Public Safety Report: October 2023 to March 2024

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Activity 1: Community Engagement

Overview/context of Okanagan Indian Band on/off reserve:

OKIB Health Bulletin

- *OKIB follows BC Public Health Orders, and alerts. Thus, providing supports and services to membership.*

BC Opioid, Mental Health, Environmental, and Housing Crisis

Our community has faced consecutive crisis's, dealing with both the opioid epidemic, floods, fire rehabilitation, and homelessness. Community safety is a collective responsibility, and we, as syilx people, have a deep understanding of our responsibilities to the land and to each other.

- *A full spectrum of culturally competent supports and services to support safety planning: including ways to minimize the risks of using substances, we continue to find new ways to stay safe, reduce harms and support each other. Supports inclusive of education, prevention, advocacy, crisis response, coordination of care & care planning, trauma informed treatments and referrals to support community members on/off reserve.*

Public Safety Department key themes have shaped the framework and continuum: Culture as a foundation, community input of what they need to be safe, and collaboration with partners etc.

For more information on healing circles, workshops, resources, reports etc. go to: https://okib.ca/departments/public-safety

Community Safety Planning

Comprehensive Safety Strategy:

Community Mobilization, Phase 4: In the late spring *ntytyix A Time for Action 2022-2023 Annual Report* was completed. The next phase will include OKIB departments identifying their 'medium-term goals' to come together to create a safer community in relation to their own action plans.

The Okanagan Indian Band departments (Education, Housing, Lands, Health, Territorial Stewardship, Public Safety, Group of Companies etc.) will continue work on next set of defined goals to implement medium-term goals (action items) throughout the year. Final report of outcomes will be made available in the spring of 2024 to community and leadership on progress and next steps.

Activity 2: Direct Interventions and sustainability of programs, services, and partnerships.

Sustainability of programs, services and partnerships that include culture, language, and sense of belonging/connection.

Youth Leadership Council
The purpose of the Youth Leadership Council is to provide a platform for syilx youth to actively participate in decision-making processes, advocate for the needs and interest of the youth community and contribute to the overall development of empowerment of syilx youth within the Okanagan Indian Band.

The vision of the Youth Leadership Council is to create a supportive and inclusive environment where Indigenous youth can thrive, develop leadership skills, and actively contribute to the betterment of our community.

The mission of the Youth Leadership Council is to represent the voices and interests of Indigenous youth, promote cultural preservation and revitalization, address issues affecting youth, and collaborate with community leaders and organization to create positive change.

Highlights:

- Leadership Training Series ~ 4 Modules complete
    - The training encompasses: defining your skills, creating a vision for self and community, understanding the importance of planning for the future while assessing their strengths and weaknesses. Through this process, the hope is to identify ways to improve impacts on the community, and to better serve the needs of young people in our region. Youth will be seeking feedback and ideas from a diverse group of individuals, including youth, community leaders and experts in various fields. The belief is that by working together, the youth can create a plan that is truly reflective of the needs and aspirations of the community.
- 4 Seasons of Indigenous Learning ~ 10 Modules over 10 months.
    - This initiative encourages and empowers educations to deepen their understanding of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives while strengthening connections with the local land.
- Youth worked alongside Women's Group, and Public Safety Office to support Indigenous Homelessness
    - Collecting donations, Indigenizing and messages of support to homeless
    - Distribution of backpacks filled with essential items (hygiene kits, gloves, scarves, hand/foot warmers, canned foods etc.) to homeless in partnership with Upper Room Mission
- Participation in local seminars/speaking circles e.g. "White Supremacy Culture", at the Vernon Library.

- Application and acceptance of one youth per-province to attend the RCMP Indigenous Academy, Saskatchewan, Manitoba.
    - Emmarie L. was the successful candidate. She represented the Okanagan Indian Band and the Province of British Columbia. She was accompanied by OKIB RCMP Liaison Cst. Neil Horne to the Youth Leadership Workshop that was held at RCMP Depot in Saskatchewan.
    - The focus of the workshop was Operation Cap. A project that was designed to target issues that youth and members of community face daily.
- Cultural teaching, research and nsylixen workshops are ongoing to support identity, sense of belonging, relationship building and culture.
    - Rattle making, education books for research and knowledge: “21 Things you may not know about the Indian Act” & 500 year of Indigenous resistance comic book”.
- Youth Leadership attending ‘Gathering Our Voices’, Victoria. This conference provided the Indigenous youth with the tools to empower and inspire so that they can contribute their gifts to their communities and the world. Over the course of conference delegates gather from across Canada to participate in ceremonies, workshops, and engaging informative and educational experiences.
- Attendance and participation at:
    - Youth Leadership Conference: Native Courtworkers & Counselling of BC ~
    - Youth Leadership Conference: syilx Youth Winter Gather, March ~ Okanagan College, Kelowna Campus.

First Nation Justice

The Youth Justice Worker provides continuous support, education, prevention and awareness, cultural wellness teachings etc. with local School Districts, the justice system, social justice, police, the Ministry of Children and Family, referrals to other services, counselling etc.

- Legal and Wellness Information hosted annually to provide community members with up-to-date information, ask questions etc.

Youth Justice Worker and RCMP/IPS Cst. Horne in unity have developed educational workshops for Grade 5 to 12 on crime, guns, gangs, drugs, bullying, racism etc. that are being delivered at SD 22, SD 23, and OKIB schools.

Assembly of First Nations, First Nations with Persons with Disabilities and Knowledge Keepers Talking Circle.

The AFN invited the OKIB Community Safety and community member who has lived experience (PWD) to the talking circle to address:

- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Accessible Canada Act review
- Wholistic Accessibility Diagram that creates policies, laws and legislation that impact First Nations Persons with Disabilities. Further, these policies influence First Nations programs and services to see the barriers and supports. When complete, it will be used to develop new accessibility

legislation/recommendations/calls to action grounded in First Nations reality and world view.
- Development of a Distinct First Nations Accessibility Framework to be presented at the AFN
    - The Inclusion Action Plan survey will be going out to communities across the country ~ dates for release to be determined.

Cultural Safety Education
Cultural Safety Education has been ongoing educational workshops to native & non-native OKIB employees, community members (youth, elders etc.) and partners/stake holders. Averaging 2 sessions per month (20+ participants per session). Education includes pre-contact, Canada's hidden history, understanding Truth & Reconciliation, and celebrating our past, live in the present, and visualize our future as Okanagan/syilx.

Reconnecting our Spirit Healing Circle
The purpose of this program is to develop the capacity to heal from unresolved grief and the legacy of historical and intergenerational trauma. This two day culturally based program explores strategies for reconnecting, and completing these relationships, even with members who have made their journey. The Reconnecting our Spirit Healing Circles are at the request of individuals and families. On average four healing circles per year are hosted.

Documentary ~ Where are all My Relations
The documentary features personal stories from Indigenous peoples within British Columbia on homelessness. Mike Ochoa, Youth Justice Worker is one of the featured speakers sharing his story and how he has been in the situation and with help was able to gain recovery for himself.

Family Healing Circles
At the request of community members, we support families, youth, and partners to meet. A cultural approach to healing can provide a safe space to express feelings, recognize and understanding the importance of who we are as syilx peoples and to enhance personal strengths.

Young Girls and Women Talking Circle
The Public Safety Department supports young girls and women coming together bi-weekly to define their topics of interest: healing, building relationships, learning new things, sharing knowledge, supporting community initiatives etc.

Indigenous Policing Services
Indigenous Policing Services for OKIB is provided by Cst. Horne who provides enhanced policing services to our community e.g. hosts Community Consultative Committee meetings, supports cross-cultural education for local RCMP, provides education, prevention, awareness etc. for a safe community to children, youth, elders, and families.

Activity 3: Culturally Based Supports

Community informed workshops, healing circles and clients supported:

Description	Month	Average # of participants per session
Wellbriety (2 locations, weekly)	October 2023	39
Clients:17 Healing Circles: Traditional teachings Cultural Safety Education	Land Acknowledgement, CMHA = 32 staff Understanding Our Purpose= 16 youth Community Futures, Cultural Teachings = 23 youth OKIB Immersion Women' Group = 31	Clients = 17 Healing Circles= 25 Cultural Safety= 45
Wellbriety (2 locations, weekly)	November 2023	49
Clients:18 Healing Circles: Cultural Safety	Family Healing Circles (2 sessions = 18 participants) New Horizons = 16 youth Speaker Series = 38 participants Women's Circle = 26	Clients= 18 Healing Circles= 18 Cultural Safety= 48
Wellbriety (2 locations, weekly)	December 2023	48
Clients:17	Community Futures= 21 youth Women's Circle= 12	Clients = 17
Wellbriety (2 locations, weekly)	January 2024	54
Clients:17 Cultural Teachings	Cultural Safety = 25 Women's Circle = 8	Clients = 17 Cultural Safety = 25
Wellbriety (2 locations, weekly)	February 2024	39
Clients: 17 Cultural Teachings	Alexis Park School, Understanding Our Purpose = 80 kids Alexis Park School, Warrior Teachings = 39 kids Cultural Safety = 53	Clients = 17 Kids/Youth = 119 Cultural Safety=53

Wellbriety (2 locations, weekly)	March 2024	55
Clients: 17 Healing Circles	 Reconnecting Our Spirit=5 Cultural Safety= 39	Clients = 17 Healing = 5 Cultural Safety=39

Total for Culturally Based Supports (October 2023 to March 2024)

Description	**Total Participants or Contact Hours**
Healing Circles	48 participants
Education, Prevention, Awareness, Advocacy (SD 22, SD 23, OKIB, and Community Futures)	230 participants (children & youth)
Cultural Safety Education	210 participants
Counselling	500+ hours
Psychologist	36+ hours
Referrals to Treatment Centre's	5 clients
Women's Circle	77 participants

Next Steps:

- Through teachings and education on what Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP) therapy is a strength-based framework that seeks to understand and respond to the impact of trauma on people's lives. The main aim of trauma informed practice is to prevent re-traumatization in therapeutic and everyday settings, and to safeguard against the dangers of vicarious trauma for all OKIB members and staff. A majority of treatment centers use the TPI therapy.

- Ongoing workshops for Grade 5 to 12 on crime, guns, gangs, drugs, bullying, racism etc. that are being delivered at SD 22, SD 23, and OKIB schools. The Youth Leadership Council will lead 'Building Safer Communities' by development of a "Safety Campaign". The goal is to host a conference in the fall of 2024 that includes youth, family, community leaders and the RCMP Crime Unit.

- Continuance of Cultural Safety and Education presentations, Reconnecting our Spirit Healing Circle, Public Safety Open House, Legal Fair, Residential School, and Relationship Workshops.