

# Public Safety Report: October 2020 to March 2021

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## Activity 1: Community Engagement

*Note: COVID 19 – OKIB closes main offices, March 16<sup>th</sup>. “Soft re-opening of offices”, June 2020. Essential services maintained, EOS enacted, all staff support efforts for safety of community members on/off reserve.*

### Community Safety Planning

**Comprehensive Safety Strategy** – Community Mobilization, Phase 1: survey community members on/off reserve. Survey Monkey launched on OKIB website, ongoing promotion to participate in development of community driven safety plan. We have hired local contractor to assist in reaching out to membership on/off reserve. Outcomes report of survey completed in the spring 2021.

OKIB communities has experienced several (back to back) passing of membership: suicide, homicides, overdoses etc. and loss of Elders. Survey will continue respectfully and by fiscal years end OKIB will have completed Phase 1 of community mobilization.

Public Safety team reached out for mental health supports, Okanagan Nation Response Team, to strengthen team work when addressing crisis, prevention, counselling, traditional healing and supports. By working as a team we are able to coordinate mental health service delivery, coordinate culturally appropriate service delivery, as well as promote mental health awareness to our members/families.

## Activity 2: Direct Interventions and sustainability of programs, services and partnerships.

Sustainability of programs, services and partnerships that include culture, language and sense of belonging/connection.

**Cultural Safety Training** – Cultural Safety Educators Eric Mitchell and Chris Marchand trained 10 OKIB members and the Youth Leadership Council in Cultural Safety Education >

- Session 1: Who we are? Positive pre-contact about Okanagan/Syilx Peoples
- Session 2: Canada’s Hidden History – the political, legal structure and impositions on Okanagan/Syilx Peoples
- Session 3: Understanding Truth & Reconciliation – a dialogue necessary to understand our truths as Okanagan/Syilx
- Session 4: Community Engagement – to celebrate our past, live in present and visualize our future as Okanagan/Syilx

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**Youth Leadership Council** – The Youth Leadership Council commenced December 2020 and have begun a series of training: Cultural Safety Education, Medicine Wheel, How to be a Leader, You are a Leader, Prepare in a Traditional Way, Breaking Habits and Create Neuro Pathways, and Coyote Captik teachings. The training will support the Youth in developing their roles, strengths and the development of meaning and identity across their lifespan which is a critical aspect of enhancing their individuality: spirit, self, family, community and culture.

For further information: <https://okib.ca/departments/public-safety/okib-youth-council>

**First Nation Justice** –The Youth Justice Worker continues to provide support in dealing with the justice system, social justice, police, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, referrals to other services, counselling etc. The Public Safety team priorities are: keep people safe by reducing incarceration, promote a healthy path away from the justice involvement (referrals to health, treatment, other supportive programming), provide supports to navigate legal system and includes social justice (education, employment, housing etc.).

**Youth Transitional Housing** – Partnership with Vernon Native Housing and Ministry of Children and Families to support our Youth with transitional Housing as they age-out from the Ministry. The Vernon Native Housing provides 6 units and a Youth Transition Worker who provides: supports, advocacy, life skills, mentoring, referrals etc. The Youth Justice Worker identifies gaps in service for youth transitioning from care to living on their own - to funding for the units via MCFD.

**FASD** –Partnership with FASD Okanagan Valley Assessment Society, People Place Vernon has sponsored 5 OKIB community members for assessments. Next steps – FASD OVAS has offered mentorship to OKIB Physicians to support our community members with access to assessments, supports etc. – preliminary meetings to follow.

**School District 22** – Preliminary meetings with Director of Aboriginal Learning to advance partnership and relationship with SD 22. The Public Safety Team, Indigenous Policing, A/D Counselor and Harm Reduction Worker will work closely with SD Aboriginal Support Workers to provide: education, awareness and supports to children and youth regarding: mental health supports, cultural teachings, gang & drug recruitment awareness etc.

**Safe Communities** – Preliminary meetings with Regional District North Okanagan, Vernon Community Safety Unit and Indigenous Policing to advance partnership and relationships to support safe communities.

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### Activity 3: Cultural Based Supports

Community informed workshops, healing circles and clients supported:

Description	Month	Average # of participants
Wellbriety	October 2020	38
Clients: Clients = 20	October 2020	Wellbriety & Clients= 58
Wellbriety	November 2020	36
Clients: Day Program, Masks We Ware = 16 Clients = 22	November 2020	Wellbriety & Clients= 62
Wellbriety	December 2020	46
Clients:	December 2020	Wellbriety = 46
Wellbriety	January 2021	36
Clients: Medicine Wheel=16 Clients = 21	January 2021	Wellbriety & Clients = 73
Wellbriety	February 2021	36
Clients: Medicine Wheel= 17 Clients = 21	February 2021	Wellbriety & Clients = 76
Wellbriety	March 2021	39
Clients: Medicine Wheel= 18 Clients = 22	March 2021	Wellbriety & Clients = 75

### Next Steps:

**Youth Leadership Council** – have completed extensive training in their first quarter. The Youth will work towards sharing their knowledge by hosting community projects, activities, and checking in with other youth to seek what they want in community, territory etc. for example: connecting Youth through web-based tools and service for workshops, language teachings, cultural revitalization, wellness supports etc.

**Cultural Based Supports** – Public Safety team will continue with workshops, healing circles, balanced cultural activities etc.: Mending Broken Hearts series, Racism Talking Circles, Cultural Safety Education, Medicine Wheel, Wellbriety on/off reserve, One-on-One supports/advocacy etc. For example: Youth Traditional Games –ensuring Syilx rooted traditional games are relevant and continuously practiced. Empowering to attain

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the highest level possible to be physically active, fun, inclusive personal growth, land-based and building meaningful relationships. Movement is medicine!

**Public Safety Annual Open House** – invite community membership, partners etc. to Public Safety Office to introduce the Public Safety Team: Community Safety Coordinator, Youth Justice Worker, Youth Support Worker and Indigenous Police

**Comprehensive Community Safety Planning** – developing a framework or model of change that is community driven and a 'living model' that can be adaptive to change. The goal for community is: increased awareness for parents and family members of programs/services and help for their young people, increased openness and discussions about challenges in the community and strengths that exist in community to build upon.

First phase: Community Mobilization Framework completed by OKIB membership on/off reserve. Targeted actions will include: regular community engagements, time-lines (short-med-long), setting priorities collectively, grounded plans and processes in culture, forging meaningful collaborations between internal departments and with external partners. Reciprocal accountability will ensure each member has a clear understanding of their decisions and actions for their contribution: individual community members, Health and Wellness teams, Leadership, external partnerships etc.

**Racism Talking Circle** – Phase 2: Elders/Knowledge Keepers and Youth (College & High School students) will continue to meet. To re-cap first meeting - collectively, it was agreed upon that racism has impacted each one of us and that we have a high capacity to tolerate racism – which we have allowed to go un-checked in our environments due to not feeling safe. We agreed that knowing who we are, where we come from and sense of belonging needs further discussion as Okanagan peoples before we expand our talking circle with non-native peoples and/or groups open to talking about “Racism in the Okanagan”. The Vernon Social Planning Council and Immigrant Services will host (when OKIB is ready) to a Racism Talking Circle.