

*“A Communication
Link with
Foster Families
Across the
Province”*

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Fostering Community Newsletter

Issue: 56

Fall 2021

The Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia is a charitable organization funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services and governed by a Board of Directors who are foster parents.

Mission Statement:

The Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia is a collective voice for all foster parents in Nova Scotia. In pursuit of this mission, the Federation will ensure assistance and support for foster families and Foster Family Associations.

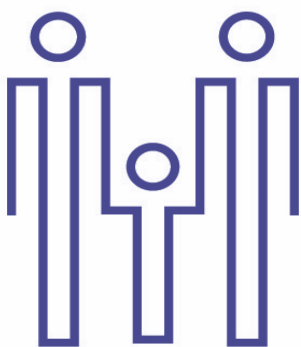
Objectives:

- To ensure the integrity of the Federation as the collective voice for all foster parents
- To better equip foster parents in the provision of the best possible child care
- To promote a positive profile of foster care
- To encourage the development of Foster Family Associations and Support Groups
- To continually work toward improving foster care in Nova Scotia

2022 AGM hosted by Mi'kmaw

May 27, 28, 29

Inn on Prince in Truro



2021/2022 Board of Directors

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Executive Director's Report

Greetings from the Federation Office!

Hoping that your past summer and fall have been less restrictive and more exciting than last year.

Although the past two AGMs have taken place virtually, we are hoping for an “in-person“ AGM for 2022. Plans are already in place for the Mi'Kmaq community to host and the Inn on Prince Hotel in Truro has been booked. The dates for this event are May 27th, 28th and 29th. It will be decided in early January 2022 if it will take place “in-person” or via Zoom.

For those of you who visit our website, you will notice that it has been revised and updated as of the month of October 2021. We are very pleased with the results, therefore please check it out to get the latest information from the FFFNS and DCS.

The Regional Focus Meetings continue to take place three times per year in each region. As of September 2021, all foster homes in each region are emailed with an invitation with the date and time to attend the Focus Meeting in their respective region. These meetings are conducted through Microsoft Teams video chats. Please try to attend as it gives Foster Parents the opportunity to voice their concerns as well as ask questions to social workers and DCS senior staff who also participate in these meetings.

The Lunch and Learn sessions, part of the PSS program, continue to take place on a monthly basis. Again, all Foster Homes are emailed with an invitation to attend. These sessions are very educational and we have received very positive feedback.

The C.A. I. T. Team, established in March of 2021, has proved to be a great asset to foster parents who are going through an allegation of abuse. Please remember, that if going through such an allegation investigation, contact Jill Martin, the FFFNS Allegation and Support Social Worker, who can support you and guide you through the process. Her contact information can be found on our website.

The Training Program resumed its “in-person” training this fall, as we followed all Nova Scotia provincial Covid-19 guidelines.

The biggest positive “News Story” for 2021 is the fact that the Foster Care Redesign roll out will be taking place this fall. This is extremely exciting news for the Foster Care community. DCS and the FFFNS will collaborate in establishing a new and improved model to replace our present Foster Care System. We have been talking about it for some time now, and it has become reality. The FFFNS Board Members will be involved every step of the way.

In closing, to all the board members and my coworkers, thank you very much for your support and for all the work that you do to support the foster parents. For all the Foster Parents in the province, thanks for your kindness, passion and perseverance. Better days are ahead!

Hope you all enjoy the upcoming Holiday Season!

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Landry



Happy Holidays from Peer Support Services

The holidays are so special ...and they can also be so complicated for many. Foster parent and Peer Support Services volunteer Ernie Matheson gives some tips for how his family helps children-in-care feel safe and special during Christmas:

"We ask if they have any special memories they have around Christmas. If we can, we try to incorporate those memories into our Christmas plans. We also let them help trim the house and tree.

Christmas is for the kids so we do our best to make them all feel special and important.

Some kids only have bad memories so we try to make new good ones. We also make food they remember they liked around Christmas time. It may not be turkey - don't be surprised with what they remember and liked"

Peer Support Services will offer on-call support over the holidays as always. If you need a listening ear, call **1-888-845-1555** and press 4 to reach Peer Support Services, and then 1 to speak to a volunteer. The hours of operation are:

Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays: 4pm to 10pm

Saturdays/Sundays: 10am to 10pm.

Virtual Lunch and Learn, held via Zoom on the last Tuesday of each month, will take a break for the month of December. We will resume on January 25th with mental health as our topic of choice.

P.S.S. wishes you all the very best and brightest of the season.



Board of Directors

Past Board Chairperson

Greetings Fellow Foster Parents!

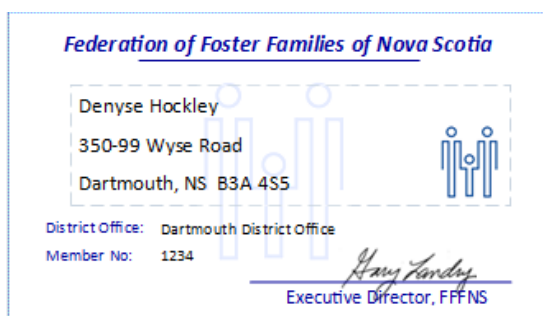
The recent announcement by our Minister of Community Services, the Honorable Karla MacFarlane, regarding the increase to the per diem rate, was extremely delightful to hear. I had the privilege of hearing the announcement by phone and I really had to ask if I heard correctly. While many may say this is long overdue, this type of increase in our chosen profession is quite unheard of. I know she realizes the important role foster parents play in the lives of the children in our care. While I thanked the Minister for this announcement, I also thank Deputy Minister Tracey Taweel and Director of Placement Services, Wendy Bungay. Both have been strong advocates of foster families for the past number of years and continue to support us to the best of their ability. As chairperson of our board for several years, sometimes you become frustrated but like everything in life, if at first you don't succeed, you try again and again. There are many changes coming for Foster Care in Nova Scotia, so hang in there, continue doing what you do really well, and I believe you will like the coming changes.

I want to thank Gary, Debbie, Rose, Denyse, Jill, Michele, and Kim for not only how you supported me in my role as chairperson, but for all your efforts to support our foster parents. I really don't feel most are aware of your contribution to our foster care system and/or the support you provide to our families. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to work with you and I appreciate your efforts. Our Board has always been able to have quality members sitting in the board seats and the current board is no exception. We are in good hands going forward so if you have a question, need information, having a bad day or whatever, reach out to your board member. And don't forget to view the Federation website which contains many resources that can be very helpful in your role as a Foster Parent.

I want to wish everyone from New Waterford to Yarmouth and everywhere in between, A Very Merry Christmas and All the Best in 2022. The past two years have been very stressful for many and has changed the way we do many things going forward. One thing that will not change is how foster parents share their life and love to strangers whom quickly become part of the family.

Best Regards To All,
Wendell Fraser

Attached to this newsletter you will find an expiry date sticker for your Federation membership card. These membership cards are included in the welcome package sent to new foster homes. Each year a new sticker is sent out with the Fall/Winter newsletter or Holiday card.



African Nova Scotian Representatives

Hello to everyone!

We are hoping this newsletter finds everyone well and ready for another Christmas. As most of you have already heard there have been some announcements recently regarding the Foster Care Redesign. The per diem board increase of \$15.00 per day for each placement is an improvement and long awaited. More changes are currently being worked on by the Department with announcements to be made in the near future. The Board has recently met with the Department and we have verbalized that caregivers are eagerly awaiting the impending changes. Foster caregivers have been put to the test in the last couple of years and our dedication to the children we care for is beyond stellar! Our board meetings lately are not held every month due to Covid, but we are planning on having some virtual meetings over the winter months and some in person. If anyone has anything they would like added to our agenda to discuss or if there is anything that is on your mind please reach out to myself or Iona Smith. We want to know how things are going for you! On a final note we hope you enjoy the upcoming Holidays with your loved ones and also hope you continue to stay safe and well. All the best!

Anita Sheppard MacMillan
Iona Smith

Northern Region Representatives

Greetings!

Hope this newsletter finds you well. We just wanted to drop a quick note to wish everyone Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year filled with great health and happiness.

The board has been working on your behalf to give input to the Department of Community Services regarding Foster Care Redesign. It is encouraging to see that the Department is wanting a collaborative effort between themselves and foster parents.

Also, We look forward to hopefully holding meetings in different parts of the province this year giving the Board the ability to hear from all foster parents across the province. We look forward to many good things in the new year.

Carolann Fitzgerald-Zegray
Mary Ann Burke



Please Help us Save Some Trees!
To sign up for email or if your email has
changed, contact us at
denyse.hockley@novascotia.ca
or 902-424-3071



Snickerdoodles

Butter or margarine, softened	1 cup
Granulated sugar	1 1/2 cups
Eggs	2
All-purpose flour (see note)	2 1/2 cups
Cream of tartar	2 tsp
Baking soda	1 tsp
Salt	1/4 tsp
Granulated sugar	2 tbsp
Cinnamon	2 tsp

Cream butter and first amount of sugar well. Beat in eggs 1 at a time.

Mix in flour, cream of tartar, baking soda, and salt. Shape into 1 inch balls.

Stir remaining sugar and cinnamon together in a small dish. Roll balls in mixture to coat. Place on ungreased cookie sheet (I flatten them a little with a fork or bottom of a glass). Bake in 400° F oven for 7 to 8 minutes. Makes about 4 dozen.

Note: If cookie dough is too sticky, up to 1/4 cup flour may be added.

*Recipe from Company's Coming Cookies by Jean Paré



Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia

“A Communication Link with Foster Families”



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We're also on the web!

www.fosterfamilies.ns.ca

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**Do you have any news or articles you would like to see featured in this newsletter? If so, please contact our editor Denyse Hockley at
(902) 424-3071 or denyse.hockley@novascotia.ca**