

Shuswap Band Newsletter

CHIEF & COUNCIL

If you would like to book an appointment to see Chief and Council, please contact Lorena at 250-341-3678 Ext. 1013

Cheques are issued and will be available every Thursday.

JULY 2017

- CHIEF & COUNCIL
- HEALTH CENTRE UPDATE
- SUMMER PROGRAM
- COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN
- LANDS & RESOURCES
- CULTURE & HERITAGE
- EDUCATION
- TERRITORIAL LANDS MANAGEMENT
- EMPLOYMENT
- BIRTHDAYS
- SHUSWAP BAND CALENDAR



Photo of Andrew Leslie, he is in charge of Canada relations of foreign affairs. He wanted our view on how the Columbia River Treaty affected the Shuswap Indian Band.

HEALTH CENTRE UPDATE

DR MANNHEIMER – GENERAL PHYSICIAN He continues to provide medical outreach at the Shuswap Band Health Centre. He is available to see any Shuswap Band Members for doctor services on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month, starting at 12:00. His services are by appointment or drop-in basis – appointments are preferred.

In July he will be here: July 11th and July 25th.

Please contact Shauna for an appointment.

HEALTHY FOOD BOXES – Healthy Food Boxes are now going to be at the Shuswap Band Community Hall for pickup from 12-3. Reminder, if you forgot to pick up a food box that you ordered, your name has been taken off the list.

Food Boxes in July are: July 13th and July 27th

We are looking for volunteers to assist with the food box program in exchange for a free food box as we will be providing a community luncheon on these days. Please contact Shauna or Morgan to sign up for volunteering, the luncheon will be served from 12-2.

POOL PASSES – We have Copper Point and Fairmont Hot Pools passes available in the Health Department.

UPCOMING EVENTS – Seabird Island Diabetes Team will be coming in early September. More information to come.

For any information about Health Services please contact our Health Professionals:

**Health Coordinator, Shauna Cameron (250) 341-3678 ext 1015 or
health@shuswapband.net**

**Community Support Worker, Morgan Floesser (250) 341-3678 ext 1009 or
mfloesser@shuswapband.net**

SUMMER PROGRAM

Shuswap Band's Summer Program is Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10am-3pm starting on July 11th and ending on August 18th with a celebration day. All Shuswap Members are encouraged to join however, must sign up prior to with Morgan Floesser. We would like to welcome and thank our two youth Band Members who we have hired to assist Morgan in running the Summer Program, Wallace Warbrick and Trinda Cote! We are looking forward to a fun-filled summer with the kids.

Please contact Morgan to register your child ASAP

**For more information, please contact Morgan Floesser
(250) 341-3678 Ext. 1009 or mfloesser@shuswapband.net**

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN

Hello Everyone!!

I am currently working on updating the information from past meetings.

The next CCP Session will be on **July 26, 2017 at 5PM**

Dinner provided along with door prizes.

For further information, please call me @ 778-526-8115 or email sthomas@shuswapband.net

Thank you

Suzie Thomas

LANDS & RESOURCES

CP Lands

CP lands are subject to the Land Code and any questions about development of CP lands should be directed to the Lands Office. Please note that CP lands are private lands and should not be accessed or used for any purpose whatsoever **INCLUDING AND ESPECIALLY HUNTING** without the permission of the CP holder.

Land Committee

We have received quotes for the conduct of the Land Committee election which will be presented to Chief and Council at the next meeting. The selected electoral officer will then call a nomination meeting to receive nominations to sit on this committee.

Family Real Property Committee

A number of responses to the Family Real Property Committee survey were received and are being reviewed. They will be presented to the committee at the next meeting and the draw for the gas card will be made at that time! If you haven't gotten your survey in, please complete it and send it in as all responses are valuable and help to guide the work of the committee. We will be scheduling a community session to discuss the FRP law and the date will be selected at the next committee meeting.

If you would like a copy of the draft law, please contact Kerri-Anne Thomas at (250) 341-3678.

Wills Program

We have no further update on the unspent funds nor the request for funding for this fiscal. Please contact Sierra Stump at (250) 341-3678 or by email to info@shuswapband.net to add your name to the list for estate planning documents.

Species at Risk

The Species at Risk project is being managed by Bob Jamieson and Brad Munroe reporting to the Lands Department. Band Members have been working on the Species at Risk project which involves the identification of and spraying of invasive weeds on reserve and doing some wildlife surveys for species at risk. These Band Members received training in the spraying earlier in the year and worked with a certified herbicide sprayer to complete the work that budget allowed for. Wildlife surveys will be completed over the next couple of months as well. CP holders will be contacted prior to surveying being done on their lands. Not all CP lands were sprayed for invasive weeds as some CP holders advised that they did not want their lands sprayed.

Shuswap Creek

Two Band Members expressed an interest in working on this project and will be doing work on an Environmental Flow Needs assessment of the creek with the assistance of FLNRO. There will also be a Cultural Heritage Study of the Shuswap Creek watershed.

Section 35 Highway Widening

There is some additional work being done on the appraisal of the lands needed for the highway widening and a follow up meeting will be scheduled once that work is completed. Lambert Rd. is set to be surveyed and we will let membership and CP holders know when this is scheduled to take place.

Corix

The position for the Operator in Training, with Corix, was filled by Kellen Viret. Congratulations!!

CULTURE & HERITAGE

RISC Course

Congratulations to all the successful participants who took part in the RISC (Archaeology) course we hosted at the beginning of June! Brett Watson and Wayne Choquette did a great job modifying the course to include more field learning, and less time inside so we hope that it was more beneficial.

Secwepemcul'ecw Assembly – Gathering

Pauline attended the Secwepemcul'ecw Assembly gathering in Clearwater, BC on June 2nd-4th. It was an inspirational gathering hosted by Secwepemc people from across the Nation. It was to provide information and gathering of minds against the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline. During the gathering a Declaration was made:

Secwepemc Declaration on Protecting Our Land & Water Against the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline

We, the Secwepemc, have never ceded, surrendered, or given up our sovereign title and rights over the land, waters and resources within Secwepemcul'ecw. We have lived on our land since time immemorial and have never been conquered by war. We collectively hold title and governance regarding Secwepemcul'ecw and the collective consent of the Secwepemc is required for any access to our lands, waters and resources.

The Secwepemc collectively are the decision-making authority for Secwepemcul'ecw lands and waters. The Secwepemc are committed to upholding our collective and spiritual responsibility to look after the land, the language and the culture of our people. Under Secwepemc and spiritual law, the land, the water, the animals are our equals and our relations. The salmon has sustained us since time immemorial and hence it is our responsibility to take care of our salmon, the watercourses they travel through and their spawning and birthing grounds in our territory. Our ceremonies ensure that our way of life and our environment are protected. Secwepemc law is the highest law of the land.



Thank you to all who came out for the Elders Feast!

We, the Secwepemc, stand resolutely together against any and all threats to our lands, the wildlife and the waterways. Today the most serious threat comes from the proposed Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline expansion.

Secwepemul'ecw is the largest indigenous territory that the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion project is proposed to pass through, covering up to 518 km of the pipeline route. The federal and provincial governments and Kinder Morgan have failed to engage with the Secwepemc collectively, as the proper title and rights holders. Their infringement of our laws, our spirituality, and our relationship to the land can never be accepted or justified.

The federal government unilaterally approved the original Trans Mountain Pipeline in 1951, when Indigenous Peoples were prohibited from organizing on land issues and holding our ceremonies. The original pipeline went into operation in 1953 without the consent of the Secwepemc.

Today, once again the federal government has approved the proposed expansion of the Trans-Mountain pipeline without the consent of the Secwepemc. Kinder Morgan has signed deals with a few Indian Bands Councils, in a cynical attempt to divide and conquer our people. We remind them that Indian bands are not the title holders of Secwepemcul'ecw. Indian bands have only delegated authority from the federal government on Indian Reserve lands, which currently cover only 0.2% of the territory claimed by Canada,

which entrenches our poverty through dispossession, dependency and oppression. Indian Band councils have no independent decision-making power regarding access to our Secwepemc territory. The Secwepemc collectively are the only decision-making authority regarding our lands and waters.

Today we remind the people of the so-called province of British Columbia that their own government has recognized at the National Energy Board hearing that the proposed project is not safe on land or water. Yet the government still approved it. We remind the people of so-called British Columbia that even under Canadian colonial law, we as Indigenous Peoples, have more power than the provinces regarding pipeline approvals, since our rights are protected under Section 35 of the Canadian constitution. The Supreme Court of Canada, in the Tsilhqot'in Decision warned governments and investors that the only way to ensure legal and economic certainty is to get the consent of Indigenous Peoples. Kinder Morgan does not have the collective consent of the Secwepemc.

The Kinder Morgan pipeline is not simply a threat to our land it is a threat to the entire planet. It carries bitumen from the Alberta tar sands, which are one of the largest greenhouse gas emitter and the largest construction project in the world and that this commercial industrial megaproject has had devastating impacts on us all. The proposed pipeline stands to accelerate the extraction and climate change impacts. If the proposed Kinder Morgan Pipeline Expansion project goes through, tar sands exploitation could increase by 40%. The world cannot afford this destructive increase in capacity. The only way to avoid further climate change impacts is to keep the tar sands buried in the ground.

We stand in solidarity with other Indigenous Peoples, Spiritual Peoples, environmental groups, organizations, municipalities, international supporters, land and water defenders and people opposed to tar sands extraction and the proposed Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion project.

We, the Secwepemc, have the inherent right to self-determination, which is also recognized under international human rights law. Canada is a signatory to the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which includes the right to freely determine our political status and freely pursue our economic, social and cultural development. This fundamental international legal principle is also enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples. It is further expressed through the principle of indigenous free, prior and informed consent in UNDRIP and international environmental agreements.

We the Secwepemc have never provided and will never provide our collective consent to the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline Project. In fact, we hereby explicitly and irrevocably refuse its passage through our territory.

Declared in Unceded, Unsurrendered Secwepemcul'ecw, Secwepemc Territory.
(*Clearwater, BC at the Secwepemcul'ecw Assembly / June 4, 2017*)

Native Plant Workshop

We had several community members take part in the last Native Plant Workshop! We have successfully obtained Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) funding to assist with bringing in the local expertise of Mike Keefer, along with Knowledge Keepers from our community to provide a well-rounded workshop. This workshop is very informative, and will be continuing on **July 6th & 7th**. Meet in the Territorial Operations office.

Knowledge Keepers Meetings

Our next Knowledge Keepers meeting will be **July 24th, from 11AM – 3PM** in the Shuswap Band Hall. If you are planning on coming from out of the Invermere area, please contact Pauline ASAP to ensure you have travel done up ahead of time.

Drum Making Workshop

Thank you to David Archie, Traditional Wellness Coordinator for the Secwepemc Health Caucus for taking the time to show some of us how to put together hand drums! These hand drums will be used for our community to learn different songs and play stick games. If you have songs recorded you would like to share, please bring a copy to the Territorial Operations building. If you need the copy you bring back, please ensure you indicate that when dropping it off.

Tipi Raising

We are seeking out individuals/families in our community who can come forward and show us how to put the tipi cover back onto our tipi poles for the summer. It has been repaired and we need to raise it back up! If you would like to share your knowledge about the tipi and how we put it up, please contact the Territorial Operations office.

Ceremony/Song/Story Requests

If you have a ceremony, song, story, or recording you would like to share with our community, please contact Pauline Eugene at the Territorial Office to discuss. We are seeking to bring our ceremonies and songs back to our people, and especially our children! It is important we share as much knowledge with our upcoming generations!

Cultural Heritage Assessments

We are seeking people who can share their uses of the land, specifically the Kicking Horse area. Also working on a project on the Shuswap Creek area with the Lands Department. If you use the land for any type of activity, and want to ensure we protect that area, please come in to discuss. If we do not know what is being done, where and with whom, we cannot move forward with that knowledge to protect our traditional rights.

Summer Program Cultural Programming

If you have a skill or knowledge you would like to share with our summer youth program, please contact Pauline Eugene, Morgan Floesser, or Suzie Thomas. Thursdays have been designated as cultural days, so we can utilize these days to teach the summer program participants language and culture!

Field Season

Please note, with field season here Pauline Eugene will be in and out of the office sporadically and may not be available. If you need to reach Pauline urgently, contact the Territorial Operations Office Assistant, Suzie Thomas to relay a message.

EDUCATION

Chief and Council, and our community is very proud of the following High School Graduates of 2017!

Shuswap Indian Band Members:

Alex Eugene

Eric Eugene

Teresa Thomas

Jade Tardif

Also, to **Jack Crook** who has lived in our community off and on all his life.

TERRITORIAL LANDS MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR

Diana Cote

Forest and Range consultation and revenue Sharing Agreement (FCRSA) Agreement was amended and will end on April 9th, 2018. This aligns with the expiry of the RFA and they will now expire on the same date.

**RFA – Reconciliation Frame Work Agreement:
Natural Resource Technical Committee.**

I sit on this Committee as the Shuswap Band Representative. Our short-term Priorities we are discussing are:

Single Window Administration Portal(SWAP) A one stop for all referrals from Government Agencies. The Shuswap Band receives only the referrals that are within our interest area.

A few key issues are allowing proponents and Government the use of the SWAP and having Government data available on the SWAP site for our Referral Coordinators to use.

Water: Salmon reintroduction, Kokanee Stocking, Shuswap Band water rights, Fisheries sensitive watersheds.

Forestry: Moose watershed plan, Need deeper consultation, Timber supply review, cumulative impacts.

Environmental Monitoring: Send out our crews to monitor all work conducted when known area is high Cultural significance

Territorial Patrol: Agreement is signed to develop a vision for Patrol. Have our members out Patrolling our lands.

Forestry Council: I sit on the sub Committee discussions and negotiations around all forestry issues.

Columbia River Treaty: I will be attending the Columbia Basin Tribes and First Nations Leaders Workshop on July 13th and 14th. The Columbia River Treaty is up for renewal and negotiations are starting to take place. Part of Resolution 1 is We hold Title and Rights and the Columbia River Treaty has had significant impacts on our Title and Rights. Significant impacts on our Cultural way of life

National Aboriginal Day: Assisted with the organization of National Aboriginal Days on June 23rd. The Shuswap band Community came together and successfully demonstrated strong Cultural Strength.

CBT: Administration for all Columbia Basin Trust programs.

Salmon Festival: Shuswap Band and the Ktunaxa Dance Troupe will be hosting the Salmon Festival on **September 9th**. We will have Canoe Brigade, Salmon Feast and Pow Wow at the White Tent. More information to follow.

Water Conference: September 8, 9, 10. Panorama Resort. Priorities develop a protocol for water extraction, Secwepemc Nation Water Law, Identify vulnerable watersheds for protection, Capacity Funding for Water Watchers/Environmental Monitors, Compliance Officers Collect all water declarations that are already developed by First Nations within the Territory More information to follow.

Barbour Rock: Barbour Rock is a small lake in behind Lake Lillian. A portion of the Lake sits on Crown Land and the other half is on Private Land. We have had a referral from the biking Community to build a mountain bike trail system on the Crown Land Portion. The Shuswap Band opposed this licence as we have high Cultural Heritage Values throughout that area. I would like to hear from the Community of past or present usage within that area to support our Title and Rights.

Toby Creek Adventures: We met with Scott Barsby to discuss his amendment to his licence. Initially many concerns were raised as there has never been a relationship developed with Toby Creek Adventures to assert our Strength of Claim or ensure the protection of our Cultural interests. A relationship was forged and we have agreed on developing an MOU. We were also invited to go on a tour of his operation, via ATV, if anyone is interested in attending the field trip please let me know so I can add you to the list.

Ongoing discussions and negotiations: Ministry of Transportation Highway Corridor-Wide, Parks Canada Protocol, Kicking Horse Mountain Resort, Impact benefits agreement, Kootenay West Mine.

Participated in two-day strategic planning session with all Shuswap Band Staff. The objectives of the sessions were working as a team, effective communication, Mission statement, Vision Statement and Core values of the Band.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the Territorial Office 778-526-8116

Thank you

Diana Cote, Territorial Lands Management Coordinator

EMPLOYMENT

DEPARTMENT: SHUSWAP INDIAN BAND
SUPERVISOR: CHIEF AND COUNCIL
POSITION: DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
TERMS: FULL-TIME

The Director of Operations role is ideally suited to a seasoned business manager and will have the capability to provide strong leadership initiatives that will impact the Shuswap Indian Band's success.

YOUR SKILLS:

- Successful experience working with First Nations community;
- Strong understanding of Human Resources;
- Experience in budgeting and finance;
- Sound judgement and excellent decision-making skills;
- A sincere interest in leading, mentoring and working with others throughout the organization;
- Hands-on capabilities and intuitive understanding to provide business leadership as well as culturally reinforcing operational excellence;
- Inspire respect and loyalty to attract and retain superior talent, and to diffuse complex organizational silos for better decision making and work team effectiveness;
- A strong communicator, sharp business mind, and the financial acumen to determine key P&L factors – ability to then develop and implement workable plans swiftly and decisively.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide oversight of administrative staff on all day to day operations;
- Ensure staff is accountable and producing according to their terms of employment;
- Review, implement and monitor internal controls within program departments and the entities;
- Under the direction of Chief and Council, communicate and prepare strategic plans for review and adoption;
- Develop policy to assist in improving it's administrative/managerial responsibilities and train the staff to enhance their ability/capacity to effectively administrate and manage;
- Assist the finance team with the development, review, implementation, and administration of policies, reporting documentation and agreements;
- Provide monthly verbal and written reports to Council meetings;
- Deliver programs and services under the federal funding arrangement; and finalize completion of projects;
- Under the direction of Chief and Council and KDC Board of Directors, works with Economic Development to develop business plans and assess for Economic Development benefits for the organization;
- Provide information to external organizations as necessary (i.e. auditors);
- Under the guidance of Chief and Council and the finance team, oversees overall organizational annual budget;
- Attend special meetings as required by Chief and Council, and respond to enquiries;
- Manage INAC funding programs;

Please forward your resume` no later than July 19, 2017 outlining your qualifications to:

Attention: Lorena Tegart
 Shuswap Indian Band
 Box 2847, Invermere, BC VoA 1K2
 ea@shuswapband.net

DEPARTMENT: SHUSWAP INDIAN BAND
POSITION: TAXATION ASSISTANT
TERMS: FULL-TIME

Summary of Role Responsibilities:

As a Property Taxation Assistant, the responsibilities include property taxation, accounting and clerical tasks related to the efficient maintenance and processing of property taxation duties. You work directly with the Surveyor of Taxes at a process level for information sharing and problem solving.

Key Area of Responsibility

Under the supervision of the Surveyor of Taxes

- Must have keen interest and basic understanding of First Nation Property Taxation
- Must understand QuickBooks program
- Prepare cheque requisitions for payables
- Address queries from tax payers and public
- Maintain good public relations with all customers
- Compose correspondence
- Ensure that payments for contracts and agreements are met
- Enforce Taxation Law with respect to collections of outstanding property taxes
- Prepare and send timely documentation to delinquent tax payers
- Prepare Deposits
- Reconcile monthly bank statements
- Filing
- Understanding of Budgets

Qualifications, Abilities and Competencies**Education**

- Certificate in First Nations Property Taxation Administration
- Completion of Grade 12 and some post-secondary education/ training in basic bookkeeping, or an acceptable combination of education, training and experience.

Experience

- Knowledge and interest in Property Taxation.
- Recent and relevant accounts payable experience (normally acquired over a 1-2-year period)

Knowledge

- Knowledge of First Nations Property Taxation regime
- Knowledge of bookkeeping or accounting principles and the ability to expand your job.
- Knowledge of Word and Excel programs

Abilities

- Ability to pay attention to detail, to ensure accuracy of data entry
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision, and as part of a team
- Ability to manage a deadline driven and detail oriented workload, including an ability to prioritize workload
- Ability to recognize opportunities for improvement and efficiency
- Ability to demonstrate professionalism when dealing with financial information including confidentiality
- Ability to communicate both orally and in writing

- Ability to work with a variety of people in a team environment including department managers within the Shuswap Indian Band administration as well as the boards associated to the Band i.e. FNTC and FNTAA.

Suitability's

- Dependable
- A willingness to learn

Working Conditions

- Normal office working conditions, with an ability to work occasional planned overtime.

Please forward your resume` no later than July 19, 2017, outlining your qualifications to:

Lorena Tegart
 Shuswap Indian Band
 Box 2847, Invermere, BC V0A 1K2
 ea@shuswapband.net

BIRTHDAYS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL THAT ARE CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS IN JULY!
 From the Shuswap Band Calendar located in the band office:

- JULY 8th – Leonard Eugene**
 - Millie Stevens
- JULY 14 – Jesse Paul**
- JULY 17th – Wade Eugene**
- JULY 22nd – Audrey Eugene**
- JULY 24th – Selena Martin**
- JULY 25th – Mandy Warbrick**
 - Tisha Tardif
- JULY 30th – Quentin Eugene**

Happy 1st Anniversary to Betty and Henry Burgoyne, July 1st!

- Love you Henry, from Betty.

Congratulations to all Graduates, have a great summer.

- Betty Burgoyne



Hand drum making happened on June 28th; Stick Games; Elders Feast happened on June 28th; Teresa Thomas, 2017 Graduate receiving her package from Chief Barb Cote at the Secwepemc Elders Council Meeting; and Plant Workshop that happened in June.

SHUSWAP BAND

CALENDAR

- JULY 2017 -

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 OFFICE CLOSED: CANADA DAY	4	5 Massage in Health Centre	6 Native Plant Workshop	7 Native Plant Workshop	8
9	10	11 Summer Program (see website for daily details) Dr. Mannheimer in Health Centre	12 Summer Program (see website for daily details) Massage in Health Centre	13 Summer Program (see website for daily details) Food Box Pickup 12-3	14	15
16	17 Columbia Valley Healing Circle 7pm at Territorial Operations	18 Summer Program (see website for daily details)	19 Territorial Operations Open House 12-6pm Summer Program (see website for daily details) Massage in Health Centre	20 Summer Program (see website for daily details)	21	22
23	24 Columbia Valley Healing Circle 7pm Knowledge Keepers Mtg. 11am-3pm	25 Summer Program (see website for daily details)	26 Summer Program (see website for daily details) 5pm CCP Session	27 Summer Program (see website for daily details)	28	29
30	31 Columbia Valley Healing Circle 7pm	Dr. Mannheimer in Health Centre	Massage in Health Centre	Food Box Pickup 12-3		

- AUGUST 2017 -

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Massage in Health Centre	3	4	5
6	7	8 Dr. Mannheimer in Health Centre	9 Massage in Health Centre	10 Food Box Pickup 12-3	11	12
13	14	15	16 Massage in Health Centre	17	18	19
20	21	22 Dr. Mannheimer in Health Centre	23 Massage in Health Centre	24 Food Box Pickup 12-3	25	26
27	28	29	30 Massage in Health Centre	31		

August's calendar is tentative, please see updates on website calendar or in August newsletter.

Columbia Valley Healing Circle *for friends and families of alcoholics and addicted loved ones*

Monday evenings at 7pm in the basement of the Territorial Office at the Shuswap Band.

Are you feeling alone, overwhelmed, tired, burnt out and hopeless because of a loved one's alcoholism or drug addiction?

There is HOPE

The Columbia Valley Healing Circle is a place where:

- You can share your life stories with others who have had similar experiences
- You can feel less alone and isolated
- Confidence and self-esteem can be built
- You are not judged but accepted for who you are
- Differences are cherished and honoured and not discriminated against
- You are encouraged to be positive and confident about yourself, your loved ones and your relationships
- You will learn the techniques of using support and about other services such as counselling

The Columbia Valley Healing Circle is an initiative sponsored by the Shuswap Band Health Department

Facilitator: Gerard Gregoire



1086299

June 15, 2017

Dear parents and guardians:

As you are likely aware, British Columbia is currently experiencing an illegal drug overdose crisis. Since January 2016, more than 1,400 people have lost their lives. While youth aged 14-18 are not considered high risk for an overdose death, school-aged youth are not untouched by tragedy, either directly or through family and friends and media awareness. Nineteen youth between the ages of 14 and 18 years old were reported by the Coroner's Office to have died from an illicit drug overdose since January 2016.

We hope that with your help in speaking to the youth in your life as they go into year-end celebrations and new activities in the summer months, we can avoid preventable tragedies.

What you need to know to keep your kids safe

I strongly encourage you to talk about substance use with the youth in your lives. Non-judgmental and supportive conversations about substance use and overdose risks can save lives. Obviously the best way to stay safe is to avoid drugs altogether, but we know that many of our youth will experiment and so it is important to share that:

- The greatest risk for overdose death is when someone uses drugs alone – because no one is there to call 9-1-1 if they overdose.
- Opioids are a type of medication which includes heroin, morphine, fentanyl, methadone and codeine. Fentanyl is around 50 to 100 times more toxic than morphine, which makes the risk of accidental overdose from illegal fentanyl very high. Other opioid compounds are being found now that are even more toxic, such as carfentanyl. About two-thirds of overdoses occurring in B.C. are due to lethal fentanyl and compounds like it.
- A very high percentage of illegal, street opioid drugs like heroin and fake Oxycontin contain fentanyl – *but you also should know* that fentanyl is being found in street drugs that are not sold as opioids, including drugs like cocaine, ecstasy (MDMA) and methamphetamines. The dealer may not know fentanyl is in them.
- Anyone who does not regularly use opioid substances is at very high-risk for overdose if substances like fentanyl contaminate their drugs, because they have no tolerance built up for opioids. People who have used drugs containing opioids and then stopped for a time are also at risk for this reason.
- Contrary to some reports, fentanyl has not been found in marijuana.
- You can talk to your older children about being the responsible one at parties where drugs may be available – encourage them to call 9-1-1 in an emergency and assure them they will not face criminal consequences for overdose-related calls, provide naloxone if available and perform rescue breathing.

Visit gov.bc.ca/overdose to learn more about reducing harm and preventing overdose. It can be a challenge to talk to teens and young adults about drugs, but help and resources are available. Reach out and start the conversation. You are the most important source of information for your children. Be non-judgemental, respectful and ask teens what they know. Please take some time to go online and learn more about how to speak honestly with your kids about this important topic:

- Articles about how to talk to kids, teens and adult children are available on HealthLinkBC at healthlinkbc.ca/substance-use/parenting-articles.
- Leslie McBain lost her only son Jordan to overdose. Listen to her story at youtu.be/pGv_jFhInJQ.

What you can do to help save a life

If you have a youth or adult in your life who uses illegal drugs regularly or occasionally – *or you use illegal drugs yourself* – here are some important actions to take:

- Carry a naloxone kit and learn how to properly use it. Visit www.gov.bc.ca/overdose to find where you can get a kit and training.
- Be prepared to give rescue breaths in case someone overdoses: giving rescue breaths before help arrives can save a life and prevent brain damage.
- Anyone using drugs should do a small test amount first. Don't mix drugs (including with alcohol).
- Anyone using drugs should do so with someone who will check on them and call 9-1-1 in case of overdose, or use an overdose prevention site if there is one in the area.
- **Call 9-1-1 in a health emergency** – a new Good Samaritan law protects people from charges of possession in the case of an overdose and you will save a life.
- If you think someone you love may be using, or at risk, begin a **non-judgemental conversation** about how to stay safe. Know that addiction is a chronic health condition and relapses happen.

Help is available

If someone you know is using drugs, there are treatment and support options available. Visit www.gov.bc.ca/overdose or call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1 to speak to a health navigator about treatment options and services in your area.

Each of us can make a difference by starting a dialogue with the youth in our lives. Together we can begin to turn the tide on this crisis happening in our communities.

Sincerely,



P.R.W. Kendall
OBC, MBBS, MHSc, FRCPC
Provincial Health Officer