing.
- 20. Additional Parenting and Caregiving Support:** There is a need for additional parenting and caregiving support.
- 21. Foster Parent Engagement:** Any foster parents of Huu-ay-aht children must be dedicated to connecting those children with their community and culture.
- 22. LGBTQ+ and Gender Support:** Some citizens would like support on matters related to LGBTQ+ and gender.
- 23. Increased Inclusivity:** There are opportunities to make programs more inclusive.
- 24. Secure Bill C-92 Negotiation Funding:** Huu-ay-aht should continue to secure funding to support Bill C-92<sup>1</sup> negotiations and follow-up work.
- 25. Secure Huu-ay-aht Wraparound Services Funding:** Huu-ay-aht should establish committed long term funding dedicated for Huu-ay-aht Wraparound Lifecycle Support.
- 26. Designate or Establish an Alternative Dispute Resolution Body:** Huu-ay-aht should designate or establish a Huu-ay-aht Decision Making Body as an Alternative Dispute Resolution Body.

The results of this 2020 evaluation of the Huu-ay-aht's Social Services Project serves as both a benchmark and a template for future and ongoing evaluations of the Project. If scope and public-health restrictions allow, future evaluations of the Huu-ay-aht's Social Services Project would be well-served to more closely engage Huu-ay-aht citizens in formulation, design, and input through in-person engagement.

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<sup>1</sup>Act Bill C-92, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families.



# INTRODUCTION

## 2017 Huu-ay-aht Report of the Social Services Panel

Figure 1: 2017 Huu-ay-aht First Nations Social Services Project: Report of the Social Services Panel

The Huu-ay-aht Nation is one of the leading First Nation Governments in Canada in reclaiming one of the most fundamental aspect of Indigenous self-governance: working to keep Huu-ay-aht children, families, and citizens safe, healthy, and connected. In an endeavour to make the changes necessary to “ensure that all Huu-ay-aht children grow up safe, healthy, and connected to Huu-ay-aht home, culture and values”, Huu-ay-aht convened a Social Services Panel in 2016 to make recommendations to work toward this goal.

After extensive consultation with Huu-ay-aht children, mothers, fathers, foster parents, the Citizen Development Committee, and other key individuals, organizations, and governments, the resulting 2017 Social Services Panel Report<sup>2</sup> (Figure 1) issued 30 recommendations for bringing the Nation and citizens closer to this goal. In the fall of 2017, Huu-ay-aht began the implementation of these recommendations (represented as a cyclical and iterative process in Figure 2). ■

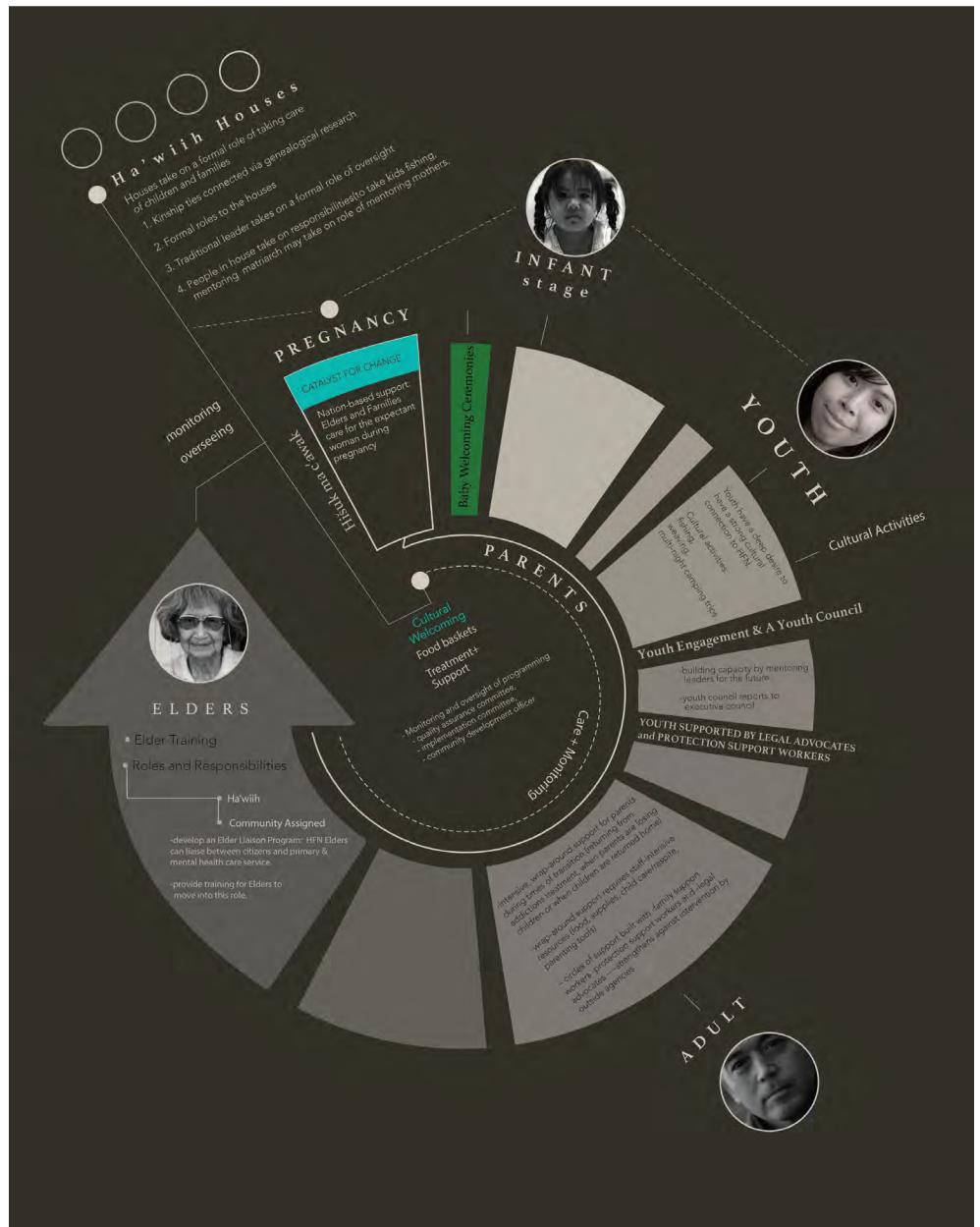


Figure 2: Process infographic from the 2017 Huu-ay-aht First Nations Social Services Project



Table 1: Huu-ay-aht Social Services Panel Recommendations: Summary<sup>3</sup>

<b>Recommendation #</b>	<b>HFN Social Service Panel Recommendation Topic (abridged)</b>
Recommendation 1	Huu-ay-aht should have dedicated Family Support Workers.
Recommendation 2	Huu-ay-aht should have dedicated Protection Support Workers.
Recommendation 3	Huu-ay-aht should ensure the Programs and ... are available to be drawn upon by the FSW and PSW to fulfill their prevention and protection support roles.
Recommendation 4	Huu-ay-aht should implement expanded Pregnancy support and baby welcoming programs. FSW should establish early connections with mothers during pregnancy (all pregnancies, not just first pregnancies).
Recommendation 5	Huu-ay-aht should ensure robust food, necessities and shelter assistance is available to its citizens as an important prevention measure.
Recommendation 6	Ensure addiction treatment and mental health counselling is available to HUU-ay-aht citizens.
Recommendation 7	Build a Transition Support Program to assist HUU-ay-aht citizens and families transition through the periods which many identified as making them most vulnerable, including after children have been removed or upon their return to the home, and as a family prepares for one or both parents to undertake addiction treatment, and very importantly, after addiction treatment has been undertaken and completed.
Recommendation 8	Implement support and safety mechanisms in Anacla.
Recommendation 9	Ensure consistent and more frequent cultural participation opportunities are in place for all HUU-ay-aht families and children.
Recommendation 10	Ensure parenting education and support tools are in place.
Recommendation 11	Implement a strong anti-violence program, with strong outreach component to HUU-ay-aht people wherever they live.
Recommendation 12	Build an Elders Liaison and Support Program.
Recommendation 13	Retain Legal Advocates to formally represent youth, parents and HUU-ay-aht in court processes related to any protection proceeding involving HUU-ay-aht youth or their families
Recommendation 14	Huu-ay-aht to implement Jordan's Principle.
Recommendation 15	Implement Family Group Conferencing.
Recommendation 16	Establish a Quality Assurance Committee.
Recommendation 17	The Citizen Development Officer, which is already provided for under HUU-ay-aht legislation, must be appointed at all times.
Recommendation 18	Immediately develop Permanency Plans for each HUU-ay-aht youth currently in care.

<b>Recommendation 19</b>	Continue Culture Plans for Huu-ay-aht youth in care.
<b>Recommendation 20</b>	Pursue and continue significant engagement with children and youth, including the development of a Huu-ay-aht Youth Council.
<b>Recommendation 21</b>	Traditional Houses Groups, under leadership of Ha'wiih and matriarchs must... determine connection and place of all Huu-ay-aht youth and their families within Traditional House Groups.
<b>Recommendation 22</b>	Establish an Implementation and Oversight Committee.
<b>Recommendation 23</b>	Huu-ay-aht should negotiate significant cooperation and partnership with provincial and federal governments.
<b>Recommendation 24</b>	Establish committed long term funding dedicated for Huu-ay-aht Wraparound Lifecycle Support.
<b>Recommendation 25</b>	Designate a Huu-ay-aht Decision Making Body as an Alternative Dispute Resolution Body.
<b>Recommendation 26</b>	Work to establish a centre modelled on the Vancouver Aboriginal Mother Centre.
<b>Recommendation 27</b>	Huu-ay-aht should establish a consistent Community Engagement Program to continue community engagement and receive input on matters related to child and family health and well-being.
<b>Recommendation 28</b>	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.
<b>Recommendation 29</b>	Exercise Huu-ay-aht's law making power over adoption to ensure culturally appropriate limits on adoption of Huu-ay-aht children in B.C. 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.
<b>Recommendation 30</b>	Huu-ay-aht Leadership will itself need to commit to ...strong advocacy for Huu-ay-aht youth and families; ...advancing a strong, open and united voice against violence among Huu-ay-aht people; ...ensuring the financial and human resources are in place for healing multi-generational trauma; and ...ensuring, through community consultation and engagement, an alliance between leadership, staff and citizens on the path forward for Huu-ay-aht youth and families.

<sup>2</sup>Report of the Social Services Panel (May 2017). Huu-ay-aht First Nations Social Services Project: Safe, Healthy and Connected, Bringing Huu-ay-aht Children Home.

<sup>3</sup>Note: this list of recommendations is an abridged version of the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Panel's 2017 Recommendations



# What We Have Been Through, How Far We Have Come

The following consolidated timeline provided by HFN is a snapshot into what Huu-ay-aht people have been through as individuals and as a nation, and how far we have come.

## *What We Have Been Through - the last two centuries for Huu-ay-aht*

1700	Huu-ay-aht population is approximately 2,790.
1846	Britain asserted sovereignty over what is now BC.
1849	The Colony of Vancouver Island was established.
1866	The Colony of Vancouver Island merges with the colony of BC.
1870	The Catholics establish a church at Nuumaqimyis.
1871	BC joins Canadian Confederation - Canada assumes responsibility for Indian Affairs establishing Indian Reserves.  Traditional Huu-ay-aht government was based on core principles and elaborate customary laws – Canada destroyed and replaced our traditional government.
1872	Aboriginal people were denied the right to vote in any Canadian elections.
1874	An Indian Agent described the Nuu-chah-nulth as earning large profits for fishing and sealing – the traditional Huu-ay-aht economy was based largely on fishing, forestry products, and trading.
1876	The <i>Indian Act</i> imposed the Band Council structure. The <i>Indian Act</i> defined who qualified as a “Status Indian”. Status women who married a non-Indian man cease to be an Indian; she was denied health benefits, the right to live on reserve, inherit family property, and to be buried on reserve.
1881	Under Canadian law, native fisheries was classified as a privilege rather than a right.  The Huu-ay-aht population was reduced to 274 due to disease brought by European people such as smallpox, malaria, measles, influenza, and typhoid fever.
1884	The Canadian government approved church-run Residential Schools to “educate” Huu-ay-aht children without consent from Huu-ay-aht.  It became illegal for native people to sell fish – licensing was restricted to canneries owned by European people. Rules and restrictions have prevented Huu-ay-aht people from earning their livelihood from fishing. Other laws restricting hunting, trapping, and other resource gathering activities were enacted by the Crown.

1885	The <i>Indian Act</i> was amended, making potlatches, and other native cultural practices illegal.
1900s	The Huu-ay-aht population decreased to 4% of the original number, 116. Think how much was lost.
1930s	The emergence of Indian Hospitals, including one in Nanaimo, were another colonial method of segregation and restriction, and were operated similarly to reserves and residential schools.
1951	The law against potlatching was dropped under the new <i>Indian Act</i> .  It became legal for First Nations to hire lawyers.
1960s - ongoing	The removal of many Huu-ay-aht children from their families into the child welfare and foster system without the consent of Huu-ay-aht.
1983	After several generations, Huu-ay-aht hosts First Potlatch with singing and dancing.
1985	The <i>Indian Act</i> was amended and Bill C-31 passed in 1985; women who had lost status could regain status, but status could only be passed on for one generation.
1993	Ha'wiih starts the Treaty process and took 20 years to reach their goal.
1999	First Canoe Launch

#### ***How Far We Have Come - what Huu-ay-aht has been doing to heal***

2010	Paawats (HFN's first children's program Language Nest) opened in 2007 and continues to operate.
2011	April 1 – Huu-ay-aht Treaty effective date.  HFN reorganizes organizational structure and creates the Department of Human Services.
2012	HFN begins to receive calls regarding MCFD and Usma.  The HFN Director of Human Services takes on a family support role.
2013	HFN continues to receive calls for help from Huu-ay-aht citizens.
2014	HFN acknowledges need by allocating budget for Child and Family support.  HFN hires a Child and Family Services Coordinator.  HFN signs a protocol agreement with Usma Child and Family Services.
2015	HFN implements a Fresh Food Box program to provide help to families.

- 2016 CFS Coordinator case load grows.
- HFN allocates \$250K to commission the Social Services Panel to conduct research and provide recommendations to address the growing numbers of children in care.
- Huu-ay-aht creates its 2016-2033 Strategic Plan including the Five Posts.
- 
- 2017 May 31 – Social Services Final Report “Bringing Our Children Home” delivered and accepted by Executive Council.
- July – HFN EC gives direction to begin to implement the 30 recommendations.
- HFN Executive Council allocates \$400K to Social Services Project.
- Social Services Task Force appointed.
- HFN hires 2 Family Support Workers.
- HFN hires 1 Protection Support Worker.
- 
- 2018 HFN allocates almost \$1M in funding to support the 30 recommendations.
- Huu-ay-aht declares a “Public Health Emergency” with regards to the numbers of children in care with 48 children in care.
- HFN successfully advocates to Canada for \$4.2M over 5 years and obtains \$300K from BC (initially to be spent over 3 years – this was later changed to one year).
- HFN recognizes a need for counselling and hires a Counsellor.
- HFN recognizes a need and hires a Family Ties and Preservation Worker, and hires a second Protection Support Worker.
- HFN creates a Child and Family Wellness Department.
- Huu-ay-aht partners with BC Housing to build a Mother Centre in Port Alberni.
- Huu-ay-aht wins landmark case related to the rights of nursing mothers, a precedent against birth alerts in BC, and the rights of Huu-ay-aht community to provide care instead of state apprehension.
- Huu-ay-aht updates its third Strategic Plan for 2018-2020 and adds a reconciliation plan.
- 
- 2019 HFN allocates another \$1M to the Social Services Project.
- HFN hires a Director of Child and Family Wellness.

HFN Executive Council adopts a Jordan's Principle Policy Statement.

HFN begins to create an Evaluation Framework to measure the progress of the Child and Family Wellness department and the implementation of the 30 recommendations

Child and Family Wellness team moves to their own location to provide citizens with more services and enhanced confidentiality.

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2020

Canada enacts Bill C-92 "An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families".

Huu-ay-aht gives Canada "Notice of Intent" draw down jurisdiction in Child and Family Services and negotiate a Coordination agreement.

Social Services Task Force drafts a strategy for Bill C-92.

The number of Huu-ay-aht children in foster care continues to decrease.

Huu-ay-aht updates its third Strategic Plan for 2019-2023 including the Five Posts:

1. Huu-ay-aht citizens will be guided through self-determination to reach their fullest potential.
2. Huu-ay-aht children will grow up safe, healthy, and connected to our home and culture/values guided by our traditions and our Nananiiqsu.
3. Huu-ay-aht homelands will be a safe, healthy, appealing place where our people choose to live.
4. Huu-ay-aht lands, waters, and natural resources will provide sustainable wealth that respects Huu-ay-aht values of conservation.
5. Huu-ay-aht economy will operate sustainably, is the major employer in the region, and the major source of revenue for the Nation.

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2021

Huu-ay-aht working on securing operational funding for a Mother Centre.



## 2020 Evaluation of the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project

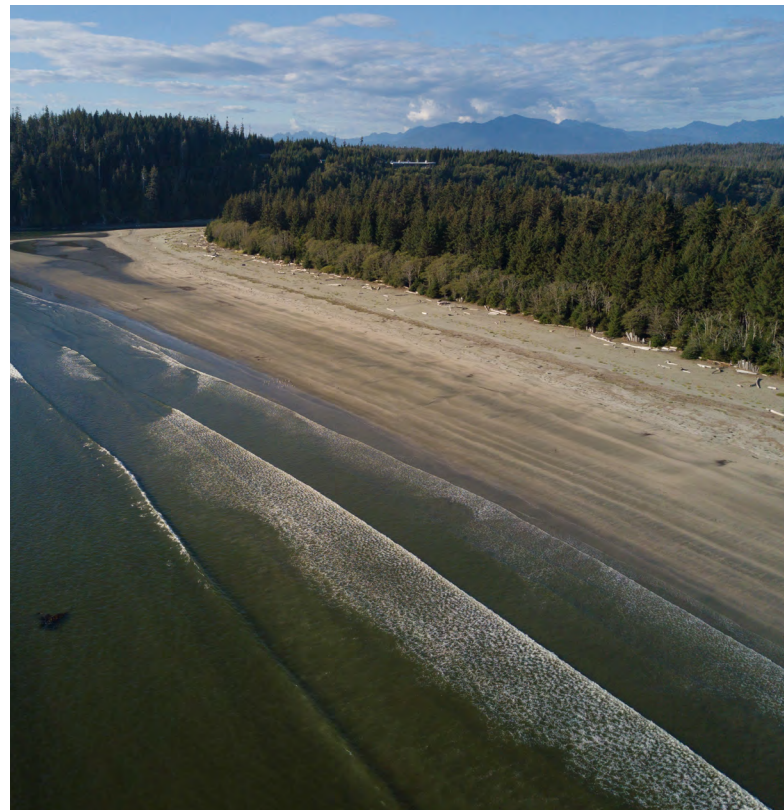
In June 2019, two years after the beginning of Huu-ay-aht's implementation of the recommendations, HFN initiated a process to begin the first evaluation of the implementation of these Social Services Panel Recommendations.

The objective of this 2020 evaluation, the results of which are presented in this report, was (1) to report on the effectiveness of the implementation of the HFN Social Service Panel recommendations from the perspective of HFN citizens, program recipients, relevant HFN staff, HFN Directors, the Social Services Task Force, and HFN Executive Council, and (2) to serve as the first benchmark upon which future years of the Social Services Program will be measured. Outlined in this report are the results of the first evaluation and point of reference for HFN's Social Services work.

The methodology used for this 2020 evaluation of the implementation of these 30 HFN Social Services Panel recommendations was framed in accordance with the "safe, healthy, connected" categories identified by the Panel. The basis for this 2020 evaluation of the HFN Social Services Program was centered on the May 2017 Social Services Panel Report, and many of the questions in this evaluation stemmed directly from the Panel's recommendations and sub-recommendations. In total, two surveys and two questionnaires were created to collect the evaluation data (see Appendices C, D, and E for the wording of these surveys and questionnaires):

1. **Citizen Survey:** made available to all HFN citizens, including parents/caregivers, adults, Elders, and youths, as well as to foster parents of Huu-ay-aht children.
2. **Staff Survey:** completed by staff in the Community Services Department and the Child and Family Wellness Department.
3. **Director's Questionnaire:** Completed by Directors of the Community Services and Child and Family Wellness Departments, and the Executive Director.
4. **Executive Council and Social Services Task Force Questionnaire:** Completed by HFN Executive Council and the Social Services Task Force.

In the initial concept formulation of this evaluation, data collection was to include not only surveys and questionnaires, but also focus groups and in-person interviews with citizens, staff, and other key individuals administering and directing the implementation of the recommendations. However, due to COVID-19 occurring shortly after the March 2020 release of the Citizen Survey (the online survey where respondents had the opportunity to make their interest in participating in focus groups and interviews known), both of these in-person data collection options were canceled. Despite this setback, and thanks to the effort made by staff, citizens, Directors, HFN Executive Council, and the Social Services Task Force to provide information through the surveys and questionnaires, the resulting evaluation contains a snapshot of the HFN Social Services Project that is rich with information and voices to advise on areas for building a stronger program in the coming years and decades. ■







# EVALUATION DESIGN

## De-colonial Evaluation

At best, evaluations are a limited tool through which to evaluate the dynamic, real-time, lived experience of program recipients and administrators. This reality is certainly the case in Indigenous communities where the lived experience of Indigenous individuals, families, and communities are only known to them, and can only be accurately represented by them. Typically, evaluations focus on assessments that are based in a Eurocentric process. Eurocentric research brings with it cultural bias, a certain set of values, a particular concept of time, competing ideas of knowledge, and structures of power<sup>4</sup>. When Eurocentric standards become the benchmark(s) for success, evaluations risk failing to recognize the strengths of the community and/or the project/program<sup>5</sup>.

Given the history of research in Indigenous communities and the bias of Eurocentric forms of inquiry, evaluation (a form of research) must avoid repeating similar pitfalls. Prior to the COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings, Huu-ay-aht citizens were presented with the opportunity at the 2019 People's Assemblies in Port Alberni, Anacla, Nanaimo, Victoria, and Vancouver to provide input on how the evaluation should approach this evaluation and evaluation process. At those assemblies, Huu-ay-aht staff and Directors used the following infographic<sup>6</sup> to alert citizens to the evaluation of the HFN Social Services Project, asked attendees to provide input on potential approaches to evaluation, and then staff and Directors then incorporated those suggestions into the format and wording of the citizen survey:

<sup>4</sup>Smith, L. T. Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples. (Zed Books, 2012).

<sup>5</sup>LaFrance, J. & Nichols, R. Reframing evaluation: Defining an indigenous evaluation framework. Can. J. Progr. Eval. 23, 13-31 (2010).

<sup>6</sup>Design by presentationGO.com

<sup>6</sup> LaFrance, J. & Nichols, R. Reframing evaluation: Defining an indigenous evaluation framework. Can. J. Progr. Eval. 23, 13-31 (2010).

# Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project: What Should We Evaluate?

## OVERALL PROJECT GOALS

We need to evaluate whether Huu-ay-aht's implementation of the Social Services Panel recommendations is making a difference toward the goals of preventing our children from leaving the community, and bringing our children home.

## HUU-AY-AHT EVALUATION

We could evaluate the HFN Social Services Project using Huu-ay-aht evaluation methods: either existing methods used before/traditionally, or develop ones that suit the community and citizens.

## FIT WITH EXPECTATION

We could evaluate the HFN Social Services Project compared to what people expected from the project. We could ask various sectors of HFN citizenship if it is meeting each of their expectations and needs.

In the interest of immediate feedback, and to comply with BC COVID-19 guidelines, HFN elected to use only surveys and questionnaires in this first year of the HFN Social Services Project evaluation. HFN periodically uses surveys to solicit feedback from citizens. Despite their imperfections, the surveys and questionnaires designed for this HFN Social Services Project evaluation have, far ahead of this finalized publication, served as an opening for dialogue about the Project. This dialogue began at least as far back as the design of the questions themselves, as well as among Huu-ay-aht citizens, Elders, youth, Directors, staff, HFN Executive Council, and the Social Services Task Force in considering their responses. See Appendix B for further detail on the circumstantial limitations of this evaluation.

To mitigate re-colonizing in the use of Eurocentric methodologies in the HFN Social Services Program evaluation, four main ethical principles were observed in to evaluation design (see Table 2).



## PROJECT ELEMENTS

We could evaluate the elements of what was set out in the project such as anti-violence programming, youth and child engagement, culture and permanency plans, pregnancy support, addictions and mental health support, and the role of the FSWs/PSWs.

## WHO IS BENEFITTING

We could evaluate the project in terms of who it is benefitting such as pregnant women, children, youth, adults, parents, elders, disabled and citizens as a whole.

## QUANTITATIVE

We could evaluate the HFN Social Services Project using quantitative methods such as surveys, data, and other metrics to gauge efficacy and implementation of the program.

Following this first year of benchmarking the implementation of the Social Service Panel recommendations, future evaluations in the years to come should include a re-centering on Huu-ay-aht methods of research, evaluation, ways of knowing, ways of engaging, and ways of representing ideas. ■

## Data Collection

### *Citizen Survey*

The Citizen Survey, created to collect feedback from Huu-ay-aht citizens on the Social Services Program, was drafted in collaboration with HFN staff, Directors, and members HFN Executive Council by whom the relevant HFN Departments are overseen. (See Appendix C to see detailed content of the Citizen Survey.) The survey was posted online using Survey Monkey™ and was made available to Huu-ay-aht citizens between February 20, 2020 and August 10, 2020. HFN advertised the survey through social media,

Table 2: Measures Taken to Support Culturally Responsive Evaluation Design

<b><i>Ethical Principle in Culturally Responsive Evaluation Design<sup>7</sup></i></b>	<b><i>Measure Taken</i></b>
Indigenous communities must benefit from the research/evaluation carried out	This evaluation was commissioned by HFN and is for HFN and its citizens.
Data must be used ethically and remain in control of the community	The data collected in the surveys and questionnaires is owned and housed by HFN.
Confidentiality must be maintained where pertinent	No citizen or staff respondents are identified in the evaluation reporting. Any information that could potentially allow individuals to be identified has been omitted from the evaluation reporting.
Consent must be granted by participants in order for them to participate in evaluation	Survey respondents could choose not to do the surveys. Both the citizen and staff surveys began with a statement of consent.

including posted promotional videos, announcements at Huu-ay-aht events (most of which moved online from March 2020 on), and through the various communication methods used by the HFN’s Communication Department. The survey was completed by 169 respondents. The breakdown of who responded to this survey, including their ages, gender, and where they live is summarized in Appendix A.

*Staff Survey*

The Staff Survey was created to collect feedback from staff within HFN Child and Family Wellness Department and relevant staff within HFN Community Services Department. The survey, designed to gain an internal perspective on the implementation of Huu-ay-aht’s implementation of the 30 HFN Social Services Panel recommendations, was also drafted in collaboration with HFN staff, Directors, and members of HFN Executive Council by whom these Department are overseen. (See Appendix D to see detailed content of the Staff Survey.) The survey was posted online using Survey Monkey™ and made available to the ten relevant HFN staff members between May 4, 2020 and June 23, 2020. The survey was sent directly to pertinent staff by their supervisors and was completed by all 10 respondents.

*Questionnaire for Directors*

The HFN Executive Director, and the two Directors of the HFN Child and Family Wellness and the HFN Community Services Departments, were given a set of questions to respond to collaboratively. The purpose of this questionnaire was to be able to portray the administration’s information on implementation measures their teams have taken toward the 30 Social Services Panel recommendations, and to enumerate the relevant data collected by their respective Departments. As with the online staff and citizen surveys, these questions for the Directors were drafted in collaboration with HFN staff, Directors, and elected

members of HFN Executive Council by whom these services are overseen. The Directors were given the questions on May 13, 2020, and they were completed in full by August 12, 2020. (See Appendix E to see detailed content of the Director’s questionnaire.)

*Questionnaires for Executive Council and the Social Services Task Force*

HFN Executive Council was given a set of questions on the implementation of the HFN Social Services Panel recommendations. The purpose of this questionnaire was to illustrate HFN Executive Council’s perspective, successes, and challenges on the implementation of measures taken to fulfill the 30 Panel recommendations. These questions were drafted with oversight from HFN staff, Directors, and members of HFN Executive Council by whom these services are overseen. HFN Executive Council was given the questions on May 13, 2020, and they were completed in full by November 26, 2020. In November 2020, it was determined that the Social Services Task Force, who have overseen the implementation of the HFN Social Services since its inception, should weigh in on the same questions as Executive Council to provide additional data and perspective on this evaluation. The responses from both the HFN Executive Council and the Social Services Task Force for these questionnaires are presented in this report as combined results. The questions posed to HFN Executive Council and the Social Services Task Force are embedded in the results section which presents their responses for context, and thus to not require separate presentation in an appendix.

**“With all services I have accessed I have benefited in one form or another. HFN is paving the path for healing our people.”**

– Huu-ay-aht caregiver/parent



# RESULTS

## Huu-ay-aht Citizens' Evaluation of the Social Services Program

### Safe

In keeping with the Huu-ay-aht Strategic Plan, the report of the Social Services Panel (Huu-ay-aht First Nations Social Services Project) stated that keeping Huu-ay-aht children safe is of paramount importance. The following data and quotes characterize the responses of Huu-ay-aht caregivers, parents, and adults:

**In the last year, has the HFN Social Services Project improved your family's safety?**

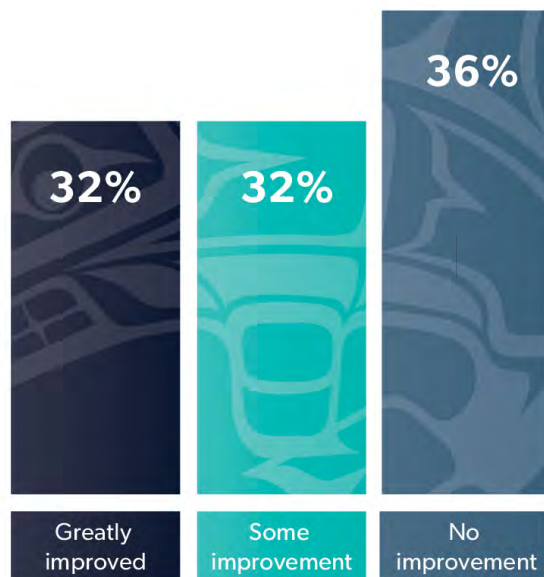


Figure 3 Safety: Huu-ay-aht Parents, Caregivers, and Adults

When responding to questions about safety, notable comments by Huu-ay-aht citizens about HFN Social Services Program work included the following:<sup>8</sup>

"[HFN Social Services Program] took immediate action to keep my [relatives] in Huu-ay-aht care (with me) and not with non-family, non-Huu-ay-aht. They have also gone above and beyond to keep us healthy and ensured we have everything we need."

"[HFN Social Services Program] has greatly helped me time and time again and I know they will go above and beyond to help in the future."

"The Services have helped me on numerous occasions for myself and children."

## Safe

### Children, Youth, Families, Citizens

- Keeping Huu-ay-aht children safe;
- Providing a path for healing from multiple-generational trauma;
- Providing safe homes for Huu-ay-aht children, families (shelter, food, and essentials, and being protected from violence).

"The work [HFN Social Services Program] is providing is wonderful."

"[HFN Social Services Program] have helped with my grandson finding a safe place to reside."

"[HFN Social Services Program has] provided safehouse[s] or hotel rooms."

"Knowing I can reach out with any questions or concerns [improves my sense of safety]."

"It helped me out tremendously when I need help with my daughter."

"Children got moved into care of a relative, which was nice, they came back to Port Alberni."

"Got me to treatment and counselling after treatment really helps the checking in weekly and, or bi-weekly keeps me safe I think."

**"They have been a strong advocate for me and my ability to care me for my children being a single parent."**

– Huu-ay-aht caregiver/parent

<sup>8</sup>Note that many quotes throughout the report have been edited for typos and clarification, but not for content, meaning, or context.



*Notably, the Child and Family Wellness Department has offered numerous group workshops in the past 2-3 years including ones on violence, healthy boundaries, self-care, bullying and online safety, intergenerational trauma, cultural parenting, and financial literacy. Participation in these groups has generally been low, but the Department continues to offer the groups and seek innovative ways to engage participation.*

One constructive comment from a Huu-ay-aht adult noted a gap where this aspect of parenting and safety could be taken further in terms of healing:

*“Looking for counselling for our children who were raised in foster homes. Have grown up and reconnected with parents, but there is a huge missing gap between the children who are now adults and the parents who missed the opportunity of being parents.”*

Both of the two Huu-ay-aht youth respondents who responded to the citizen survey noted that their sense of safety and wellbeing at *home* felt the same in the last year.

Both of these Huu-ay-aht youth respondents noted that their sense of safety and wellbeing at *school* felt the same in the last year.

The emotional and mental health of Huu-ay-aht citizens is a recurrent topic that came up in discussions with Huu-ay-aht citizens during 2016-2017 research by the Social Services Panel. The majority of respondents to this 2020 evaluation survey indicated some change or significant change in their own emotional/mental health in the last year. Given that at least 63% of respondents indicated that they have been impacted by Residential Schools, Indian Day Schools, The Sixties Scoop, and/or Indian Hospitals, and given the fact that the vast majority of responses occurred during a global pandemic, these positive findings are not insignificant.

**Do you and/or your family feel supported in accessing treatment and counselling services?**

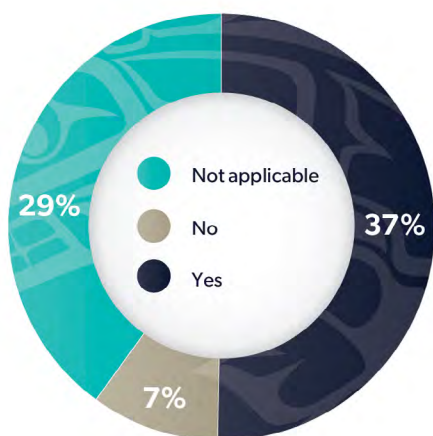


Figure 4 Mental Health Access: : Huu-ay-aht Parents, Caregivers, and Adults

The comments provided by survey respondents indicated the kind of emotional and mental health changes they have experienced or are experiencing:

“I’m less anxious when dealing with issues arising from my separation from my partner and child custody issues.”

“Since I have been receiving help from these services my mental and physical health have improved. I do not feel as stressed with the help I have been receiving.”

“I’ve been in EMDR therapy as well as trauma therapy for close to two years.... many positive changes. I do not live in negative thoughts and feelings on a daily.”

“My grandson is more open to asking for help through this program. And he trusts the people more.”

“Improvement to mental health has helped me get my children into my care.”

# Healthy

*Physical, Emotional, Mental*

- Supporting parents and caregivers;
- Addressing the compounded trauma caused by the disruption, uncertainty and fear associated with removal of children into care;
- Addressing addictions, violence, and attachment.

“[I’ve observed my] teen spiraling out of control in defiant behavior, mood swings, physical attacks to calmer, somewhat more respectful, willing to talk about feelings/mood.”

“I’m more happy than I have been in a while.”

**“[I’ve] gone from dark, broken, defeated, sad to calm, stable, happier, ‘just keep swimming - this too shall pass’”.**

– HUU-AY-AHT ADULT

“All the work in therapy in the last two years has helped have a better connection with my son.”

“[HFN Social Services has] advocated on my behalf, counselling, cultural healing as well as helping me get into treatment and sober living (thank you).”

“[I’ve received] emotional help from counselling and support through the child protection.”

“[HFN Social Services] were with you every step of the way and ensured you were ok.”

“The support from HFN CFW has improved my quality of life with emotional support through hard transitions and sensible advice.”

**“With support I was able to talk to through my fears and work through my feelings allowing me to feel better/stronger to better support my children.”**

– HUU-AY-AHT CAREGIVER/PARENT

Matters of health that connect to substance use and addiction in order to rebuild healthy communities and homes were central to the recommendations of the HFN Social Services Panel.

**Do you and/or your family feel supported in accessing treatment and counselling services?**

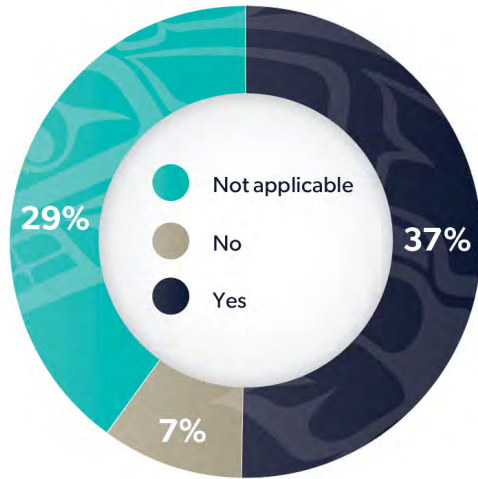


Figure 5 Access to Support for Substance Use and Addiction : Huu-ay-aht Parents, Caregivers, and Adults<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup>27% of respondents answered to this question in comment format only.

“[I have] stopped drinking.”

“Over the last few years I’ve learned a great deal about my addiction and how my mental health has played a huge role in my self-medicating.”

“I have been sober for 4 months.”

“Been alcohol free since August 2018.”

“I have family members who deal with addiction and each case they were always fully supported with the treatment process start to finish.”

“Very supported. [The HFN Social Services team] even checked on us as a family as my spouse was in treatment.”

**“I am so grateful for the help I have received from the [Huu-ay-aht First Nation] for my treatment. I am glad HFN has been nothing but supportive through this process for me and my family. I am glad I have a chance, some Nations are unable to help their people. Thank you!”**

– Huu-ay-aht adult

# Connected

## Huu-ay-aht Homes and Culture

- Connection to family, community, culture, and language;
- Children/youth/family connection to Huu-ay-aht identity, Hahouthlee, and House System;
- Continuing to build a sense of **?iisaak, ?uu?atuk, and Hišuk ma čawak**

In this evaluation survey, Huu-ay-aht citizens, including caregivers, parents, adults, youth, and Elders, provided an overwhelming number of comments with regard to culture and cultural connection. Practicing Huu-ay-aht culture is outstandingly important to citizens. While there was a very low response rate to the survey by Huu-ay-aht youth, it is notable that when youth respondents did make written comments, culture was the main (and almost only) topic brought up by these youth respondents:

“I keep in touch with my indigenous side.”

“I would like more [cultural] connection.”

[What makes you proud of being Huu-ay-aht?] “[My] family connections.”

[What supports would assist you in being able to better take care of yourself?] “More cultural gatherings.”

[What supports would assist you in being able to better take care of yourself?] “Financial support to come to Anacla.”

[What are the barriers to you being able to better take care of yourself?] “Disconnected from HFN culture.”

**[What makes you proud of being Huu-ay-aht?] “I love my songs and home territory.”**

– Huu-ay-aht youth

**“[I would like to see] more cultural/financial support to attend events at home.”**

– Huu-ay-aht youth



“The opportunity to attend has been great. Dance practice on Monday nights is a big help when connecting.”

“I’m hoping I can better connect with my culture and be able to practice our ways in my everyday life helping me finally identify who I truly am. Creating the confidence and self-love to give me strength in finding ways to help my community, even if I live off our land.”

“As a caregiver, it was a priority to have the children be connected to their traditions. The Child and Family Wellness team always let us know of opportunities and if needed support such as a vehicle, gas, etc. to get there they would help.”

“With support there’s no worries so I can enjoy culture nights and time with my kids not worrying.”

## “[HFN has] included others who do not live on reserve and travel to cities where citizens live and involve and teach us in our culture.”

– Huu-ay-aht caregiver or parent

### Do you feel supported in terms of connection to community, culture, and cultural-identity?



Figure 6 Cultural Connection : Huu-ay-aht Parents, Caregivers, and Adults

Some parents and caregivers articulated barriers to cultural connection:

“My hours of work conflict with cultural events.”

“One culture night a month doesn’t make for a connection.”

“I feel that being away from taking part in the cultural events in [Port Alberni] or Anacla, it’s harder for urban people to have a connection.”

“I am and have been trying to get a hold of our songs and art work as it would be for my family and my little ones loved to see hear and participate in any of our little home practices of our culture.”

Huu-ay-aht Adults also had many thoughts, suggestions, and experiences they reflected upon related to Huu-ay-aht cultural connection:

“Vancouver needs more people or advocates to properly get cultural programs going.”

[In the last year, how has the HFN Social Services Project impacted your connection to Huu-ay-aht culture, identity and practice?] “Impacted in no way. How would it? And why is it their responsibility to keep me connected? The Nation provides it, it is up to me to participate.”

“I feel like it has strengthened the citizens connection to Huu-ay-aht culture & identity.”

## “I want to be more connected from where I came from. I don’t want our people to be forgotten.”

– Huu-ay-aht adult

“I feel Huu-ay-aht have definitely brought culture up and down the Island and the mainland very well.”

“I look forward to attending meetings more now than in the past.”

“Being in Nanaimo there really isn’t much programs offered here and even if it were, it is tough to say how many will show up.”

“Being more involved with more gatherings, meeting has been great.”

“I like the further community engagement and that there’s a way to reach out to our nation for help.”

“I’ve never felt more disconnected than I do today. Healing still needs to take place. Unity needs to happen. There are alliances within the office that go outside also. Lateral Kindness needs to be practiced more.”

“I did not before. I am recently getting help and feedback and information I feel I need to teach my own children of our culture and practices.”

“With COVID, doing more virtual sessions to share information or HFN history would be great.”

## “I have been more involved. I think the children in care need more encouragement to get involved.”

– Huu-ay-aht adult

**“For some of our youth, change  
is made when they understand  
they do not need to be afraid.”**

**– Huu-ay-aht Elder**



Huu-ay-aht Elders provided their observations of what changes they have seen with regard to cultural connectedness:

**In what way if any, have you seen the following change as a result of the implementation of the HFN Social Services Project?**

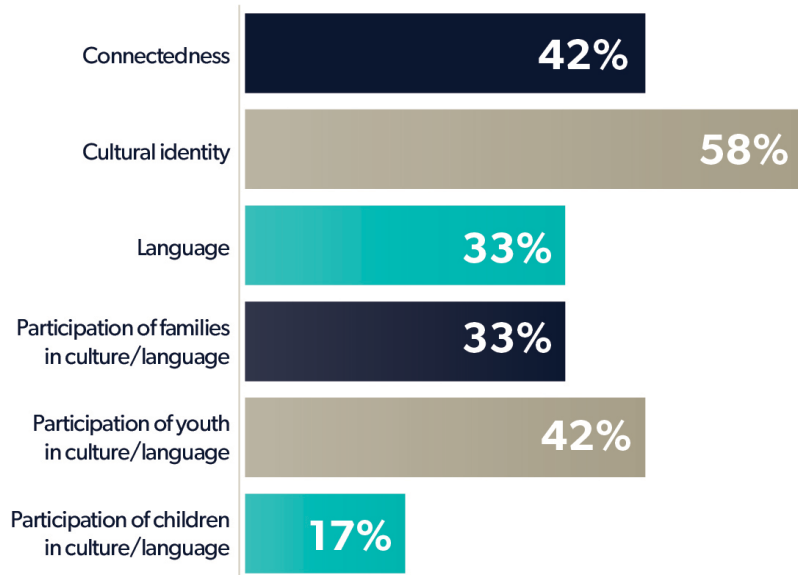


Figure 7 Cultural Connection : Huu-ay-aht Elders

**Connected | Program Access Equality**

For Elder’s programs, Elder respondents did not indicate why, most indicated that they had not access Elders training and education programming in the last year.<sup>9</sup>

In a few cases, Huu-ay-aht adults, caregivers, and parents noted a need to improve the equality of access to cultural programs. These respondents stated:

“Programs offered are too far to attend.”

“Have these services available and easily accessible to members in the [United] States.”

“[I] work 5 days a week long hours, HFN only schedules events at work hours which doesn’t help me to attend without losing full day.”

**Have you accessed any Elders training and education programming in the last year?**

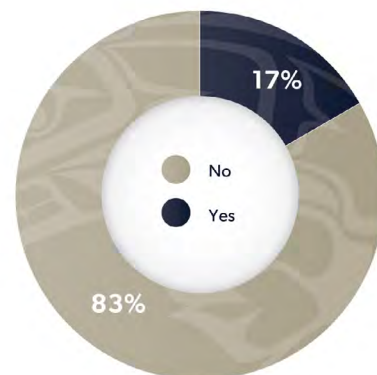


Figure 8 Elders Training and Education : Huu-ay-aht

<sup>9</sup>It is worth considering that this survey occurred during COVID-19 during which Elders may have been disinclined to attend and that others may not have been interested in programming or had not heard about it. This data point warrants further engagement with Elders on what would increase their participation in this training/education.

## Staff Evaluation of the Social Services Program

Staff from the HFN Social Services Department and select staff from the HFN Community Services Department completed an online survey with questions about the HFN Social Services Project implementation. The staff's insights that are gained from their in-person and direct work with and among Huu-ay-aht citizens is reflected in their comments:

### Safe

"I feel like the violence has remained the same, but how we are responding to it has changed. More proactive instead of reactive, having safe groups of individuals to share their life experiences, access to trained help could mitigate some of the affects of violence whether it be physical, sexual, emotional when people are supported and feel like they have a sounding board to their issues and given options to change the circumstance or support to leave the violence."

"...there are far too many intricacies [of what safety means] that really only families can answer if they feel safer."

"We meet clients where they're at and what makes one person feel safe is not necessarily the same for another."

**"It's hard to generalize but with some families we have seen this approach [having safe adults move in to keep children in place] work and other situations it has been more difficult."**

– Huu-ay-aht staff member

"On an individual basis ...I've seen huge growth in some folks wanting something different for their life and at the same time I've seen no growth for others... all we can do is meet people where they're at and offer supports accordingly."

**"Families are starting to talk more about violence."**

– Huu-ay-aht staff member

### Healthy | Substances

HFN Community Services Department and the Social Services Department staff also commented their observed changes on substance use. While staff also suggest program additions or changes (see "Next Steps" section below) their comments help to characterize the nuances in their observations on substance use:

"[With regard to addiction] you see more [people] ready and willing to make changes for self and feel comfortable and safe with family supports and staff."

"More individuals are curious about reducing substance use, talking about sobriety. [There is] increased accessing [of] treatment and counselling services."

**"This year, I saw it publicized that [one of] our [Hereditary] Chiefs was attending a treatment program. I feel like we are moving in a direction where it's not an elephant in corner of the room anymore and people's recovery is talked about and supported."**

– Huu-ay-aht staff member

### Healthy | Mental Health

While improvements in the general emotional wellbeing and mental health of individuals and Huu-ay-aht communities can be difficult to gauge, the observations of staff who work with individuals on a daily basis are an excellent inroad to understanding what changes may be underway. Staff observed the following:

"I'm seeing our people wanting to care for themselves and create a better wellbeing for themselves and families."

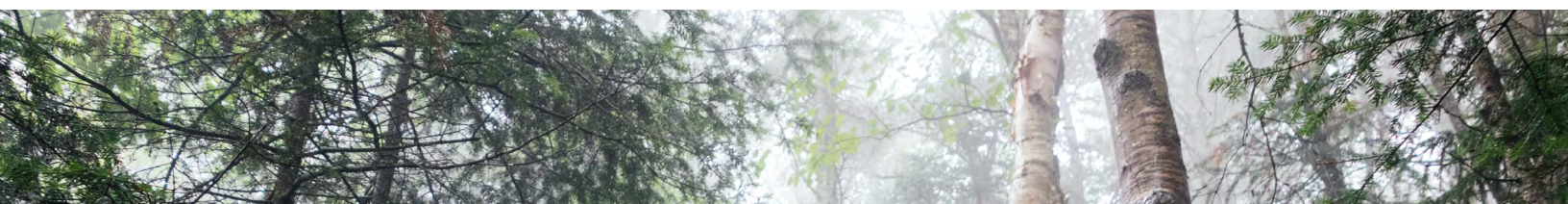
"Our clinical counsellor is quite busy with meetings, giving an indication that citizens are working on their mental health."

"Individuals are talking more about anxiety and depression."

"[The HFN Social Services team spends] countless hours talking people through difficult moments in their lives, showing up for them and being accountable and accessible. It's not always perfect but the consistency by the team is something special. The unity when handling hard situations really displays the leadership each of the team possesses."

**"More [Huu-ay-aht citizens] are asking for and identifying their need to seek out someone to talk to too and voice their concerns for others."**

– Huu-ay-aht Staff Member





## Connected

HFN Community Services Department and the Social Services Department staff weighed in on the importance of cultural events, and the role that they play in them:

“We attended cultural events, community engagements, we have gone to various places on and off [Vancouver] Island.”

“Being able to take part as staff in HFN culture events - culture is medicine for everyone.”

In-keeping with the comments and experiences of some Huu-ay-aht citizens, the staff also noticed some unevenness in citizens’ ability to access the programming and support offered to Huu-ay-aht citizens:

“[The HFN Child and Family Wellness staff is] a small team of 7 working to support a Nation of 800 plus... I think all things considered we have done incredibly well at ensuring we are addressing needs and offering support to anyone requesting it. The challenge is not everyone is good at requesting support... so with those that do reach out... sometimes numerous times per day... can mean ...time is taken from those who do not reach out as often or at all but still need support. It’s challenging to connect with those folks as those are perhaps the ones who can benefit the most from our support.”

***“It is difficult to make the same presence [elsewhere as] we do in Port Alberni.”***

– Huu-ay-aht staff member

“Some [Huu-ay-aht parents or caregivers] cannot access after school programs like sports or groups being remote it costs more and parents cannot afford the travel.”

“Citizens are all spread out in different cities. The team does a great job supporting all with each concern.”

“Sometimes [we go above and beyond by] working on our time off. There are times when we as a team go above when a family and us are coming up with a plan.”

**“I don’t love-limit my visits with individual or family. I help in any way with their needs or wants. If it’s something I know someone else is giving away I will either connect or get for them. I connect them to the team.”**

– Huu-ay-aht staff member



## Directors Questionnaire Responses

The Directors of the HFN Community Services Department and the HFN Child and Family Wellness Department provided input on what their teams have put in place since the launch of the HFN Social Services Project, with a focus on the last fiscal year (ending March 2020) during which data began to be systematically collected. The following responses from Directors represent a summary of what their teams have provided, accomplished, and what has exceeded or fallen short of the implementation of related HFN Social Services Panel recommendations.<sup>10</sup>

### Safe

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 8(a)**, to “Identify ‘safe houses’ and provide supports to those offering their homes for this purpose (including security through either volunteer, police or private security). The goal is to establish informal safe houses (people’s homes), as distinct from a formal institutional safe house in Anacla”, HFN Directors have stated that:

- There is one safe house in Port Alberni, an unstaffed unit for a maximum of three people at a time. The space is utilized by both the Patient Travel Program through Community Services as well as families/individuals in transition and/or needing a safe place to stay. HFN purchased the safe house in 2018 for a patient travel place to use instead of hotel use along with using the other two units on the property for an Elders unit, and large unit for reconnecting families after being returned from in care.
- Since its establishment, the unit has been used more for transitions with more families having children returned or individuals leaving an unsafe situations.
- To date, there is no formal safe house identified and operated by HFN government in Anacla. There is one home that has been identified by citizens as a safe place to go if they need a safe place to stay.

### Healthy

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 6**, to “Ensure addiction treatment and mental health counselling is available to HUU-ay-aht citizens” HFN Directors have stated that during the 2018-2019 fiscal year:

- Three adult individuals sought and received addiction treatment under Community Services.
- Six individuals with children sought and received addiction treatment under Community Services.

During the (2019-2020) fiscal year:

HFN funded the treatment of 19 individuals and supported one individual who accessed FNHA funded treatment.

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 6 (a)** “....continuing to assist HUU-ay-aht citizens navigate existing systems to access treatment and counselling services”, HFN Directors have stated that:

- Assistance is being provided to HUU-ay-aht citizens to navigate systems to access treatment and counselling services, and the Directors of Child and Family Wellness and Community Services and HFN’s Clinical Counsellor are working on a Treatment Centre and Detox Policy.
- When individuals are wanting guidance/support to change their lifestyle, they tend to reach out to the HFN’s that they feel most comfortable in talking with.
- Since COVID, some requests for this support have slowed. The team works to provide help close to where they live, and/or offer online meetings/ in person with counsellors.
- HUU-ay-aht has made funds available through both the Child and Family Wellness and Community Services to help citizens with treatment.

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 6 (c)** “....to ensure that all HUU-ay-aht citizens who require treatment or counselling are able to access those services in a timely manner”, HFN Directors have stated that, in terms of process:

- The Clinical Counsellor provides information, pre-admission counselling, referrals, and assistance for citizens wanting treatment, detox, and counselling services. If the citizen is already working with a counsellor, our HFN counsellor will touch base with them and work together for the citizen to see about treatment.
- Citizens talk with Quu’asa Clinical Counsellors and Directors of CFW and Community Services (CS) regarding options.
- The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) process is followed; six pre-admission counselling sessions are required to assess commitment to treatment, what citizen is looking for in a treatment centre, discussion of types of treatment (in-patient, outpatient, funded, non-funded, cultural), expectations for citizen’s commitment. Referrals can be made when the citizen has completed three sessions. However, if sessions are not completed, HFN will not fund treatment. During these pre-counselling sessions, the importance of after-care plans is discussed.
- The HFN Counsellor assists citizens with application processes, as needed, and liaises with treatment centre staff during treatment and in the development of an after-care plan. The treatment centre will provide weekly reports on how citizen is doing in treatment and if treatment needs to be extended.

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 1** “Huu-ay-aht should have dedicated Family Support Workers”, HFN Directors have stated that:

- The Director of Child and Family Wellness, the Family Ties and Preservation Worker (a position created but now eliminated), and the Administration Assistant are additional positions outside of the HFN Social Services Panel recommendations. This Director position was created to manage the growing Child and Family Wellness Department and Child Care Centres to provide mentorship, managerial support, and self-care support.

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 30** “Huu-ay-aht Leadership will itself need to commit to... (e) ensuring the financial and human resources are in place for healing multi-generational trauma”, HFN Directors have stated that:

- These is HFN Clinical Counsellor and a contract with Quu’asa (Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council provides this service through our Health Contract) to provide two more Clinical Counsellors and two youth counsellors to address multigenerational trauma.
- An HFN clinical counsellor was implemented since the HFN Social Services Panel recommendations.
- Cultural Healers are available to provide spiritual support, ceremonies, and land-based healing.
- Cultural Support Worker is made available to Huu-ay-aht citizens

### Connected

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 9** to “Ensure consistent and more frequent cultural participation opportunities are in place for all Huu-ay-aht families and children”, HFN Directors summarized the following information to provide a snapshot of the kinds of cultural and community connections that have been occurring:

#### In 2018:

- Two youth in care came with their foster parent to visit in Anacla.
- One youth in care in Victoria attended Family Reunion at Pachena Bay (Anacla).

#### In 2019:

- Three children living in one foster home went to Anacla four times.
- One youth in foster care went three times to Anacla.
- One youth in care in Nanaimo stayed with family in Port Alberni for Christmas 2019.
- One youth in care from Victoria went on a Huu-ay-aht campout and Family Reunion at Pachena Bay.
- A family living in Switzerland visited Anacla with a baby (baby is a Huu-ay-aht citizen and the parents not).
- A family from the East Coast visited Anacla, and have since relocated to Port Alberni. One parent is Huu-ay aht along with child. They connected with their family in Anacla, participated in baby welcoming then.

#### Culture Nights:

- In 2019, there were two siblings in foster care with family in same home who attended Culture Nights approximately 10 times in Port Alberni.
- In 2019, there were two sets of children and youth in foster care located in Ontario and in Ladysmith who were not been able to visit the Treaty Settlement Lands, cultural gifts and family trees were taken to them (bringing culture and family to them). Additionally, the Ontario children were connected to other family living there.

#### Community Potlucks:

- In 2019, two siblings living with a foster family in Port Alberni attended community potlucks at least twice.

#### Indigenous Days:

- In 2019, two children in care with family attended in Anacla twice for Indigenous Days.
- In 2019, four children in care in Victoria attended in Anacla for Indigenous Days.
- In 2019, three children in care in Port Alberni attended.
- In 2019, eight children in care attended “Honouring our Connections.”

<sup>10</sup>This information is a summarized version of the data and comments provided by Directors, and thus there is a possibility of some inaccuracies or misrepresentations.



In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 2 (f) (iii)** “Through advance planning, moving toward system that emphasizes keeping children at home and having safe adults move in to keep children in place if parents or guardians must be removed”, and given that a major priority of the HFN Social Services Panel work was centered around the refrain of “bring our children home”, Directors provide the following progress summary on supporting Huu-ay-aht children and youth in care and in other circumstances:

Since the beginning of the HFN Social Services Project in 2017, there has been a decrease in the number of children in the care of the BC Ministry of Child and Family Development/Delegated Aboriginal Agencies and an increase in the number the number of children being cared for by Huu-ay-aht families when those children are unable to live at home. While the exact numbers of children “in care” at any particular moment both constantly in flux and is confidential information, it is notable that 32 Huu-ay-aht children have been returned home since the fall 2017 beginning of the HFN Social Services Project. Further, it is important to note that the majority of the children in care are living permanently with family and /or when other HFN caregivers/parents are unable to care for their children.

The number of Huu-ay-aht children who are in temporary care at any given time is fluid, but is typically fewer than five at a time.

In terms of advance planning, and proactive support, the Child and Family Wellness data supports the following changes over the last year:

- There has been an increased number of Huu-ay-aht citizens reaching out for support through:
  - one-on-one counselling
  - groups counselling
  - support from Protection Support Workers and/or Family Support Liaison Workers
  - seminars/workshops
- To build resiliency, the HFN Child and Family Wellness team has provided more:
  - advocacy
  - opportunities to access mental health and wellness services (e.g., counselling, groups)
  - opportunities to access detox and treatment
  - supporting Huu-ay-aht family members caring for children
  - one-to-one support

**Table 3. HFN Current Data on “Bringing Huu-ay-aht Children Home”**

<i>December 2020</i>	<i>November 2016</i>	<i>March 2018<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>January 2021</i>
Total number of Huu-ay-aht children	220		271
Total number of families of Huu-ay-aht children that HFN providing support to	84		148 <sup>2</sup>
Number of Huu-ay-aht children in foster care	34	47	21
Number of these children in the care of extended family	9	11	16 <sup>3</sup>
Number of these children in external foster care	25	36	7 <sup>4</sup>
Number of reversals of continuing care orders	0	0	3
Number of returns			34 <sup>5</sup>
Number of averted removals			54 <sup>6</sup>

An increasing number of citizens are accessing support from HFN Protection Support Workers when the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Delegated Aboriginal Agencies such as Usma Nuuchah-nulth Family & Child Services have received child protection and neglect reports. Correspondingly, these agencies (MCFD/DAA/Usma) also now call HFN when they have received a call about a Huu-ay-aht child.

<sup>1</sup>Date at which Huu-ay-aht declared a public health emergency and demanded the Province do better for First Nations children in care.  
<sup>2</sup>In families where there are multiple children, the family being supported was counted one time only. This total doesn't include the many calls that are a one-time information call from the Child and Family Wellness team.  
<sup>3</sup>Two are under voluntary care agreements. This number fluctuates.  
<sup>4</sup>This number fluctuates month to month as has gone as low as 1 in 2020.  
<sup>5</sup>Since Social Services Project implementation.  
<sup>6</sup>Since tracking began in April 2020.



In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 1 (a)** “The Family Support Workers are dedicated full-time to supporting all HUU-ay-aht citizens and their families, not just youth and parents involved in the child welfare system. FSW will help navigate and coordinate proactive outreach and the provision of supportive services to HUU-ay-aht people from before they are born and throughout the life cycle”, Directors note that:

- Since the end of March 2020, when statistic tracking began, the two Family Support Liaison Workers have provided support to 25-35 citizens per week, not including contact with community partners.
- Staff estimate approximately 250-300 visits with citizens per a calendar year.

For perspective on this topic, please note the relevant responses from the Citizen Survey where respondents were asked about the Family Support Liaisons and Protection Support Workers:

**Do you see the role of the Family Support Liaisons and Protection Support Workers as assisting and supporting you?**

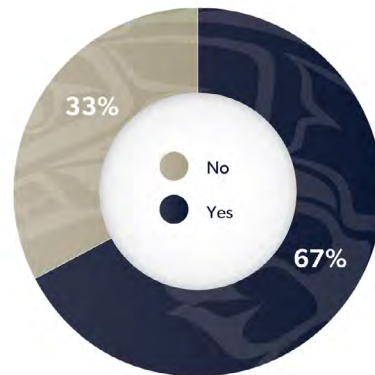


Figure 9 Family Support Liaisons and Protection Support Workers : HUU-ay-aht Parents, Caregivers, and Adults

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 2** “HUU-ay-aht should have dedicated Protection Support Workers... (a) The Protection Worker is an Support advocate for HUU-ay-aht families involved in any child protection matter or potential child protection matter;... (d) The PSW will engage in proactive and early planning with families in case protection measures become necessary”, Directors note that:

- Since the end of March 2020, when statistic tracking began, the two Protection Support Workers have visited 26-46 citizens per week excluding vacation.
- Staff estimate approximately 250-300 visits with citizens per calendar year.

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 4**: “Huu-ay-aht should implement expanded pregnancy support and baby welcoming programs”, Director’s note that in 2019:

- Of the 11 babies invited, 9 babies were honoured in person with baby welcomings. The two babies who could not attend still received their baby kits which contained drums, a drumstick, a cedar headband, a cultural board book, and an Indigenous stuffed whale toy that has cultural significance.
- 14 parents were present at the baby welcomings (one mother was in labour and could not attend).
- A total of 21 family members attended the baby welcomings, plus a social worker and the HFN staff/team.

Similarly, in relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 4**: “Huu-ay-aht should implement expanded Pregnancy support and baby welcoming programs... (c) Huu-ay-aht Baby Kits are distributed with healthy baby and parent essentials (e.g. clothes, bath, safety seats, diapers etc.)” Directors note that “recognizing that new parents often need additional supports preparing for an caring for a new born or baby, parents and caregivers in need were provided with baby formula and baby supplies, when requested, or when a need was identified”.

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 5**: “Huu-ay-aht should ensure robust food, necessities, and shelter assistance is available to its citizens as an important prevention measure. In particular, Huu-ay-aht should... (a) Re-implement the Fresh Food Basket Program for all Huu-ay-aht who require it, regardless of geographical area (if baskets themselves cannot be delivered, grocery funds and shopping support should be provided in lieu”, Directors noted that:

“recognizing that parents, caregivers, and individuals may experience unexpected financial shortfalls that result in a shortage of funds necessary to provide for a family’s basic needs, Huu-ay-aht provided support for food, necessities and shelter assistance to citizens as a preventive measure.”

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 8** “Implement support and safety mechanisms in Anacla. Particulars of this recommendation include that Huu-ay-aht: (b) Increase the number of existing “host homes” in Anacla to enable more cultural connection for youth and families who live away”, as well as many of the recommendations that include better inclusion of Anacla in cultural and social services, the Directors note that:

- There is one certified Host Home in Anacla. From 2018 to 2019, five families accessed the Host Home. However, the Host Home is now caring for four HFN children in care so is no longer available due to lack of space in the home.
- A Clinical Counsellor provided services in Anacla one day per week (prior to COVID-19), and now offers these services remotely.
- A SMART Recovery Program was being offered once per week in Anacla (weather permitting) – now being offered remotely and response has been positive (includes residents in other areas now)
- A FRIENDS for Life Group (group for youth to reach out and a safe place to share) is offered at Bamfield Elementary School (and remotely during COVID).
- Art programs (paused due to COVID-19) are offered in Anacla. These help to offer alternative healthy programs to support sobriety, healing intergenerational trauma, etc.
- Health-related after-hours programming is offered in Port Alberni & Anacla. The programs have been on grief and loss, depression, importance of self-care, anxiety, arthritis, diabetes, healthy eating, and harm reduction.
- There are cultural history nights offered every Monday in Anacla.
- Recreation outings are provided for youth in Anacla.
- Cultural & language camps and family camps have been offered in Anacla.
- Families in Anacla have been involved with Tlupitch games.
- Indigenous Days have been offered to all community members.
- Men’s and Women’s groups have been offered to residents of Anacla through the cultural worker.
- Various programs have been brought into Anacla with Service Canada and NETP such as on skill development.
- The Nananiqsu (grandparents) group have monthly meetings to offer connections, guidance on cultural knowledge, and access for traditional practices to citizens and families.

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 12** to “Build an Elders Liaison and Support Program that: (b) Ensures Elder Liaisons can go into homes where children are currently in foster care as an important means by which to maintain connection”, Directors stated that:

- There have been no Elder Liaisons able to connect with and visit homes where children are currently in foster care this year. There was one interested couple but they wanted to wait.
- An Elder Liaison was hired in 2019 is focusing on supporting Elders and others in hospital, helping families with grief and loss and funeral support.

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 18** to “immediately develop Permanency Plans for each Huu-ay-aht youth currently in care”, Directors note that:



- 39 youth currently have Permanency Plans in place.
- All 24 children with MCFD involvement are in Permanency Planning. HFN staff and Directors are trying to find family to care for them and for those in foster care are working towards returns to their families, extended families, or Huu-ay-aht families.

### General Topics

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 27** that “Huu-ay-aht should establish a consistent Community Engagement Program to continue community engagement and receive input on matters related to child and family health and well-being”, Directors note that:

- As of December 2019, a total of 151 and then as of October 2019, a total of 84 HUU-ay-aht citizens, attended Community Engagement Sessions in Anacapa, Port Alberni, Nanaimo, Victoria, and Vancouver. These Community Engagement Sessions included an introduction of the HFN Child and Family Wellness team members, services offered by the team, and how citizens can access these services. The Sessions included discussions that related specifically to receiving input on matters related to child and family health and well-being as information about Child and Family Wellness staff, programs and services.

In relation to HFN Social Services Panel **Recommendation 30** that “Huu-ay-aht Leadership will itself need to commit to: (c) strong advocacy for HUU-ay-aht youth and families”, Directors note that:

- HFN has advocated for homes for the homeless HUU-ay-aht citizens during COVID-19.
- By making Legal Counsel for CFW Team a priority, HFN Leadership has been and is advocating for youth and families, including providing legal representation for families involved in child protection system who have best interests of HFN children and families in mind. HUU-ay-aht families are now able to seek legal advice and advocacy when cases are “stuck”.
- HFN distributed cheques during COVID-19 for families with minor HUU-ay-aht citizen in the family.

**“Healing is messy  
but wonderful.”**

– Edward R. Johnson *āicitath*



## Huu-ay-aht Executive Council and the Social Services Task Force Questionnaire Responses

The following responses were provided by Huu-ay-aht Executive Council and the Social Services Task Force. Each question relates directly to recommendations of the 2017 HFN Report of the Social Services Panel.

### Safe

a. Have the Traditional Houses, under the leadership of Ha'wiih, assigned roles within the Traditional House to support and care for youth and families?

Ha'wiih meets once a month and appoints new citizens to traditional houses. The Ha'wiih started a process in 2019, working with facilitators to formalize their practices but this process wasn't completed because of factors related to COVID-19 restrictions and the need for more Ha'wiih support on this. This process should be restarted as there is so much more the Ha'wiih can offer on these matters.

b. Is Huu-ay-aht Leadership advancing a strong, open, and united voice against violence among Huu-ay-aht people?

Leadership carries the three sacred principles,

**?uu?aluk/Taking Care Of:** In this context, this is about taking care of present and future generations, as well as taking care of self and the resources provided by the land and the natural world.

**Hišuk ma ćawak/Everything is One:** A notion of the interconnected, interdependent, and reciprocal relationship between the people, the land, and the wider world(s) in a physical, spiritual, and social sense.

**?iisaak/Utmost Respect:** Personal and collective respect for the community and its people, traditional knowledge, the natural world, the metaphysical world, and other peoples and communities.

HFN will continue to work with the RCMP to improve policing services in Anacla.

There are preliminary discussions underway (as of November 2020) to explore a restorative justice strategy, with the goal of reconciling and healing amongst HFN members, both victims and perpetrators.

### Healthy

c. Has a Mother Centre, as per recommendation parameters 26(a)(i-iv), been established?

The Oomiiqsu (Mother Centre) has not yet been completed, but it is underway: We have been successful in getting capital funding from BC Housing for construction for the purchase of a site at 4305 Kendall Avenue in Port Alberni. A Port Alberni Mother Centre Society has been formed, and the architectural firm "dHKarchitects" has submitted a successful design proposal for the building. What is still needed to meet this commitment to building the Oomiiqsu (Mother Centre) is an operations fund. HFN staff are seeking alternative sources for operational funding and hope to have some in place by end of year 2020. Huu-ay-at elected leadership will continue to push for BC Government assistance at the political level. The Social Services Task Force has recommended staff explore if HFN can contribute enough funding to open the facility at a minimal level. This would require further exploration with BC Housing, to ensure they will approve the construction process. The Social Services Task Force further recommends ensuring that HFN has increased capacity to manage the construction project and to continue fundraising efforts.

d. Has Huu-ay-aht established a consistent Community Engagement Program to continue receiving input on matters related to child and family health and well-being as per Recommendation 27 (a & b)?

Yes, the Community Engagement Program is an ongoing process, although this first 2020 evaluation of the Social Services Program is the most targeted opportunity for feedback. It is important to factor in to these processes and engagement that the community is adjusting to virtual meetings due to COVID-19. While there has been successful engagement sessions in regards to the Child and Family Wellness Department, there needs to be more virtual community engagement sessions on matters related to child and family health going forward. HFN has the people in place to make a successful virtual community engagement program with proper support services. The community engagement sessions leading to this survey project, were a huge success the feedback was incorporated into the survey. The last Community Engagement Session for the evaluations was in December 2019. Elected leadership brought the survey to citizens through the CES to accomplish three things.

1. Introduce the framework and the survey so citizens know it is coming and have opportunity to ask about the process for collecting data.
2. To ensure that we are working towards "Prior Informed



2. To ensure that we are working towards “Prior Informed Consent” which is a cornerstone to any research project.
3. To gain an understanding from citizens about the questions themselves as an ongoing measurement tool. Do they make sense, are they understandable, are they offensive, and will answers to the questions produce good and usable data?
4. Once the evaluation for the social services project is completed, there will be a community engagement session to go over the findings.

e. Is Huu-ay-aht Leadership ensuring the financial and human resources are in place for healing multigenerational trauma?

HFN has a budgeting process annually, where we contribute to Child and Family Wellness Department. In addition, we are constantly seeking financial support to go towards multigenerational traumas in our Child and Family Wellness Department. HFN Executive council has also approved a Child and Family Wellness Financial Support Policy that will better meet the needs of our citizens to decrease financial dependency and increase citizen self-reliance. Elected leadership has also supported the creation of positions and programs. All of this is with the objective of having Huu-ay-aht children will grow up safe, healthy, and connected to our home and culture/values guided by our traditions and our nananiqsu.

**Connected** .....

f. Has Ha’wiih welcomed and determined placement of all Huu-ay-aht children, youth, and their families within Traditional House families?

Yes, with our citizenship Ha’wiih puts all new citizens in a Traditional House before going to citizenship committee.

g. Has Ha’wiih assigned roles to ensure cultural connections are supported and consistently maintained?

Yes, Ha’wiih are engaged in our cultural decisions with in the government they have a saying what cultural activities that take place like cultural history nights, cultural events such as baby welcomings, and cultural care packages that go to our newborn babies.

**General** .....

h. Has Huu-ay-aht negotiated significant cooperation and partnership with the Provincial and Federal governments in the areas laid out in Recommendation 23(a)(i-ix)?

Much effort by HFN Directors and HFN Government has been made to advance relationships between HFN and the

Crown both federally and provincially. HFN is awaiting a response from the Federal government to commence Bill C-92 negotiations. HFN is restarting a table with BC to funding issues.

HFN has worked with MCFD, as well as BC Housing to advance child welfare issues. HFN has also worked with delegated agencies to advance advocacy for families. This advocacy has prevented the removal of children from families in several instances.

i. Has Huu-ay-aht negotiated funding agreements with the Provincial and Federal governments as set out in Appendix B – Huu-ay-aht Children and Family Jurisdiction Negotiations?

Huu-ay-aht has had two years of Provincial funding and have a multi-year agreement with Canada in place for the Social Services Panel recommendation implementation. Huu-ay-aht received multi-year funding commitments from the federal government at a substantial level. Huu-ay-aht will need to continue to secure funding to support Bill C-92 negotiations and beyond. HFN has requested to start the process for Bill C-92 negotiations with Canada (Indigenous Services Canada) and are awaiting a response.

j. Has Huu-ay-aht begun negotiating expanded jurisdiction over child protection for Huu-ay-aht children in BC?

The teams started a workplan for HFN Child and Family Jurisdiction and Coordination Agreement. Identifying timelines and high-level goals for meetings with Canada, BC, and tripartite, reviewing existing HFN funding/deliverables with federal funding, budget, legislative development, and litigation strategy.

k. Has committed long term funding been dedicated for Huu-ay-aht Wraparound Services that meets the parameters of Recommendation 24 (a-c)?

Aside from the funding agreements listed above, HFN has contributed to Panel Recommendation implementation annually. HFN has not yet responded to recommendations about guaranteed permanent financial appropriations for HFN family support.

l. Has an Alternative Dispute Resolution Body been designated/established to replace the Provincial Court’s role in decision making around Huu-ay-aht children and families?

No – discussions have not been active.

m. Is Huu-ay-aht working with the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council regarding the creation of a Tribunal under s.104 of CFCSA?



n. Is Huu-ay-aht Leadership acting as a strong advocate for Huu-ay-aht youth and families? Explain.

Yes. HFN Leadership participates in many programs such as the Warriors Program, Supportive in the Girls Project and Mentoring Program, and is working on building homes for families on traditional homelands. Leadership also participates in cultural events and promoting language and culture via social media events. Executive Council actively ensures that someone from Council has the portfolio on these issues. HFN Executive Council will ultimately oversee the negotiations and preparations for drawing down child welfare jurisdiction in regards to Bill C-92. Finally, Executive Council follows Huu-ay-aht sacred principles while following our strategic plan and its five pillars.





# NEXT STEPS IN SUPPORTING HUU-AY-AHT CITIZENS

Respondents to the 2020 evaluation questions of the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project, of which this report is a summary, not only evaluated their past experience to date of the Social Services Project (presented in the Results section above), but they also had valuable recommendations going forward. These potential next steps and recommended programming and services for supporting Huu-ay-aht citizens were derived directly from the survey comments of HFN staff, Huu-ay-aht adults, caregivers, parents, Elders, and youth, as well as gathered from the input by the Social Services Task Force and HFN Directors. The collated recommendations and comments are as summarized in the list that follows. Each of these recommendations is elaborated upon further below this summarized list.

- 1. Secure Oomiiqsu (Mother Centre) Funding:** Huu-ay-aht should secure operational funding for the Oomiiqsu (Mother Centre).
- 2. Housing:** There is a stated need for more housing, in particular, affordable housing.
- 3. Staff Fatigue and Burnout:** Staff from both the HFN Community Services and Child Family Wellness and

Departments need continuous support for the vital services they are providing.

- 4. Staffing:** There was a need indicated by citizen respondents and staff for more social services staff, as well as more support and training for staff.
- 5. Cultural Events:** There is a keen interest in more cultural events and programs, and in greater language and cultural education.
- 6. Atmosphere at Huu-ay-aht Cultural Events:** Every effort should be made to make cultural events welcoming to all ages of citizens for whom (re)learning, (re)invigorating, and expressing Huu-ay-aht culture and language can feel vulnerable.
- 7. Food:** There is a notable appetite for learning and programming related to food and cooking.
- 8. Communication with Citizens:** Some respondents to the survey consistently indicated that they want to be better informed about programming and available supports.

9. **Internal Communication:** Internal communication among Directors, HFN Executive Council, and the Social Services Task Forces should be regularized.
10. **External Communication:** Externally, there is a need for improved communication protocols among parents, HUU-ay-aht, Directors/staff, and MCFD/Usma.
11. **Transportation:** Some survey respondents pointed to the need for better transportation.
12. **Additional Project Capacity:** HFN Executive Council, and Social Services Team needs to build additional capacity in several areas of program delivery and advocacy.
13. **Engaging with Youth:** The lack of youth responses in the citizen survey points to the need to engage with youth to assess and be informed about their programming and support needs.
14. **Check-in with Elders:** Respondents indicated that Elders are isolated and would benefit from more check-ins.
15. **Safety Programs & Education:** There is a desire for some additional programs and education related to safety.
16. **Strategy on Addressing Violence:** In order to protect victims and to build safer HUU-ay-aht communities and households, now may be a good time to come together and address the topic of violence head-on.
17. **Physical Health:** There is an interest by respondents for more opportunities related to physical health and exercise.
18. **Additional Mental and Emotional Health Support:** There is a need for additional mental health support.
19. **Access to Equipment:** Respondents noted some equipment access that may improve citizen's wellbeing.
20. **Additional Parenting and Caregiving Support:** There is a need for additional parenting and caregiving support.
21. **Foster Parent Engagement:** Any foster parents of HUU-ay-aht children must be dedicated to connecting those children with their community and culture.
22. **LGBTQ+ and Gender Support:** Some citizens would like support on matters related to LGBTQ+ and gender.
23. **Increased Inclusivity:** There are opportunities to make programs more inclusive.
24. **Secure Bill C-92 Negotiation Funding:** HUU-ay-aht should continue to secure funding to support Bill C-92 negotiations and follow-up work.
25. **Secure HUU-ay-aht Wraparound Services Funding:** HUU-ay-aht should establish committed long-term funding dedicated for HUU-ay-aht Wraparound Lifecycle Support.
26. **Designate or Establish an Alternative Dispute Resolution Body:** HUU-ay-aht should designate or establish a HUU-ay-aht Decision Making Body as an Alternative Dispute Resolution Body.



The following explanations of the potential next steps and recommendations going forward for the HFN Social Services Project implementation are not listed in any order of priority. Going forward, the extent to which HFN adopts these next steps, when they are acted upon, and in what order they are prioritized is the purview of HFN. This list is intended to be used as a planning tool for Executive Council, Directors, staff, and the Social Services Task Force to coordinate their scope, budgets, and capacities to address them.

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## 1. Secure Oomiiqsu (Mother Centre) Funding

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The 2017 HFN Social Services Panel Report's Recommendation 26 was to "[w]ork to establish a centre modelled on the Vancouver Aboriginal Mother Centre." The purpose of this Port Alberni-based centre was to include the provision of transitional and supportive housing to keep families together, and to potentially become a hub for service delivery.<sup>11</sup>

To date, HFN has a site for the Oomiiqsu (Mother Centre) and has identified the capital funds for building it. While HFN has developed an operational plan for the Centre, no operational funding has yet been identified. Huu-ay-aht will need to secure operational funding for the Oomiiqsu (Mother Centre).

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## 2. Housing

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There is a need for more housing, in particular, affordable housing. In particular, Huu-ay-aht adults, caregivers, and parents suggested the need for:

- Affordable housing
- More crisis grants to help secure a rental housing
- More housing for women, men, and others who are homeless
- Support with housing as it relates to safety
- Housing for parents/caregivers having trouble with rent and wanting to provide safety and consistency for their children

**“Housing and poverty are the biggest societal issues I see citizens facing on top of violence mental health and drug or alcohol use... we need more housing!”**

– Huu-ay-aht Staff Member

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<sup>11</sup>Report of the Social Services Panel (May 2017). Huu-ay-aht First Nations Social Services Project: Safe, Healthy and Connected, Bringing Huu-ay-aht Children Home.



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### 3. Staff Fatigue and Burnout

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Staff from both the HFN Community Services and Child Family Wellness and Departments need continuous support for the vital services they are providing. Some HFN staff members in their survey responses specifically mentioned or alluded to a degree of staff fatigue or burnout. One of the staff members stated that their team goes above and beyond the HFN Social Services Project recommendations “to the point of extreme burnout”. The following quote from an HFN staff member exemplifies this concern about staff burnout and fatigue:

**“Our entire team is dedicated and passionate about the work we do and wanting to make a difference in the lives of HFN citizens ... often times at the expense of our own self-care. We are learning to make our self-care a priority and find balance. At the same time demonstrating and modeling how to do that.”**

– Huu-ay-aht Staff Member

Factors to consider in this supporting of staff as a priority matter may include (1) the inherent demanding nature of providing social services, (2) the additional fatigue for staff created by the current protracted COVID-19 pandemic, (3) sufficiency of staffing levels to meeting community and staff need, and, perhaps most importantly, (4) the need to continue to support Huu-ay-aht citizens, families, and children.

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### 4. Staffing

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Both citizen respondents and staff indicated a need for more social services staff, as well as more support and training for staff. Huu-ay-aht adults, Elders, and HFN staff suggested the need for:

- A bigger social services team available to citizens
- More care workers
- More prenatal support workers
- A staff member on the mainland to support Huu-ay-aht needs there
- Mandatory Cultural Sensitivity and Trauma Training for all Huu-ay-aht staff, administration, government, and business employees
- Ensuring health, wellness, and self-care for social services staff
- Additional professional development opportunities and team building for staff

**“[The staff are] already doing an amazing job with the team we have now but I feel like we could add people to the team to better support individuals and giving training to the staff with lesser experience to help navigate the subjects that come to us.”**

– Huu-ay-aht staff member



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## 5. Cultural Events

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There is a keen interest by many in having more cultural events and programs, as well as better access to greater language and cultural education. In their comments, staff and citizen respondents indicated an interest in more cultural events, programs, and education.

Suggestions from staff regarding cultural events, language, and cultural education included:

- Family wellness days
- Huu-ay-aht Days
- Continuing culture teachings via social media
- Sessions like women's, men's, and teen groups<sup>12</sup>
- Monthly cultural history nights with language and singing
- Youth programs
- More cedar barking teachings and cultural regalia being made
- More tours around Huu-ay-aht territory for the community and children to be familiar with
- A hunting program
- A fishing program
- Lessons on how to build a smoke house

Suggestions from Huu-ay-aht adults, parents, and caregivers regarding cultural events, language, and cultural education included:

- More cultural programming in Anacla
- Craft/cultural nights in Nanaimo
- Virtual connections made available like Google meet or Zoom so citizens can connect more
- Group or outreach program for members in the United States and those out-of-Province
- Partnering with other Indigenous governments to support local HFN members living elsewhere
- Cultural activities for Huu-ay-aht children living outside of Anacla and Alberni Valley
- Access to a consistent Elder for cultural teachings
- Home visits with family cultural support

**“I would like to see that culture nights are not combined with community engagement sessions.”**

– Huu-ay-aht Staff Member

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<sup>12</sup>To avoid exclusion of non-binary individuals, consider alternatives to these binary labels.

Suggestions by Elders on what is most important for youth and children to learn about their culture included:

- Traditional food harvesting
- Language
- Cooking
- Songs
- Dance
- Family trees
- Identity

**“I want to grow spiritually and be able to teach my kids, I want to learn cultural hobbies and ways of life to help keep us busy and close with one another. I would love ...to go over teachings and language, along with songs, dance, meals, everything I missed out on learning because I wasn't around our traditions as a child.”**

– Huu-ay-aht parent/caregiver

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## 6. Atmosphere at Huu-ay-aht Cultural Events

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Every effort should be made to make cultural events welcoming to all ages of citizens for whom (re)learning, (re)invigorating, and expressing Huu-ay-aht culture and language can feel vulnerable. As many citizens indicated in their responses, Huu-ay-aht cultural events and gatherings clearly do much to connect Huu-ay-aht citizens with their culture and each other, and as such are appreciated by many. Greater consideration could be given to making Huu-ay-aht cultural events more welcoming to all ages of Huu-ay-aht citizens. Considering the vulnerability that Huu-ay-aht citizens sometimes feel in (re)learning, (re)invigorating, and taking part in expressing Huu-ay-aht culture and language, it will continue to be important to build approaches to engaging with Huu-ay-aht culture that are welcoming, informative, and adhere to the sacred principles around respect.

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## 7. Food

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There is keen appetite by many for more learning and programming related to food and cooking. Programs and food-related support were suggested primarily by HUU-ay-aht caregivers and parents. Their suggestions included:

- A course on preparing healthy traditional food
- “Families in the Kitchen” was a good program but ran during the day when it was harder to access for working parents/caregivers
- “Fresh Food Program” was useful and could be made available again
- More family cooking classes
- More food programming
- Help with meal planning, in particular on vegetarian foods
- Help with getting children interested in their health and healthy food

**“Another area I see that can benefit citizens is having a food program. We need someone to coordinate and organize food for our citizens that are most vulnerable ... [this] became most evident during [the] COVID pandemic.”**

– HUU-ay-aht Staff Member

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## 8. Communication with Citizens

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Some respondents to the survey consistently indicated that they want to be kept better informed about programming, available, and events supports, while others indicated feeling satisfactorily informed about these.

HUU-ay-aht adults, parents, and caregivers suggested that:

- There needs to be more communication about programs and events
- They want to be informed in advance of cultural events so their children can attend
- They weren’t aware of some of the services and programs offered until reading the list within this evaluation survey
- HFN over-relies on Facebook™ for reaching out about programs and events

- Communication about programs and events on the Facebook™ page not easily found because of so many postings there by community members
- Frequently, communication to citizens about programs and events are on too short notice, not giving citizens enough time to rearrange work schedules
- They are not always made aware of groups available or services
- That communication has to be even stronger now that COVID-19 is restricting communication among people
- That phone calls, emails, and/or mail-out notices calendar would be helpful for knowing about culture nights
- When funding is required for participation, that extra advance notice should be given to allow interested participants to locate needed funds

**Communication: Has the HFN team kept you informed about upcoming events, programs and services offered/delivered by the HFN Social Services Project?**



Figure 10 Communication: HUU-ay-aht Parents, Caregivers, and Adults

**“I don’t hear about events until days before the event. I work and need to plan vacation days to attend HUU-ay-aht events. I understand they are truly amazing, fun and learning experiences.”**

– HUU-ay-aht parent/caregiver

**“Usually by the time I find out about events I have missed any chance of transportation.”**

– HUU-ay-aht adult

If you live away from Alberni Valley and Anacla, are you able to access transportation and accommodation in a way that removes barriers to attendance and participation in cultural events?

## 9. Internal Communication

Internal communication among Directors, HFN Executive Council, and the Social Services Task Force should be regularized. This communication may include updates on:

- Federal Government relations
- BC Government relations
- Community engagement
- Staffing
- Financial reporting
- Governance and policy development
- Frontline prevention and advocacy work
- Program development, delivery, and monitoring

## 10. External Communication

Externally, there is a need for improved and regularized communication protocols among parents, Huu-ay-aht, Directors/staff, and MCFD/Usma. This need for improved communication is rooted in the problem where specific cases become “stuck” and where communication issues with social workers/situations where social workers change the bar for parents/not notifying the Nation when children are being interviewed, and where plans for children are moving slowly.

HFN Directors note that there is a need to ensure that MCFD and Delegated Agency Social Workers are held accountable for this communication. For example, at times, children and families get “lost” in the system and plans for reunification are not being moved forward in a timely manner. Another example is that there have been times when the Huu-ay-aht hasn’t been notified when child protection interviews with children are happening. Directors have also used the Quality Assurance Committee Table to discuss bigger themes such as foster parent training and expectations and note the importance of (in this communication) highlighting the success stories and examples of when MCFD/Usma have worked effectively with HFN and Huu-ay-aht families. Importantly, appreciation for teamwork and progress has been acknowledged between MCFD and Delegated Agencies.

## 11. Transportation

Some survey respondents pointed to the need for better transportation.

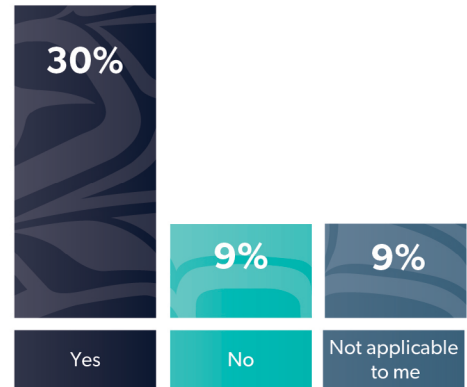


Figure 11 Transportation and Accommodation: Huu-ay-aht Parents, Caregivers, and Adults

In particular, Huu-ay-aht adults, parents, and caregivers suggested that:

**“I don’t drive and always find it hard to even get to Anacla to show my family where we come from.”**

– Huu-ay-aht adult

- Frequently, travel expenses keep citizens from attending cultural and community events
- Where travel expenses can be found, sometimes accommodation expenses prevent citizens from attending cultural and community events
- Citizens who don’t drive find it hard to get to Anacla and to attend cultural events
- The cost of travel is quite high
- Travel costs are a barrier for some parents in caring for their children

Similarly, Huu-ay-aht Elders suggest:

- The need for better access to travel, in particular to and from home to medical appointments that are out of town
- Assistance with travel expenses /hotels/lodging for citizens that need medical assistance

**“It’s hard to find a ride to go see doctors in city and the Bamfield nurse.”**

– Huu-ay-aht Elder



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## 12. Additional Project Capacity

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The following list identified by Social Services Task Force are examples of what the HFN Executive Council, and Social Services Directors and teams, will need to address on a more regular basis, and therefore more capacity on the following matters is recommended.

- Federal government relations
- Current funding agreement
- BC government relations (e.g., Bill C-92 Negotiations)
- Quality Assurance
- HFN funding for current prevention work
  - Huu-ay-aht child welfare law development
  - Oomiiqsu (Mother Centre) fundraising, operational funding, and project management
  - Communications and engagement – internally and externally
  - Governance matters and policy development
  - Frontline prevention and advocacy work to assist families
- More robust food, necessities and shelter assistance
  - Program development, delivery, and monitoring

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## 13. Engaging with Youth

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The lack of youth responses in the citizen survey points to the need to engage with youth to assess and be informed about their programming and support needs. Huu-ay-aht's Social Services Project responds to the needs of Huu-ay-aht youth in real time. However, the lack of Huu-ay-aht youth response (only 2 youth respondents) in the citizen survey portion of this 2020 Evaluation makes planning difficult for how the Project can be nimble in responding to youth needs. Future Social Services Project evaluations should consider non-survey methods of engaging with youth, especially those vulnerable or deeply connected with vulnerable youth.

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## 14. Check-in with Elders more

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Respondents indicated that Elders are isolated and would benefit from more check-ins.

**Is safety, abuse, and/or neglect of elderly Huu-ay-aht citizens being addressed by the HFN Social Services Project?**

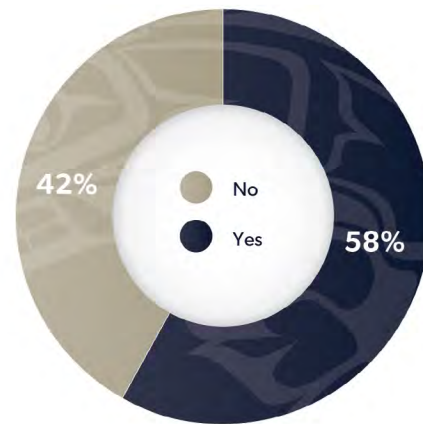


Figure 12 Elderly, Safety, Abuse, Neglect: Huu-ay-aht Elders

**“It’s always nice to hear from home.”**

– Huu-ay-aht Elder

In particular, Huu-ay-aht Elders suggested:

- The need looking out for Elders, checking in on them, and hearing what they think
- More communication
- Improved communication



In support of these suggestions, Huu-ay-aht Elders commented that:

- “You should stop by to those that have no phones or internet. You don’t have to go inside of their house, just be there for them.”
- “I lost [a loved one] earlier this year and nobody looks in on me it’s pretty lonely.”
- “See if Elders need a ride to go get groceries or medicine because I won’t be driving much longer and getting echum.”

**“As an Elder I’m grateful to have family in my life who stay in touch but I worry about Elders who are not as fortunate to get calls to check up on them.”**

– Huu-ay-aht Elder

**Is loneliness among elderly Huu-ay-aht citizens being addressed by the HFN Social Services Project?**

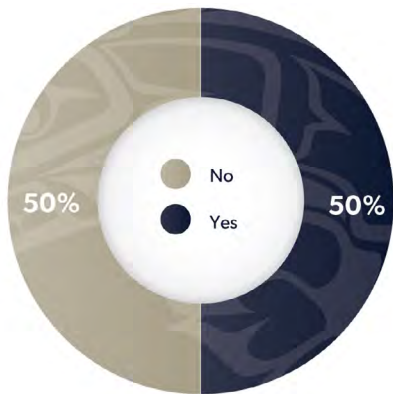


Figure 13 Loneliness: Huu-ay-aht Elders

## 15. Safety Programs & Education

There is a desire for some additional programs and education related to safety. Huu-ay-aht parents, caregivers, adults, Elders, and staff had some specific suggestions for additional safety programming and education including:

- Self-defense classes or tribal group
- Programs on healthy relationships, such as awareness of domestic violence boundaries
- Violence resistant workshops
- Programs for youth about drinking and driving
- Making emergency numbers known to all members, e.g., putting those numbers in the AGM package and highlight them for Elders to see

In addition to these ideas, the Huu-ay-aht youth respondents indicated that school support, cultural support, counselling services, and information about bullying could help them build more safety and stability:

**What do you need in your life to create a sense of safety and stability?**



Figure 14 Safety and Stability: Huu-ay-aht Youth

## 16. Strategy on Addressing Violence

To protect victims and to build safe Huu-ay-aht communities and households, now may be a good time to come together and address the topic of violence head-on. Violence is an ongoing issue of society at large, and it is a difficult matter to address particularly when fueled and exacerbated by the legacy of colonization and disenfranchisement. In this evaluation, comments related to violence such as intimate partner violence, violence related to child protection, and attitudes toward violence emerged. Of particular concern was reporting as it relates to violence. This emergence of concerns around violence and the hesitancy and complexity surrounding the reporting of violence may be a place to begin a discussion. Further, with the Social Services Project in its third year, many people may now have a better grasp on how Huu-ay-aht and Huu-ay-aht citizens can take this difficult topic head on. Given the complex nature of addressing and resolving matters of violence, ensuing discussions would best to include all levels of input – citizen, staff, Directors, leadership, Ha’wiih, and the Social Services Task Force.

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## 17. Physical Health

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There is an interest by respondents for more opportunities related to physical health and exercise. Huu-ay-aht caregivers, parents, adults, and staff suggested the following as a way of supporting physical health and exercise for Huu-ay-aht citizens:

- Access to an exercise gym with, for example, weights, bikes, and treadmills – including in Anacla
- Wellness programming that could include of hikes, yoga, meditation, and/or self-care options
- More opportunities for all Huu-ay-aht children to take part in outdoor sports such as trips to Mt. Washington
- General physical activity support
- Help with sports fees or camps
- Sports coach to teach parents how to start little league games or sporting activities for a community as a whole in Anacla
- Bringing in more health professionals and facilitators

---

## 18. Additional Mental and Emotional Health Support

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There is a need for additional mental health support. Huu-ay-aht parents, caregivers, and adults suggested that their, and their children's, mental and emotional health could be better supported through:

- More consistent services for younger children in family ties
- Education on social media safety
- Education on sexuality and relationship building
- Art therapy for pre-teens and teens
- More awareness education for children effected by trauma and addictions
- More youth mental wellness chats
- More mother-and-daughter groups
- Trauma treatment
- More support for people who have experienced childhood rape and residential school mistreatments

**“I want to see programs offered to the children in care where they can go without parents or caretakers and learn things such as life skills, wellness, behaviors, counselling, coping, etc.”**

– Huu-ay-aht parent/caregiver

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## 19. Access to Equipment

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Respondents noted equipment access that may improve Huu-ay-aht citizens' wellbeing. These include:

- Big and small drums for home practices
- More access to computers to apply for jobs and to write resumes

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## 20. Additional Parenting and Caregiving Support

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There is a need for additional parenting and caregiving support.

**Do you feel that you have satisfactory access to parenting education and support tools?**

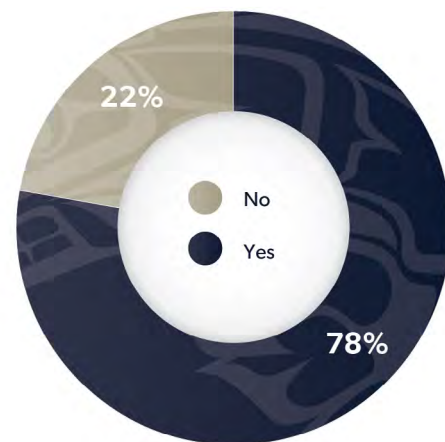


Figure 15 Parenting Support: Huu-ay-aht Parents and Caregivers

Huu-ay-aht parents, caregivers, and adults noted this need for additional parenting and caregiving support, and included the following suggestions:

- Better access to Huu-ay-aht parenting principles and practices
- Huu-ay-aht parenting practices put in to a booklet
- Better access to daycare or child care
- After school care and transportation
- Help with infant learning materials
- More prevention and parenting groups
- More Huu-ay-aht foster homes
- Programs for families who are in transition
- More opportunities to connect with other mothers outside of work hours

- One-on-one meetings with parents or caregivers
- More foster parenting programs to ensure there are enough homes open for our children
- More of a push for grandparents to do positive parenting programs

Huu-ay-aht staff suggested the need for:

- A safe place for moms and their babies
- A home for moms to raise children
- More emergency homes for families needing to access it
- Secondary housing for families leaving abuse or leaving treatment
- Life skill development for young mothers
- A youth home or home for young families where they can be supported 24/7

---

## 21. Foster Parent Engagement

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Any foster parents of Huu-ay-aht children must be dedicated to connecting those children with their community and culture. HFN Directors tabled concern about the roles and expectations of foster parents. Information booklets about these roles and expectations were provided to foster parents by MCFD to our Child and Family Wellness (HFN) team. However, a concern is that some foster parents create barriers for the Huu-ay-aht birth parents and do not provide access to children for participation in cultural activities. These foster parents are therefore not following cultural plans that are provided to them, which includes taking children to and participating in cultural events, celebrations, and visits to Anacla. Being able to hold foster parents accountable, including being able to educate them, and where appropriate veto them, must be a right that is held and exercised by Huu-ay-aht.

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## 22. LGBTQ+ and Gender Support

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Some citizens would like support on matters related to LGBTQ+ and gender. Their suggestions included interest in:

- The implementation of a LGBTQ+ type of project to help educate and support those who don't know much about it and to connect with others to feel less alone
- Getting help in changing their name and gender
- Trans, bi, gay, non-binary, lesbian programs

<sup>13</sup>Bill C-92: An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families. First Reading February 28, 2019, Forty-second Parliament: <https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/C-92/first-reading>

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## 23. Increased Inclusivity

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There were suggestions by both staff and Huu-ay-aht parents and caregivers that indicated the need or opportunities to make programs more inclusive. There were multiple mentions of the need for:

- More programs for adult Huu-ay-aht men
- A group for girls (as there is only a group for boys - the warriors program)
- More groups for teens and children

---

## 24. Secure Bill C-92 Negotiation Funding

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Much effort by HFN Executive Council and Directors has been made to advance relationships between Huu-ay-aht and both Federal and Provincial Governments. Huu-ay-aht is awaiting a response from the Federal Government to commence Bill C-92 negotiations. Central to these negotiations are the Crown “engaging with Indigenous peoples and provincial governments to support a comprehensive reform of child and family services that are provided in relation to Indigenous children.”<sup>13</sup>

Huu-ay-aht will need to continue to secure funding to support Bill C-92 negotiations and follow-up work as well as their negotiation work with the Provincial Crown.

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## 25. Secure Huu-ay-aht Wraparound Services Funding

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In response to the 2017 HFN Social Services Panel Report's Recommendation 24, Huu-ay-aht needs to establish committed long-term funding dedicated for Huu-ay-aht Wraparound Lifecycle Support.

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## 26. Designate or Establish an Alternative Dispute Resolution Body

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In response to the Social Services Panel Report Recommendation 25, Huu-ay-aht needs to designate or establish a Huu-ay-aht Decision Making Body (e.g., the Huu-ay-aht, Tribunal, Elders Council, or other body) as an Alternative Dispute Resolution Body (to replace the Provincial Court's role in decision making around Huu-ay-aht children and families).

# INCORPORATING RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

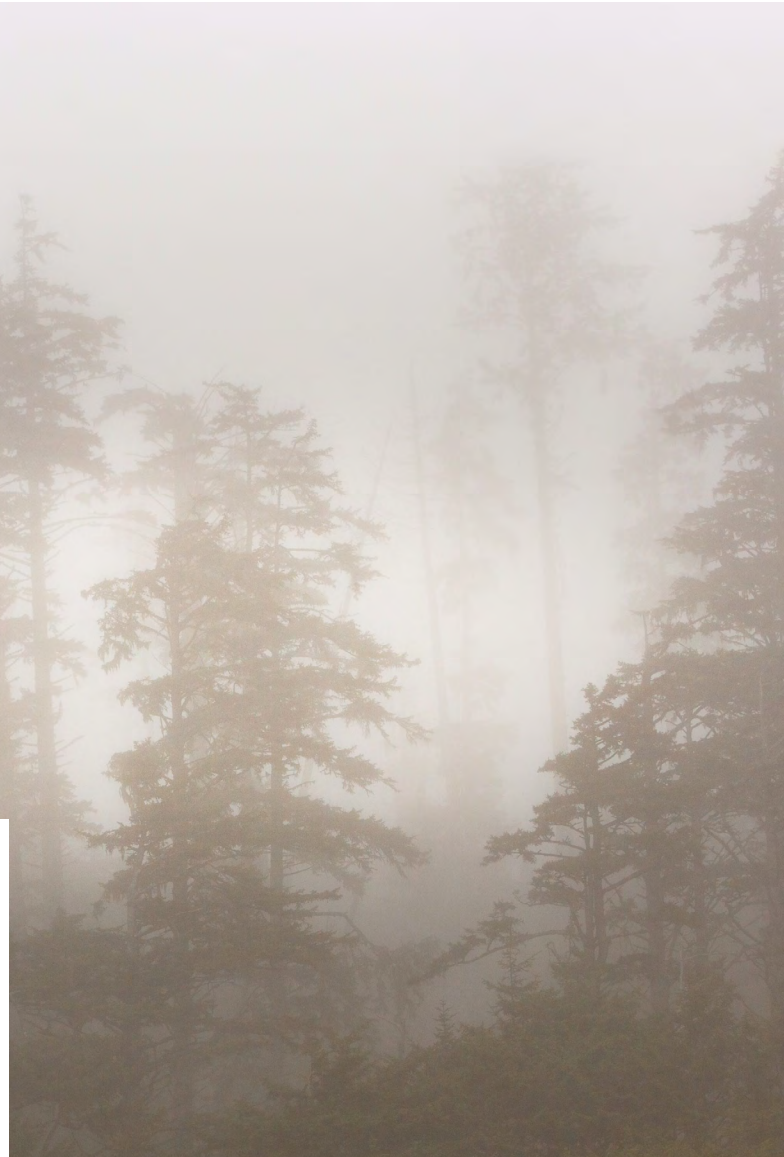


Figure 16 Incorporating Evaluation Into Program Development and Implementation

It is the purview of Huu-ay-aht Executive Council, Directors, staff, and Social Services Task Force of how they choose to take action on, account for, and incorporate these evaluation results and recommended next steps. Notably, all of these aforementioned Huu-ay-aht entities/personnel are already working from the original 30 Social Services Panel recommendations, which continue to drive the focus and goals of the Project. The results and recommended next steps that flow from this 2020 evaluation of the HFN Social Services Project can be incorporated into the Project in an ongoing matter. Figure 18 provides an illustration of an iterative incorporation of results and recommended next steps into an existing program.<sup>14</sup> ■

<sup>14</sup>Source: Queensland Government, Queensland Treasury. 2014. Queensland Government Program Evaluation Guidelines available at: <https://www.treasury.qld.gov.au/publications-resources/qld-government-program-evaluation-guidelines/>. accessed 17 May 2017

# CONCLUSION

In addition to providing immediate feedback, this 2020 evaluation of the HUU-ay-aht's Social Services Project is a benchmark upon which future evaluations of the Project can measure success. While using the same template for the evaluation methods and content (e.g., same survey questions and questionnaire wording) would most accurately measure change and ensure replicability in future evaluations of HUU-ay-aht's Social Services Project, allowances and adjustments may also be suitable depending on the circumstances during future evaluations.

If scope permits in future iterations of the evaluation of the HUU-ay-aht's Social Services Project, the evaluative process would be well-served to even more broadly engage HUU-ay-aht citizens in the formulation of and feedback for the Project evaluation. Similarly, if public-health restrictions allow at that time, a more in-depth evaluation could be done to gain in-person feedback on the Project, particularly from Elders and youth who may be less inclined to provide survey-based feedback. Figure 17 demonstrates the spectrum of choices for community engagement in terms of control of the evaluation, depth of participation, and participant selection. ■

This range of options can be considered in more depth in future iterations of the evaluations of the HFN Social Services Project as it grows and becomes integrated into Project implementation and delivery.

## Community Engagement

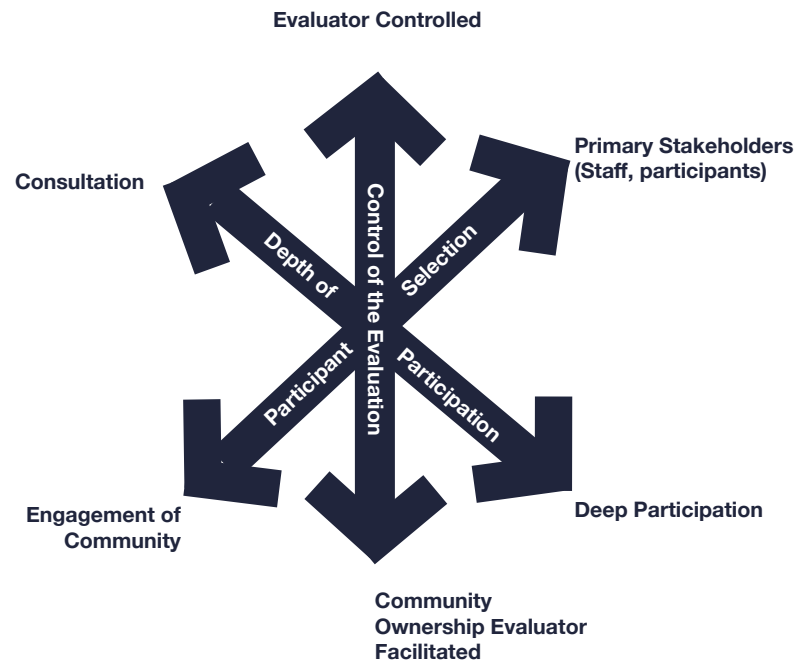


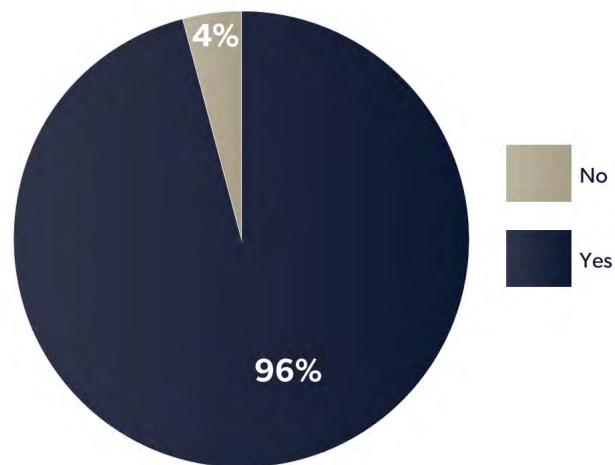
Figure 17 Options for Community Engagement in Evaluation



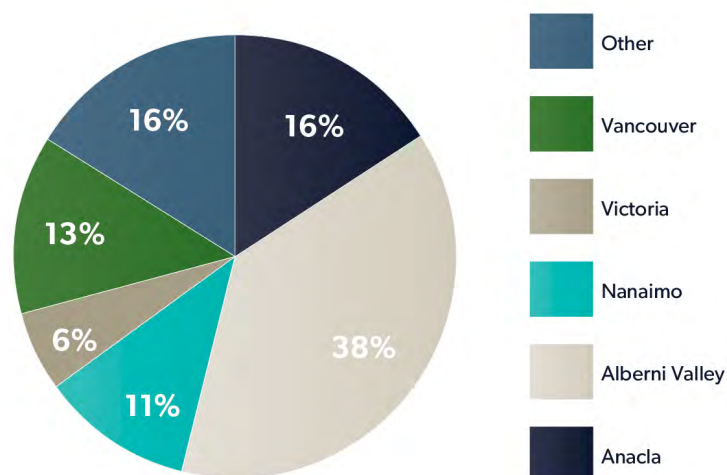
# APPENDIX A

## Who We Heard From on the Citizens Survey: A Profile of the Respondents to the Citizen Survey

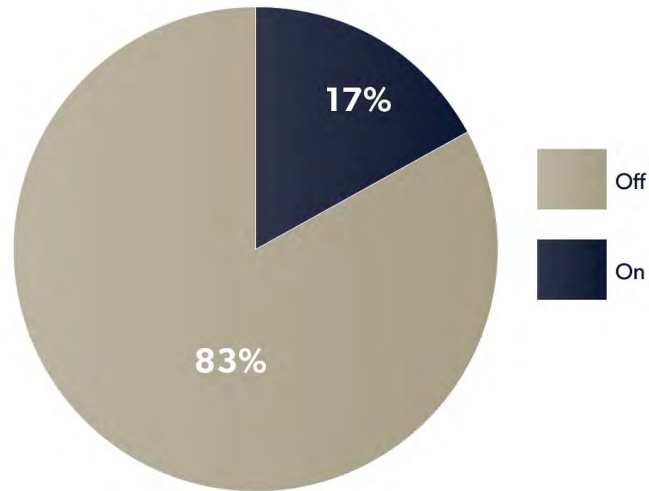
Are you a Huu-ay-aht Citizen?



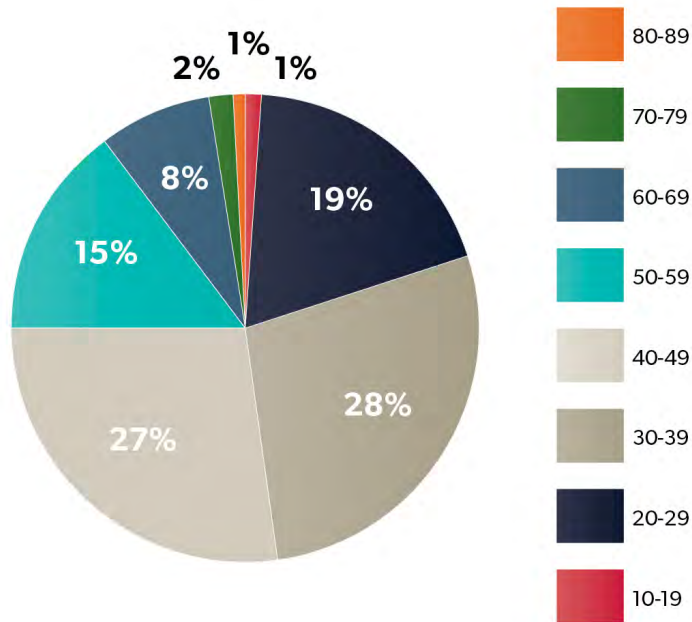
Where do you live?



Do you live on or off Treaty Settlement lands?

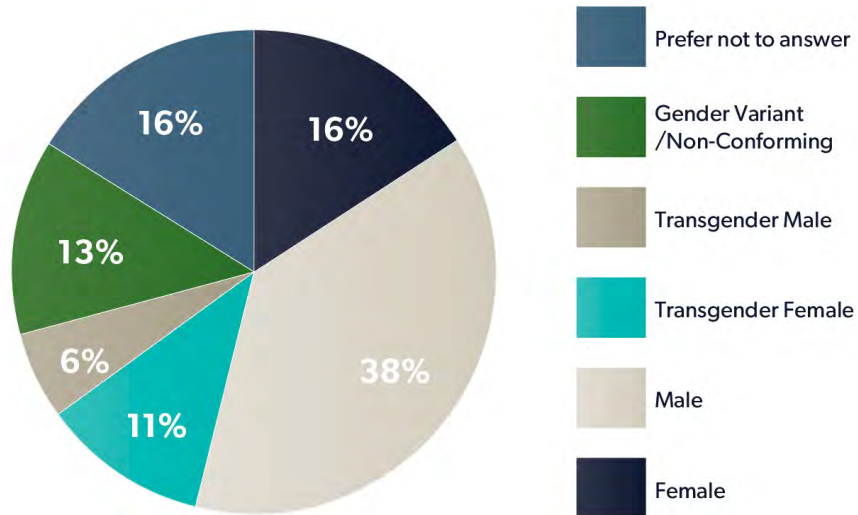


Which of the following age range are you in?

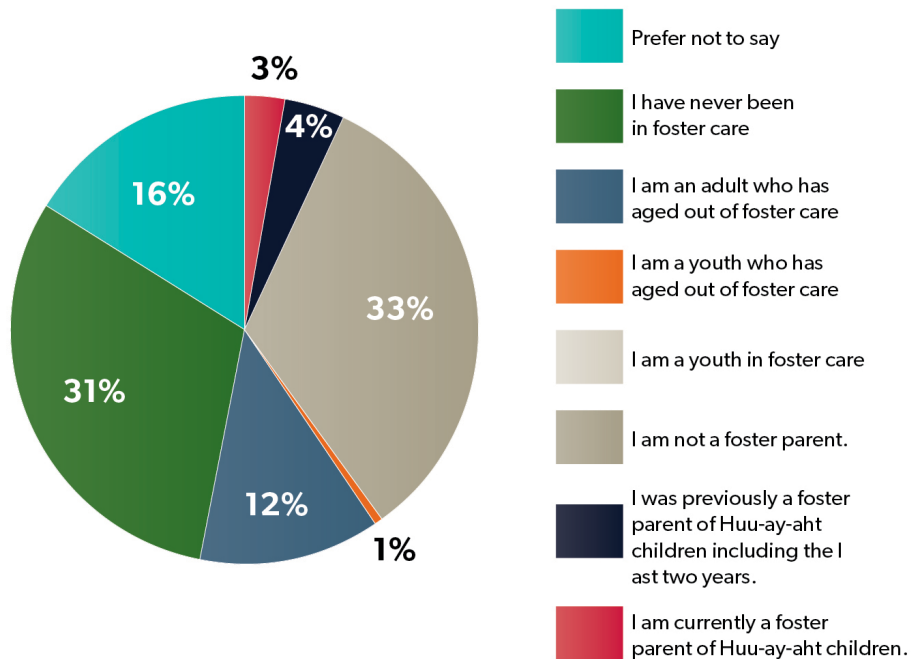




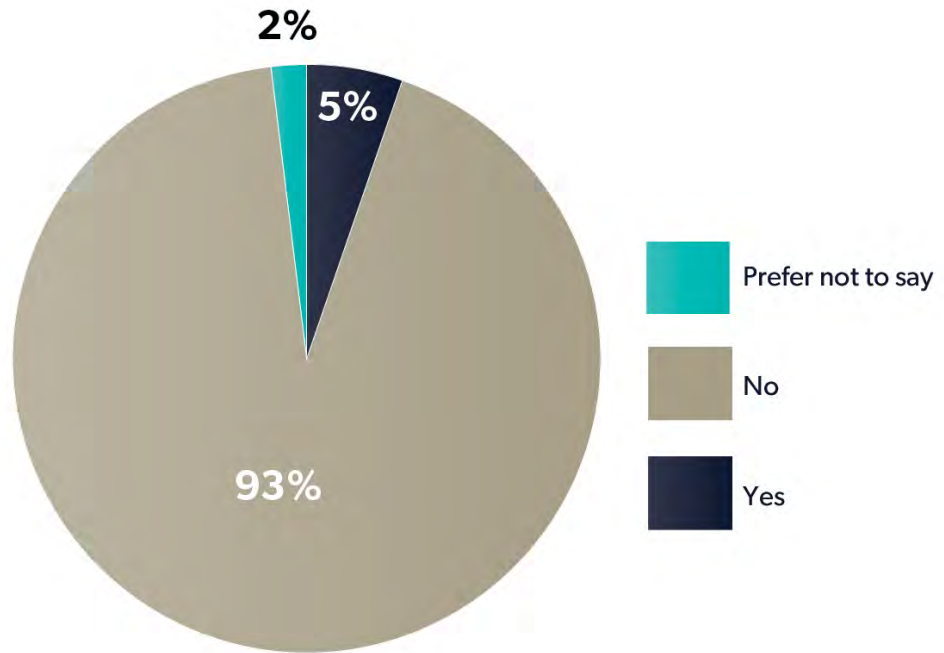
To which gender identity do you most identify?



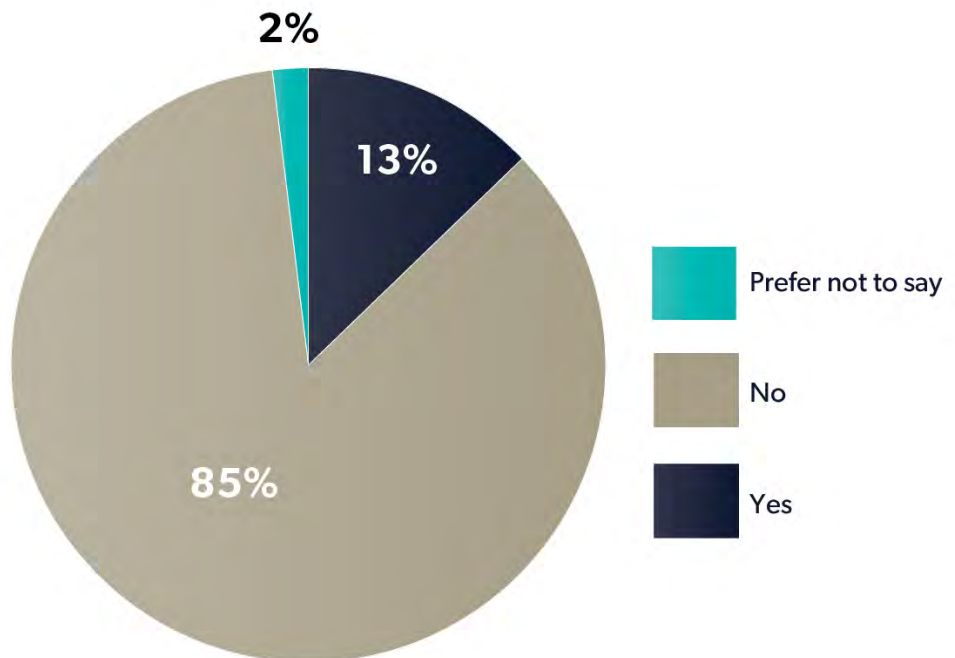
Which of the following best describes you?



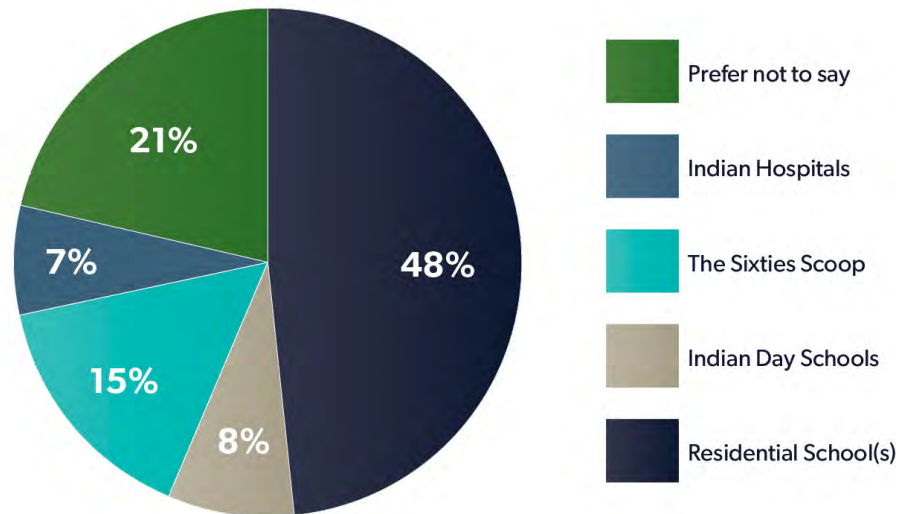
### Are you pregnant?



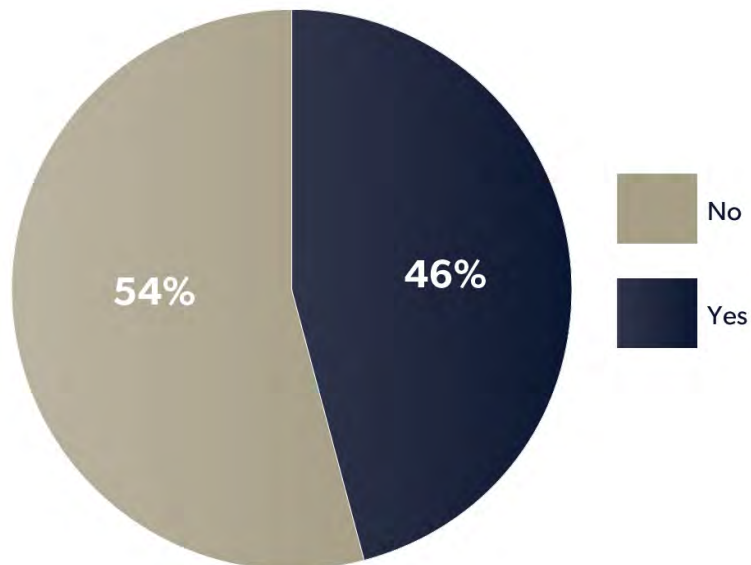
### Are you a Residential School survivor?



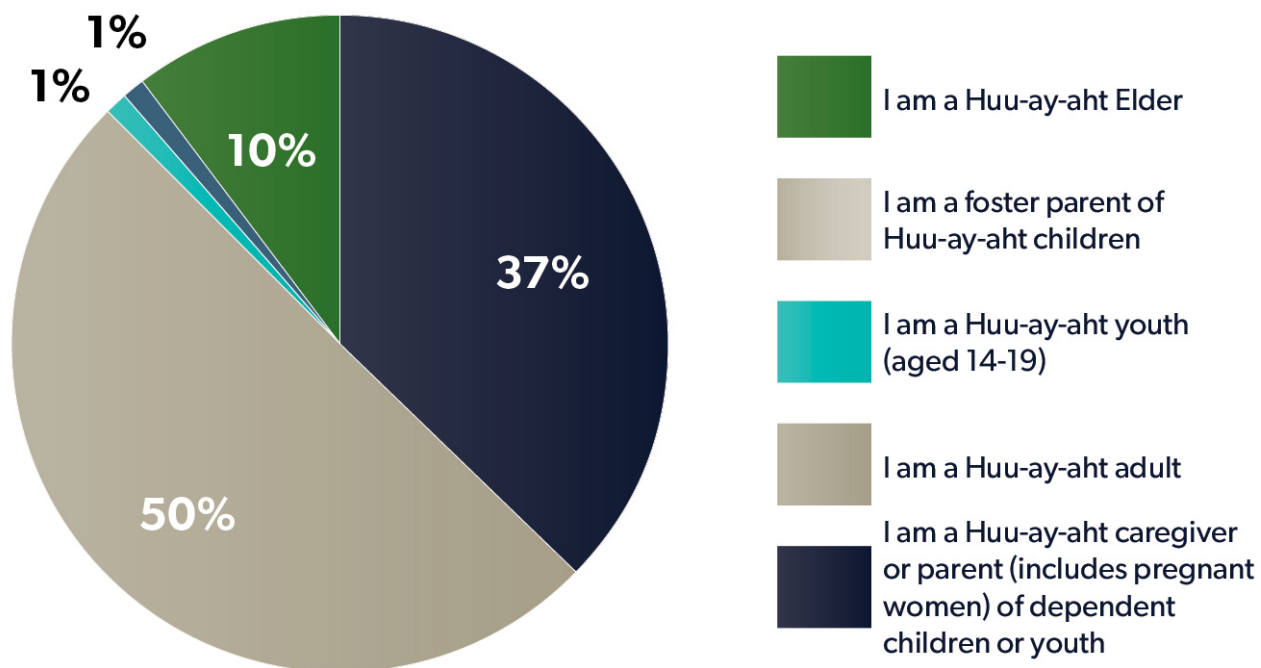
Have you or your caregivers been impacted by any of the following colonial institutions?



Have you accessed support from the HFN Social Services Project in the last year?



**Which of the following most closely describes you or your current situation?**



# APPENDIX B

## Circumstantial Limitations of this Evaluation

In addition to the aforementioned limitations of the use of Eurocentric evaluation in Indigenous settings, there were other practical considerations in what limited the scope of this evaluation and results:

**1. COVID-19:** This pandemic occurred shortly after the launch of the Citizen Survey which hindered the evaluation because of:

- a. The inability to do one-on-one, in-depth interviews with citizens and key individuals.
- b. The inability to do focus groups to hone in on topics of intense interest to Huu-ay-aht.
- c. The reduced gathering of responses because of the cancelation of in-person gatherings and People's Assembly (where HFN staff would have gathered evaluation responses through engagement and assistance with surveys, i.e., paper surveys or devices such as iPads made available).
- d. The reduced in-person promotion of evaluation and citizen survey of the cancelation of in-person gatherings and People's Assembly.
- e. The possibility of skewed results: most responses to the Citizen Survey occurred after the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. Notably, many responses included reference to the pandemic and its effect on social services, despite the fact that the questions were backward looking and worded to reflect on the previous year. The gravity of the COVID-19 and its immense effect on people's lives may have made reflecting on times prior less vivid.

**2. Technology:** Online surveys are the preferred method of communication for very few people. The fact that this year's evaluation was limited to online information gathering (as opposed to in person conversational information gathering) may have contributed to the fact that:

- a. Very few Huu-ay-aht Elders responded to the survey. Elders may have less experience with online technologies, the operation of computers/devices, may not find it meaningful to express themselves through this medium, and may have less access to the technologies and connectivity/bandwidth to carry them out.

**3. Youth Participation:** Very few youth responded to the survey. While generally competent with technology, youth may have had less incentive and less interest in completing the evaluation survey.

# APPENDIX C

## Citizen Survey for 2020 Social Services Evaluation

2020 Evaluation of the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project

Welcome to the 2020 Survey for the Evaluation of the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project  
Thank you for participating in our survey. Your feedback is important.

In 2016, the Huu-ay-aht government's executive council appointed an independent Social Services Panel to inquire into and make recommendations for improving outcomes in bringing Huu-ay-aht children home. The focus of the Panel was to fulfill Huu-ay-aht's goal to take a...

*"...focused and concerted action to 'bring our children home' and to keep Huu-ay-aht children safe, healthy and connected to their families and their Huu-ay-aht culture and community."*

Now that the resulting Social Services Project has been underway for just over two years, we are in the formative stages of planning for an evaluation of the approach, outcomes, and progress of the project.

This evaluation will mark the beginning of benchmarking and measuring the progress of Huu-ay-aht's work to build a safe, healthy, and connected community. The following draft contains potential questions we are considering asking people involved in or effected by the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project.

Your responses are anonymous and confidential. When you have completed the survey, please email Nicole.m@huuayah.org and your name will be entered in for a prize at the conclusion of our survey process.

łeko łeko for your time.

2020 Evaluation of the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project

Pre-survey questions

\* 1. Are you a Huu-ay-aht Citizen?

- Yes  
 No

\* 2. Where do you live?

- Anacle  
 Alberni Valley  
 Nanaimo  
 Victoria  
 Vancouver

Other (please specify)

\* 3. Do you live on or off Treaty Settlement lands?

- On  
 Off

\* 4. Which of the following age range are you in?

- 10-19  
 20-29  
 30-39  
 40-49  
 50-59  
 60-69  
 70-79  
 80-89  
 90+

\* 5. To which gender identity do you most identify?

- Female  
 Male  
 Transgender Female  
 Transgender Male  
 Gender Variant/Non-Conforming  
 Prefer not to answer

Not Listed (please specify)

\* 6. Which of the following best describes you?

- I am currently a foster parent of Huu-ay-aht children.
- I was previously a foster parent of Huu-ay-aht children including the last two years.
- I am not a foster parent.
- I am a youth in foster care
- I am a youth who has aged out of foster care
- I am an adult who has aged out of foster care
- I have never been in foster care
- Prefer not to say

\* 7. Are you pregnant?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

\* 8. Are you a Residential School survivor?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

\* 9. Have you or your caregivers been impacted by any of the following colonial institutions? (Check all that apply).

- Residential School(s)
- Indian Day Schools
- The Sixties Scoop (1965 to 1984)
- Indian Hospitals
- Prefer not to say

\* 10. Have you accessed support from the HFN Social Services Project in the last year?

- Yes
- No

If no, please specify why (haven't needed it, didn't know about programs, or other reasons)

\* 13. Have any of the following HFN Social Services Project services/programs helped your confidence or ability to provide for yourself and/or children? (Check all that apply)

- Protection Support Workers
- Family Support Liaisons
- Counselling
- Family Elder Liaison
- Cultural Support
- Community Health
- Ties and Preservation
- Not applicable to me

Please elaborate on any box you've checked above.

\* 14. Which of the following most closely describes you or your current situation? (This question will direct you to the appropriate questions/survey).

- I am a Huu-ay-aht caregiver or parent (includes pregnant women) of dependent children or youth
- I am a Huu-ay-aht adult
- I am a Huu-ay-aht youth (aged 14-19)
- I am a foster parent of Huu-ay-aht children
- I am a Huu-ay-aht Elder

2020 Evaluation of the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project

Huu-ay-aht Caregivers and Parent

\* 1. In the last year, has the HFN Social Services Project improved your family's safety?

- Greatly improved
- Some improvement
- No improvement

2. How could the HFN Social Services Project better meet the safety needs of your family? Please explain.

\* 11. HFN Social Services offers several programs. Which of the following Child and Family Wellness Program are you already aware of? (Check all that apply)

- Family Support Program (parenting/court/advocacy)
- Food Skills for Families
- Friends Group
- Parenting Programs
- Bullying Prevention Seminar
- Healthy Relationship Programs
- Traditional Parenting Program
- Counselling
- Treatment
- Family Ties and Preservation
- Cultural Support Outreach
- SMART Recovery
- Warriors Program
- Art Group
- Cultural Craft Group
- Elder Liaison Program

\* 12. HFN Social Services offers several programs. Which of the following Community Health Programs are you already aware of? (Check all that apply)

- Health Prevention and Promotion Groups (Arthritis/Elder Abuse/Anxiety/Grief and Loss/FNHA Benefits/Men and Women's Wellness)
- Elders Program - Nananiquisu (Grandparents Group)
- Patient Travel
- Alternate Therapies
- Counselling
- Treatment
- Crisis Grant
- Employment Trades and Training
- Youth Group

\* 3. Are you aware of safe places/homes that are accessible to you?

- Yes
- No

4. Please provide feedback on how the HFN Social Services Project has supported you in terms of safety:

\* 5. In the last year, have you seen or experienced changes in emotional/mental health in yourself?

- Significant change
- Some change
- No change
- Not applicable

Please explain:

\* 6. In the last year, have you seen or experienced changes in emotional/mental health in your family?

- Significant change
- Some change
- No change
- Not applicable

Please explain:

7. If you have experienced the disruption, uncertainty and fear associated with removal of children into care, how has Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project addressed your emotional/mental health? Please explain:

\* 8. In the last year, have you seen or experienced changes in substance use in yourself?

- Significant change
- Some change
- No change
- Not applicable

Please explain

\* 9. Do you and/or your family feel supported in accessing treatment and counselling services?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

Please explain:

\* 10. In the last year, has your access to any of the following improved? (Check all that apply)

- AA
- NA
- Day Centres
- Counselling
- Family Treatment
- SMART Recovery
- Not applicable to me

\* 11. Has your ability to access playgrounds in Anacla improved in the last year?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable to me

\* 16. Communication: Has the HFN team kept you informed about upcoming events, programs and services offered/delivered by the HFN Social Services Project?

- Not applicable to me
- Yes
- No

(If no, please explain):

\* 17. If you live away from Alberni Valley and Anacla, are you able to access transportation and accommodation in a way that removes barriers to attendance and participation in cultural events?

- Not applicable to me
- Yes
- No

(If no, please explain):

\* 18. Do you feel supported in terms of connection to community, culture, and cultural-identity?

- Not applicable to me
- Yes
- No

(If no, please explain):

\* 19. Do you see the role of the Family Support Liaisons and Protection Support Workers as assisting and supporting you?

- Yes
- No

\* 12. Do you feel that you have satisfactory access to parenting education and support tools?

- Yes
- No

13. In the last year, how has the HFN Social Services Project affected your connection to Huu-ay-aht culture, identity and practice? Please explain

\* 14. In the last year, have you worked with the Family Support Liaisons on any of the following? (Check all that apply)

- Early planning with your family
- Protection plans
- Transportation
- Legal advocacy
- Group support
- Parenting support
- Not applicable to me

\* 15. In the last year, have you worked with the Protection Support Workers on any of the following? (Check all that apply)

- Early planning with your family
- Protection plans
- Transportation
- Legal advocacy
- Group support
- Parenting support
- Not applicable to me

\* 20. Are Family Support Liaisons and Protection Support Workers approachable?

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

Please explain:

\* 21. What supports would assist you in being able to better take care of yourself or your child?

\* 22. What are the barriers to you being able to better take care of yourself or your child?

\* 23. Are there any programs or services related to being safe, healthy, or connected that you want to see offered? Please explain:

2020 Evaluation of the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project

Huu-ay-aht Adults

\* 1. In the last year, has the HFN Social Services Project improved your safety?

- Greatly improved
- Some improvement
- No improvement

\* 2. How could the HFN Social Services Project better meet your safety needs? Please explain:



3. Are you aware of safe places/homes that are accessible to you?

- Yes
- No

\* 4. Please provide feedback on how the HFN Social Services Project has supported you in terms of safety:

\* 5. In the last year, have you seen or experienced changes in emotional/mental health in yourself?

- Significant change
- Some change
- No change
- Not applicable

Please explain:

6. If you have experienced the disruption, uncertainty and fear associated with removal of children into care, how has Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project addressed your emotional/mental health? Please explain:

\* 7. In the last year, have you seen or experienced changes in substance use in yourself?

- Significant change
- Some change
- No change
- Not applicable

Please explain:

\* 12. If you live away from Alberni Valley and Anacra, are you able to access transportation and accommodation in a way that removes barriers to attendance and participation in cultural events?

- Not applicable to me
- Yes
- No

(If no, please explain):

\* 13. Do you feel supported in terms of connection to community, culture, and cultural-identity?

- Not applicable to me
- Yes
- No

(If no, please explain):

\* 14. Are there any programs or services related to being safe, healthy, or connected that you want to see offered? Please explain:

\* 15. What supports would assist you in being able to better take care of yourself?

\* 16. What are the barriers to you being able to better take care of yourself?

\* 8. Do you feel supported in accessing treatment and counselling services?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

Please explain:

\* 9. In the last year, has your access to any of the following improved? (Check all that apply)

- AA
- NA
- Day Centres
- Counselling
- Family Treatment
- SMART Recovery
- Not applicable to me

10. In the last year, how has the HFN Social Services Project impacted your connection to Huu-ay-aht culture, identity and practice? Please explain:

\* 11. Communication: Has the HFN team kept you informed about upcoming events, programs and services offered/delivered by the HFN Social Services Project?

- Not applicable to me
- Yes
- No

(If no, please explain):

#### Huu-ay-aht Youth (14-19 years)

\* 1. How has your sense of safety and well-being at home changed over the last year?

- I feel safer
- I feel less safe
- I feel the same

Please explain:

\* 2. How has your sense of safety and well-being at school changed over the last year?

- I feel safer
- I feel less safe
- I feel the same

Please explain:

\* 3. What do you need in your life to create a sense of safety and stability? (Check all that apply)

- School Support
- Cultural Support
- Counselling Services
- Community Health
- Sexual Health
- Safe Adults
- Smoking/Vaping Info
- Support with Substance Use
- Support with Intimate Partner Relationships
- Peers
- Information about Bullying

Please explain:

\* 4. Have you accessed counsellors (e.g., Quu'asa, Mental Health, Child and Family Wellness (CFW) Counsellor) in the past 12 months?

- Yes
- No

\* 5. Do you have access to safe, reliable transportation in order to access health and social services?

- Yes
- No

\* 10. If you are a youth in care, are you connected with our Families Ties and Preservation Worker?

- Yes
- No

If no, please explain:

\* 11. What makes you proud of being Huu-ay-aht?

12. Are there any programs or services related to being safe, healthy, or connected that you want to see offered? Please explain:

\* 13. What supports would assist you in being able to better take care of yourself?

\* 14. What are the barriers to you being able to better take care of yourself?

2020 Evaluation of the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project

Foster Parents of Huu-ay-aht Children

\* 6. Has your sense of Huu-ay-aht identity and sense of connection to culture changed over the last year?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

Please explain:

\* 7. Do you have adequate access to safe, reliable transportation in order to access cultural and community events?

- Yes
- No

\* 8. Are regular cultural activities being made available to you?

- Yes
- No

\* 9. Have you heard of the Youth Council in HFN Social Services?

- Yes
- No

If so, how do you see the role of the Youth Council in HFN Social Services? What could be improved (e.g., communication, access, membership, role, organization, etc.).

\* 1. In the last year, has the HFN Social Services Project had an affect on your ability to support the safety of the Huu-ay-aht child(ren) in your care?

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

\* 2. In the last year, has the HFN Social Services Project affected your ability to support the mental, emotional, and physical health of the Huu-ay-aht child(ren) in your care?

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

\* 3. Over the last year, what actions has Huu-ay-aht supported and/or encouraged your ability to make sure the Huu-ay-aht child(ren) stay connected to their community, culture, language, and identity? Please explain:

\* 4. In the last year, has your ability to visit Alberni or Anacla or stay connected to culture and Nuu-chah-nulth language with the Huu-ay-aht child(ren) changed?

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

\* 5. What would help you better support the connection of the Huu-ay-aht child(ren) to their community and identity? Please explain:

\* 6. In the last year, have you had opportunities to learn about Huu-ay-aht culture, family, traditions, and protocols? Please explain:

\* 7. What supports would assist you in being able to better take care of yourself or the child in your care?

\* 8. What are the barriers to you being able to better take care of yourself or the child in your care?

### 2020 Evaluation of the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project

#### Huu-ay-aht Elder

\* 1. In what way have you seen safety for families change as a result of the implementation of the HFN Social Services Project?

- Safer
- No change
- Less safe

Please explain:

\* 2. In what way have you seen safety for youth change as a result of the implementation of the HFN Social Services Project?

- Safer
- No change
- Less safe

Please explain:

\* 3. In what way have you seen safety for children change as a result of the implementation of the HFN Social Services Project?

- Safer
- No change
- Less safe

Please explain:

\* 4. Is safety, abuse, and/or neglect of elderly Huu-ay-aht citizens being addressed by the HFN Social Services Project?

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

\* 5. In what way have you seen the health (mental, emotional, and/or physical) of families change as a result of the implementation of the HFN Social Services Project?

- Safer
- No change
- Less safe

Please explain:

\* 6. In what way have you seen the health (mental, emotional, and/or physical) of youth change as a result of the implementation of the HFN Social Services Project?

- Safer
- No change
- Less safe

Please explain:

\* 7. In what way have you seen the health (mental, emotional, and/or physical) of children change as a result of the implementation of the HFN Social Services Project?

- Safer
- No change
- Less safe

Please explain:

\* 8. In what way if any, have you seen the following change as a result of the implementation of the HFN Social Services Project? (Check all that apply)

- Connectedness
- Cultural identity
- Language
- Participation of families in culture/language
- Participation of youth in culture/language
- Participation of children in culture/language

Please explain:

\* 9. Have you accessed any Elders training and education programming in the last year?

- Yes
- No

10. If you have accessed any Elders training and education programming, was it helpful? (Please drag the white dot to the place that most suits your answer).

Not Helpful                                  Neutral                                  Very Helpful

\* 11. Have you been able to connect with and visit homes where children are currently in foster care?

- Yes
- No

\* 12. Do you attend the Nananiqsu meetings?

- Yes
- No

\* 13. Do you access Cultural Support?

- Yes
- No

14. What do you feel is most important that youth and children should learn about their culture? Please explain:

\* 15. Do you feel that Elders should be involved in the Cultural Plans for children and youth?

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

\* 16. Is loneliness among elderly HUU-ay-aht citizens being addressed by the HFN Social Services Project?

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

17. Are there any programs or services related to being safe, healthy, or connected that you want to see offered? Please explain:

\* 18. What supports would assist you in being able to better take care of yourself or the people around you?

\* 19. What are the barriers to you being able to better take care of yourself or the people around you?

łeko łeko for taking the time to complete this survey...one last question:

\* 1. Have you got more to say? We'd love to hear from you in person. Please indicate which of the following you'd like to be contacted to participate in:

- Interview:** One-on-one anonymous interview with a person of your choice on our evaluation team.
- Focus Group:** Sharing ideas in a group of 3-6 people facilitated by our evaluation team.
- Maybe:** I'd consider doing an interview or focus group but would like to be contacted with more information
- No thank you,** this survey will be my contribution to the evaluation of the HFN Social Services Project.

If you would like to be contacted regarding interviews, focus groups, or information about either of those, please provide your email address or phone number here:

# APPENDIX D

## Staff Survey for 2020 Social Services Evaluation

2020 Staff Only Social Services Survey

2020 Staff Only Survey for the Evaluation of the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your feedback is important.

In 2016, the Huu-ay-aht government's executive council appointed an independent Social Services Panel to inquire into and make recommendations for improving outcomes in bringing Huu-ay-aht children home. The focus of the Panel was to fulfill Huu-ay-aht's goal to take a...

*"...focused and concerted action to 'bring our children home' and to keep Huu-ay-aht children safe, healthy and connected to their families and their Huu-ay-aht culture and community."*

Now that the resulting Social Services Project has been underway for just over two years, we are in the formative stages of planning for an evaluation of the approach, outcomes, and progress of the project. It is important that we get the staff's perspective on this Project.

This evaluation will mark the beginning of benchmarking and measuring the progress of Huu-ay-aht's work to build a safe, healthy, and connected community. The following draft contains potential questions we are considering asking people involved in or effected by the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project.

Your responses are anonymous and confidential.

łeko łeko for your time.

\* 1. Over the last year, have you seen changes in safety for Huu-ay-aht children and families?

- Safer
- No change
- Less safe

Please explain:

\* 2. What is being done by your team to help meet the safety needs of Huu-ay-aht families?

\* 3. What could be done by your team to better meet the safety needs of Huu-ay-aht families?

\* 4. In the last year, have you noticed changes for Huu-ay-aht people in terms of violence?

- Increase
- Decrease
- No Change

Please explain, specifying what kind of violence you are referring to:

\* 5. In the last year, have you seen changes in terms of individual attitudes toward addiction?

- Significant changes
- Some changes
- No change

Please explain:

\* 6. Have you seen changes in the last year in terms of individual attitudes toward mental health and wellness?

- Significant changes
- Some changes
- No change

Please explain:

\* 11. Over the last year, in what ways have you and your team been able to build a presence at Huu-ay-aht cultural events?

\* 12. What measures have been taken by you and/or your team that go above and beyond the HFN Social Services Panel recommendations?

\* 13. Are some sub-groups benefiting from the HFN Social Services Project, but not others (for example, Huu-ay-aht boys versus girls, or families in Port Alberni but not Anacla)? Please explain:

\* 14. Are there any programs or services related to being safe, healthy, or connected that you want to see offered in the future? Please explain:

\* 7. In the last year, have you been able to provide prompt and consistent in-home support for families in transition?

- Yes
- No

Why/Why not?

\* 8. In the last year, have you seen any changes in cultural connectivity/spirituality and identity as a result of implementation of the HFN Social Services Project?

- Yes
- No

Why/Why not?

\* 9. In the last year, have you been able to reach pregnant and/or new mothers to establish early support?

- Yes
- No

Why/Why not?

\* 10. In the last year, has there been any success in moving toward a system that emphasizes keeping child at home and having safe adults move in to keep children in place if parents or guardians must be removed?

- Yes
- No

Why/Why not?

# APPENDIX E

## Director's Survey for 2020 Social Services Evaluation

### Safe

*In the last year:*

- a. How many safe houses have been identified? How many safe houses have been accessed (total)? How many houses of those accessed have been provided supports for offering their homes for this purpose?
- b. Is Huu-ay-aht Leadership advancing a strong, open, and united voice against violence among Huu-ay-aht people?

### Healthy

- c. In the last year, how many people have been sent for treatment?
- d. Is assistance being provided to Huu-ay-aht citizens in order to navigate systems to access treatment and counselling services?
- e. Is Huu-ay-aht Leadership ensuring the financial and human resources are in place for healing multigenerational trauma?

### Connected

*In the last year:*

- f. How many Huu-ay-aht children and youth have visited the Port Alberni or Anacla? How many times has each visited?
- g. How many Huu-ay-aht children who were in care have returned home to the Port Alberni or Anacla?
- h. How many Huu-ay-aht children who were in care have returned home to their family or extended families?
- i. Is there any data to demonstrate that people are using less substances and more safely?
- j. How many Huu-ay-aht children were prevented from going into care?
- k. How many Huu-ay-aht children went into care? What were the reasons for removal?
- l. How many Huu-ay-aht people have the Family Support Liaisons met with?
- m. How many Huu-ay-aht people have the Protection Support Workers met with?
- n. How many of the Huu-ay-aht children removed from homes remained in the Port Alberni or Anacla? Moved away from the Port Alberni or Anacla?
- o. Are baby welcoming ceremonies being done for babies? (Number of babies this year, number of ceremonies, number of parents who came, number of baby kits distributed).
- p. Are grocery funds and shopping support being accessed by Huu-ay-aht? (Number of people who accessed this year).
- q. Is diaper allowance assistance being provided to citizens who require it? (Number of citizens accessing diaper

allowance).

- r. Is discretionary funding for other emergency support being utilized? (Total annual funds accessed for emergency discretionary funding).
- s. How many "host homes" are there in Anacla (for the purposes of enabling more cultural connection for youth and families who live away)?
- t. How have social services to families in Anacla been improved?
- u. How many Elder Liaisons have been able to connect with and visit homes where children are currently in foster care this year?
- v. How many times this year have Elder Liaisons been able to assist the Protection Support Workers by going to homes in crisis to provide temporary care?
- w. How many times this year have Elder Liaisons been able to assist the Protection Support Workers by providing parenting support, including facilitating co-parenting arrangements with foster parents and transition supports for families?
- x. How many youth are currently in care? How many of these youth have Permanency Plans in place?

### General

- y. What concerns of the Quality Assurance Committee addressed over the last year?
- z. How many community engagement sessions in relation to the Social Services Project, by topic, have been done over the last year? How many people (total) were at these engagement sessions in the year?
- aa. Is Huu-ay-aht Leadership acting as a strong advocate for Huu-ay-aht youth and families? Explain.
- bb. How do the efforts and outcomes of the HFN Social Services Project compare to those of other First Nations?
- cc. What additional positions have been created / hired beyond the recommendations of the HFN Social Services Project?

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