

## *Windsong Child and Family Services: A New Direction*

On November 30, 1994, the Minister of Family and Social Services announced a plan for a new approach to delivering children's services. To support the new way of providing services, the government would establish Authorities with boundaries the same as the Regional Health Authorities. Within each Region, a Regional Steering Committee would be appointed to coordinate a community planning process to develop a service plan for the Region over a three-year time frame. Based on the Service Plan, Child & Family Services Authorities would be established to administer the new system in the Region.

Windsong Child & Family Services was formed after several years of consultations with communities planning with them, and production, specifically, of three important documents.

Firstly, a Steering Committee of interested and committed community volunteers appointed by the Provincial Government, engaged in a three-year process with communities in Region 3 geographical area. The Purpose of this community development process was to gain community (and specific stakeholder) input to develop plans for supporting in a better way than had been done in the past, families and communities. The vehicle for achieving this was the Service Plan, which created a new foundation for a different way of delivering services to children and families. The Service Plan for Region 3 was approved by Government in March 1998.

Secondly, on June 1, 1998, Board members of Region 3 Authority were appointed by Minister Pearl Calahasen, and were charged with , amongst other things, the development of a Strategic Plan for Windsong Region. That plan was completed several months ago and became the "fuel" for the Board's Business Plan.

Thirdly, and lastly, the Board was required to develop a Business Plan (and operational plan and budget) that is the template for the provision of services to/for Region 3.

A Business Plan that is the template for the provision of services to/for Region 3 was recently delivered to Government and is awaiting approval. An Operational Plan is currently being finalized by Windsong.

All of what Windsong (and the other 17 Authorities across Alberta) has done and must do, must be consistent with its legislated mandate, and is required to meet the intent of the redesign of services for children and families. Windsong must ensure (and had made a commitment to Government and communities it serves) that it meets the intent of four planning "pillars" or principles of the Initiative:

**Integrated Services:** Planning and service delivery will be integrated at the community, regional and provincial levels to facilitate barrier-free access to holistic services for children and families.

**Community Based Services:** Communities support the principle of participation and access for all. The role of natural helpers, support networks and cultural groups will be respected. Professional delivery of service will continue.

**Improved Services to Aboriginal People:** The responsibilities for planning and delivering services for Aboriginal children and families will be transferred to Aboriginal communities. Planning and service delivery will reflect the values, beliefs and customs of First Nations, Metis and other Aboriginal people in a respectful, collaborative way.

**Focus on Early Intervention:** Regions will provide an array of timely, accessible services to assist/support children and families to develop skills to build on their strengths and reduce the need for crisis intervention. The term “early” encompasses all definitions’ from providing services for very young children and parents, to intervention aimed at reducing or averting crisis.

## Integration

Both the Integration and Aboriginal Committees were struck to work on the Service Plan, involving members from partnering authorities.

We have heard from every sector of the community about the *critical* necessity for integration of services, how children and families have suffered because of lack of integration.

Integration is the planning and delivery of services by all partners in a seamless, co-ordinated way that focuses on needs of children and families. The focus of our Plan is on co-ordination that empowers communities to seek family and child centered solutions to needs. Integration must occur at all levels to make Region 3’s Plan effective: Ministries of the Government, local Authorities, community agencies and community members must all be involved and committed to keeping focus on meeting the needs of children and families in a seamless manner.

To help “gel” the pillar of integration in our Plan, an Integration sub-committee worked with others (Justice, AFSS, FCSS, Headwaters Health Authority and Education) to actively identify barriers and solutions to integration. So we have actually worked for several months to this point in order to lay a good working framework for integration AND to write into our Plan the function of the Regional Integration Group. This will include community members and agencies that fund and have a vested interest in integrated planning and delivery of services to children (Health, Justice, FCSS, AFSS, Community Development and Aboriginal service providers). Through this group (which we have identified as the “oil” in our schematic representation of our Integration Delivery Model) initiatives for integration will be developed, roadblocks removed. The groups initiative will be influenced largely by experiences and challenges of front line workers. The integration group will act as a resource to the Regional Authority and the partnering authorities.

Provision has also been made for the possibility of creating *local* integration groups throughout the Region, again emphasis being in swift removal of barriers and developing of new and creative initiatives to keep the services focussed on community and family based needs – to keep this whole initiative creative, alive, sustainable, relevant.

Integration has already been demonstrated through several pilot projects:

- Integration in action – the integration sub-committee itself.
- Call to Action, organized by the Foothills School Division, focusing on addressing the complexity of social problems schools find themselves dealing with daily.

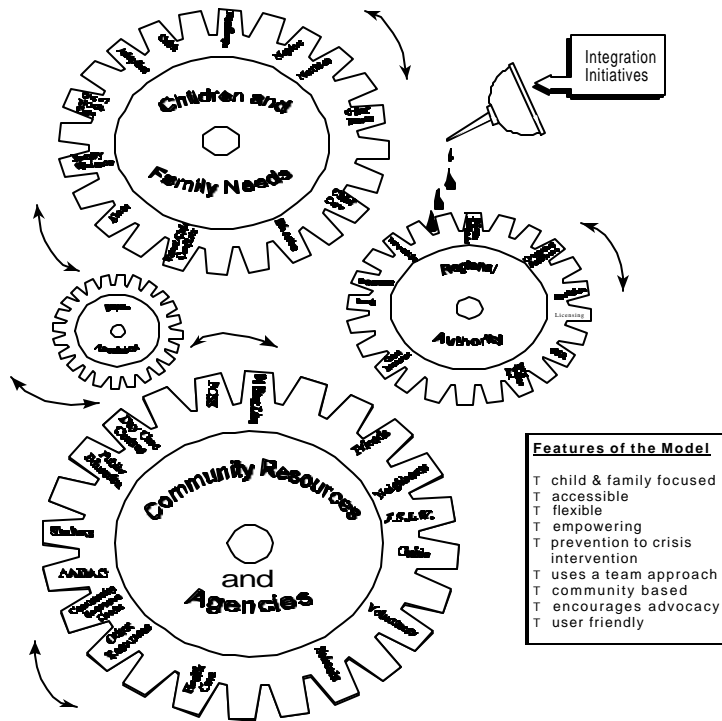
- Participation on Provincial and Region Fetal Alcohol Effects/Syndrome Committee.
- Healthy Okotoks – a consortium of agencies and community members focusing on community wellness and other.

The furtherance of integration will be achieved through pilot projects involving other organized focus groups on special issues, co-location and integrated information systems.

Practical issues that the Integration Group will grapple with include lack of resources for children 14-18, integration of service agencies and ministries involved with adoptions, resolution to transportation issues that negatively impact the ability of families to access services, even when they are actually available, and development of policies for service to handicapped children so that service delivery is co-ordinated/integrated.

## Integration Model

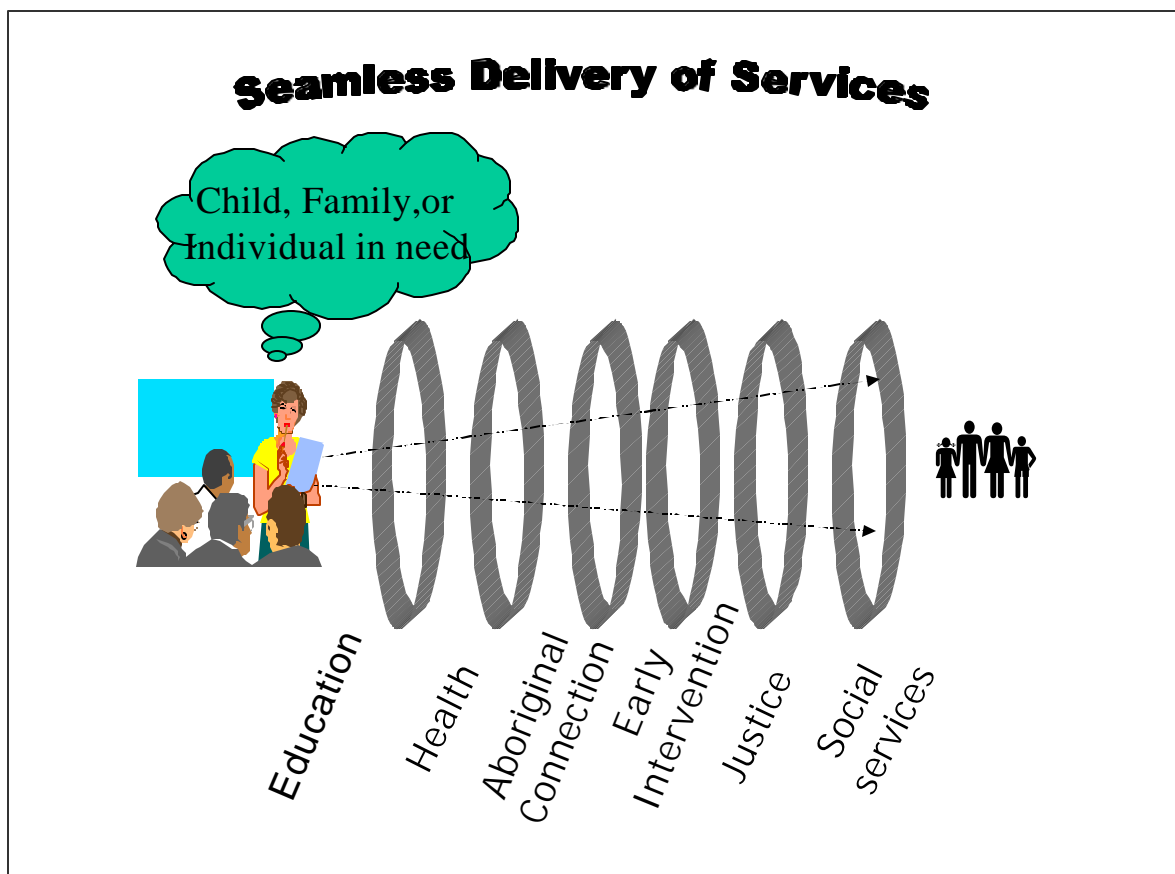
*Together, we find ways to 'mesh the gears' so that child and family issues are addressed in the community.*



## Our Ultimate Goal

Integration will be invisible to the eye of children and families – it would simply be. Services will be seamless; separation of services between service providers would not be seen or felt.

Windsong's concept of Service Delivery and its commitment to the 4 pillars, including integration, are illustrated conceptually in the attached Service Delivery Model.



Windsong's services will be available throughout the Region through the vehicle of Family Resource Centres. The attached chart, in draft form, shows the possible configuration of the geographical provision of services. (It should be noted that this is still under discussion and not yet finalized.)

It is anticipated that Windsong will have a signed agreement with the Minister of Family and Social Services during the month of May. In the interim, services will be delivered for children and families of Region 3 by Region 4 (Calgary/Rockyview Children's Authority). At the present time, we are advertising and interviewing for a CEO, social workers and administrative support staff.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Baseline Services Provided to Clients</b>	<b>Baseline Partnership</b>
High River	Base of Operations Server Support staff Cost Centre, Archives Information and referral Client Centre Board Room	Professional staff for consultation Visiting Space for partners
Banff	Visiting Space Canadian Rockies School Division Information and referral	Professional staff for consultation
Canmore	Office Server Professional Staff Support Staff Client Centre Information & referral	Professional staff for consultation Visiting Space for partners
Okotoks	Visiting Space \Scheduled Visits Information & Referral	Professional staff for consultation
Vulcan	Visiting Space \Scheduled Visits Information & Referral	Professional Staff Support Staff
Claresholm	Office Server Professional Staff Support Staff Client Centre Information & referral	Professional staff for consultation Visiting Space for partners
Lake Louise	Visiting Space on a as needed basis	Professional staff for consultation

<b>Location</b>	<b>Baseline Services Provided to Clients</b>	<b>Baseline Partnership</b>
Millarville Priddis	Visiting Space on a as needed basis	Professional staff for consultation
Black Diamond or Turner Valley	Office Professional Staff Support Staff Client Service Centre Information & referral	Professional staff for consultation Visiting Space for partners
Champion	Visiting Space on a as needed basis	
Nanton	Visiting Space \Scheduled Visits Information & Referral	Professional Staff Support Staff
Lomond	Visiting Space on a as needed basis	
Blackie	Visiting Space, on a as needed basis	
Cayley Carmangay Stavely Eshaw MD Bighorn Vulcan County MD Foothills	Multi Resource Mobile Unit	



# Meet the Board Members

## ***Andrea Fugeman-Millar, Co-Chair***

Andrea is a practicing lawyer who presently serves as a Director with Native Friendship Centre, and as well she is a member of Aboriginal Community Services. Andrea also has been actively involved with school associations and the Headwaters Health Authority.

## ***Dodie Gaudry, Co-Chair***

Dodie has served as a member of the Metis Nation's Regional Council, the Foothills Association for the Handicapped and Black Diamond Recreation Committee. As well, Dodie is a former Steering Committee Member. She currently is the President of the Alberta Metis Nation, Local 333 and lives on a farm outside of Longview.

## ***Brian Callaghan***

Brian is currently Superintendent of Schools in the Banff/Canmore area. He is the past President of the College of Alberta School Superintendents, and past Chairman of the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards. He has served on a number of education-related committees at both the provincial and national levels. Brian lives in Canmore.

## ***Sharon Davis***

In addition to serving as Director of Nanton Family and Community Support Services, Sharon has served as Chair of the Nanton Interagency and as a Board Member with the Community Education Advisory Committee and Project Read. She has also been a Steering Committee member from the inception of the planning process. She lives in Nanton.

## ***Toni Garlock***

Toni is presently Chair of the Rainbow Literacy Society and former Director of the Family Literacy Action Group. She has a masters degree in Adult Education and has volunteered on a number of community boards and associations including the Vulcan Day Care Board. Toni lives in Vulcan.

## ***Bryan Gerrie***

Bryan, a former RCMP officer, is the manager of the Credit Union in Banff. He is past Chair of Banff's Day Care Society and of the Transportation Advisory Committee. Currently he is the Chair of the Development Appeals Board for the Town of Banff where he resides.

## ***Al Hagan***

Al, a retired Social Worker currently resides in Okotoks. He is the Chair of the Michener Centre Board and has served as a Council Member with the Alberta Association of Social Workers. Al was also a member of the Region 3 Steering Committee.

## ***Marie Poelman***

Marie, who has a masters degree in administration, was previously manager of hospital services for the Rockyview Alberta Children's and Oilfields Hospital, she lives in High River and has volunteered on a number of community Boards and Associations, including 10 years as MD representative for the High River Recreation Board.

## ***Wanda Rider***

Wanda has a Life Skills Coach Certificate and a Business Management Certificate and is the mother of one child. Wanda served as a past Region 3 Steering Committee member. She lives in the Eden Valley Stoney Bearspaw First Nation community and works as a secretary at Chief Jacob Bearspaw Memorial School.



## ***Our Name: Windsong***

Wanda Rider, a Board Member from the Eden Valley Reserve, suggested the name Windsong. The Board was delighted by the images Wanda shared. The following provides the essence of the name Windsong:

### ***Wind:***

*Strength,  
Power,  
The wind brings the seasons  
It is know to have a cleansing effect*

### ***Song:***

*Song of the circle of life  
Celebration  
Song of birth/death  
Songs for the season  
Songs that tell stories  
Songs that elders sing to show respect/discipline  
Songs when boys/girls reach manhood- puberty rituals/songs*

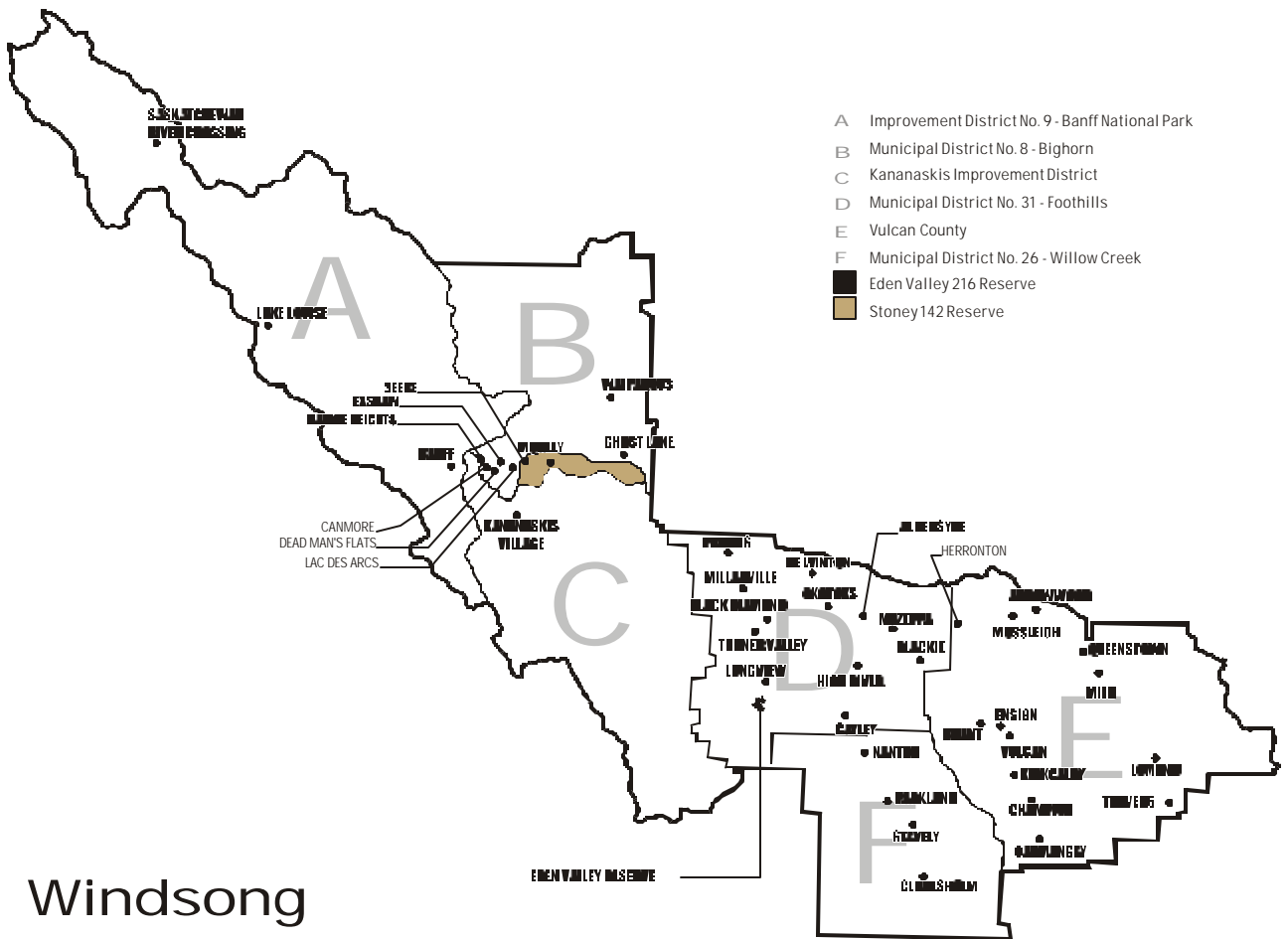
### ***Windsong***

*When I think of Windsong, many things come to mind. The wind is, and still continues, to be a powerful force that has affected our whole region. Many elders say that if we listen to the wind we can hear a song or words that may help guide us. I believe that our authority needs guidance and wisdom, and the calmness that the wind brings. With the strength of the wind we will reach our goals to better our children and families in our region.*

- Wanda Jean Rider

# Profile of the Region

Region 3 encompasses a wide range of geographical terrain including spacious prairie, rolling foothills and the Rocky Mountains. The Region skirts around the west and south sides of the City of Calgary reaching as far west as Lake Louise, as far north as Saskatchewan River Crossing and as far south as Claresholm. Included in its boundaries are: the Bow Corridor (Banff, ID #9, Canmore, Kananaskis ID, MD of Bighorn and Morley); the MD of Foothills, including Longview, Eden Valley, Black Diamond, and Turner Valley; the towns of Okotoks, High River, Nanton, the County of Vulcan, the town of Claresholm, and part of the MD of Willow Creek.



Windsong  
Child and Family  
Services

Map Produced by:  
Strategies, Communications & Research, Headwaters Health Authority  
for Windsong Child & Family Services (Feb. 1999)  
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