



January Newsletter

Issue 09

In Memory of Marilyn Parker ♥

We honour the life and legacy of **Marilyn Parker**, a longtime staff member of NOFCS and a deeply respected Family Support Worker who passed on December 24, 2025. Marilyn dedicated many years to supporting individuals and families through the Friendship Center, offering compassion, lived experience, and care. Her presence and teachings continue to be felt within our community, and she will be remembered with deep gratitude and respect. More on page 2.

Happy New Year, NOFCS Community!

January is a time to set intentions and prepare for the months ahead. As we begin 2026, our focus is on strengthening core programs, welcoming new team members, and offering opportunities for connection, learning, and wellness throughout the winter season. We look forward to sharing what's ahead and continuing this work alongside our community.

Seasonal Reflections



Program Hosts & Santa at Christmas Party



Elder's Christmas Lunch

December closed with meaningful gatherings across programs. **Aboriginal Infant & Child Development** and **Pregnancy Outreach Programs** hosted a festive family celebration at All Saints Hall, while the **Elders Group** gathered in the main office to share a meal, games, and good company. Staff and community members also came together to promote **National Ribbon Skirt Day** ahead of January 4.

Staff Updates

We are excited to welcome new members to the NOFCS team. **Mady Kowalski** joins us in the main office as the **Mental Health & Community Connections Assistant**. You'll find Mady at the front desk, where she offers a warm welcome and helps connect community members with NOFCS programs and community resources, ensuring everyone feels supported and heard. **Nathan Hedges** has officially accepted the permanent role of **Kekuli Property Manager** after joining NOFCS in an interim capacity. Nathan has built strong relationships with residents and plays an important role in maintaining the safety and care of the apartments. We also extend congratulations to **Gareth Jones**, NOFCS' Executive Director, who has successfully completed his probation period. Gareth continues to lead the organization with care, integrity, and forward-thinking leadership, and we are grateful to have him guiding our team.



Staff Holiday Lunch



Ribbon Skirt Day promoting

Respect | Trustworthy | Integrity | Kindness

Wellbriety Program & Marilyn Parker

The Wellbriety Program is an Indigenous-led approach that brings together wellness, culture, and community. Rooted in traditional teachings, it supports balance in mind, body, spirit, and emotions. Our weekly Wellbriety program is facilitated by Carla, NOFCS' Mental Health & Addictions Counsellor, and offers a welcoming space for community members at any stage of their wellness journey. Sessions are held **every Tuesday from 5:30-7:30pm**, with limited seating and a meal provided.



Mondays:

AIECD Lunch
11:30-1:30

Tuesdays:

Fathers Circle
10:00-11:30
Wellbriety
5:30-7:30

Wednesdays:

Elders Lunch
11:30-1:30
AIECD Lunch
11:30-1:30
Father's Group
5:00-7:00

Thursdays:

Prenatal Drop-In
9:00-3:30
POP Lunch
11:30-1:00

Fridays:

AIECD Cultural Craft
once a month

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Marilyn Parker. Marilyn was a longtime employee of NOFCS who served the community as the Family Support Worker for more than 18 years. She facilitated a successful Mothers For Recovery group for moms of all stages which helped unite families, and heal hearts and spirits. She also played an important role in the Wellbriety Program, co-facilitating alongside Carla after carrying the program on her own for a time. Through her work Marilyn supported many individuals and families navigating addictions and complex life challenges. She shared her stories, wisdom and lived experience with compassion and care, leaving a lasting impact on those she worked with. We extend our deepest condolences to all who knew an loved her.



Community Resource Highlight: OTDC

NOFCS is grateful to partner with **Okanagan Training & Development Council (OTDC)**, who work out of our building and support Indigenous community members in accessing post-secondary education, skills training, and employment opportunities. Their work helps individuals explore career pathways, build confidence, and take next steps toward their goals. OTDC is hosting a **Career Cafe** at the Friendship Center, allowing opportunity to build a resume and gain the support they need to find a job. The Career Cafe will take place January 8 and 15 from 9:30-11:30am.

For more information, visit www.otdc.org, or contact **Coreen Jenner at 250-241-8407** or coreenj@otdc.org



JANUARY AT A GLANCE

- January 4- National Ribbon Skirt Day
- January 8 & 15- Careers Cafe **register** with Coreen (OTDC) 250-241-8407
- January 8 & 15- Ribbon Skirt Workshop 5pm-7pm
- January 22- Dream Catcher Workshop 5pm-7pm

Cultural Insight

Ribbon skirts are primarily worn by Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people as expressions of identity and culture. In some cases, non-Indigenous people may wear a ribbon skirt when it has been gifted or when they have been invited to do so, and when it is worn respectfully. Protocols can vary between Nations and communities.

Let's Keep in Touch!

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Stay current through our website & social media accounts!

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