

## MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 25, 2018  
1:00 – 3:00PM  
C-21 Youth Centre - 2760 Emerson St

**Chair: Eric Van Egmond**

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

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### 2. Abby Dads Presentation – Reg Unrau

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Abby Dads is a program to help dads interact with their kids. Jeff McLean and Reg speak at different events and programs in the community. There is a Dad Chat group, as well as a Dad Chat Punjabi group and about 15-20 dads come to each session. Some of the dads get emotional and there are a lot of deep conversations. There is also a drop-in at the Sweeney Centre on Saturday mornings for dads and their kids aged 0-6. Sometimes this is the only time during the week these dads get to interact with their kids, so this is a great way for them to engage with each other. Thursdays nights there is an Anger group and it is a great group of men who are going to be successful in their futures. There will be an 8-week Men in Relationships group starting soon. They will be using the material from MCC's program, but there will also be more research done to ensure that everything will be covered in the curriculum. The reason for this program is to find a better way to help men in their relationships and to be better prepared for future relationships. 30% of Crown files are associated with domestic violence, so we want to prevent court and probation, so this program will be a great start to help with prevention.

**Challenges:** Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) finds that most homes are single parent and mostly mothers taking care of their kids. Some dads may not know about these programs and services; they also feel isolated and can get really overwhelmed. Youth Unlimited (YU) feels that the teen dads don't want to admit they need help or don't know how to ask for help. They have their own insecurities and feel more like they're being judged.

**Other comments:** We need to build these men up! We also need to bridge these programs with Aboriginal dads and bring together different cultures. Dad resources are under-utilized and we need to help better equip and educate dads. There is also a need to bridge together different agencies throughout the community so that there are more contacts and better connections and resources for dads to get the support they need. It would also be great to bring together different agencies to start an Abby Dads sports drop-in.

There is also a federal pilot project for incarcerated fathers; more info to come.

In the past Safe Relations Safe Children meeting, there was discussion that women in shelters have been involved with domestic violence, which brings PTSD. This is a struggle for the women and we need to invest in education so that we can be more aware and help prevent domestic violence.

### 3. Middle Years Forum Update

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This event is promoted by the East Fraser CYC / Healthy Communities executive committee. Registration information was sent out for the February 7 forum. This is the age range that we really need to focus on, as this is the most underappreciated transition that children go through in their childhood. There will be discussion on the MDI, a guest speaker and break-out sessions.

\*\* If you would like to have your agency to have an information table at the forum, please email Jelisa at [cyc@abbotsfordcommunityservices.com](mailto:cyc@abbotsfordcommunityservices.com) and she will pass it along to the correct contact.

### 4. Program Updates

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**Abbotsford Youth Commission:** the winter program schedule is out and was distributed to the group

**New Beginnings:** very busy with about 43-44 students with 37 children and everyone is attending. Some of the students have been going to Empowered by Horses and participating in outdoor education and it has been a good experience for them. There are 2 full-time and one part-time teachers and there was a childcare provider who was recently hired.

**Abbotsford Community Services:** There is a Food Skills program that recently started for moms and dads with young children. For more info, contact [Cindy.Resig@abbotsfordcommunityservices.com](mailto:Cindy.Resig@abbotsfordcommunityservices.com). The Wellness Committee is open to new initiatives and ideas, as we want to improve the wellness of staff. We need more resources and help for parents with mental illness. There is also an increase in aboriginal clients and we want to ensure we can provide the appropriate services for them.

**Mental Health:** There is a Mental Health Parenting group that is partnered with ACS which is offered to individuals who have developed MH symptoms. These group participants will be offered child care subsidy. We are looking at new connections for dads and want to work together as a community to help with MH and substance use. The team are knocking down barriers but are still working through more barriers. The Fentanyl crisis still a huge problem in Abbotsford and we need to reach the individuals who overdose behind closed doors. The highest deaths are in the 30-40 age range; these are the parents of youth/children and we need to make this change.

**Abbotsford Addictions Centre:** Sandy Makkar-Sandhu is the school-based prevention worker is working at Mouat, Gordie Howe, Abby Senior, Eugene Reimer and ASIA. She works with youth who are exposed to many different drugs and is taken by surprise of how much they know about it. There are girls' groups for self-esteem and confidence, and this will help in early prevention. AAC has great daytime programs, which require an orientation (every Wednesday @ 4pm). There is a lot of good work happening for all age ranges. If you would like to have a community presentation about AAC, be sure to contact them.

**Youth Unlimited (YU):** There are 10 youth workers who are involved at Rick Hansen, Eugene Reimer, Gordie Howe, Mouat, Bakerview, ISP at Abby Senior and the Aboriginal department at Abby Middle. They work mostly with vulnerable youth. Chris is the C-21 director and there is a drop-in on Friday nights for youth to come and hang out in a comfortable setting. Their main focus is building relationships with youth at the schools and in the drop-in centre. There is currently a mobile drop-in centre in the works and the plan is to be running in September of this year. The team will go into different communities in



### *Listening to the Voices*

Abbotsford and have children and youth hang out in the bus, with their parents knowing they're in a safe place just outside their house.

**Hospice:** There is a teen lounge drop-in for youth 18-24 years old. There is also an event coming up for youth 13-24 years old who are struggling with trauma, grief, loss and anxiety.

**Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS):** There is a Go Girls program at Hatzic Secondary at the grade 7 level that helps with drug pressures. These girls are exposed to a lot, so they need help in preventing drug use. The Mental Health crisis has been growing in children and their families; Xyolhemeylh and MCFD have increased referrals with 25% of caseloads being children in care. There is a need for proper training in special needs children and to have social supports for their families. There have also been increased deaths and losses and Hospice has been a huge help in this.

**BC Responsible & Problem Gaming Program:** The school-based program has changed. It's about building relationships; the curriculum is now starting at age 6 because there are a lot of apps on parents' phones and children are getting addicted to these games. This program helps teachers with a peer-to-peer curriculum and they also practice resiliency.

**Abbotsford Restorative Justice:** There is an expansion in mentoring for the West Side of Abbotsford and there is a need for 19-30 year olds as mentors. Elementary schools have been calling ARJ, as they are in need of support with the various issues they see in the student body.

**Foundry:** Construction is scheduled to end on April 30, so there is a plan for a soft launch in May and then fully open in June. Foundry will be an integrated youth hub for 12-24 year olds, with a majority of services. Foundry BC launched their [new website](#). There will be lots of supportive information on the website. There is a health and wellness Activate program that recently started for 16-24 year olds. It is a weekly program from 7-8PM with various topics and activities.

**Fraser Valley Youth Society:** The main focus is education and awareness in the community for LGBTQ youth and how to work with them better and the School District and UFV have been involved in this process. There are drop-ins for youth on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays in Abbotsford, Mission and Chilliwack. There is a Heroes fundraiser gala coming up for the society.

**Xyolhemeylh:** Marlee Ponich is starting as Regional Manager on February 1 and there are new staff hired for 16-18-year-old youth aging-out to offer more support as this is a growing need.

**West Abbotsford School:** WAS has recently moved to the Sweeney Centre. The winter programs have started and spring camps are coming up. Coast Capital is sponsoring *Abby Talks* for grade 8-9 students. Students must register for this 8-week program, which runs once per semester. It has been a lot harder to advertise and get youth motivated. The youth that have registered are really engaged and WAS is hoping to build the program to get more registrations. We are currently looking for speakers who can empower youth, and the goal would be to have youth speakers.

**Public Health – Healthy Schools:** Fraser Health started in October 2017, and the orientation/training was held from October-December. Currently building partnerships in the community and the goal is to offer healthy schools throughout the community. This program involves students, teachers, family and community partners to support emotional well-being, bullying and LGBTQ.

## 5. Table Updates

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**Early Years Table:** Continued work with social and emotional regulation. There have been talks with Mike McKay and there have been about 100 parents per session. The Basic Needs Committee is creating rack cards (translated into 6 languages) in a variety of categories, that will be distributed to various businesses throughout the community. There will also be online quick lists available on the CYC website for everyone to share on their websites.

**Middle Years Table:** We need other communities to help kick start and support this age range. The February 7 forum will help with this process/transition.

**Youth Networkers:** The YN table hosted a training for suicide and risk assessment and it was successful. The next meeting will be February 14 at C-21.

## 6. Upcoming events

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- **February 23** | Pink Shirt Day event @ ARC 3:30pm
- **March 3** | [SNAC Bridging the Gap: Transitioning from Youth Services to Adulthood](#)

**Next ACYC meeting: TBD**

**[www.abbotsfordchildandyouth.ca](http://www.abbotsfordchildandyouth.ca)**