



Fostering Early Development and Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society

VACFSS acknowledges that this work takes place within traditional
Coast Salish territory

VACFSS Overview

VACFSS is a non-profit society providing service to urban Aboriginal children and families living in the Greater Vancouver area.

Programs:

- Child Protection & Family Services
- Family Preservation & Reunification
- Resources
- Guardianship

VACFSS Overview

Our Vision

- A balanced and harmonious Aboriginal community.

Our Mission

- Provide holistic service delivery that culturally & spiritually strengthens Aboriginal families.

Our Values

- Respect
- Integrity
- Belonging
- Humility
- Strength-Based Practice



Overview of Foster Care System

Profile of Foster Parent System (MCFD Report March 2015)

- 49% of Children and Youth in Care in BC are Aboriginal
- 56% of Foster Parents are over the age of 50
- 72% are between the ages of 45 and 65
- Of the Foster Caregivers who started in 2008 only 30% are still fostering 5 years later

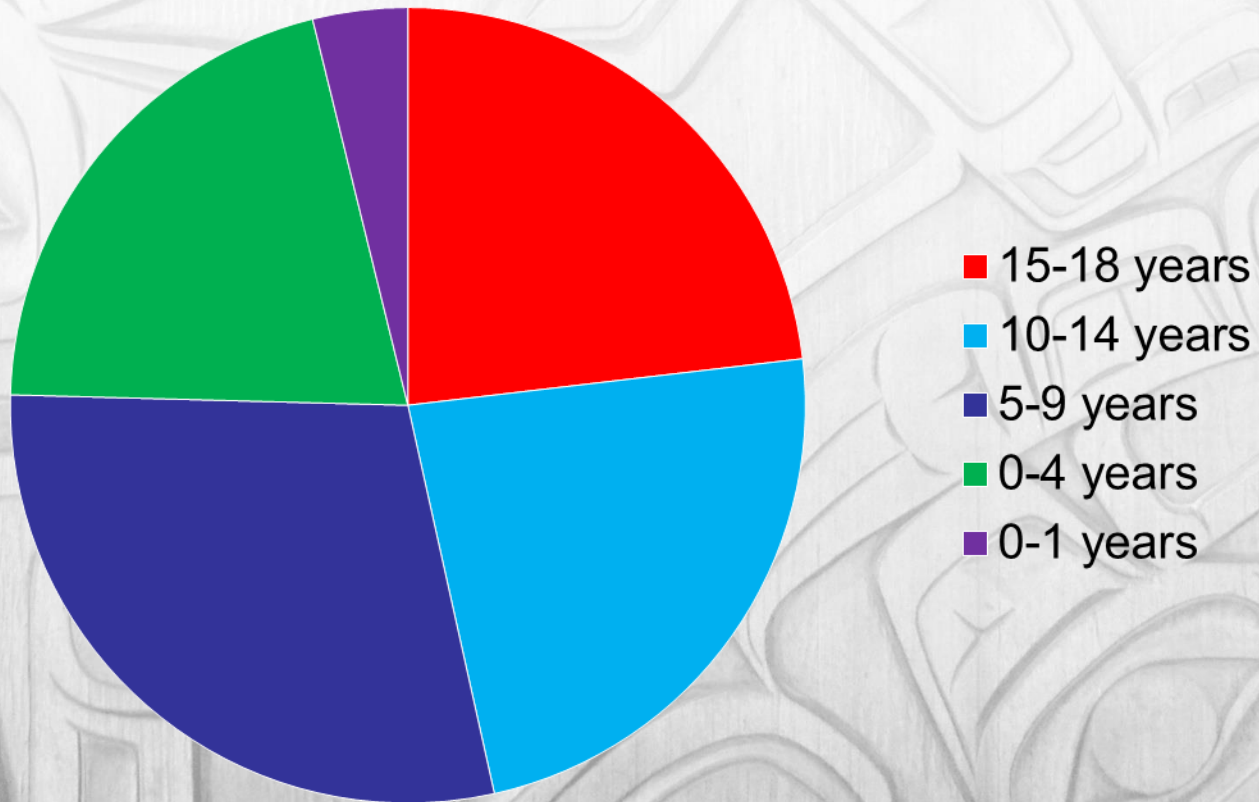
VACFSS Foster Homes

- In 2014/2015 198 open foster homes
- Approx. 25% of homes are Aboriginal
- 86% of Children and Youth in Care are placed in Family Care Homes



Children in VACFSS Care

Children in Care: Age Distribution



Source: VACFSS Annual Report 2015

Current Placement Challenges for Children Aged 0 - 6

- Lack of skilled foster parents for Children in Care
- High Numbers of children under the age of 6 coming into care
- Large sibling groups coming into care



Effectiveness of Fostering Early Development for Foster Parents

Support from FED assessments has helped to

- Retain foster parents
- Ensure stability in foster care placements
- Increasing understanding of child development
- Helping foster parents create developmentally appropriate environments
- Helping to advocate for support services
- Feel supported by FED screeners, feel respected for their expertise.

Effectiveness of Fostering Early Development for Foster Parents

- “I have found them to be highly effective in their assessments and suggestions on what to do/continue to do with the kids to increase their development.”
- “I found the training ... to be informative and I learned so much about milestones to watch for, activities to do with the kids to help them develop their skills, and watch for social emotional queues. I felt empowered after taking this training in how to best help the kids developmentally, both mentally and physically.”
- “Everyone who I have worked with at FED seems to really care about the kids and genuinely seeks to help them.”

Effectiveness for Social Workers

For Child Protection Social Workers

- ASQ-3 and ASQ SE-3 provide insight into behaviours they might have overlooked
- Needed services are implemented
- Speeds up the referral process for intervention services
- Screenings provided by professionals in the child's environment

Effectiveness for Social Workers

For Resource Social Workers FED provides:

- Concrete recommendations workers can follow up on with foster parents
- A measure of a child's functioning in the home
- Real and concrete support to foster parents

Inclusive Foster Care and FED

Inclusive Foster Care:

- Involves birth parents and foster parents working together and teaching each other how to care for the child and how to keep the child connected to their culture. Foster care becomes a temporary extension of the child's family not a replacement for it.

Principles of Inclusive Foster Care

- Children stay connected to family and culture
- Foster parents and birth parents form a partnership
- Families' strengths are acknowledged
- Decisions are based on protection and attachment

Guiding Principles – Towards Inclusive Foster Care: A Policy Handbook

Implementing Inclusive Foster Care with FED

- Safe Babies Ceremony for Infants under 12 months of age
- Cultural components to the Safe Babies and FED Training and Support Group
- Newsletter



Become a Foster Parent

Foster Parent Info Nights

First Tuesday of every month at 6:45pm

3284 E Broadway

604.216.7447

Come Join our Circle of Caring