



2020 - 2021



**SDHHS**

Saskatchewan Deaf and  
Hard of Hearing Services

Bridging the Gap

# ANNUAL REPORT

*Celebrating 40 Years*





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**@sdhhsinc**

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# VISION & VALUES

**SDHHS has been Serving Saskatchewan since 1981**

## OUR MISSION

To support the independence of Deaf, Deafened and Hard of Hearing people by providing services which enhance their quality of life.

## OUR VISION

A world without barriers for people who are Deaf, Deafened, or Hard of Hearing.

## OUR VALUES

- Communication with respect, dignity, and cultural sensitivity.
- Collaboration and cooperation among individuals and communities.
- Self-determination, empowerment, and choice.
- Operational integrity and accountability that inspires trust.
- Accessibility.







# WHO WE ARE

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Gord Hein.....President  
Michelle Grodecki.....Vice President  
Jessica Tiefenbach.....Secretary  
Art Hillcox.....Treasurer  
Paulette Smith.....Director  
Elmer Olson.....Director  
Mustafa Alabssi.....Director  
Ashley Bucknall.....Director  
Fatima Nafisa.....Director  
Gale Estell.....Director

## REGINA OFFICE:

Karen Nurkowski.....Interpreter  
  
Patti Spicer.....Vocational Worker &  
Early Childhood and  
Family Services  
  
Rochelle Carty-Bauman....Sign Support Professional

## SASKATOON OFFICE:

Nairn Gillies.....Executive Director  
Kami Harbidge.....Executive Assistant  
Human Resources  
Finance  
  
Rose Wu.....Office Coordinator  
  
Sue Schmid.....Interpreter  
Tyler Burgess.....Interpreter  
Dean Wiebe.....Interpreter  
  
Jody Thompson.....Vocational Worker &  
Youth Worker  
  
Robyn Holmes.....Early Childhood, Youth  
and Family Services  
  
Nicole Musey.....Sign Support Professional  
& 4C Preschool Teacher  
SonJa VanEe.....Education Assistant  
Alyson Hein.....Substitute EA  
Lisa Hale.....Substitute EA  
Andrea Paquin.....Substitute EA

**A BIG Thank you to the Board and Staff of SDHHS for all your amazing work through this last year!**



# THANK YOU!

## **FREELANCE CNS PROVIDERS**

Donna Whitelaw  
Rhonda Leier  
Heather Reynoldson

## **FREELANCE INTERPRETERS**

Carla Klassen  
Maureen Stuart  
Krissy Haines

## **DEAF INTERPRETER**

Janet Dittrick

## **ASL INSTRUCTORS**

Twayla Chartrand  
Caroline Bergbusch  
Nicole Musey

## **JANITORIAL STAFF**

Evan Auger  
Sonya Rees

## **CONTRACT WORKERS**

Shelly Carver  
Scot Earl  
Krissy Haines  
Alanda McLeod  
Adam Stratychuk  
Lisa Hale  
Sheri Chambers



# THANK YOU!

**TO OUR VOLUNTEERS ACROSS SASKATCHEWAN!**

## **REGINA**

Oscar Grodecki  
Mustafa Alabssi  
Fatima Natifisa  
Isaac Marsden  
Kainat Wahid  
Amna Wahid

## **SASKATOON**

Noah VanEe  
Matlin Cajipo  
Lezli-Jo Trofimenkoff  
Paulette Smith  
Art Hillcox  
Ashley Corriveau  
Robert Hutchinson  
Lucille Hutchinson  
Lana Janzen

## **FORT QU'APPELLE**

Kevin Goodfeather

## **PRINCE ALBERT**

Alanda McLeod  
Sue Schmid

## **WARMAN**

Gord Thompson  
Norma Thompson

## **MONTREAL LAKE**

Burton Bird

# SDHHS BOARD President's Message Gord Hein

Margaret Mead, American cultural anthropologist said:

**“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”**

I would like to thank the members of Saskatchewan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services for the opportunity to serve as President. I would also like to thank the Board of Directors for their continued service and support for the MISSION of SDHHS and in helping to **Bridge the Gap**.

We have lived through a year of Covid-19, and SDHHS has been able to continue the services with d/Deaf, deafened, deaf + and hard of hearing (DHH) people in Saskatchewan. Some of the changes have improved how we can provide services for the citizens of Saskatchewan, which include ASL/English Interpretive Services, Vocational Services, Early Childhood Family Support, ASL Classes, CCCC Pre-School and Sign Support Services.

The services that SDHHS continues to provide for DHH people of Saskatchewan contribute to enhancement of their lives. Early screening of infants for hearing loss is happening throughout the Province of Saskatchewan to identify and provide early intervention for children.

SDHHS continues to be innovative and in the foreground promoting accessibility for DHH people. I would like to give a BIG SHOUT OUT to all the staff at SDHHS for the work that they continue to do in these unusual times. The new SDHHS website is AMAZING and fun.

We are continuing to work with the Government of Saskatchewan to receive funding to operate the programs and services across the Province. We have a multitude of challenges that face us as we continue to “Bridge the Gap”.

The inability to gather as groups of people has been difficult and quite isolating on all of us. We are continuing on the journey in Saskatchewan to re-open as the rates of Covid-19 are continuing to drop.

I look forward, as do many people, to a time when we can see each others' faces in person, which is so essential to good communication. I am incredibly thankful for the technology that exists today as it allows us to stay connected from a distance.

We also look forward to continued expansion of services for the people of Saskatchewan and I would like to thank Nairn Gilles and Kami Harbidge for their leadership and direction at SDHHS

It is important to remember Helen Keller's words: **“I seldom think about my limitations and they never make me sad. Perhaps there is a yearning at times; but it is vague, perhaps like a breeze among flowers”**

Respectfully submitted,

Gordon Hein,  
President of SDHHS Board of Directors



# SDHHS Executive Director's Message Nairn Gillies

**“Kids are amazing – we just need to give them the tools and support to succeed!”**

Debbie Thompson, B.Ed. B.A. M.Ed. Government of Saskatchewan  
Senior Policy and Program Consultant.

Recently, in our office, I had the opportunity to watch a young family with a small child who is d/Deaf. This young mother was signing back and forth to her daughter beautifully, using her voice to talk and her hands to sign. The daughter quickly became engaged with Robyn Holmes, our Early Childhood and Family Service Worker (ECFS), and this little girl was playing and signing, asking questions and giving answers expressively in sign language. When I spoke to the mother and said how good she was signing, she said “it was because they were involved with the 4C Preschool, and had one-to-one time with the Preschool Teacher, Nicole Musey.”

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (SHRC) talks about the three pillars of human rights; Rights, Responsibility, and Respect. I have come to understand how important respectful communication really is. On the SHRC website, there is a picture of our Deputy Premier Gordon Wyant with the SHRC Commissioner David Arnot, giving a high-five to a d/Deaf child, with his mother. The dignitaries from Saskatchewan's highest level of government met at the level of the children, communicated respectfully, and built relationships with them and their families. They willingly became students of the Deaf Instructor, and openly received new information about a new and different mode of communication.

Bill C- 81, The Accessible Canada Act was passed in 2019. Frank Felino from the Canadian Association of the Deaf (CAD) made an excellent presentation to the senate.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elzwC7awwvA>) Bill C-81 was aimed at “enhancing the full and equal participation of all persons, especially persons with disabilities in society”. He suggested amendments to that act, that made royal assent last year. Bill C-81 recognizes American Sign Language, LSQ, and Indigenous Sign Language as the languages of the d/Deaf in Canada.



ASL standards have been established by the CAD and the Sign Language Instructors of Canada (SLIC). The CAD has an ASL Proficiency Interview (ASLPI), which is their rating scale. This is one of the tools we have been using to assess Sign Language Instructors and Interpreters in Saskatchewan as well. Recently the Regina Public Schools recognized the CAD ASLPI as a way for them to gauge sign language proficiency, to make informed choices for Teachers of the Deaf.

# CONTINUED....

The Saskatchewan Government has recognized the value of providing ASL classes in the school system, and has been working on ASL curriculums for the grade 10, 11, and 12 levels. They have had consultations with Instructors in Saskatchewan and members of the d/Deaf community across Canada.

In an effort to build and bridge better communication with the d/Deaf community, members of the Disability Legislation Team worked with our staff to interpret their engagement package. The information was interpreted, and made available online. Leaders in the Deaf community set up a Zoom follow-up meeting with the representatives from the team to raise d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing specific concerns.

SDHHS has been working to eliminate barriers in relation to accessibility as well. Funding was granted to SDHHS that allowed us to create packages for children called ASL Activity Kits. These ASL Activity Kits will give early access to literacy and language, allow children use their imagination, fine motor skills, and help develop their communication skills. They allow our ECFS Workers to connect with children and families, and support them with holistic learning opportunities.

Respectful communication is not only from government to families and children and government to d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing community leaders. There has been much respectful communication in coffee chats, with seniors and youth groups, and in activities for young people being part of the community. Book clubs and many events make everyone feel welcomed and included.

During the pandemic we have found that exclusion can happen very easily, especially with those who are Hard of Hearing. While accommodating d/Deaf individuals with Interpreters has been very successful at the Legislature, there are those who rely on captioning or reading lips that have often been left without access because of masks, physical distancing or other barriers. Barriers to access can be as simple as no access to batteries for your hearing aids or can be complicated due to socioeconomic status and the inability to afford a hearing aid at all. These barriers cause individuals to wait for accessibility which leads to a delay in communication abilities, isolation, or limited access to information.

Working with the Ministries of the Government of Saskatchewan to address accessibility issues is now, and always will be, a place for respectful communication. While many long-standing issues have been addressed, there remains much work to be done by all of us to create a more inclusive province.

Nairn Gillies,  
Executive Director

## ***Celebrating 40 Years!***

# SDHHS: A YEAR IN REVIEW



- SDHHS Offices closed to the public on March 18th 2020 due to COVID-19, some staff continued working in-office and some staff worked from home.
- Offices re-opened to the public on August 10th, 2020 and SDHHS was able to safely have appointments and small workshops.
- SDHHS Offices were closed to the public again as of December 11th, 2020 due to COVID-19, and all staff continued their work, working at home.
- Zoom Coffee Chats were hosted online to allow the community to feel connected.
- Zoom Staff Meetings were hosted every Wednesday morning.
- Regina and Saskatoon offices hosted a Holiday Scavenger Hunt on the same day in December to spread cheer.
- Youth and Adult workshops were hosted on Zoom and a few in-person, small, safe gatherings were facilitated as well.
- Book Clubs were hosted on Zoom 4 times a month, with a new book every month.
- Connected with clients and community through Video Calls.
- Virtual classes and in-person classes for the 4C Preschool students and families continued throughout the school year.
- Interpreting for Saskatchewan residents was offered through Zoom, FaceTime and Skype.
- Staff had the choice to work from home or in one of the offices.
- SDHHS created and launched a new SDHHS website and updated and printed new leaflets about our services.

# We Re-Vamped Something...

It's Re-fresh Time! (In other words, improve, modernize, streamline?)

This past year, SDHHS has re-vamped the organization's website, leaflets and newsletters. Take a look below, or even better go and look at [www.sdhhs.com](http://www.sdhhs.com)

What's new on the website you ask?

- ASL Accessible website
- Events Page
- E-mail directly from our website
- and MUCH more!

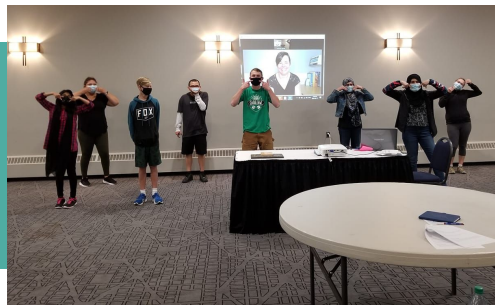
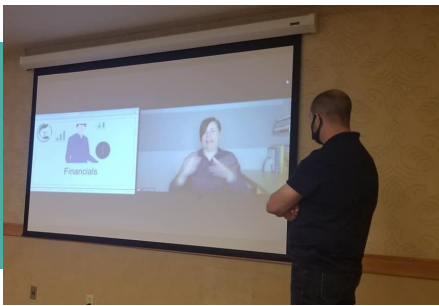
Many thanks to the SDHHS Staff for taking part and making this happen!





# Vocational Education & Employment

As many other reports from this past year probably state at the beginning, it has been a challenging year for us in the Vocational Department at SDHHS. For the majority of the year, the Vocational Workers were working remotely, from home, to ensure the safety of both our consumers and our coworkers. In doing so, we attended many appointments and hosted workshops online through various sources such as Skype, Facebook Messenger video, Teams, and Zoom. At the beginning of the year, we were doing a lot of crisis management in helping consumers who were laid off, needing Employment Insurance, or to apply for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). Many informational videos were made and posted to social media, so that we could support consumers not yet registered with us by relaying important information. Many of our consumers were not familiar with the new technology we were using and we needed to make sure that they were learning along with us in the pandemic. Then, as things seemed to re-open, we were helping consumers in their employment searching and with re-entry to jobs.



In Regina in August, and in Saskatoon in September, we hosted Handsigns workshops. These were workshops designed to show consumers that they can turn a hobby or an interest into a small business. We taught them how to stencil wooden signs that included American Sign Language (ASL) handshapes and talked about costs, time & effort, resale value, and had a small business presentation from Leah at the Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf. Leah brought important business aspect to the workshops including business registrations, explanations of business plans, GST, advertising, etc. It was interesting and held everyone's attention, with many questions at the end! At the end of each of these workshops, we booked time to sell at a marketplace in both Regina and Saskatoon. The participants took shifts working at the markets and sold the products they made. This was a great success; setting up a business from start to selling showed the participants how much work goes into being a maker and running a small business.

# CONTINUED...

SDHHS also hired a Language & Life Skills Coach, through the Vocational Department, on a small contract to start working one-to one with a newcomer/registered consumer who needed enhanced language supports to become employable. We then realized that another consumer who is Deaf + needed more one-to-one supports as well and hired a second contract worker, who is Deaf, to work casually as a Language & Life Skills Coach with this consumer to enhance language and understanding. We are currently still working with both of these Language & Life Skills Coaches to ensure there is continued support for these consumers as they are learning more ASL and English and attempting new milestones in their lives.

October 2020 we hosted a sewing workshop in Regina, again focusing on building small businesses. Leah from OCSD presented for us again, bringing new information about business plans and establishing rates, cost vs. sales, building clientele, and much more. We had full intentions of hosting this same workshop in Saskatoon shortly after, but due to announcements surrounding COVID-19 numbers increasing from the Saskatchewan government, we were forced to cancel the Saskatoon workshop.



# CONTINUED...

In November 2020, some SDHHS Staff, including 1 Vocational Worker, joined an online membership meeting for SLIC (Sign Language Institute of Canada). This was to help support SLIC in developing a Canada-wide standardization of levels for ASL. The standardization of ASL levels will help in hiring/employment and in education situations, to identify what language level people have and can effectively communicate with. On December 11, 2020, SDHHS closed and Staff worked remotely from home full-time.

In January, 2021, the Vocational Workers started to plan various workshops and informational sessions that could be hosted online for the year. We continued to support our consumers, although our supports looked a bit different at the beginning of the year, as we were concerned with isolation and mental health of the d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing population in Saskatchewan. We helped to host some general community coffee chats to ensure people were staying connected, and still hosted many appointments with our consumers on Zoom. In February, we were offered an Employment for Deaf Youth webinar through the Canadian Association of the Deaf (CAD). This was an amazing opportunity to offer to the youth, aged 16 - 30, in Saskatchewan. We were also then asked if we'd be willing to present at this webinar - so we partnered with CAD and our Regina Vocational Worker presented at this webinar. It was a great opportunity for SDHHS to partner with a national organization and help to provide information to individuals across Canada. CAD hosted other employment readiness workshops throughout February and March which we encouraged our 16 - 30 year old consumers to attend.

The Vocational Workers have many more exciting workshops and activities planned for the upcoming fiscal year. They include a Google Drive workshop, Photography business sessions, ASL Children's Instructor training, and other great ideas! We look forward to being able to work safely, in-person with our consumers once again soon.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Spicer & Jody Thompson

# Interpreting

With all non-essential businesses closed by provincial mandate; the team continued to provide virtual interpretation when needed. SDHHS designated iPads to the emergency rooms of 7 major hospitals across the province to ensure access to emergency medical interpretation. Initially, the bulk of interpretation work was done remotely from newly created home offices. Eventually as business, health, justice and educational processes began to move forward, interpretation demand also began to increase both on-line and in person. In-person appointments occurred on an as-need basis to ensure health and safety of all in the community. The physical SDHHS offices were closed but all staff continued to work from home. Like other demographics, interpreters learned to navigate the various protocols set out by the government and anxiously await the roll out of the newly released vaccines.

The Government of Saskatchewan worked with SDHHS to have all there COVID health updates in ASL which was wonderful to see. Thank you to Karen who looked after the majority of these requests and the other interpreters who made this possible.

Our hats off to the resilient members of the Saskatchewan Deaf Community! Together we have figured out various platforms such as Zoom, Pexip, MS Teams, Skype, FaceTime etc. to allow for interpretation to occur. The challenges included holding a phone in one hand, signing with the other; finding a strong WiFi signal or using data; proper lighting; muted mics and so much more. Thank you for staying positive and flexible during these Covid times.

Thank you,

**Sue Schmid**-Prince Albert

**Karen Nurkowski**-Regina

**Dean Wiebe & Tyler Burgess**-Saskatoon



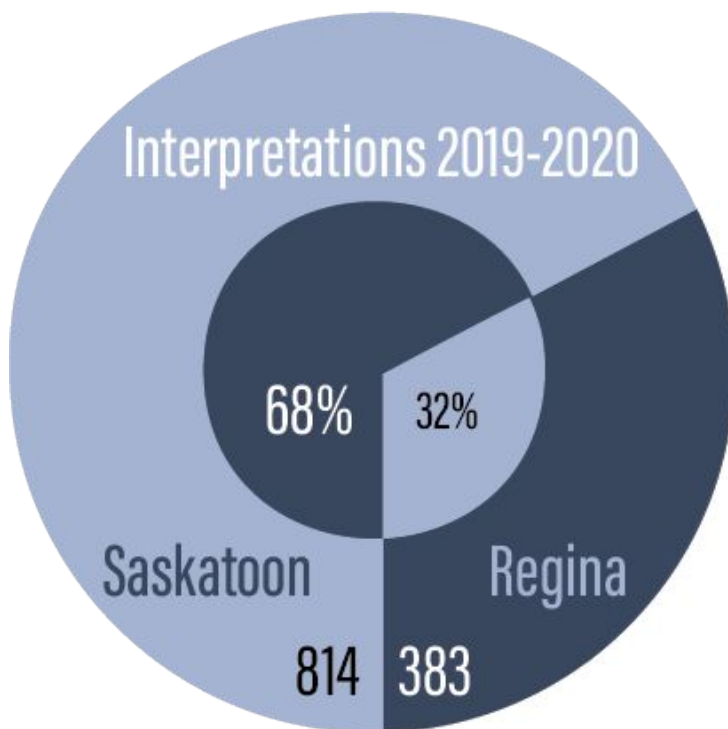
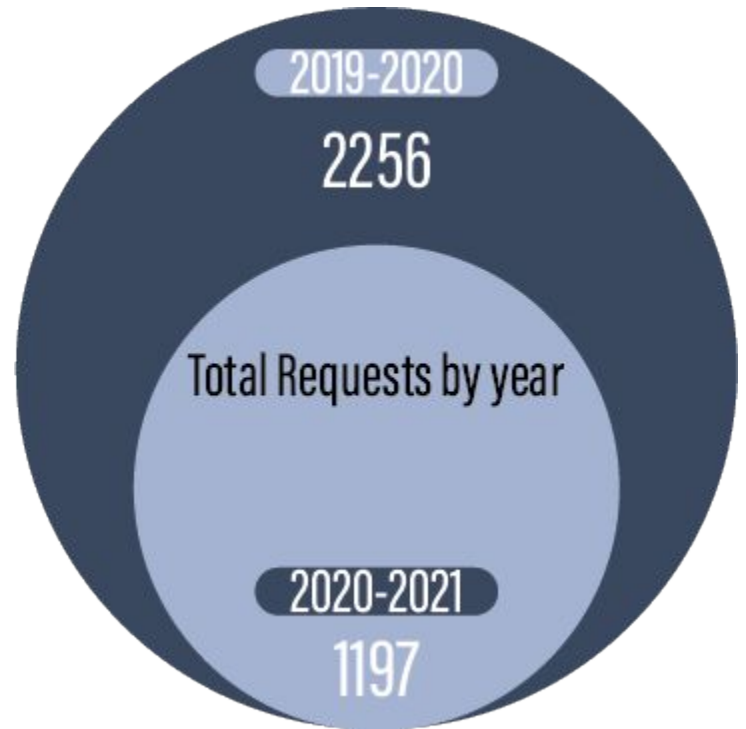


# CONTINUED...

Total hours interpreted: 1197

This was the first, full year with online interpretation options.

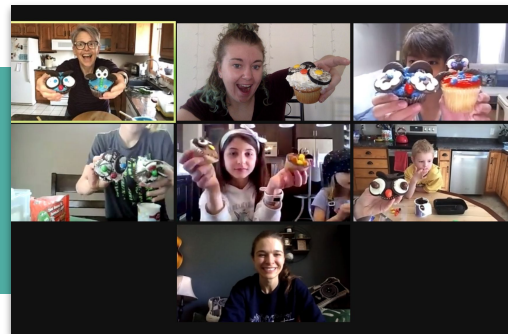
Some months were almost entirely online interpretations, while in-person appointments are once again becoming more popular.



On the whole, April 2020 – March 2021 saw an almost even split between the two modalities. Online interpretation has allowed interpreters to work anywhere in the province as opposed to our traditional North/South split between Regina and Saskatoon. In those traditional boundaries 68% of these interpreted hours originated from the Saskatoon area this year.

# Sign Support Professional

Rochelle worked as a Sign Support Professional (SSP) out of the Regina office, and Nicole was the Saskatoon SSP. Nicole continued to stay in contact with her clients and worked closely with Patti, Robyn, Sue, Jody, and Rochelle throughout the year on a variety of projects. They were an amazing team. She was also involved in various events and activities including the Holiday Scavenger Hunt. Nicole helped with the ASL Activity Kit project during the Spring 2021, by signing ASL storybooks on camera, cutting papers, creating crafts, games, and more! The SSP position is an interesting position because it involved a lot of different roles in the office and in the community. It was a very positive experience!



Rochelle started the SSP position in Regina in September 2020. The position has various duties for the d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing youth. They aimed to empower learners using different ASL strategies, hosting community events to promote youth inclusion from ages 6-21, and help increase the youths' leadership skills. This year has been a busy year running various activities. It was a pleasure to meet more youth in the community of Saskatchewan.

With a big start, the team hosted the Sign Language Institute Canada (SLIC) session with Gary Malowski and Angela Stratiy with over 40 participants via Zoom in November. This allowed us to learn what the Sign Language Institute Canada is and why it is essential for us to be a part of it.



# CONTINUED...

In December, Board Games via Zoom was the first youth gathering event! A few of us played different games including online Boggle, Pictionary, and Cards. It was a good start to the year!

The Holiday Scavenger Hunt took place all across Saskatchewan, in December, with eight families participating from Regina. The families hunted for and discovered different things and places by following a scavenger hunt list. Once the items were located around their city/town participants took pictures and selfies as they went, and posted most of their photos to social media with our hashtag #sdhhsphotothat.



We also hosted February Break Youth Events for five high schoolers during the youths' school break in February. One week, we had three special guests that provided different workshops. These workshops included: **Deaf Spectrum** with Sage Lovell from Ontario, **Budget/Finance Workshop** with Andrew Stadnicki from Ontario, and **Arts Workshop** with Jenny Hans from British Columbia. We finished the week with an outdoor skating activity on a beautiful day! Check the recap video out by using this link: <https://youtu.be/V8VFauISvqs>

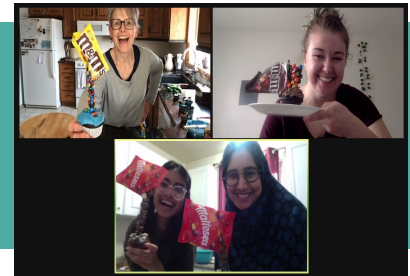
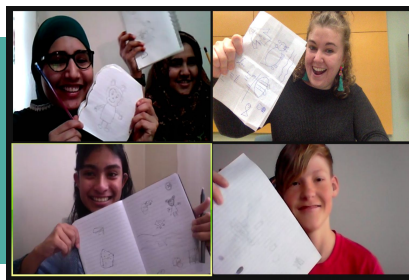


Youth Club occurred every Saturday from 10-11 am in May for d/Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and CODA 6-13 years old. We had 8 participants on average. Each Saturday had ice breaker activities, and we hosted two special guests on different Saturdays; Deaf artist Jenny Hans, and Baking with Sue Schmid to wrap it up. In June, the community of Saskatchewan was asked to show off their talents on the SDHHS Saskatchewan's Got Talent LIVE! We witnessed 12 talented participants share their magical skills! To end of the show, we ask viewers to vote online for their top 3 favorites! We gave fun prizes to the 3 winners. Miss the show?! Worry not. Here is a link to the video to it check out!

<https://youtu.be/Uypmhuu9BBs>



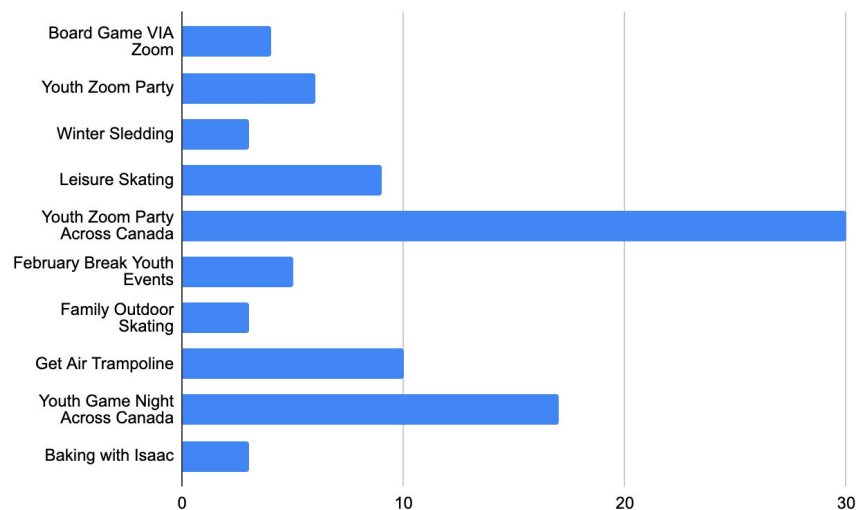
# CONTINUED...



## Youth Assistant/ Social Development

Isaac Marsden, our part-time Youth Assistant/Social Developer, has been planning fun activities for youth in Saskatchewan! He had arranged the activities, wrote proposals, created flyers, and did ASL videos to advertise. In January 2021, we hosted the first Game Night Across Canada played on Zoom! It was a successful night. There were around 30 participants ranging from 13-21 years old. We played various games online, and it was FUN! In March, we had an in-person activity at Get Air Trampoline in Regina. We owned the place! The participants jumped and ran everywhere; from corner to corner in the building, especially in the glow in the dark jumping area! Check out the recap video of the jump at Air Trampoline:

<https://youtu.be/KzxdFWKD7xo>



In closing, we are grateful to have made many events happen through Zoom and for the opportunity to work with and mentor Isaac to run the youth activities.

Rochelle Carty-Bauman  
Nicole Musey



# Early Childhood and Family Services

The Early Childhood and Family Services (ECFS) program had an interesting year during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020/2021. There were good times and challenging times, but Robyn and Patti were determined to continue the SDHHS ECFS program with the hope that things would continue to get better!

During the pandemic, we learned a lot of technology, and that there were a couple of challenges in working with young kids online. Not only us, but the children's parents were finding it challenging as well. We continued meeting with some families on Zoom, but a couple of our clients decided to wait until pandemic is over. With the COVID restrictions, we had to cancel a couple of in-person events and think of other ways to keep families engaged and host events and activities online.



We continued teaching American Sign Language (ASL) to children that are d/Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and/or those with Cochlear Implants, and their families. In the Fall, we hosted Max the Deaf Mime, and close to Christmas we hosted a Holiday Scavenger Hunt for families across Saskatchewan. We noticed a need for gathering and community, and came up with the idea to host online Coffee Chats on Tuesdays at noon. Coffee Chats continued for many months, which proved the need to lessen the isolation happening in the community. Robyn got in touch with a couple of different organizations across Canada to see what other programs were/are offering for children through their organizations. Also, we attended workshops for professional development, to educate ourselves more in what we can offer through the ECFS Program.

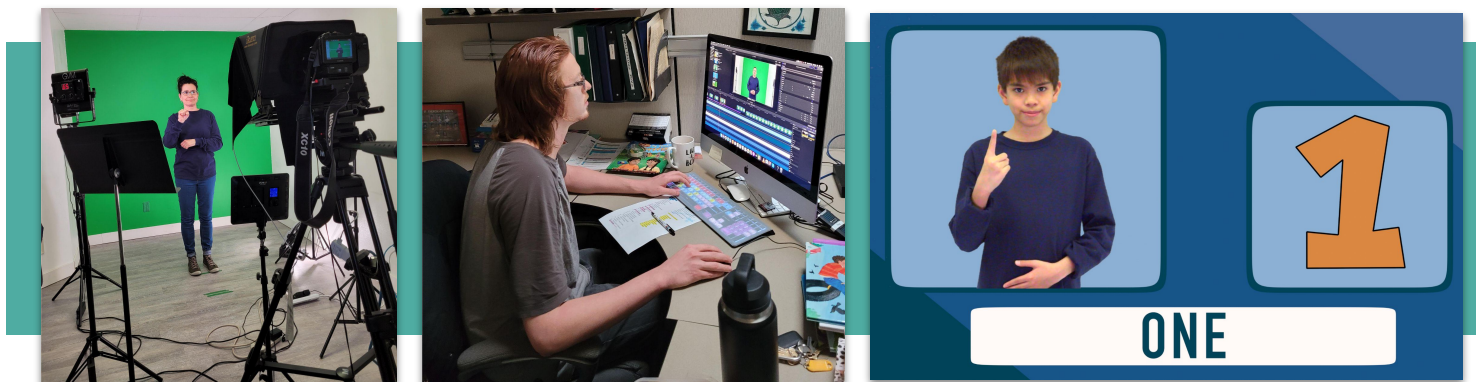


# CONTINUED...

After Christmas, Robyn started working in the Saskatoon office almost everyday, instead of working at home (the office was closed to the public, but staff could choose to work at home or in the office). SDHHS received a grant for a Pilot Project called ASL Activity Kits. The ASL Activity Kits will be for d/Deaf or Hard of Hearing children to encourage early access to language and literacy. The funding came from the Emergency Community Support Fund (through the Community Foundations of Canada).



Robyn and coworkers brainstormed, created goals for each kit, and researched a lot of books and information to ensure that the content in the kits matched the 5 levels and the 7 early learning categories. The categories include: Literacy & Language, Mental Health & Wellness, Health and Hygiene, Social Inclusion & Learning, The World Outside, Just for Fun, and at lastly Birthdays! Each of the ASL Activity Kits includes a book, a USB with the ASL version of the book, follow-up questions in ASL to help initiate conversations, vocabulary flashcards, activities, games, and crafts that match the theme of the book and its category.



Once we ordered and then received the 35 books, we had SDHHS Interpreters help us pre-interpret some of the books. SDHHS Deaf Interpreters then pre-interpreted the books so our volunteers could visually see how the book was interpreted to ASL, and have suggestions on how to sign the full book. This also helped them to see how to film with a greenscreen background and made them more comfortable on camera. We had d/Deaf, Hard of Hearing, hearing, Cochlear Implant, and CODA makers, illustrators, photo editors, video editors and volunteers helping to make the ASL Activity Kits a success! We are looking forward to seeing the finished products which will be 105 ASL Activity Kits for d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing children in Saskatchewan. Many thanks to the grant provider and all of our volunteers!

Sincerely,  
Robyn Holmes & Patricia Spicer

This year was unlike any previous year! The 4C Preschool transferred to a in class,, remote and online learning with our students. There were some challenges, but also positive experiences. The parents were amazing supporters, ensuring that the kids received a proper education by keeping them engaged online and enjoying learning new things in our Preschool Zoom sessions. We developed the “Craft Box” system; every two weeks we packed a variety of themed crafts, games, worksheets, and stories. Teacher Nicole drove to each students’ home and dropped off the craft box at their front doors. Sometimes we would send a list of supply items that the parents needed to pack in a plastic bag and place by their front door so Teacher Nicole could pick it up to bring back to the Preschool for another time.

We hosted individual zoom sessions with each student. We hosted Family Day involvement events that included ice skating, farm tours, and some group Zoom sessions in addition to the regular school sessions. We chose to integrate 30-minute Zoom sessions because we found that students had a hard time keeping focus for long periods of time online. The Preschool students are 3 or 4 years old and have limits to their attention span on a computer. We kept Zoom sessions simple and engaged students by choosing various storybooks, crafts, and games that are based on our monthly themes. We also used SeeSaw to keep connected with the students and parents, posting pictures and providing extra activities to keep their learning continuous.

Sonja and Alyson were also huge supports as our Teacher Assistants this year! They helped and supported by preparing the Craft Boxes and co-teaching during the Zoom sessions. We are strongly supportive of bi-bi learning which incorporates English and American Sign Language. During storybook times, Teacher Nicole signed based on each page, and then our Teacher Assistants voiced the English written on each page. This ensures each student has full access to both languages in their education at 4C Preschool.



We are looking forward to this Fall as we return to full-time, in-person learning, in a regular classroom at St. Augustine School on Boychuk Drive. We are super thankful for St. Therese Lisieux School and Saskatchewan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services for all they have done for the 4C Preschool program so far!

Nicole Musey

# ASL Class

During the first Great Lockdown back in March 2020, all SDHHS ASL classes switched to online learning, using Zoom. The Instructors, Nicole, Twyla, and Caroline continued teaching classes through Zoom during the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021.

## **Regina:**

Some ASL students were from, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, and Regina. It was amazing to see the students from cities all over. Challenges were had with computer technical problems, but we managed very well. I enjoyed teaching online because I didn't worry about carrying the heavy things to and from the classes.

-Caroline

## **Regina:**

9 students registered for level 101 but some withdrew due to a variety of reasons. 5 students passed and completed the course. We had a good class this year despite some couldn't continue the class due to personal reasons. Some of them want to take it again in the future.

-Twyla

## **Saskatoon:**

In Fall 2020, Nicole had 14 students participate in Level 1 and 9 students registered in Level 2. Then in Spring 2021, the number of students in Level 1 was 11. Nicole held classes from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, Mondays and Wednesdays, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays (depending on the level). She enjoyed teaching ASL on Zoom. It was a different experience and she's proud of her students' motivation and improvement in sign language skill and knowledge of Deaf culture.

-Nicole Musey





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