

## From the Executive Director

With the snow melted and the first signs of spring beginning to emerge, we're reminded of the meaning this season holds—hope, resilience, new beginnings, and connection. At the Kootenai Community Centre Society, we see these reflections every day in the people we serve and in the individuals and organizations who stand alongside us.

Our Ending the Violence programs continue to provide safety, advocacy, and compassionate support for individuals and families navigating incredibly difficult circumstances. These journeys are never easy, but they are made lighter through community—through listening, believing, and treating one another with dignity and respect.

On May 9, 2026, Ford Kokanee, in partnership with Pealow's Independent, will be supporting KCCS' Stopping the Violence Outreach program through their *Drive for Your Community* fundraiser. For every test drive, Ford of Canada will donate \$30—up to \$6,000—to support this essential program. We hope you'll join us, take a drive, and help make a difference.

In our anti-poverty work, we are continually reminded that small acts of care can have a profound impact. Whether it's helping someone access resources, sharing a meal, or creating a space where people feel seen and valued, these moments matter. They build trust, restore hope, and strengthen the fabric of our community.

In our child care programs, we see the future taking shape each day. The laughter, curiosity, and creativity of children are powerful reminders of why this work matters. By supporting families and providing safe, nurturing environments, we are investing in a stronger, more connected community for years to come.

We extend our sincere thanks to the dedicated volunteer Board of Directors of KCCS. These individuals generously contribute their time, skills, and leadership to guide the Centre's operations, ensure sound financial stewardship, and support long-term planning. Their work behind the scenes makes so much of what we do possible. At this time, KCCS is also seeking a Treasurer to join the Board. If you are interested, please visit [kootenaicommunitycentre.org](http://kootenaicommunitycentre.org) or contact our office at 250-402-0068.

None of this work happens in isolation. It is made possible through the kindness, commitment, and generosity of our staff, donors, supporters, partners, and neighbours. Each of you plays a role in creating a community where people are supported, challenges are met with compassion, and everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

As we move into this new season, we invite you to stay connected with us. Together, we continue to build something truly special.

With gratitude and hope,  
Executive Director

## Ending the Violence

As we head into the spring season, we reflect on all of the challenging and fulfilling work we do at Kootenai Community Centre Society. We feel privileged in our role providing support and advocacy to women in our community.

We continue to assist our clients through accessing housing initiatives, legal forms, court appearances, food support and a wide range of emotional support.

Housing subsidies have been especially impactful, offering women a measure of financial freedom and the ability to meet needs that may have previously been out of reach.

Understanding the basics of the BC court system has allowed us to provide our clients with some comprehension of legal proceedings and of how to navigate the court system. We also attend court with clients who request it as a means of support.

Irvine House (Safe Home), continues to be a secure and comforting refuge for women and children that need it in a time of crisis and who have nowhere else to turn. Lela's Place (Second Stage), is consistently full and gives the tenants a stable, affordable place to call home while they are working on moving forward in their lives.

Our Access to Benefits Program (ABP) is still running two times per week; Tuesday's at the library and Thursdays at Trinity Church during the Den drop in (homeless outreach). The program is always busy and is accessed regularly by people who require assistance with applications etc.

We have made some staffing changes in the last couple of months to accommodate the ever expanding need for support. Our Administrator now serves in a Support Worker Role two days a week and one of our Crisis Line Workers fills in the admin on those days.

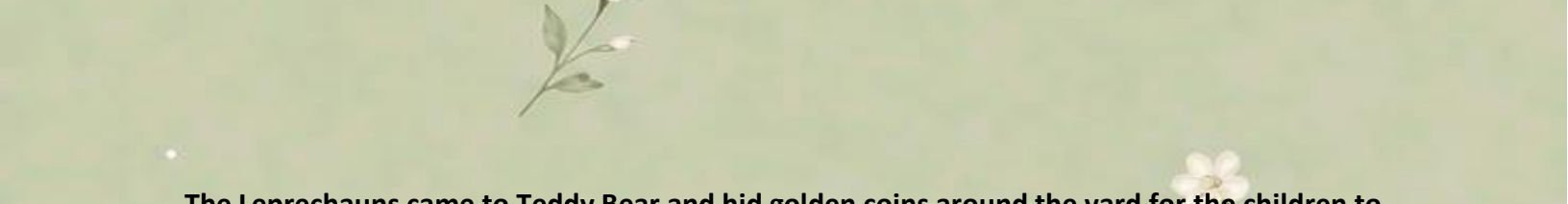
We are actively working to collaborate with other agencies/community services. Bridging the gap between the RCMP, Creston Hospital, the Den, Town of Creston and Valley Community Services has been of the utmost importance to this organization. We believe that the more we can work together in support of an individual, the more likely the outcome will be a positive one. Two of our support workers are currently taking the training to sit on the Creston Situation Table which will help to further cement these relationships.

The crisis line and support staff recently attended a 2-day training event in Cranbrook titled *When Love Hurts*. We returned with strengthened knowledge about language, barriers and lived realities that many women face. This training also allowed us to connect with teams from external communities: Cranbrook, Kimberly, Invermere, Elk Valley and Salmo. These connections will prove valuable to both the staff here and the women we work with.

## Teddy Bear Daycare

Teddy Bear started the year off waiting for the snow to fall and when it finally did the children made snow people and snow angels before it melted away.

We had a fun pajama Valentines party in February. The children exchanged Valentine cards and had party food and did some dancing.



The Leprechauns came to Teddy Bear and hid golden coins around the yard for the children to find. We had a dance party outside with our new Bluetooth speaker. It was so much fun! The Easter Bunny hid colored eggs outside, that the children decorated and eggs that had a little squishy inside. We followed that up with fun food and a dance party. We have also been doing arts and crafts with the children daily, as well as daily outside play. It has been a very fun and busy first quarter.

## **Grizzly Bear Daycare**

Happy New Year to All!! The Grizzly crew rang in the new year by making fireworks in a jar—they were fun and exciting to watch!

We have celebrated many special occasions since the start of the year. We had a pancake breakfast, made bracelets, decorated cards, and watched a movie for Valentine's Day. During Spring Break, the leprechauns left clues behind for us to follow on St. Patrick's Day. We weren't successful catching them in the traps we built, but we were very happy that the clues led us to a pot filled with chocolates wrapped in gold and leprechaun aesthetics!! The next best thing to catching a leprechaun, is dressing up as one!! The kids had a blast dancing to Irish tunes, in their new found treasures!

Over spring break, we also had a High land dance demonstration by Bree Hollis—she was fabulous!! Bravo to Bree!! We also did scavenger hunts, had a lot of outdoor play, made many crafts, did multiple science experiments, and just had fun together.

The beginning of April was Easter. We were very fortunate to have the Easter Bunny hide eggs for the children in the classroom—he is an excellent hider!! The group also enjoyed decorating/dyeing hard boiled eggs to bring home to their families.

Spring has sprung....and soon another school year will be completed. Summer at Grizzly is just around the corner and will be filled with themed weeks, outings, and sun shiney days ☺

