

61 YEARS

PORT ALBERNI FRIENDSHIP CENTER

Celebrating 61 Years of
Community, Culture & Connection

2026 ANNUAL REPORT



3555 4th Avenue – Unit A
Port Alberni, BC V9Y 4H3



Phone #:
250-723-8281



pafriendshipcenter.com



HONOURING OUR PAST • STRENGTHENING OUR FUTURE

hiszukiscawaak – Everything is one.



TABLE OF CONTENTS



PORT ALBERNI
FRIENDSHIP CENTER
Community • Culture • Connection

3	About Us.....
4	Message from our Executive Director.....
5	Message from our Board Chair.....
6	Meet Our Team.....
9	Meet Our Board of Directors.....
10	History & Evolution.....
11	Our History.....
13	Our Location.....
14	Our Programs.....
31	Our Statistics.....
32	Photo Gallery.....
44	Celebrating Six Decades of Friendship.....





We acknowledge & honor the unceded traditional territories of the čišaaʔath T'seshaht and Hupačasath people, expressing our deep gratitude for their stewardship that allows us to live, work, and play here. Their rich cultural heritage and traditions are vital to our community, and we recognize their enduring connection to this land. As we gather in celebration, we embrace their contributions and the wisdom of their ancestors, fostering a spirit of collaboration and unity in all that we do.



hupačasath
First Nation

OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As we celebrate 61 years of service, the Port Alberni Friendship Center (PAFC) stands as a cornerstone of cultural pride, resilience and community connection. Since 1965, we have walked alongside Indigenous peoples and the broader community, providing a safe, inclusive space for healing, learning and growth.

We respectfully acknowledge that we are located on the traditional unceded territories of the Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations and this relationship to the land grounds our work in responsibility, respect and cultural integrity.

This milestone year reflects decades of progress—and bold steps toward the future. Over the past year, PAFC has advanced several transformative initiatives designed to address critical needs:



Tiny Homes Project – Creating safe, traditional housing for individuals seeking stability and dignity on their path to long-term independence.



Emergency Shelter Services – Expanding access to a secure, supportive environment for those experiencing homelessness, ensuring that no one is left behind in times of crisis.



Culturally Rooted Childcare & Language Revitalization – Through our ?iihmisuk taatna?is – Treasure Our Young Ones Childcare Center, we continue to nurture early learning while strengthening Nuuchah-nulth language and cultural identity.



Steps to Success Program – Empowering youth and adults with life skills, employment training and cultural support to open doors to opportunities.



Indigenous Community Health Center – Coming Soon – Advancing a culturally grounded community health center to improve access to health and wellness services, while pursuing funding for medical equipment, facility improvements and expanded community-based care.

None of this work is possible without the guidance of our Elders, the dedication of our staff and the strength of our partnerships. Together, we are addressing challenges—housing insecurity, mental health, cultural disconnection—while building a future grounded in healing and hope.

As we look ahead, our vision remains clear: to create a thriving community where Indigenous traditions guide innovation and where every individual feels valued, supported and connected. The next chapter of our journey will be as bold as the last six decades and we invite you to walk with us as we continue to grow, advocate and lead.

Cyndi Stevens

Executive Director



ABOUT US

ROOTED IN CULTURE. FOCUSED ON COMMUNITY.



PORT ALBERNI
FRIENDSHIP CENTER

Community • Culture • Connection



THE CENTER

Founded in 1965, the Port Alberni Friendship Center is a non-profit Indigenous organization offering inclusive, culturally grounded services to Indigenous peoples living away from their home communities. We are part of a national network of over 100 Friendship Centers.

Our wide range of services includes mental health and addictions counseling, legal advocacy, employment training, family and youth support, Elders programming, licensed childcare, a community shelter, a tiny home village and cultural events — all in a welcoming, drop-in atmosphere.



OUR VISION

We envision a vibrant, healthy and empowered community – one that uplifts, respects, accepts, and honors all people of all ages in safe, culturally connected and welcoming environments.

hiszukiscawaak [Everything is one]
pronunciation: *hishook-ish Tsawaak*



OUR PURPOSE

To offer programs and activities that focus on enhancing the lives, relationships, knowledge, and compassion of the diverse peoples within the Friendship Center community.

hiszuknis cawaak [We are all one people]
pronunciation: *hishook nish Tsawaak*



OUR MANDATE

Our mandate is to improve the quality of life for quu-as [the people] in an urban environment by supporting self-determined activities which encourage equal access to, and participation, in society, while respecting and strengthening the identity and distinction of Indigenous cultures.

hiszukina cawaackwi [We are all one family]
pronunciation: *hishookna Tsawaackwi*





MEET OUR TEAM



Every day, the dedicated team at the Port Alberni Friendship Center works to strengthen our community through compassion, culture, advocacy, education and support. Our staff bring diverse skills and lived experiences while sharing on common purpose - serving Indigenous people, families and the broader Port Alberni community with respect and excellence.



ADMINISTRATION

Cyndi Stevens	<i>Executive Director</i>
Naomi August	<i>Executive Assistant/HR/ Finance Assistant</i>
Heather Fraser	<i>Finance/HR</i>
Betty Knighton	<i>Finance Assistant</i>
Roxanne Taylor	<i>Office Manager</i>
Martina Martin	<i>Reception</i>
Bruce McCollough	<i>Program Support</i>



LEGAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM

Trudy Wale	<i>Family Law Advocate</i>
Steve Muise	<i>Outreach Legal Advocate</i>
Kathleen Anderson	<i>Outreach Legal Advocate</i>



FAMILY, HEALTH & SUPPORT SERVICES

Christine Milligan	<i>Family & Health Services Team Lead HCPPP/Outreach Worker</i>
Charles Parent	<i>Mental Health & Substance Use Counselor</i>
Darlene Leonew	<i>Brighter Futures Parenting Program Coordinator /Elder & Cultural Support</i>
Selean Kitchen	<i>Family Support Worker/Homeless Support</i>
Leanne Grant	<i>Early Childhood Development Outreach Liaison Worker</i>
Madeline Oulton	<i>CAIS Outreach Worker</i>
Destiny Wolf	<i>Family Support Worker</i>
Simon Joseph	<i>Shelter Kitchen & Laundry Support</i>



EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING PROGRAMS

Jeff Jeffries	<i>Employment Programs Manager</i>
Karen Bennie	<i>Employment & Training Program Assistant</i>
Darlene Leonew	<i>Employment & Training Program Cultural Support</i>

Message from Our Board Chair



PORT ALBERNI
FRIENDSHIP CENTER
Community • Culture • Connection



Richard Samuel, Board Chair

It is an honour to serve as Board Chair of the Port Alberni Friendship Center as we celebrate 61 years of service. As an Indigenous man, I believe strong leadership is grounded in humility, culture and responsibility to community. I care deeply about the people we serve and the future we are building together.

We respectfully acknowledge that PAFC is located on the traditional, unceded territories of the Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations. We are grateful for our relationships with both local Nations and remain committed to walking together in respect and partnership.

For more than six decades, PAFC has provided a safe and inclusive place for healing, learning and growth. This year, I am especially proud of our progress in five important areas:

- **TINY HOMES INITIATIVE**
Creating safe, transitional housing that supports stability and dignity.
- **STREET OUTREACH**
Connecting people with support, safety and essential services.
- **HOUSING AND EMERGENCY SHELTER SUPPORTS**
Providing safe places for people experiencing homelessness or crisis.
- **CULTURALLY ROOTED CHILDCARE**
Supporting children through culture, learning and connection.
- **INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER — COMING SOON**
Advancing culturally grounded, community-based health care.

These projects respond to real community needs and open doors to stability, dignity, healing and opportunity.

Kleco (thank you) to our Elders, staff, volunteers and partners whose dedication makes this work possible.

I see a strong and promising future for PAFC—one where our Indigenous values guide innovation, culture remains at the heart of our work, and every person feels valued, supported and connected.

Our youth are the future. By listening to their voices and making room for their ideas, PAFC's next chapter will reflect the strength and hopes of the community we serve.

Kleco for supporting and walking with us as PAFC continues to grow, advocate and lead.

Richard Samuel
Board Chair





WALYAQIL TINY HOME VILLAGE

- Anna Meier – HSW Team Lead
- Coby Felsman – HSW Team Lead
- Leila Rabanes – Housing Support Worker
- Eamon Carney – Housing Support Worker
- Dreden Rislund – Housing Support Worker
- Hunter Flaro – Housing Support Worker
- Andrew Baird – Housing Support Worker
- Dionne Muller – Housing Support Worker
- Geraldine Tom – Cultural Support Worker / Elder
- Jessica Jansen – Housing Support Worker
- Kara LaJeunesse – Housing Support Worker
- Brittany Kyte – Housing Support Worker

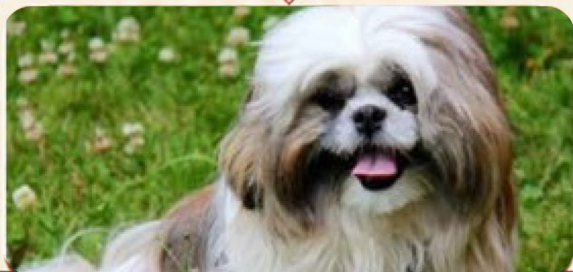


WALYAQIL SHELTER & SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

- Hannah Bexson – Supportive Housing Coordinator
- Dylan Drouin – Shelter Counsellor
- Nori Anderson – HSW Team Lead
- Barb Mintz – HSW Team Lead
- Anne-Marie Sather – Housing Support Worker
- Austin Wallin – Housing Support Worker
- Connie McPhee – Housing Support Worker
- Jon Shaw – Housing Support Worker
- Tom Brar – Housing Support Worker
- Darlene Leonow – Cultural Support
- Alex Smith – Janitorial Maintenance Team Lead
- Richard Moras – Janitorial Maintenance Team Lead
- Tammy Webster – Janitor
- Mitchell Noel – Janitor
- Abbasi Tinwala – Janitor
- Bruce McCulloch – Maintenance Support
- Brittany Kyte – Housing Support Worker
- Brian Lucas – Housing Support Worker
- Shayla Sampson – Housing Support Worker
- Ryan Held – Housing Support Worker
- King Comia – Housing Support Worker
- Samara Marshall – Housing Support Worker
- Brianna Ostrander – Housing Support Worker
- Avery Zimmerman – Housing Support Worker



PAFC MASCOTS



Bella

OUR PAST MASCOT

Bella was more than a mascot—she was family. With her gentle spirit and unconditional love, she touched the hearts of so many and will always hold a special place in ours.

Forever in our hearts. ❤️



Mookie

OUR CURRENT MASCOT

Mookie brings joy, comfort, and smiles to everyone he meets. He is a beloved part of our Friendship Center family!



CHILDCARE CENTRE

Shelby Mellaart	<i>Infant/Toddler Educator & Childcare Centre manager</i>
Ryan George	<i>Responsible Adult/Language Assistant</i>
Alexea Haberland	<i>Infant & Toddler / Early Childhood Educator</i>
Bansari Patel	<i>Infant & Toddler / Early Childhood Educator</i>
Sukwinder Singh	<i>Infant & Toddler / Early Childhood Educator</i>
Patty Frank	<i>Language Nest Speaker & Elder</i>
Bruce McCollough	<i>Transportation</i>
Elisa Sunga	<i>Early Childhood Educator</i>
Gloria Webber	<i>Early Childhood Educator Assistant</i>
Rajbir Kaur	<i>Early Childhood Educator Assistant</i>
Amber Flaro	<i>ASI Coordinator</i>
Chantel Lalonde	<i>ASI Program Support</i>



YOUTH & ELDER PROGRAMS

Karen Bennie	<i>Youth Program Coordinator</i>
Darlene Leonew	<i>Elders Program Coordinator</i>
Roxanne Taylor	<i>Facilities Bookings</i>
Norma Taylor	<i>Elder</i>
Ron Ratelle	<i>Elder</i>
Martina Martin	<i>Youth Worker</i>
Jayne Noel	<i>Youth Worker</i>

“

Working together
to strengthen our community
through compassion,
culture and connection.

”





HISTORY & EVOLUTION OF FRIENDSHIP CENTERS

The concept of the Friendship Center emerged in the mid-1950s, as many Indigenous people moved to urban areas in search of better opportunities and quality of life. To meet the needs of these growing urban populations, community leaders began advocating for dedicated spaces that could provide referrals, counseling and support services in areas such as employment, housing, education and health—while serving as a bridge to other community resources.

By the late 1960s, Friendship Centers began organizing into Provincial and Territorial Associations (PTAs). In 1969, a national steering committee was formed to explore creating a unified voice for the rapidly expanding network of Centers.

Until 1972, Friendship Centers relied heavily on volunteers and local fundraising efforts, supplemented by small grants from government and private donors. During this period, Centers evolved from primarily offering referrals to becoming frontline providers of essential social services. Despite limited resources, they remained innovative, adaptable and accountable to their communities—laying the foundation for continued growth and impact.

A pivotal moment came in 1972, when the Government of Canada officially recognized the importance of Friendship Centers by launching the Migrating Native Peoples Program (MNPP). A 1976 evaluation of MNPP highlighted the crucial role these Centers played and the strong community support behind them.

In 1983, the National Association of Friendship Centers partnered with the Department of the Secretary of State to transition MNPP into the Native Friendship Center Program (NFCP), which carried a five-year mandate and formal recognition of Friendship Centers as vital urban Indigenous institutions. In 1988, this program evolved into the Aboriginal Friendship Center Program (AFCP), securing permanent federal funding. This milestone enabled the creation of over 114 Friendship Centers and 7 Provincial/Territorial Associations across Canada—ensuring continued support for urban Indigenous communities nationwide.



In Memoriam **JOHN BARNEY** **TREASURER • BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

With heavy hearts, we remember
and honour the life of

John Barney.

John dedicated his time, wisdom, and strength to the Port Alberni Friendship Center with great integrity and care. As our Treasurer, he played a vital role in guiding our organization and supporting our mission to build a healthier, stronger community.

His leadership, kindness, and unwavering commitment will be deeply missed and forever remembered.



*May his spirit be at peace,
and may his legacy continue
to inspire us all.*



OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



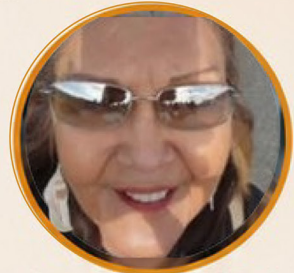
Richard Samuel
Chair



Roman Frank
1st Vice Chair



Kelly Sport
2nd Vice Chair



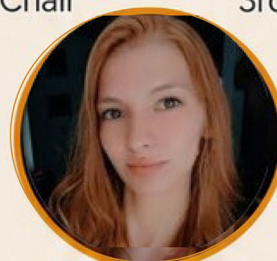
Agnes Keithlah
3rd Vice Chair



Claudette Watts
Board Member



April Lucas
Board Member



Sasha Pielak
Board Member



Thank you, John, for your dedication and for continuing to provide excellent programs and services to our community.





OUR HISTORY

By 1979, with an estimated 6,600 Indigenous people living in Port Alberni, the original 2nd Avenue location could no longer meet the growing demand for programs and services—or accommodate the vision for the Friendship Center's future.

In November 1983, a symbolic first donation of just \$2 from 81-year-old Placide Lucas sparked a four-year community-driven fundraising effort. Through the dedication of staff, board members and countless supporters, the Port Alberni Friendship Center proudly opened the doors to its new \$880,000 facility in 1986—a testament to what community can achieve together.

Youth at the Center in the 80's



While PAFC welcomes people of all cultural backgrounds, its foundation remains firmly rooted in Indigenous traditions and values—providing a healing space, a gathering place and a sense of belonging.

Youth at the Center in 2026



Now, as we celebrate **61** years of service in **2026**, the Port Alberni Friendship Center stands as a respected leader and trusted resource in the community—shaped by decades of experience, strengthened by partnerships and inspired by the vision that began over half a century ago.

Gathering at the Center in the 70's



Since then, the demand for counseling, life skills and support services has grown exponentially. In response, the PAFC has expanded its programming to include:

- Mental Health and Addictions Counseling
- Parenting and Early Childhood Development Support
- Legal and Family Law Advocacy
- Employment Skills and Training Programs

All of these services are free of charge and open to everyone, with a continued emphasis on creating a culturally safe and holistic environment for Indigenous people in the Alberni Valley and beyond.

Youth at the Center in the 2000's



To maintain the highest standards of care and professionalism, PAFC operates under a strong statement of principles, code of ethics and policies aligned with its mission and values.



OUR HISTORY

In the early 1960s, the idea of an urban Indigenous Center was little more than a dream—one envisioned by Les Hammer, who hoped to create a welcoming space where Indigenous people from up-island could gather, socialize and feel at home. His vision was for a place where families could connect, children could play and community could thrive—especially for those who, living away from their home communities, lacked a sense of belonging in the city.

In 1964, that dream began to take shape when five community members formed the first Friendship Center Committee. Among the founding members were Dr. Harry Webster, who served as the first Chair; Sister Mary Ellen of Smith Memorial School; and former mayor Les Hammer. Dr. Webster invited Art Peters to join, recognizing the importance of including voices from local First Nations. The support was overwhelming: all 14 Nuu-chah-nulth Bands, the Alberni Lions Club and both city councils of Alberni and Port Alberni endorsed the project.



PORT ALBERNI FRIENDSHIP LODGE



FRANCIS CHARLIE – 1st EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



LES HAMMER – FORMER MAYOR

Early contributions were instrumental in getting started. A donation from the Rev. Stewart Schoberg Memorial Fund and a long-term lease of the Eric Graf Hall on 2nd Avenue for \$1 per year from the trustees made it possible to secure a location. The first center operated out of a converted funeral home, which the committee remodeled to include a small gym for basketball. Modest though it was, this space became a vital hub—proving that urban Indigenous people now had a place to gather and belong.

On October 23, 1965, the Port Alberni Friendship Center officially opened its doors. The following year, the first Board of the Friendship Center Society was established, chaired by Dr. H.W. Webster, with members including George Eddie, Rev. E. Kempling, Art Peters, Ted Watts, Agnes Peters, Roy Sutherland, Romana Gus, Jim Saxby, Bob Thomas and Margaret Clutes. During the opening ceremony, Jack Peter, then President of the West Coast Allied Tribes, described the new Center as “a halfway house between the reserve and urban living.”





OUR PROGRAMS & SERVICES



CULTURAL & RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Celebrating culture, language, arts, drumming, dancing and traditions.



MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS COUNSELING

Trauma-informed support for individuals, families and communities.



LEGAL & FAMILY LAW ADVOCACY

Support and advocacy for families navigating legal challenges.



PARENTING & EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPPORT

Programs that strengthen families and support healthy child development.



EMPLOYMENT SKILLS & TRAINING PROGRAMS

Building skills, confidence and pathways to meaningful employment.



REFERRALS TO COMMUNITY SERVICES

Connecting you to the resources you need.



INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER **COMING SOON**

A culturally grounded health center providing primary care, wellness services and community-based support.

Opening 2027.





OUR LOCATION

Vancouver Island is home to diverse indigenous communities, including the traditional territories of three First Nations: Coast Salish, Kwakwaka'wakw and Nuu-chah-nulth.



The Port Alberni Friendship Center (PAFC) is located in Nuu-chah-nulth territory, on the unceded lands of the Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations, in the heart of Port Alberni. The ha'houlthee (chiefly territories) of the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations stretch across approximately 300 kilometers of the Pacific coastline, offering a rich cultural history and breathtaking natural beauty.

PAFC serves the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District - a vast area of more than 6,600 square kilometers on Vancouver Island's west coast. There are approximately 3,000 Nuu-chah-nulth people living away from their home communities across North America, with nearly 2,000 living in Port Alberni.

While our foundation is deeply rooted in Indigenous culture and traditions, our doors are open to everyone. We foster understanding, inclusion and connection between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities - sharing teachings and creating a space where all feel welcome.





CULTURAL WELLNESS PROGRAMMING

The Port Alberni Friendship Center strengthens culture, language and community through culturally grounded programs that support children, parents and families from pregnancy through early childhood. Guided by Elders, Knowledge Keepers and community partners, our Aboriginal Supported Initiatives (ASI) team creates opportunities to connect with Nuu-chah-nulth teachings, language and traditions.

2026 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



FAMILY GATHERINGS

Monthly dinners bring families together year-round, averaging **40–70** participants each month, with special celebrations drawing as many as **195** community members!



PRE & POST NATAL GROUP

Weekly sessions with health and child development professionals including nutritionists, occupational therapists, Island Health and community partners. **20–26** families participate each week.



LANGUAGE NEST

Children learn Nuu-chah-nulth words, numbers, colours and songs through circle time, activities and classroom resources. Building language skills together!



ABORIGINAL HEAD START

ASI staff support classrooms with cultural resources, language learning, field trips and personalized books that celebrate each child's identity and learning.



NINAYAQSHA (BABY WELCOMING)

Twice-yearly ceremonies honour new life with Elders' prayers, lullabies, cedar headbands, gifts and a shared meal—celebrating babies and strengthening family and community bonds.



♦♦ BY THE NUMBERS ♦♦



195

attendees at our
largest Family
Gathering



40–70

people attend
Family Gatherings
each month



20–26

families
participate in
Pre & Post Natal
weekly



9

children
enrolled in
Language Nest



2

Baby Welcoming
ceremonies
held annually

Our Impact

Every program strengthens identity, language, belonging and community. Families build lasting relationships, children develop pride in their culture, and Elders continue to share the knowledge, teachings and traditions that connect generations.





ELDERS PROGRAM



At the Port Alberni Friendship Center, we are dedicated to creating safe and welcoming spaces for our Elders. Every Monday, we host an Elders Drop-In—a relaxed gathering where Elders can connect, share stories and enjoy each other's company. On the last Monday of each month, we hold a special Elders Luncheon, offering a warm meal and a chance to strengthen community bonds.

Each summer, Elders are invited to participate in our Cultural Camp, an immersive experience that celebrates traditional teachings, land-based learning and cultural activities. These camps provide an opportunity to honour Indigenous knowledge, nurture cultural identity and promote wellness through connection to both culture and community.

This past April, Elders joined us for our Wellness Day, a vibrant event dedicated to holistic health. In collaboration with Island Health, Oceanwalk Pedorthic, Alberni Pharmacy, Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council (NTC), First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) and other partners, we offered services such as foot care, Kidney Check screenings, glucose monitor demonstrations, blood pressure checks and consultations with a Nurse Navigator. Holistic care options like haircuts, massages, Reiki, manicures and access to traditional Indigenous medicines were also available. A healthy lunch was shared with all attendees. By blending Western healthcare with traditional healing practices, Wellness Day created a space of care, connection and empowerment for our community.

SERVICES & ACTIVITIES



WEEKLY DROP-IN

A welcoming space for Elders to socialize, share stories and enjoy activities.



MONTHLY ELDERS LUNCHEON

A nutritious meal and time to strengthen relationships and community.



CULTURAL CAMP

Land-based learning, traditional teachings and cultural activities.



WELLNESS DAY

Access to health services, traditional healing, personal care and a healthy meal.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS – 2026

1



Weekly Drop-In: Every Monday, Elders gather to connect, share stories and support one another.

2



Elders Luncheon: Held on the last Monday of each month, providing a warm meal and opportunity for community connection.

3



Cultural Camp: Each summer, Elders participate in land-based learning and cultural activities that celebrate our traditions and teachings.

4



Wellness Day: A holistic health event offering health services, traditional healing, personal care and a shared meal in a supportive environment.

5



Strong Community Bonds: Building relationships, honouring knowledge and creating a sense of belonging and respect.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

By honouring our Elders and supporting their wellness, we strengthen our community's culture, knowledge and connections. These programs create safe spaces of care, respect and belonging for our Elders.



**PORT ALBERNI
FRIENDSHIP CENTER**

Community • Culture • Connection

FAMILY LAW ADVOCACY PROGRAM

THE  LAW
FOUNDATION
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Trudy Wale
Family Law Advocate

The Family Law Advocacy Program at the Port Alberni Friendship Center provides free, confidential support to individuals navigating matters under the Family Law Act, Divorce Act and CFCSA (child protection). Services are available to everyone, with no income testing required. A mandatory conflict check protects client confidentiality. If a conflict is identified, the second party is referred to other resources.

The Family Law Advocate provides information, guidance and practical support, but does not provide legal advice. Support is available to clients representing themselves in Provincial or Supreme Court, as well as those working with a lawyer who need help understanding legal processes. This assistance can help reduce legal costs and make services more accessible.

The program follows a "no wrong door" approach. Clients can access support through drop-in visits, phone calls, email or scheduled appointments.

The program works closely with other PAFC programs to provide coordinated, wraparound support tailored to each client's needs.



**PORT ALBERNI
FRIENDSHIP CENTER**
Community • Culture • Connection

MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS PROGRAM

Compassionate, culturally respectful counseling for individuals, couples and families throughout Port Alberni and surrounding communities.



Charles Parent
Mental Health and
Substance Use Counsellor

HIGHLIGHTS 2025-2026



137
NEW CLIENT
INTAKES



2,011
INDIVIDUAL
COUNSELLING
SESSIONS



400+
DROP-IN
CLINIC VISITS



68
LONG-TERM
TREATMENT
PLACEMENTS



**NO CLIENT
COMPLAINTS**



**ISLAND HEALTH
CONTRACT RENEWED
FOR 4 MORE YEARS**

BUILDING RECOVERY THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

Working alongside community agencies to ensure clients receive the right support at the right time.

KEY PARTNERS INCLUDE:

- Island Health MHSU
- West Coast General Hospital
- Kackaamin
- Tsow-Tun Le Lum
- Cedars
- Edgewood
- Ravensview
- Comox Valley Recovery
- Phoenix House
- Harbourside Home for Women
- KUU-US
- Fraser Health
- Coastal Sage Haven
- Shelter Farm



Integration and collaboration with service providers help create better outcomes and support long-term recovery and well-being.

OUR COMMITMENT



Evidence-based counselling
Professional, ethical and empirically grounded care.



Culturally safe and inclusive
Honouring Indigenous teachings and welcoming all individuals and families.



Weekly Recovery Meetings
A safe, supportive 12-step space for recovery and connection.



Treatment referrals & care coordination
Connecting clients with the right resources and support.



Ongoing professional development
Continuous training to provide the best possible care.

MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT

Demand for services continue to grow. Through expanded drop-in access, strong community partnerships and culturally grounded care, we remain committed to helping individuals and families build healthier futures.



**45%
INCREASE**
in visits to mental
health intake agency.



CONSISTENT CARE
Our counsellors remain
available all year,
providing stability
and trust.



**STRONGER
TOGETHER**
Building healthier
individuals, families
and communities.



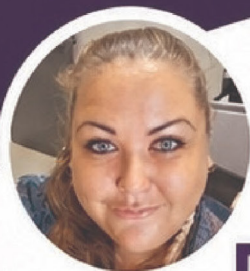
"The program helped me with my communication."

"I learned how to control my emotions better."

"I learned how to self-reflect and be open to those around me, this is something am grateful for with Switch Back."



— Program Participant



URBAN ABORIGINAL EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



PORT ALBERNI
FRIENDSHIP CENTER
Community • Culture • Connection



Ministry of
Children and Family
Development



SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS
FAMILIES FROM PREGNANCY
THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD
(AGES 0-6)
WITH SAFE, NURTURING AND
CONNECTED SERVICES.

OUR SUPPORT INCLUDES:



PARENTING SUPPORT & EDUCATION

Healthy routines and positive parenting.



ADVOCACY & REPRESENTATION

Supporting families in meetings with MCFD, Usma courts, schools and other services.



EMOTIONAL & PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Building confidence, setting goals and reducing social isolation.



HOUSEHOLD ASSISTANCE

Budgeting, safety planning and organizing daily tasks.



COMMUNITY NAVIGATION

Connecting to legal aid, housing, healthcare, childcare and more.



TRANSPORTATION & ACCOMPANIMENT

Access to appointments, court dates and community meetings.



2026 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ 90% INCREASE IN PRENATAL & POSTNATAL GROUP ATTENDANCE
- ✓ 42 WEEKLY GROUPS WITH 20-26 PARTICIPANTS
- ✓ 800+ VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOURS
- ✓ 26 HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTED THROUGH BC FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION COUPON PROGRAM
- ✓ INCREASED CLIENT REFERRALS AND FAMILY INTAKES
- ✓ STRONGER OUTREACH AND COLLABORATION



SIGNIFICANT GROWTH IN 2026,
EXPANDING FAMILIES SERVED
AND SUPPORTS OFFERED.



A 90% INCREASE IN ATTENDANCE
FOR PRENATAL AND
POSTNATAL GROUPS.



2026 WAS A YEAR OF EXCEPTIONAL
GROWTH, STRENGTHENED PARTNERSHIPS,
AND EXPANDED SUPPORTS FOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.



Thank you! ♥

TO OUR FAMILIES, PARTNERS AND COMMUNITY
FOR YOUR TRUST AND SUPPORT!



OUTREACH LAW ADVOCACY PROGRAM



The Outreach Legal Advocacy Program is a vital service offered by the Port Alberni Friendship Center, dedicated to helping community members—particularly those facing barriers—access legal support.



Steve Muise
Outreach Legal Advocate



Kathleen Andersov
Outreach Legal Advocate



LEGAL SUPPORT – WE CAN HELP WITH:

The program offers free legal advice and assistance across a range of areas, including:

- ✓ **Income Support:** Guidance and assistance with BCEA/Welfare, Persons with Disabilities (PWD) benefits, Old Age Security (OAS), Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), Canada Pension Plan (CPP) & Disability applications, Employment Insurance (EI) and Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) claims.
- ✓ **Housing:** Support for landlord/tenant disputes, eviction notices, repairs and applications for housing programs such as SAFER.
- ✓ Child protection matters
- ✓ Child & spousal support
- ✓ Divorce & separation
- ✓ Protection orders
- ✓ Visitation & access
- ✓ Court forms & paperwork
- ✓ Preparing for court
- ✓ Referrals to other community resources
- ✓ And more



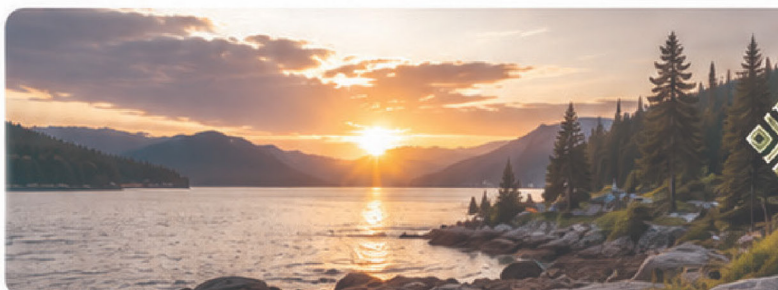
We support Indigenous people, low-income individuals and other vulnerable groups to ensure equitable access to legal resources and guidance.



Our Advocates do not provide legal advice (a role reserved for lawyers) but offer free, confidential support, information and referrals.



We operate under a “no wrong door” approach, meaning you can access support through drop-in visits, phone calls, email, or scheduled appointments.



The Outreach Legal Advocacy Program is essential in promoting fairness, accessibility and justice in Port Alberni. By offering culturally sensitive and inclusive legal services, the program helps reduce inequalities and empowers community members to navigate the legal system with confidence and support.



BRIGHTER FUTURES PARENTING PROGRAM



Brighter Futures is a peer-facilitated parenting program designed for parents and extended family members. The program creates a welcoming and supportive space where participants can share experiences, learn from one another, and grow in their parenting journey.



OUR GOAL

is to encourage and empower parents to take an active role in shaping the program.

Participants are invited to help guide the topics we cover and recommend guest speakers they believe would benefit the group.



TO ENSURE

parents can fully engage in discussion and activities, we provide on-site child-minding, giving families peace of mind while they focus on learning and connection.



“ Stronger families today, brighter futures tomorrow. ”





FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER PROGRAM



Ministry of
Children and Family
Development

The Family Support Program at the Port Alberni Friendship Center provides compassionate, hands-on support to families navigating complex challenges. While many referrals come through Usma Nuu-chah-nulth Child and Family Services (CFCS) or the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), self-referrals are welcome. Any parent or caregiver seeking assistance with parenting, home management, or accessing community resources is encouraged to reach out.

The program's primary goal is to help families create and maintain safe, stable and nurturing environments for their children while emphasizing caregiver well-being, including self-care, goal setting and personal growth.

Family Support Workers (FSWs) provide tailored, individualized support to meet the unique needs of each family. Services include:



DESTINY WOLFE
Family Support Worker



SELEAN KITCHEN
Family Support Worker



Parenting support and education: Establishing routines, structure and healthy parenting strategies



Advocacy and representation: Supporting families in meetings with MCFD, Usma CFCS, family court, schools and other service providers



Emotional and practical support: Building confidence, developing self-care plans, setting achievable goals



Household management assistance: Budgeting, safety planning, organizing daily tasks



Community navigation: Connecting families with legal aid, counseling, housing, healthcare, food security, childcare and family planning



Transportation and accompaniment: Ensuring access to appointments, court dates and community meetings

Services are delivered in flexible, accessible ways, including in-home visits, office appointments, phone calls, drop-ins and email support. The approach is non-judgmental, culturally sensitive and meets families where they are.

FSWs often walk alongside families during some of life's most difficult moments, including court proceedings, guardianship and child protection matters and reunification efforts. The program's strength lies in the trusted, respectful relationships fostered between workers and families, promoting meaningful, long-term support and positive change.





READY SET GROW PROGRAM



BCAAFC | BC Association of
Aboriginal Friendship Centres



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

The Best Place on Earth

Ready Set Grow supports Indigenous youth (10–29) through culture, learning and life skills to build confidence and brighter futures.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS



YOUTH PROGRAM

Cultural, social and recreational activities for youth aged 10–29.



YOUTH NIGHTS

Fridays 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Sports, creative activities, meals and connection.



SWITCHBACK SESSIONS

Group sessions on wellness, culture and traditional teachings.



MAKING AN IMPACT

Empowering youth to build stronger, healthier communities.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS – 2026

- ✓ Stronger cultural identity and pride
- ✓ Improved life skills and well-being
- ✓ Better communication and relationships
- ✓ Increased confidence and self-awareness
- ✓ Connections with Elders and community
- ✓ Pathways to education and employment
- ✓ A safe, supportive space to grow

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK



"The program helped me with my communication."



"I learned how to control my emotions better."



"I am grateful for Switch Back."





STEPS TO SUCCESS



The Steps to Success program provides employment skills and training to empower Indigenous youth and community members to reach their goals.

Our programs are deeply rooted in the nuučaañuł language and culture, with initiatives such as Switchback, Ready Set Grow, and Food Skills integrated into the Steps to Success program. Participants receive a stipend based on the number of sessions they attend.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS



BUILDING A FOUNDATION – 6 WEEKS

Develop essential skills, confidence and workplace readiness.



WORK EXPERIENCE – 6 WEEKS

Gain hands-on experience with local employers and receive a completion bonus.

2025-2026 PROGRAM IMPACT

READY SET GROW

47 Participants
227 points of service

STEPS III

5,125 points of service
Employment & skills training

YOUTH FOCUS

40 youth
53 First Nations Participants



Switchback

BCAAFC
BC Association of
Aboriginal Friendship Centres



WALYAQIT SHELTER & SUPPORTIVE HOUSING



**PORT ALBERNI
FRIENDSHIP CENTER**
Community • Culture • Connection



Aboriginal Housing
Management Association
Over 25 Years of
Indigenous Housing Expertise



Walyaqit Shelter is more than a safe place—it's a community built on care, respect and connection.

Upstairs, 30 self-contained apartments with private bathrooms and kitchenettes provide residents with independence and privacy, while downstairs, 35 emergency shelter beds offer immediate refuge for those in need.



Residents have access to daily nutritious meals, laundry and shower facilities, common rooms with TVs and a supervised use site to reduce harm. We also provide transportation to local grocery stores, helping residents meet their day-to-day needs.



Our programming creates opportunities for growth and connection through bingo, movie nights, baking and art workshops, clothing repair and computer skills sessions. Daily mental health support is available on-site and we ensure all services are delivered in a culturally respectful way.



Community partnerships with Island Health teams, Ministry Outreach and peer support workers strengthen our holistic approach, bringing specialized care and guidance directly to residents. At Walyaqit, we walk alongside each individual on their path to stability, wellness and belonging.



A WELCOMING PLACE

Safe, respectful and supportive spaces for all who walk through our doors.



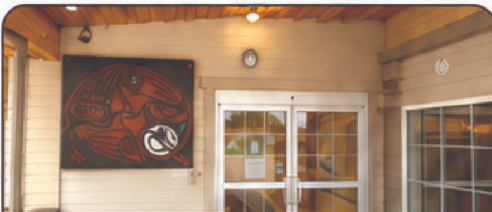
HEALING & HOPE

Encouraging positivity, self-worth and mental wellness every day.



TOGETHER WE WALK

Community connections and support on the journey forward.



A WELCOMING PLACE

Safe, respectful and supportive spaces for all who walk through our doors.



HEALING & HOPE

Encouraging positivity, self-worth and mental wellness every day.



TOGETHER WE WALK

Community connections and support on the journey forward.

2026 HIGHLIGHTS



30

self-contained
apartments providing
stability and dignity



Daily meals, laundry,
showers and supervised
use site on-site



Transportation to
grocery stores and
essential services



Cultural programming,
wellness support &
community partnerships





CAIS PROGRAM



**PORT ALBERNI
FRIENDSHIP CENTER**
Community • Culture • Connection

The Culturally Aligned Integrated Support (CAIS) Program at the Port Alberni Friendship Center provides culturally grounded support to individuals and families within underrepresented populations who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless. Using the CAIS framework, Outreach Workers assist eligible First Nations, Inuit and Métis clients with wraparound services and a monthly rental supplement to secure and maintain safe, stable housing.

Outreach Workers play a key role in promoting safety, stability and long-term wellness. Support includes:

- Tenant advocacy and housing navigation
- Assistance with identification retrieval or renewal
- Connections to healthcare, counseling and cultural resources

Referrals come from self-referrals or other community service providers and support is personalized and long term, helping clients build independence while staying connected to trusted community services.

A central component of the CAIS Program is fostering cultural connection and community belonging. Clients are invited to participate in weekly cultural activities, including drumming, sewing, beading and singing, supporting healing, creativity and cultural reconnection. Monthly community dinners provide a warm space for sharing meals, strengthening relationships and reducing social isolation.

Since its launch in June 2024, the CAIS Program has grown rapidly. What began with just a few participants now supports 65 clients through active rental subsidies, each receiving comprehensive, culturally aligned services. Outreach Workers continue to engage with additional families and individuals, ensuring that culturally safe, community-based housing solutions remain accessible to those who need them most.

2026 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- 65 CLIENTS SUPPORTED THROUGH ACTIVE RENTAL SUBSIDIES
- INCREASED OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
- MONTHLY CULTURAL DINNERS AND WEEKLY CULTURAL ACTIVITIES
- WRAPAROUND SUPPORT PROMOTING SAFETY STABILITY AND WELLNESS
- CONTINUED GROWTH TO MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS WITH CULTURALLY SAFE SERVICES



**SIGNIFICANT GROWTH IN 2026,
EXPANDING FAMILIES SERVED
AND SUPPORTS OFFERED.**



**A 90% INCREASE IN ATTENDANCE
FOR CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND
COMMUNITY DINNERS.**



**2026 WAS A YEAR OF EXCEPTIONAL
GROWTH, STRENGTHENED PARTNERSHIPS,
AND EXPANDED SUPPORTS FOR
INDIGENOUS FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS.**



WĀŁYAQİŁ

TINY HOME VILLAGE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAM



Aboriginal Housing
Management Association
Over 25 Years of
Indigenous Housing Expertise



BC HOUSING



Wāłyaqīł offers more than shelter—it provides dignity, safety and community for those who need it most. With 24-hour support staff, residents have continuous access to essential amenities like showers, laundry and nutritious meals, ensuring their basic needs are met in a respectful, caring environment.



Each of the 30 tiny homes is thoughtfully designed with a single bed, desk, mini-fridge, heating and air conditioning, giving residents privacy and security within a personal space they can truly call their own.



Beyond meeting immediate needs, Wāłyaqīł creates opportunities for connection, cultural belonging and personal growth. Weekly programs and activities promote life skills, creativity and well-being, while cultural supports and mental health services are readily available. Our strong partnerships with Island Health, the Ministry Outreach Worker and CAT Team Peer Workers ensure holistic care and consistent support for residents.

Thanks to these efforts, Wāłyaqīł has become far more than a housing solution—it's a vibrant, inclusive community where individuals are supported on their journey toward stability, healing and hope.

2026 HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ 30 tiny homes with essential amenities and personal space
- ✓ 24/7 support staff and access to showers, laundry & meals
- ✓ Daily nutritious meals and regular wellness & life skills programs
- ✓ Partnerships with Island Health, Ministry Outreach Worker & CAT Team
- ✓ Holistic care and cultural supports for residents
- ✓ A safe, inclusive community focused on stability, healing and hope



A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Safe, private and thoughtfully designed tiny homes that promote dignity and independence.



SUPPORT & CONNECTION

24-hour staff support, daily amenities and programs that build skills, connections and well-being.



COMMUNITY & CULTURE

Cultural belonging, holistic care and partnerships that honour Indigenous ways of knowing.

2026 HIGHLIGHTS



30

tiny homes with
essential amenities
and personal space



24/7

support staff and
access to showers,
laundry & meals



DAILY

nutritious meals
and regular wellness
& life skills programs



PARTNERSHIPS

with Island Health,
Ministry Outreach Worker
& CAT Team



**A SAFE, INCLUSIVE
COMMUNITY**

focused on stability,
healing and hope





*Cleansing /
Groundbreaking*
of the

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

A proud project of the Primary Care Network
and the Port Alberni Friendship Center!

Today was the Cleansing/Groundbreaking of the Indigenous Community Health Centre, a proud project of the Primary Care Network and the Port Alberni Friendship Center!

This event marks a significant step forward in our commitment to enhancing health and well-being for our community.

Alberni Clayoquot Métis is very appreciative to be part of working together on traditional territories of the Tseshaht First Nation and Hupacasath First Nation, with the community Health Centre lead Port Alberni Friendship Centre, and the Primary Care Network.

It is exciting to see this come to fruition. Was a heart filled day with like minded people working for the best interest of our community.



Tseshaht First Nations

Hupacasath First Nation

Together, we build a healthier, stronger community.



STATISTICS

APRIL 2025 – MARCH 2026

STATISTICS INCLUDE BOTH THE SHELTER AND TINY HOMES

ACTIVE PROGRAMS

27

VOLUNTEERS

188

VISITOR CONTACTS

138,353

THV VISITORS

42,381

CLIENTS SERVED

6,080

MALE CLIENTS

46%

FEMALE CLIENTS

54%

ELDERS

482

MEALS SERVED

13,500



Breakfast

10,100



Lunch

17,700



Dinner

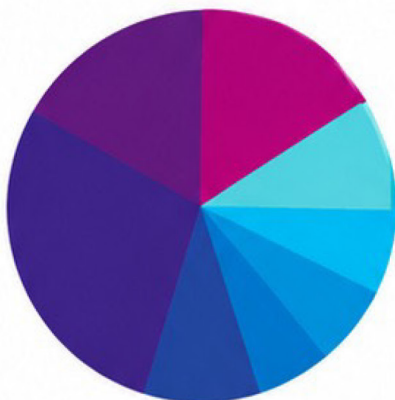
TOTAL MEALS

41,300

Breakfast + Lunch + Dinner

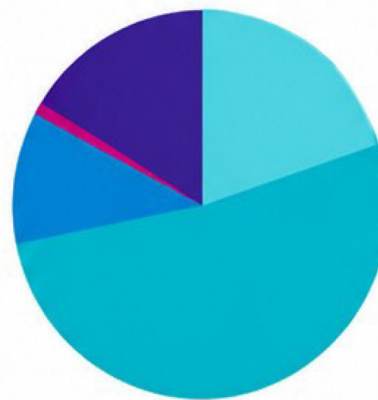
Percentages are shown as reported; minor rounding may cause totals to differ slightly from 100%.

AGE DISTRIBUTION



Ages 0-5	17.3%
Ages 6-10	8.8%
Ages 11-13	6.3%
Ages 14-17	6.7%
Ages 18-24	5.5%
Ages 25-29	8.6%
Ages 30-55	29.6%
Ages 56+	17.3%

COMMUNITY IDENTITY



Non-Aboriginal	20.4%
First Nations	52.2%
Metis	11.0%
Inuit	1.0%
Other	15.5%



**PORT ALBERNI
FRIENDSHIP CENTER**
Community • Culture • Connection

PAFC CHILDCARE CENTRE

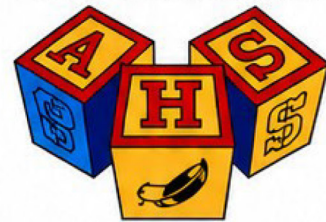
“TREASURE OUR YOUNG ONES”



FIRST PEOPLES'
CULTURAL COUNCIL

ABORIGINAL HEAD START

Urban & Northern Communities



The Port Alberni Friendship Center Childcare Centre proudly operates as an Aboriginal Head Start program, providing a culturally grounded, nurturing environment for Indigenous children and families. Since joining the Head Start program in 2022, the center has continued to grow as a place where children thrive through connection to culture, language and community.

THE HEAD START MODEL FOCUSES ON SIX CORE COMPONENTS:

-  Culture and language
-  Education
-  Health promotion
-  Nutrition
-  Social support
-  Parental and family involvement

At the heart of the program is the **Language Nest**, a cornerstone since its opening on January 23, 2017. Children ages 3 to 5 are immersed in Nuuchah-nulth culture and language, guided daily by Elder Ciisma (Patricia Frank), supported by Language Assistant Kwaasa (Ryan George Jr.), and a dedicated team of Early Childhood Educators.

The center provides free childcare for Indigenous families with children aged 0 to 6. Children receive nutritious meals and snacks in a warm, inclusive environment that centers Indigenous knowledge and values.

In addition to the full-day childcare program, the center offers a vibrant **Out of School Care Program**, operating five days a week, year-round. Elders play a key role, sharing their knowledge and fluency in Nuuchah-nulth language, fostering meaningful connections that support early development and lifelong learning.



COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER

Building Community • Sharing Joy • Strengthening Bonds



PORT ALBERNI FRIENDSHIP CENTER

Community • Culture • Connection



TINY HOME VILLAGE GARDENING

Small Spaces • Big Impact • Stronger Community



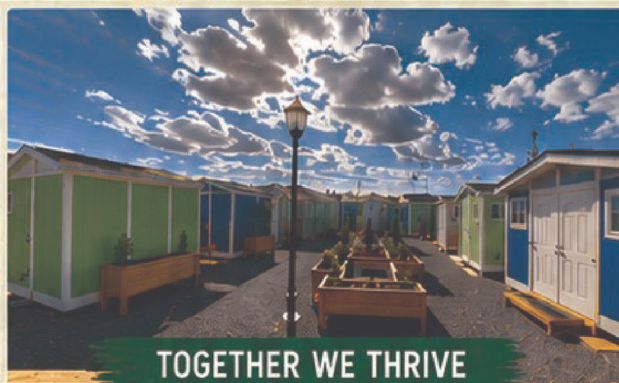
GROWING TOGETHER



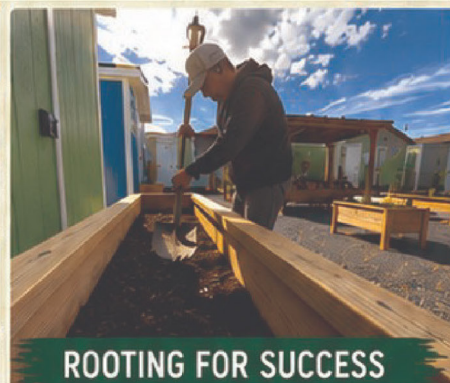
BEAUTIFYING OUR COMMUNITY



PLANTING PRIDE



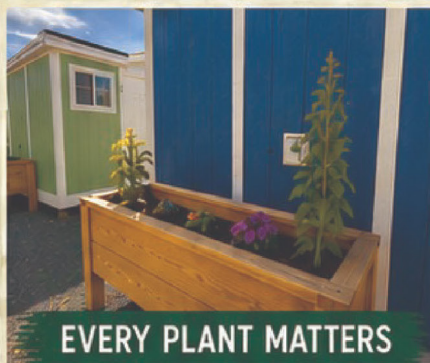
TOGETHER WE THRIVE



ROOTING FOR SUCCESS



NURTURE • WATER • GROW



EVERY PLANT MATTERS

*"From tiny
spaces, beautiful
things grow."*

-  Grow Fresh
-  Build Community
-  Create Beauty



COMMUNITY GARDENING GROWS MORE THAN PLANTS.

It grows connection, friendship, belonging and hope.

By working together, sharing knowledge and caring for our spaces,
we create a stronger, healthier community for everyone.

Let's keep growing—together.



THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO PLANTS, WATERS & CARES! 



YOUTH NIGHT!

CONNECT. CREATE. PLAY. BELONG.

A fun, safe and welcoming space for youth to hang out, try new things, and build community. Talk to a facilitator or an Elder, take part in activities, and be yourself!



**MAKE
FRIENDS**



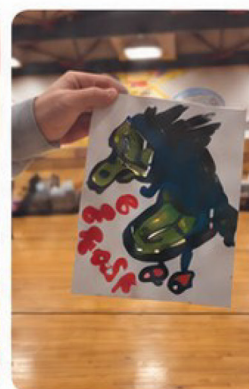
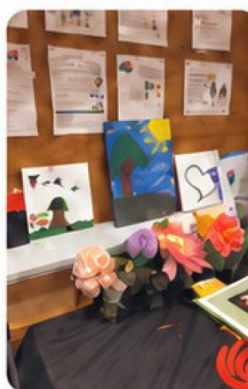
**GET
CREATIVE**



**ACTIVE
FUN**



**SNACKS
& MORE!**



OUR YOUTH PROGRAM



The primary goal of the Youth Program is to create opportunities which will support and assist Urban Aboriginal Youth in enhancing their economic, social, and personal growth.



The Youth program is open to youth ages 10—29. The purpose of this program is to offer a variety of events and activities in a safe, drug and alcohol free environment. At the center, teens can socialize, talk to a facilitator or an Elder about what is happening in their lives, and take part in recreational/educational activities.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Employment support
- ✓ Arts and crafts
- ✓ Workshops—educational and traditional
- ✓ Cultural camps
- ✓ Aboriginal Youth Employment and Training Program



**YOUTH NIGHTS - THURSDAYS
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

**AT THE CLUTESI HALL
USE THE BACK GYM DOOR**

**SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT
HAPPENS DURING YOUTH NIGHTS:**



Volleyball



Basketball



Floor
Hockey



Arts &
Crafts



Beading



Knitng /
Crocheting



Pizza
Night



Burger
Nights

**AND
MORE!**



**OPEN TO YOUTH AGES 10 – 29
EVERYONE WELCOME!**

2026 ANNUAL REPORT

34

HAPPY HALLOWEEN



**HAVE A SAFE
& SPOOKTACULAR DAY!**





INDIGENOUS HERITAGE

HONOUR. CELEBRATE. PRESERVE. SHARE.

Ribbon Skirting is a beautiful tradition that carries meaning, identity and pride. Each ribbon represents teachings, prayers and the journey of our ancestors.

At the Port Alberni Friendship Center, we offer ribbon skirt workshops where community members come together to learn, create and share. These workshops strengthen cultural knowledge, build connections and keep our traditions vibrant for future generations.



OUR CULTURE

Honouring our traditions and teachings



OUR PEOPLE

Strengthening community and relationships



OUR TRADITIONS

Passing knowledge from generation to generation



OUR FUTURE

Inspiring pride and cultural identity in our youth

RIBBON SKIRT WORKSHOPS

- ✓ Learn the meaning & placement of ribbon colours
- ✓ Cutting, sewing & gathering techniques
- ✓ Creating your own skirt in a supportive space
- ✓ Sharing stories, teachings & cultural knowledge
- ✓ Building confidence & cultural pride



TOGETHER, WE KEEP OUR CULTURE STRONG



Culture connects us to who we are and where we come from. By learning, sharing and practicing our traditions, we honour our ancestors and build a stronger path forward together.



CULTURE, TRUTH, AND INDIGENOUS HERITAGE



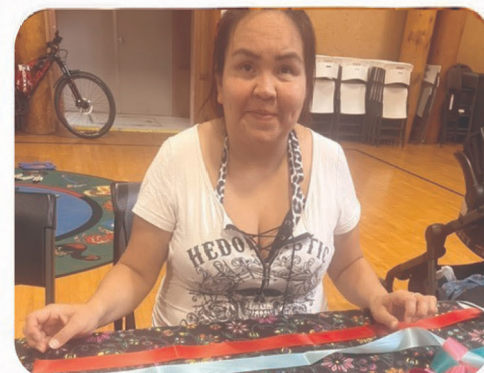


INDIGENOUS HERITAGE

HONOUR. CELEBRATE. PRESERVE. SHARE.

Ribbon Skirting is a beautiful tradition that carries meaning, identity and pride. Each ribbon represents teachings, prayers and the journey of our ancestors.

At the Port Alberni Friendship Center, we offer ribbon skirt workshops where community members come together to learn, create and share. These workshops strengthen cultural knowledge, build connections and keep our traditions vibrant for future generations.



OUR CULTURE

Honouring our traditions and teachings



OUR PEOPLE

Strengthening community and relationships



OUR TRADITIONS

Passing knowledge from generation to generation



OUR FUTURE

Inspiring pride and cultural identity in our youth

RIBBON SKIRT WORKSHOPS

- ✓ Learn the meaning & placement of ribbon colours
- ✓ Cutting, sewing & gathering techniques
- ✓ Creating your own skirt in a supportive space
- ✓ Sharing stories, teachings & cultural knowledge
- ✓ Building confidence & cultural pride



TOGETHER, WE KEEP OUR CULTURE STRONG



Culture connects us to who we are and where we come from. By learning, sharing and practicing our traditions, we honour our ancestors and build a stronger path forward together.



BABY WELCOMING



STEPS to Success

Learning • Growing • Empowering • Achieving



Every step forward brings you closer to your dreams.
You've got this! ♥



CAIS PROGRAM



Culture ♦ Connection ♦ Community



COMMUNITY WELLNESS DAY

CONNECT ♥ LEARN ♥ GROW ♥ THRIVE





Stronger Together

— COMMUNITY ♥ CULTURE ♥ CONNECTION —

Thank you to all who uplift, support, and inspire.

Together, we build a brighter tomorrow. ♥

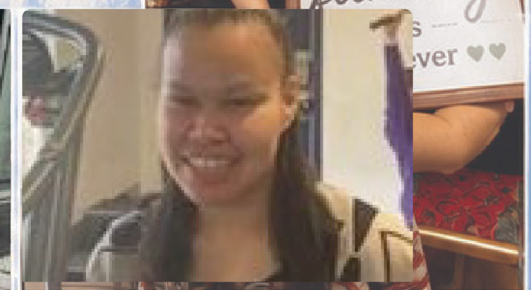
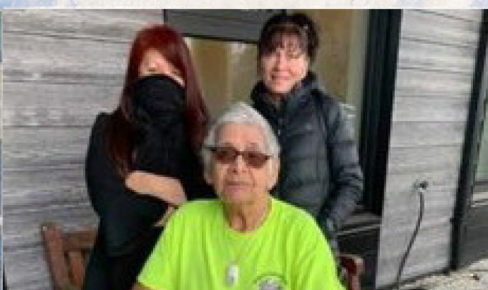
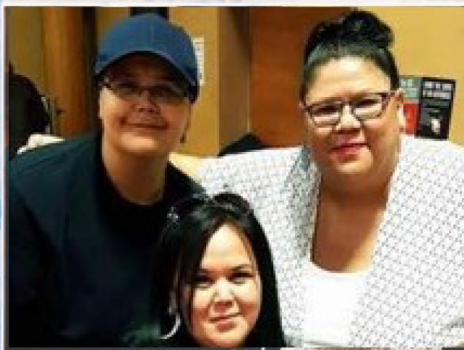


Stronger Together

COMMUNITY • CULTURE • CONNECTION

Thank you to all who uplift,
support, and inspire.

Together, we build
a brighter tomorrow.





Stronger Together

COMMUNITY ♥ CULTURE ♥ CONNECTION

When we come together, we create understanding,
share traditions, and build lasting bonds.

Thank you to all who make our community so special.



PORT ALBERNI
FRIENDSHIP CENTER
Community • Culture • Connection

CELEBRATING *Over Six Decades* OF FRIENDSHIP ♡

61 YEARS OF MEMORIES • COMMUNITY • CULTURE • CONNECTION



Honoring our past. Celebrating our present. Building our future. ♡

Thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey—your friendship, strength, and spirit continue to inspire us all.

PORT ALBERNI FRIENDSHIP CENTER | 2026 ANNUAL REPORT

♥ CELEBRATING ♥ OVER SIX DECADES *of Friendship*

COMMUNITY • CULTURE • CONNECTION



Honoring our past. Celebrating our present. Building our future.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey—
your friendship, strength, and spirit continue to inspire us all.

LEADING THE WAY: OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS



PORT ALBERNI
FRIENDSHIP CENTER
Community • Culture • Connection

through the years

Francis Charlie • 1965

Nelson Keitlah • 1968

Francis Charlie • 1969

Bernelda Wheeler • 1970

Cliff Pompana • 1972

Robert Dennis • 1973

Robert Simon • 1974

Honorine Wright • 1975

Clara Oleson • 1976

Robert Dennis • 1978

Charlotte Rampanen • 1979

Virginia Summers • 1980

Kelly John • 1980

Dave Jacobson • 1981

Barney Williams Jr. • 1981

Margaret Killop • 1982

George Atleo • 1983

Alice Hunter • 1987

Wally Samuel • 1988

Cyndi Stevens • 1994 to current

Honoring our past.  *Inspiring our future.*

We recognize the dedication, leadership, and
commitment of each Executive Director who has helped
shape the Port Alberni Friendship Center.



Thank you for leading the way!

