



Monthly Update

To: Aboriginal organizations
From: APFA staff
Date: June 29, 2007
Re: **June update**

The Aboriginal Peoples Family Accord (APFA) **Political Committee met with MCFD Minister Tom Christensen** in Vernon June 18. Those meeting with the Minister included Robert Shintah, Chief Joe Dennis, George Saddleman, Chief Lynda Price, Chief Gerald Johnny, Chief Nelson Leon, Dave Hodgson of the Métis Nation of B.C., Chief Wayne Christian, Shuswap elder Norma Manuel and APFA staff.

The Minister reaffirmed his government's commitment to the regionalization of family services for Aboriginal People. "It's important for this to succeed," Christensen told leadership in attendance. There were questions raised on whether regionalization infringed, in any way, on each Nation's jurisdiction over children and families. "We're not here to disregard anyone's jurisdiction. That's not our place," said Saddleman.

The APFA is one of five Aboriginal regions taking part in the regionalization of family services. The **Vancouver Island Aboriginal Transition Team (VIATT)** became the first region to gain **interim authority status** this month. The event was attended by APFA CEO Elaine Herbert, Transition Coordinator Eliza Terbasket and Board Chair Debbie Abbott.

It's important to note, this is not child welfare legislation as interim authority status only allows each region to be stand-alone legal entities and not dependent on a host agency. The **Fraser Region Aboriginal Planning Committee (FRAPC)** is scheduled to gain their interim authority status soon while the APFA's target date for interim authority is likely five or six months away.

Joining the APFA Aboriginal Wellness Coordinator team are **Karima Hance** in the Cariboo-Chilcotin Zone and **Marina Richards** in the Kootenay Zone. Karima is based out of the Quesnel area and can be reached at 250-255-APFA (2732) while Marina is located in the Castlegar area at 250-608-2731. The pair join fellow Aboriginal Wellness Coordinators Sandra Young in the Central Okanagan, Audrey Ward in Merritt and Kathy Hinter in Kamloops. The five Aboriginal Wellness Coordinators are working towards improving mental health services to Aboriginal People within the Interior.

Community Table participants are currently being invited to participate in APFA's **CommunityZero**. This virtual space provides a safe, secure environment for participants to view various calendars, electronic files, images, pose questions and post discussion topics for feedback. Participants in the Okanagan Zone were first to try out the system.

"People are loving the CommunityZero," reports Okanagan Community Table Coordinator Bob McCuaig. "It's a good place for participants to get more information."

APFA managers have been asked to keep the site up to date as possible. Only those invited to CommunityZero are able to participate.

Stand up and be counted in the Kootenays. Community Table Coordinator Marian Bruyere is currently looking for Aboriginal People to participate in a zone mapping project which includes filling out a brief survey. Participants filling out the survey will have their names entered to **win an attractive APFA travel blanket**. For further details, call Marian at 250-608-APFA (2732) or Kris Taks at 250-304-2021.