

# April 2022 - March 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Today  Tomorrow  
Learning Society

**We're  
building  
family in  
community**

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## VISION:

An inclusive atmosphere where children and families feel respected, encouraged, and able to fulfill their potential.

## MISSION:

To cultivate a safe, supportive and nurturing learning environment. To strengthen community one family at a time through connection, quality caregiving, and parenting support.

## HISTORY:

The Today 'N' Tomorrow Learning Society (TNTLS) has been delivering the Young Parent Program in School District 71 since 1993 when it was originally called Teddies 'N' Toddlers. It is a small not for profit organization whose goal is to support parenting students in completing their high school education. The Society now oversees four initiatives: Today 'N'Tomorrow Young Parent Program, Teddies 'N' Toddlers Childcare Centre (birth-3 years), Lake Trail Childcare Centre (birth –3 years) and, Little Friends Early Learning Centre (3-5years).

These programs are accessible to all families with a priority for young parents completing high school and/or college education, those employed and/or families needing assistance through the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

## Lake Trail Childcare Centre

Another amazing partnership continues to blossom with our local School District. In October of 2022, TNTLS became the proud operators of the new purpose-built childcare facility for ages 3 and under. Our team worked many extra hours to make this possible! We would also like to give a big shout-out to the hard working and dedicated maintenance staff with SD71. Their support and responsiveness to our facility needs are one of the many reasons we continue to operate and offer this invaluable service to our community.



**2022 / 2023  
STATISTICS**

VOLUNTEER HOURS:

**500**

# of YP kids

Supported: **10**

DONATIONS IN KIND:

**\$14,345.00**

CV CHILD DEVELOPMENT

SUPPORT HOURS:

**2,723**

NUMBER OF  
TEACHER PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT HOURS :

**503**

SD71 STUDENT  
PARTICIPANTS:

**78**

NUMBER OF BOOKS

READ TO LITTLES :

**8,120**

NUMBER OF  
CHILDREN ENROLLED  
IN CHILDCARE:

**51**

NUMBER  
OF COMMUNITY  
PARTNERSHIPS :

**30**

GRANTS:

**\$17,885**

NUMBER OF FAMILIES  
RECEIVING THE AFFORDABLE  
CHILDCARE BENEFIT :

**15**

NUMBER OF YOUNG  
PARENTS SUPPORTED  
THIS YEAR:

**12**

NUMBER OF PRACTICUM  
& WORK EXPERIENCE  
PLACEMENTS:

**7**

HOURS OF  
OUTDOOR  
PLAY TIME/ CHILD  
EACH THIS YEAR:

**1000 HRS**

NUMBER OF FAMILIES  
ON OUR WAITLIST :

**1008**

**We would like to acknowledge our 2022-2023 Volunteer Board of Directors:**

Zoe Campbell, Heather Cail, Thomas Dargie,  
Kristina Gilchrist, and Justina Johnson



**Thank You**

# Director's Report

Another year has passed and here we are once again at our Annual General Meeting. I would like to say a big thank you to my fellow board members for their contributions and support throughout the past year. Our team has been relatively small compared to other years; however, we've continued to meet monthly, work on policy changes and be a resource to our Executive Director.

As a board member I align my values with those of TNTLS. I feel proud to be a part of an organization that provides a safe and nurturing learning environment and is committed to strengthening family connections within our community.

The TNTLS board of directors is an oversight board. We not only oversee the financial management for the organization, we also practice good governance which requires trust, accountability, transparency, and regular communication with our Executive Director.

We are currently looking to expand our board of directors' team. If you support the purpose and work of TNTLS, can work well in a team, communicate effectively and are willing to commit some of your time to fulfill the responsibilities as a director, please contact me. I can be reached by email at

[kristinagilchrist@hotmail.com](mailto:kristinagilchrist@hotmail.com). I look forward to hearing from you.

Here's to another successful year of learning and growing!



**Kristina Gilchrist**  
**Chair**  
**Board of Directors**

Sincerely,  
  
06/21/2024 4:04 PM  
Kristina Gilchrist  
Board Chair

Our centres' outdoor spaces look spectacular and the credit is due to our "Fairy Godfather", Peter Ashmore. We would like to heartfully acknowledge his passion for early learning, out door play and thoughtfully handcrafted equipment



**Thank You**

## 2022-2023 FACILITY UPGRADES:

- New platform, shade sail and garden improvements at Little Friends
- Extended fenced yard grass area in the infant yard
- Expanded sandbox and renovated shed in the toddler yard
- New lighting and dishwasher installed at TNT
- Staff/Young Parent room remodeled
- Upgraded RIE inspired indoor toy shelving, tables/ stools and dramatic play furniture in all programs



## Organization Strategic goals:

- Secure a facility that meets our future needs
- Lead the way in quality, innovative childcare in the Comox Valley
- Build internal management capacity in order to maximize community opportunity



## Operation Objectives:

- Pursue more grants to improve TNTLS deliverables for both the Young Parent and childcare programs with a focus on:
  - Truth and Reconciliation
  - Inclusivity and Diversity
  - Professional Development
- Recruiting, training and retaining quality educators
- Implementing feedback from annual parent and teacher surveys
- Nurturing collaborative community partnerships
- Offering practicum student placements

## Overview From the Executive Director

What an amazing year! We have been busy supporting our young parents, welcoming very little babes and new families in to our programs, implementing the new \$10/day initiative, operating a brand new facility, taking steps towards decolonizing our organization, engaging in an EDUCARING approach, bolstering our teachers learning and being the best childcare employer in the Comox Valley! I hope you enjoy reading through the program updates and happenings in this Annual Report.

We welcomed Ainslie Patteson as the Young Parent Program Coordinator while Jessika is on maternity leave. Dani Porter continued to assist with the outreach programming. They maintained close connections with the young parents in order to meet their individualized needs.

This past year we put a huge emphasis on working towards truth and reconciliation. We have been working with Daryle Mills; Night Sun Bear doing cultural sensitivity training and drum-making workshops. We have also been successful in securing cultural kits from the Qualicum First Nations and we absolutely love them!

We value outdoor learning and time in nature, it is a huge part of our curriculum. We have continued to make significant improvements and updates to our outdoor spaces in each program. Sandboxes and shade sails are the finishing touches to our new Lake Trail yards. The TNT toddler yard received a face lift this year by moving their garden space to make room for an expanded and repaired shed. Our Little Friends grass yard has a new stage and shade sail with special thanks to Vanier's Construction Studies 12 Class. We have also added music walls, pallets, corn hole toss, A-frame door structures, and so much more with hard work all from Peter Ashmore who continues to be our fairy godfather. Our families all pitched in this year, donating logs and tires, helping us move soil and sand to fill our garden beds and sandboxes. We are so very thankful.

We have been able to increase our teachers wages as well as apply for more grants and funding for professional development. We have also continued to assist the Board with strategic planning and projects that affect all our programs and the Society as a whole.

Each year, we make every effort to improve our individualized support and outreach to our young parents while at the same time, enhancing the childcare programming for our littles. In this way, we support the Comox Valley in enriching the lives our families and our community.

Thank you for championing our cause, on all levels, for the past, current and future success of the Today 'N' Tomorrow Learning Society. If you have any feedback, suggestions or other reasons to connect, feel free, at (250) 338-8445 or [ed@tntls.com](mailto:ed@tntls.com)



**Natalie Robinson**  
**Executive Director**

## TNTLS Young Parent Program



Welcome Ainslie Patteson to the team! We are thrilled to have had her join our work family this past March. We had a busy group this year, with 8 returning Young Parents and 4 new to the program. Overall we had 6 children enrolled in the childcare programs, which included some very tiny babes.

- We continued to foster stronger connections and mental health breaks by soaking up nature as much as possible. Some of our field trips included the pumpkin patch, the hands-on farm, exploring nearby playgrounds and nature walks. We also maintained daily check-ins, guest speakers and access to community resources.
- We continued to provide extended outreach: transportation, food security, living supplies, accessing government funding, health and nutrition programming, parenting courses, one-on-one coaching, mentorship and group support.
- We continued to give back to the community by volunteering in and around the childcare centres, such as making weekly recycling trips and helping to look after the potted plants and gardens. We also engaged with other community groups such as input into the Foundry and parenting groups where possible.
- We added a 7-week Mother's Group in partnership with the Foundry and Amy Kelly.
- While the focus remains on educational goals, we are look forward to the year ahead together, finding comfort in connection and a stronger sense of community.



## TNTLS Childcare Programs



**Rebecca Kleinman**

**Manager**

We have had a very busy year with many amazing additions to our teaching team, our facilities, our learning opportunities and our community partnerships. We have had 9 teachers join our team in the last year and 1 go on maternity leave. Some of these wonderful teachers are working at our new Lake Trail Childcare Centre, which opened in October 2022. We hope to be operating at full capacity soon when new team members are hired-on.

With the addition of Lake Trail also came the implementation Site Supervisors in each of our buildings. Amber Ferguson at little Friends; Donna Wasylowich at Lake Trail and Rae Schinbein at Teddies and Toddlers. These leadership positions have been instrumental in keeping our centers running smoothly.

Professional Development days have had a wonderful impact on our team. We have been able to provide our teachers with many educational opportunities both in house and in the community, which they get to experience together as a team. We attended the Young Parent Conference with 10 staff members in Vancouver this past October, as well as having the Comox Valley's first early year's conference here at Lake Trail Middle School in February. We have also had many staff continuing on their education in the pursuit of their next qualification in early childhood education, with many completing the RIE foundations training - which is amazing!

We welcomed a number of practicum students from several different schools; Sprott Shaw, Pacific Rim, and North Island College. Our Little Friends program hosted them, doing observations and placements for their course work. We accommodated Vanier work experience students and partnered with the Food Studies 11 class and Family Studies 12 Class to have an outside learning partnership time once a week with Little Friends.

This year we were to be lucky enough to be chosen to participate in the Early Childhood Pedagogy Network opportunity to have a pedagogist be part of our Little Friends program. Shirley-Ann joins us once a week to spend the morning and help expand upon and make visible the learning that the children are engaged in throughout the day. It has been an absolute privilege to work with her.

We have been working in close collaboration all year with the CVCDA's supported child development whom we collaborate with to provide support to multiple families in our care. They provide such an important service to the community, and we are very glad that we can be in partnership with them and connect our families with them as well.

All our fundraising efforts have been successful this year! With Scholastic, Lovable Labels, West Coast Seeds, and DeVry Greenhouses we have raised just over \$700 through these fundraisers!

Our focus has been on staff retention, connection and team building. We are very proud to say that we are currently one of the highest paying child care employers in the valley.



Thank  
you



## *Special Recognition*

We would like to recognize our most dedicated and valued volunteer  
Erik Hedley

We are very fortunate to have Erik Hedley in our toddler programs 3 days a week. Erik first came to our organization as a work experience student through VIVERS. He later completed his Early Childhood Educator Assistant Certificate and joined our team as a permanent part-time volunteer 3 years ago.

He continues to share his kindness, joy for children and dedication to our littles. We could not imagine our toddler program without him and wanted to acknowledge his time and energy to our organization.

## Special Recognition

We would like to recognize two long-time community groups:

We are so fortunate to have the ongoing support from the Schoolhouse Quilters Guild. This fabulous group has been championing our Young Parent Program for decades, supplying our littles each year with handmade quilts (hugs) made with love ❤️ A heartfelt thank you from all of our families.



We were honoured to receive a donation of **\$2,000** from the AITKEN Fund of Soroptimist International of Courtenay in support of **the Infant Mothers Program** in partnership with **the Foundry**. 'Mamie' AITKEN, Life Member, and sister Cherry AITKEN, Charter and Life Member who predeceased her, would be pleased that this donation from Mamie's estate will be helping young mothers and their infants in the Comox Valley in this way. With this donation we are able to continue working towards building community and supporting young parents. Your group's support truly makes a difference for us, and we are extremely grateful. Committee members: Margaret Wootton, Heather Ferraby and Barbara Lewis, President Jean Violette and Treasurer Margot Rutherford.

## *Special Recognition*

Our facilities would not be the same without the continued care and attention each year from our hardworking School District 71 Maintenance Department.

TNTLS also gratefully recognizes all of our donors, supporters and volunteers. We acknowledge the financial support from the Province of British Columbia, the Ministry of Education and Childcare, the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

The following are some of our many partnerships and sponsors:

Innov8 Digital Solutions

Beaufort Cycles

Value Village

Creative Employment

Lunar Photography

Alliance of Professionals Serving Young Parents

Pathways to Healing

Thrifty Foods

Home Depot

Pilon Tools and Rentals

Design Therapy Inc.

Ladies Auxiliary RCL Comox Branch

Lifelong Learning Society

Mackenzie Gartside & Associates

Qualicum First Nations

418 Search and Rescue Operational TS

Coastal Community Credit Union

