



2025 Social Policy Forum Agenda

February 12, 13, & 14 | Inn at Laurel Point, Victoria, BC

Tuesday, February 11

12:30 pm - 5:00 pm | PARCA Meeting

Merino Rooms

Wednesday, February 12

8:00 am – 12:00 pm | PARCA Meeting

Merino Rooms

8:00 am – 4:00 pm | BCAAFC Membership Meeting

Spirit Rooms

12:00 pm – 4:00 pm | FCSSBC Board Meeting

Rogers Suite

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm | FCSSBC Island Regional Meeting

Merino Rooms

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm | Board Voice Members Welcome Gathering

Hunt Room

5:00 pm – 7:00 pm | Early Check-in

Foyer

5:00 pm – 7:00 pm | Social Policy Forum Welcome Reception

Terrace Ballroom

- *Special Guest Mayor Marianne Alto, City of Victoria*

Thursday, February 13

8:00 am – 9:00 am | Breakfast and Exhibitors

Foyer

9:00 am – 9:30 am | **Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Conference Opening**

Terrace Ballroom

9:30 am – 9:45 am | **The Honourable Jodie Wickens,
Minister of Children and Family Development**

Terrace Ballroom

9:45 am - 10:45 am | **Our Collective Responsibilities**

Dr. Jennifer Charlesworth, B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth

Terrace Ballroom

Following release of Don't Look Away, The Representative for Children and Youth has been calling for a collective commitment to “stop tinkering at the edges of an outdated system that does not work for too many children and families” and embark instead on both specific and larger transformative changes that will ensure that our young people are safe, connected and thriving. Listen to Dr. Charlesworth as she shares updates and outlines what we as a sector can do to support this collective commitment.

Dr. Jennifer Charlesworth, B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth since 2018, has decades of experience in child welfare, social policy, and Indigenous collaboration. Formerly Executive Director of the Federation of Community Social Services of BC, she champions social innovation and culturally safe practices. She holds a PhD in Child and Youth Care and an MBA.

10:45 am – 11:15 am Refreshments, Networking, and Exhibitors

Foyer

Morning Breakout Sessions

11:15 am – 12:30 pm | **Truth, Reconciliation, Decolonization and Indigenization**

Terrace Ballroom

Dr. June Francis, Simon Fraser University

Dr. Cheryl Ward, BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres

Dave Ward, Lu'ma Development Management

Margaret Pfoh, Aboriginal Housing Management Association

Join local experts for a vital discussion on the differences between truth, reconciliation, decolonization, and Indigenization. Panellists include Dr. June Francis, Simon Fraser University, Dr. Cheryl Ward, BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, Dave Ward, Lu'ma Development Management, and Margaret Pfoh, Aboriginal Housing Management Association. This discussion will be moderated by Kishone Roy, The Federation of Community Social Services of BC.

Dr. June Francis is Co-Founder of The Co-Laboratorio (CoLab /CoLab Advantage Ltd.), Director of the Institute for Black and African Diaspora Research and Engagement, Cofounder of the Black Caucus at SFU and a Professor in the Beedie School of Business, and was the Special Advisor to the President of Simon Fraser University on Anti-Racism. She is also Board Chair of The Hogan's Alley Society, an organization whose mission is to advance the economic and cultural well-being of people of African Descent. In 2022, Dr. Francis was appointed Chair of the Anti-Racism Data Committee by the Province of BC, which is mandated to collaborate with the Province on initiatives to help identify and eliminate systemic racism in the public sector. She is an advocate for equity, diversity and inclusion for racialized groups as well as human rights through her research, consulting, the media and as a volunteer. Dr. Francis' extensive experience spans the private sector, public sector national, regional and local, as an entrepreneur with civil society on governance boards and as an academic.

Dr. Cheryl Ward is Kwakwaka'wakw and a member of the 'Namgis First Nation from northern Vancouver Island. She and her family have been living as guests on the territory of the Snuneymuxw people for the past twenty years. Deeply committed to social justice education, decolonizing anti-racism training, and the development of Indigenous cultural safety pedagogy, Cheryl has more than twenty-five years of experience working on initiatives focusing on Indigenous cultural safety (ICS) and anti-Indigenous racism. In 2008, she joined the Indigenous Health team at British Columbia's Provincial Health Services Authority to lead the curriculum design and implementation of what would become the San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS) Training Program. Since 2010, the San'yas program has trained more than 130,000 people across Canada and continues to expand. In 2019, Cheryl completed her doctorate in education. Her thesis, "Teaching about Race and Racism: The Indigenous Elephant in the Room", examines anti-Indigenous racism in the context of adult learning environments.

Dave Ward is nêhiyaw (Cree) from Driftpile Cree Nation in northern Alberta. CEO of Lu'ma Development Management. As CEO, Dave is actively growing the company's development projects across Western Canada, while continuing to champion cultural practices at LDM and sharing cultural knowledge with LDM's sister company, Terra Housing. Dave has over 30 years of professional experience working with Indigenous communities and industry in the areas of Indigenous relations, labour market development and employment training and human services. Dave is most proud of his contributions to addressing homelessness within the Indigenous population, his abilities in building relationships with Indigenous communities and governments and his involvement with the City of Edmonton's Mayor's Task Force on Community Safety (which saw the creation of REACH Edmonton).

Margaret Pfoh is Tsimshian, a member of the Lax Kw'alaams Band and a descendent of the Blackfish/Orca Clan. She joined the non-profit housing sector over 30 years ago and is CEO of the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA).

Margaret’s career has been built on her dedication to serve and support Indigenous Peoples. Her devotion to Indigenous communities expands far beyond the Provincial housing sector. Margaret currently serves on the CHRA’s Board of Directors as President and she actively represents the urban Indigenous voice at both national and international levels by addressing and advancing housing rights for Indigenous Peoples.

11:15 am – 12:15 pm | **Invest in Communities: A community-led approach to CYSN engagement, a vision, and 11 calls to action from B.C. communities**

Spirit Rooms A/B

Karla Verschoor, Executive Director, Inclusion BC

Erika Cedillo, Director of Public Policy and Programs, Inclusion BC

Kim Lyster, Consultant

Peter Block explains that we must shift our attention from the “...problems of community to the possibility of community.” With this approach in mind, four provincial organizations designed and implemented the Community-Led Collaboration Project. This is a two-and-a-half-year project guided by the principles of collaboration, community-driven change, reconciliation and decolonizing, and transparency and timeliness.

Through the Community-Led Collaboration Project, more than 130 community organizations engaged with over 2,000 people from 23 communities across British Columbia in thoughtful conversations to capture the strengths, challenges, and hopes for children and youth with disabilities and support needs and their families.

In this session, the presenters will cover the design and implementation of the project, share the results of community conversations, towards a vision for all children and youth to achieve their fullest potential and thrive in community. The 11 calls to action with specific recommendations to make this vision a reality will be discussed along with opportunities for collective advocacy.

Karla Verschoor, Executive Director, Inclusion BC, brings a rights-based, person-centred approach to her leadership at Inclusion BC. She strives to be a connection point between people experiencing barriers to inclusion and those with decision-making power within our systems of support. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree (University of Alberta) and a Certificate in Dialogue and Civic Engagement (Simon Fraser University).

Erika Cedillo, Director of Public Policy and Programs, Inclusion BC, brings a collaborative, rights, and solutions-based approach to her work. She believes in hope as a radical act to create possibilities and the change needed to make people’s lives better. Erika has a Ph.D. in Law (University of British

Columbia), a master's degree in administration, Finance and Corporate Law (Universidad Humanitas – México) and a Law Degree (Tecnologico de Monterrey – México).

Kim Lyster has held leadership roles in the community social services sector for over 35 years, including Executive Director of a large, multi-service non-profit organization in the South Okanagan. And honorary member of the Federation, Kim continues to be active in the community living movement as a writer, consultant and voice for children and families. She is also a CARF surveyor.

11:15 am – 12:15 pm | **Cybersecurity Essentials**

Richard Watt, virtual Chief Information Officer (vCIO), Total Support Solutions

Spirit Rooms C/D

Everyone is aware that cybersecurity should be a priority but understanding the risks and working out how best to protect yourself, your business and your friends and colleagues without breaking the bank can seem a daunting task. Richard Watt explains the current security landscape, teaches you how to recognize the most common risks, and gives practical advice on how to protect yourself and your data in a fast-moving world where the 'bad guys' always seem to be one step ahead.

If you are worried about data potentially being lost or exposed, want to know how to manage your passwords for better protection, or just want to understand more about ransomware, malware and the threat of AI-powered cybercriminals, this is the session for you. You'll learn how to protect yourself and your data and know what to look out for as the threat landscape evolves.

Richard is a vCIO - virtual Chief Information Officer - for Total Support Solutions in Victoria, BC. His job is to act as strategic director of IT for businesses and organizations who don't have the resources to perform this vital function in-house.

Richard has over 30 years' experience in multiple IT fields, both here in BC and in Europe, and has worked for global corporations, home-based IT support businesses and pretty much everything in-between!

11:15 am – 12:15 pm | **Duty of Care – Duty of Loyalty – Duty of Obedience. What!?**

Tim Agg, Executive Director, Board Voice

Merino Rooms

Join Tim Agg, Executive Director of Board Voice, for a look at some key elements of board governance in an increasingly complex environment. Ask the governance questions that are top-of-mind for you and learn about useful and accessible resources.

Tim Agg is a former Executive Director of PLEA Community Services Society, current Executive Director of Board Voice, Co-Chair of the Social Services Sector Roundtable, and a consultant. Tim brings a wealth of knowledge and experience within the human services to all his work.

12:15 pm – 1:30 pm | Lunch, Networking, and Exhibitors

Foyer

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm | Achieving Success in Changing Political Landscapes: BC and Federal Positioning

Terrace Ballroom

Amber Ruddy, Vice President, Federal Advocacy, Counsel Public Affairs

Amanda van Baarsen, Vice President, British Columbia, Counsel Public Affairs

Moderator: Julia Staub-French, Executive Director, Family Services of the North Shore, Vice President, FCSSBC Board

With a potential shift in the federal government (from Liberal to Conservative) and the growing influence of the BC Conservative opposition, these changes could significantly impact our sector. Learn from two distinguished experts, both Vice Presidents at Counsel Public Affairs, and participate in a critical conversation shaping the future of community social services in BC and beyond

Amber Ruddy, a representative on the Conservative Party of Canada's National Executive and government relations expert willing to share her insights into the rapid growth of the Conservative Party of BC and how organizations can prepare for a potential federal Conservative government.

Amanda van Baarsen, a campaign strategist and government relations expert with deep connections in the BC NDP government.

2:30 pm – 3:00 pm | Refreshments, Networking, and Exhibitors

Foyer

Afternoon Breakout Sessions

3:00pm – 4:00 pm | Government Relations and Advocacy

Spirit Rooms C/D

Shane Simpson, Chair, Community Living BC, retired MLA and cabinet minister

Social services organizations need to communicate effectively with government, both elected and public service officials. Boards of directors have needs and opportunities to consult, advice and advocate. Join us for an engaging and practical look at effective government relations, including lobbying.

Shane Simpson is a retired MLA (Vancouver-Hastings) and cabinet minister (Social Development and Poverty Reduction). He was the first chair of the Social Services Sector Roundtable. He currently chairs the board of Community Living BC.

3:00pm – 4:00 pm | **Creating a Culture of Care: Wellness Exchange Program & Pulse Check Essentials** Hunt Room

Suncha Satney, Workplace Psychological Health and Safety Consultant, CSSHSA
Tigra Bajgoric, Chief Executive Officer, CSSHSA

Join Suncha Satney for a one-hour presentation on improving mental health outcomes and fostering a psychologically safer workplace within the Community Social Services sector. Participants will explore essential psychological health and safety concepts, learn about the Community Social Services Health and Safety Association's Wellness Exchange Program—which provides practical tools and a supportive network—and discover the new Pulse Check tool designed to help leaders assess their organization's psychosocial health and safety. The session will cover strategies for enhancing resilience, fostering a supportive work environment, and identifying organizational gaps to promote employee well-being.

Tigran Bajgoric is Chief Executive Officer of the Community Social Services Health and Safety Association (CSSHSA).

Suncha Satney is a Workplace Psychological Health and Safety Consultant at CSSHSA, dedicated to helping organizations foster environments that promote mental well-being and optimal performance. With extensive experience in Community Social Services and as a mental health provider, she offers strategies and education to enhance workplace mental health. She is also a CMHA Certified Psychological Health and Safety Advisor.

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm | **Get Well Canada**

Dr. Paul Kershaw, UBC professor and founder of Generation Squeeze

Spirit Rooms A/B

Get Well Canada is on a quest to improve social supports that keep us well and ease the load on doctors, nurses and hospitals. Learn how we can reverse a decades-long retreat from social investment by provincial governments in order to reduce pressure on our medical system, help tackle our affordability crisis and preserve a higher quality of life for future generations.

Dr. Paul Kershaw, a tenured UBC professor and founder of Generation Squeeze, advocates for intergenerational well-being through policy change. His work has shaped child-care investments, housing reforms, and pollution pricing in Canada.

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm | Potlatch: The Card Game

Charla Huber, Indigenous Relations and Communications Consultant

Merino Rooms

Join us for an engaging experience focused on a gifting economy, guided by Traditional Teachings and Indigenous values, where you will work together to meet everyone’s needs in a unique twist on family games. Face challenges that test how you honour others and what “winning” means while gaining a deeper understanding of the world through an Indigenous perspective. This experience enhances your ability to work with Indigenous people and organizations and promises to be a lot of fun!

Charla Huber is an Indigenous Relations and Communications consultant specializing in Indigenous communication and building mutual understanding. With nearly 20 years of experience in journalism, she has worked with Indigenous communities across Canada. Charla holds a Master of Arts in professional communication. She has served on various boards, including the Victoria-Esquimalt Police Board and as president of the BC Association of Police Boards. She has First Nations and Inuit roots from Beausoleil First Nation and Fort Chipewyan.

4:30 pm – 6:30 pm | Fundraising Dinner

Join the fun! This year we are hosting a Pizza and Bingo fundraiser in support of the Federation’s Youth Education Bursary Fund and BCAAFC’s Provincial Indigenous Youth Council (PIYC). \$20 from the cost of each ticket will be donated to these causes in support of provincial youth.

Spirit Rooms

Friday, February 14

8:00 am – 9:00 am Breakfast and Exhibitors	Foyer
8:00 am – 9:00 am Social Services Roundtable Reference Group Breakfast	Merino Rooms
9:00 am – 9:10 am Good Morning and Land Acknowledgement	Terrace Ballroom
9:10 am – 9:30 am The Honourable Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction	Terrace Ballroom
9:35 am - 10:35 am MCFD Update <i>Emily Horton, ADM Policy Legislation and Litigation Division</i> <i>Fisnik Preniqi, ADM Finance and Corporate Services</i> <i>Marnie Mayhew, ADM Strategic Services Division</i> <i>Moderator: Tim Veresh, Chief Executive Officer, PLEA Community Services Society, and President, FCSSBC Board</i>	Terrace Ballroom
10:30 am – 10:45 am Conference Closing and Thank you	Terrace Ballroom

10:45 am – 11:00 am Refreshments and Networking	Foyer
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Federation General Meeting and Board Voice Meeting

11:00 am – 12:00 pm FCSSBC Special General Meeting	Spirit Rooms A/B
11:00 am – 12:00 pm Board Voice Meeting	Merino Rooms

lək'wəŋən People (Esquimalt and Songhees Nations)

This is the land of the lək'wəŋən People, known today as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations. The lək'wəŋən People's connection with the land and the resources goes back thousands of years. We encourage you to learn more about The Sacred Trust—the obligation that embodies the relationship between the land, water, and resources; community, family and individual; the cultural and spiritual path; and the Esquimalt Nation land treaty. www.esquimaltnation.ca

The Signs of Lək'wəŋən. As you travel through the city, you will find seven carvings that mark places of cultural significance. To seek out these markers is to learn about the land, its original culture, and the spirit of its people. The markers are bronze castings of original cedar carvings that were conceptualized and carved by Coast Salish artist and master carver Butch Dick with his son Clarence Dick Jr.

www.songheesnation.ca

Quiet Room & Meeting Space

Need a place to get away and relax in a tranquil, chatter-free space? Check out the Quiet Space, a dedicated room where delegates can decompress, get centred, and re-energize before diving back into the conference. We encourage a device-free zone to get the most out of this relaxing space. A meeting space is also available for those who need a place to connect with work, reply to emails, or catch up on tasks in a quiet environment.

Wednesday, February 12 Quiet Room: Stone room 8-5pm Meeting Space: Martin Room 8-5pm	Thursday, February 13 Quiet Room: Stone room 8-5pm Meeting Space: Martin Room 8-5pm	Friday, February 14 Quiet Room: Stone room 8-5pm Meeting Space: Martin Room 8-5pm
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Support Our Youth

Please donate and help support two youth programs:

The FCSSBC Youth Education Bursary supports youth in care with their post-secondary education. We need these dedicated, caring, skilled young people in our field!

The BCAAFC Provincial Indigenous Youth Council connects youth across the province, implements initiatives that benefit Indigenous youth, and co-hosts *Gathering Our Voices*.

Social Policy Forum participants can support these programs in three ways.

- 1. Attend the fundraising dinner:** Tickets available at registration
- 2. Donate directly:** Forms available at registration
- 3. Purchase books by Indigenous authors:** Available at registration

Photography

A photographer will be on hand throughout the Social Policy Forum taking photos for future communications and promotional purposes. Images may be used, reproduced, and/or made available in print publications, online or on mobile devices.

Subscribe to the Federation Newsletter

Stay up to date on all Federation and community social service news, training and updates. Use the QR code to register.



Wi-Fi password

What is the password? Each room has a unique Wi-Fi password. Please look for the password signage in each room.

Thank you to our sponsors!



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