

## Public Safety Report: October 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022

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### Overview of Okanagan Indian Band on/off reserve:

#### **OKIB Health Bulletin**

- **OKIB follows BC Public Health Orders, and continues with vaccine mandate**  
Omicron picks up speed. OKIB follows BC Public Health Orders
  - All community gatherings cancelled December 2021
  - March 2022 gradual re-opening of community gatherings

#### **BC Opioid Crisis**

- the increase and impacts of toxic drugs in our lives and in the lives of loved ones. Safety planning: including ways to minimize the risks of using substances, we continue to find new ways to stay safe, reduce harms and support each other. We will continue to support our peoples on their healing journey.

#### **White Rock Lake Wildfire:**

- **Recovery Phase**
  - OKIB supports for community: Alcohol/Drug Worker, Youth Justice Worker, Youth Rec. Worker, Wellness Team, Health and Social Development, Housing, Education etc.

#### **Post-Wildfire Natural Hazard Risk (White Rock Lake Wildfire) Emergency Response Planning**

- OKIB will provide conceptual-level recommendations for mitigation flooding and/or debris: evaluate risk to residents, structures, roads and/or infrastructure
- Emergency Response Planning and supports will be communicated to all citizens

*Public Safety team reaches out for mental health supports; Okanagan Nation Response Team, to strengthen teamwork when addressing crisis, prevention, counselling, traditional healing and supports.*

### **Activity 1: Community Engagement**

#### Community Safety Planning

#### **Comprehensive Safety Strategy:**

**Community Mobilization, Phase 1:** “How the people of n’kmaplqs came together to re-envision a safe community” - surveyed community members on/off reserve completed.  
<https://okib.ca/uploads/files/2020-2021-Public-Safety-Dept.-Annual-Report.pdf>

**Community Mobilization, Phase 2:** “ntytyix: A time for Action”, the Public Safety Team listened to what n’kmaplqs people have said would create a safe community over the past year.

## Public Safety Report: October 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022

In this next phase, the implementation plan of action that will mobilize change set out by the contribution of the community. We have identified recurring themes that community has identified that will create a safe home for them: the resurgence of sqilxw ways of being and life: feeling a sense of belonging; more social supports in the face of colonialism; holistic wellbeing through mental and physical health and most importantly having a safe community to nurture these things in.

Over the past several months we have met with: Directors/employees, Elders, Youth Leadership Council, Community Advisory Committee, Community Consultative Group etc. to define short/medium/long term action items, targets, and goals. The Annual Report will be reviewed with Directors in the late spring, May 2022 and presented to the Community members and Leadership, June 2022. As a living document, we will continually seek input from community members on and off reserve, provide regular progress updates on the identified short/med/long term action items.

### **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.

#### **Youth Leadership Council –**

Youth Leadership Council has their own '**Instagram**' to stay connected and have important conversations with youth and community.

OKIB Community Presentation, Spring 2022: YLC will present, Cathy Peters, who has raised awareness to the issue of Human Sex Trafficking/Sexual Exploitation. Education, prevention, and awareness are paramount to the safety of our children.

Chair, Justen Peters article: <https://indiginews.com/okanagan/honesty-is-a-spiritual-super-power-says-justen-peters>

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

**First Nation Justice** –The Youth Justice Worker and Youth Rec Worker provide support, education, prevention and awareness, cultural wellness teachings etc. with: local School Districts, the justice system, social justice, police, the Ministry of Children and Family, referrals to other services, counselling etc.

The Public Safety team priorities are to empower youth and families to reach their goals and aspirations, engage and collaborate with justice-based activities, keep people safe by reducing incarceration, promote a healthy path, celebrate, and acknowledge identity, sense of belonging etc.

## Public Safety Report: October 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022

Over the next following months, the Public Safety Team will host information sessions, relationship building and advocacy from: Legal Aid, Probation Offices and Native Court Workers. The community will have supports for: legal clinics by access Pro Bono, Family Justice, Specialized Victims Assistance, Restorative Justice etc.

**Anti-Racism Network** – Public Safety team collaborated with the Social Planning Council, Vernon, 'Anti-Racism Network' to provide a "Community Resource List" that provides where to find support: type of crime or incident, where to report and Community Resource List.

**Community Advisory Committee** - (CAC) role is to provide input and perspectives on matters that impact Okanagan Indian Band membership. A forum for more in-depth discussion of key issues, concerns, or solutions and to provide advice to OKIB in developing an understanding of relevant issues: mental health, illicit drugs, alcohol, social justice etc.

The composition of Advisory Committee is structured to provide a balance of perspectives (technical backgrounds), experts in their working capacity and are of Okanagan decent. Its composition includes Indigenous knowledge in historical and intergenerational trauma and healing. Technical Backgrounds may include Addictions, Mental Health, Social Justice, Life Skills, Health, Cultural Safety etc.

**CAC Vision Statement:** *"Push boundaries to create a foundation of healing one person, one voice and one heart at a time".*

The CAC is scheduled to meet with Directors and Leadership, late spring, to present a resolution for the Leadership to commit to ongoing strength-based trauma informed practices and cultural safety and humility education and training together.

The intention is that this will become a foundation of:

- 1) current and future employee's orientation working at Okanagan Indian Band for this is a basis of what the organization stands for in enhancing a safer, more productive, and culturally safe work environment and
- 2) safer community, for community safety starts with self.

### Activity 3: Culturally Based Supports

Community informed workshops, healing circles and clients supported:

Description	Month	Average # of participants
Wellbriety	<b>October 2021</b>	Native Housing = 37 OKIB = 10
Clients:20 Healing Circles: Mending Broken Hearts =5		Clients = 20
Wellbriety	<b>November 2021</b>	Native Housing= 36

Public Safety Report: October 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022

		Shelter = 49
Clients:18 Healing Circles: Mending Broken Hearts=12 Medicine Wheel= 18		Clients= 18
Wellbriety	<b>December 2021</b>	Native Housing= 46
Clients:18		Clients = 18
Wellbriety	<b>January 2022</b>	Native Housing=41
Clients:20 WL Seaton Secondary, Medicine Wheel= 17		Clients = 20
Wellbriety	<b>February 2022</b>	Native Housing=41
Clients: 21 <b>Healing Circles:</b> Mending Broken Hearts=16		Clients = 21
Wellbriety	<b>March 2022</b>	Native Housing=39
Clients: 21		Clients = 21

Note: December 2021 to March 2022, closure of Wellbriety Healing Circles at Shelter, Vernon, and Public Safety Office – COVID uptick.

**Next Steps:**

**OKIB Community Presentation Spring of 2022:** Crime, Guns, Gangs, Trafficking and Opioids Crisis. The Indigenous Policing Services is working with: Public Safety Team, Education Liaison, A/D Worker, Recreation Worker etc. to raise awareness about the realities of organized crime and the supports needed to intervene to have a safe community. All Youth, Parents, Elders and Leadership are invited to attend in-person or live stream.

**Youth Leadership Council will present at OKIB Community Presentation 2022:**

## Public Safety Report: October 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022

Cathy Peters has raised awareness to the issue of Human Sex Trafficking/Sexual Exploitation for the purpose of Prostitution to the Okanagan Indian Band. Cathy's work has been introduced in the BC Legislature and she has participated in 2 Federal Justice Committee Human Trafficking Roundtables in Vancouver. In response to the MMIWG Inquiry Cathy presented to the Okanagan Native Alliance (7 bands) on how to protect Indigenous women and girls (January 2020).

The YLC will develop a plan to support the second phase of community mobilization: "ntytyix: A time for Action". In a sqilxw way the youth will celebrate and honor 'Indigenous Month, June'. To honor our history, culture, strength and acknowledge our presence to instill pride and a sense of belonging.

**Mending Broken Hearts Healing Circle's** began last November 2021 and is intended for families who want to face unresolved grief. Unresolved grief is a significant issue in Indigenous communities. Many people have been affected by the historical and intergenerational trauma: cultures have been made "sick" by the anger, guilt, shame, and fear passed on from generation to generation. The Public Safety team will be hosting family healing circles. The teachings will bring to realization our traditional ways of decision-making, guided by our Syilx values and the teachings that can help us acknowledge and accept our roles within our family systems and communities.

**Community Advisory Committee** has formally invited OKIB Leadership and Directors to meet. The CAC will provide support, mentorship, guidance on; strength-based trauma informed practices, cultural safety, and humility.

**First Nation Justice:** the Public Safety Team will host information sessions, relationship building and advocacy from: Legal Aid, Probation Offices and Native Court Workers. The community will have supports for: legal clinics by access Pro Bono, Family Justice, Specialized Victims Assistance, Restorative Justice etc.

**Community Healing and Gatherings:** over several months (summer to fall) the Public Safety Team will host strength-based healing and wellness based on a holistic model of health and prevention and treatment. The integral focus and wellness are through the balance and inter-connectedness of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of being. The promotion, incorporation, and protection of traditional medicines and practices - traditional healers and models of wellness. The gatherings will provide a space for Traditional and Western ways. The goals are to redesign programs and services as well as the broader work to create strategies and advance health actions to a holistic model. The community members will define their preferences: talking circles on 'Defining Wellness from a Traditional Perspective'.