

ANNUAL REPORT  
2024/2025



# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

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As a Board, it has been an amazing year to see the growth in our Connexus organization.

This past year, the Board said goodbye to our long-time Chair, Tom Clements. Tom brought a tremendous amount of administration experience to our governance team. Thank you, Tom, for your past contribution.

Our success is also directly linked to the hard work of our staff. Under the leadership of our Executive Director, Paula Wylie, and her in-house leadership team and staff, programming has shown remarkable growth over the last year. Some of the projects that moved forward and continued to be developed are:

- Fraser Lake seniors housing complex
- Integration of the new accounting system
- Opening for patients of Aurora House in Vanderhoof
- Opening of Neghuni Ghunli-Un, Fort St. James new seniors housing complex
- Seniors Community Connector project
- Renovation projects for exiting buildings

As Connexus now enters into the first year of our new three-year, Strategic Plan, we see staff support for a stronger Connexus that focuses on providing stable quality programming for our communities. The staff continue to build relationships with all of our funders, communities and families, ensuring that Connexus is an active member, will meet the needs of all three communities.

As Paula Wylie, our Executive Director leaves in 2025 to pursue other career experiences, a new co-leadership staffing model will be put in place for our Executive team. The team will become stronger as they work towards our new CARF accreditation for 2025 and ensuring continued support for programming and staffing. The Board would like to thank all our new and long-time funders, exemplary staff and communities for their ongoing support in 2024. On a personal note, I would like to thank our dedicated Board for your continued support of the society.

It is an honour for our Society to be apart of your communities.

The Connexus Community Resources Board  
Ann McCormick, Vice Chair

# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is unbelievable to see the growth and impact Connexus had over the past year. I've been at Connexus for 19 years this September. I am sad to say I am leaving Connexus on my 19th year. It is hard to leave a place I am so happy to have helped build. I wish all the best to Connexus. I know it will continue to grow and provide the best services possible to our communities. My next step in my career is a path I've been wanting to do for years. I am from Nee Tahi Buhn First Nation and I live, work, and play on the traditional territory of the Dakelh-ne. I am going to move forward, in a cultural path and work alongside Connexus. I am excited to see where it's next steps will be.

I came into this position at the end of a build, and I am now part of an exciting start to developing another. Fraser Lake has been a focus, to help build some new units there. Although it is not there yet, I am confident with the help of Connexus it will be in the very near future. It has been an honour to be part of wrapping up a build, and the start of another project. More to come on this initiative.

We have excellent staff and volunteers that make such a difference here. It is amazing to be part of. Connexus has programs and services outlined in this report that shows we have programs from prenatal to seniors and elders. We went through a 3-year strategic plan. Our key initiatives are to: 1. Be an employer of choice. 2. Optimize our Financial Resources 3. Known as our regions most comprehensive provider of community programs and resources 4. Focus on the foundation of our Four Pillars of Service.

One of the projects I am so proud of is the steps towards reconciliation we take in the work we do. We are constantly learning to adapt our programming, and stay informed and learn about cultural impacts. To be a leader of First Nations decent and have the complete support of staff makes me stand tall and proud. We value the diversity, in so many ways. Thank you to Connexus, and our communities for being so dynamic and supportive. We may provide services to individuals, but we learn each day on how to support each other and work together. I am proud to have worked here for 19 years.

Sincerely,

Paula Wylie, MA, R.C.C., A.C.S  
Executive Director

**Connexus acknowledges that we work on the traditional and unceded territories of the Dakelh-ne. We are honoured to work within their ancestral lands.**

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

As a new member of the Connexus team, who joined in early January, I am truly grateful for the warm welcome I have received.

The Director of Operations role is also new to Connexus and involves providing direction, consultation, and support for the management of housing facilities, information technology, housing programming, fleet vehicle management, and contracting/procurement for the Society. I will be working closely with the Executive Director to oversee the finance department and manage daily business operations while strategizing for long-term success.

Over the past seven months, I have benefited from outstanding support and collaboration from the Connexus team during my onboarding process. Our teams are dedicated to implementing positive changes, identifying gaps in services, and addressing the evolving needs of the communities we serve.

We continue to work collaboratively and build relationships with key stakeholders and funders within the community, for which we are very grateful.

I look forward to learning more about the Connexus team and continuing to serve the communities we support.

Sincerely,

Erin Johnson  
Director of Operations

## Our Strategic Imperatives

### Our must-do priorities

- We are our region's most comprehensive provider of community programs and resources
- We provide over 25 different services that are designed to meet the needs of people at every stage of life
- We have offices in Vanderhoof, Fort St. James and Fraser Lake, and our programs are spreading throughout north central BC
- We advocate to provide and retain the vital services that people in our communities need to thrive throughout their lives
- If we don't offer what people need, we find out who does and make the connections

**“I will never forget you guys.”**

**“I’m happy to have a worker help me at my job. I am able to save my money, pay my own bills and I also can go on vacations with my friends.”**



**“I am very happy with our experience, it has been very helpful in our journey. ”**

**“I like that they have a whole bunch of group activities. I liked that Connexus isn’t a “secret” - it’s known and easy to get to.”**

# CONNEXUS - A bridge to hope and potential

For over 40 years, we've been a bridge to hope and potential for community. We provide dozens of innovative programs and services to help people at every stage of life. And, we're always evolving to meet community needs. We play a vital role in helping people thrive, right here in their own community. How can we help you today?



## OUR PURPOSE - the reason we exist

We empower individuals to take healthy steps to improve well-being

## OUR VISION - the world we aspire to create

Connected, growing, and healthy communities

## OUR MISSION - how we will achieve our vision

We foster independence, confidence and wellness in individuals and families



## EARLY YEARS SERVICES

Early Childhood Services were provided in Vanderhoof, Fraser Lake and Fort St. James and it has been a busy this year. We have had 1669 families, and 3209 children attend our groups this year! The programs that were offered were in Early Years Drop-In services, Infant Development Program and the Community Action Program for Children.

We continue to participate in the Farmer's Market in our communities with different crafts and art activities.

We have found this helps spread the word about not only our Early Childhood Services, but also other services Connexus offers. The Kindergarten Readiness event has been a success in all 3 communities again this year. We are always excited to see the new little ones that will be attending school for kindergarten.

This event is run by many agencies including Northwest Child Development Centre, School District 91, Carrier Sekani Family services, Northern Health, Thomas Robinson Consulting Ltd., Nezul Be Hunuyeh Child & Family Services Society, YMCA and the Fraser Lake Public Library.

Our Infant Development Program (IDP) has continued to provide services in all 3 communities and also helps families find services they need. We have served 70 families in this program this year! We have started a new group this year, Circle of Security and gained great feedback about the group. We continue to offer Infant Massage group in all 3 communities. We also offered the Grandfriends Club at Riverside and Aurora buildings with seniors, elders, and little ones! This group had 12 children attend and did many activities such as rock painting, crafts, reading books, puzzles and playing games together.

The Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) has offered many groups all year and had 527 families attend with 788 children. This program has offered Bumps N' Babes, Coffee Talk, Community Kitchen, Gym time in Vanderhoof & FSJ, Infant Massage and Drop In Programs in each community.



## CHILD, YOUTH, AND FAMILY SERVICES

Over the past year, the Connexus Clinical Services Team has remained highly engaged in the communities of Vanderhoof, Fraser Lake, and Fort St. James. We have continued to offer both in-person and virtual service delivery options to meet the varying needs of clients across our region. The Clinical Services Team has worked diligently to provide both individualized therapeutic interventions and group-based programming for children, youth, and families.

In total, the Clinical Services Team received 251 new referrals for mental health and support services during the year.

Connexus provides a continuum of mental health services through the Sexual Abuse Intervention Program (SAIP), Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH), and Mental Health Support (MHS) programs. These programs collectively assist children, youth, and their families in navigating and accessing the appropriate therapeutic supports. This year, 170 new referrals were received for mental health services targeting children and youth.

The team continues to collaborate closely with BC Children's Hospital (BCCH), participating in monthly consultations to facilitate access to specialized psychiatric assessments and supports. This partnership remains an essential component of our service delivery model. Referrals to BCCH have steadily increased year over year, with 87 referrals made this past year for psychiatric consultation and assessment. We are grateful for the expertise and clinical guidance provided by the BCCH psychiatric team.

In partnership with Carrier Sekani Family Services (CSFS), Connexus offered Wellness Drop-In services at Nechako Valley Secondary School (NVSS), Fraser Lake Elementary-Secondary School (FLESS), and Fort St. James Secondary School (FSJSS). These services provide informal mental health and wellness support to students. Over the course of the year, 53 students accessed these drop-in services across the three schools.

# CHILD, YOUTH, AND FAMILY SERVICES

## CONTINUED....

Recognizing the importance of consistent access to mental health supports, the Wellness Drop-In initiative was extended throughout the summer months in both Vanderhoof and Fort St. James, operating virtually and in-person at the respective public libraries.

The PEACE (Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Education) Program supports children and youth aged 3 to 18 who have experienced or witnessed interpersonal violence. Connexus remains the sole provider of the PEACE program within the Vanderhoof and Fort St. James service areas. During the past year, 31 children and youth received services through this program.

The Youth Justice Program provides therapeutic support to youth involved under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA). Services are delivered upon direct referral from Youth Probation and are available in Vanderhoof, Fort St. James, Fraser Lake, and Burns Lake. The program remains a critical resource in supporting rehabilitation and reintegration for justice-involved youth.

The Family Support Program offers services to families who have experienced child protection interventions, as well as those who self-identify as needing assistance to improve family functioning. The Family Preservation Program is delivered in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and targets families assessed as medium to high risk for out-of-home placement. These services are short-term, intensive, and focused on crisis intervention and family stabilization.

Together, the Family Support and Family Preservation programs received 50 new referrals during the year. In response to identified service gaps, Connexus launched a new virtual drop-in initiative, Families Matter, designed to be a low-barrier support for caregivers and families. The service can be accessed via phone, email, or in person, and provides support, information, and resource navigation. Over the past year, 11 individuals accessed this service, resulting in 122 direct service hours.

Group programming continues to be a vital part of Connexus' community engagement and therapeutic model.

Offerings this year included:

- Taming Worry Dragons – a therapeutic group for children aged 8–13 focusing on anxiety management
- Unapologetic – a group supporting self-image development and self-compassion in youth
- Violence is Preventable (VIP) – a school-based violence prevention initiative delivered by PEACE counsellors, reaching 14 classrooms across the service area

The Child and Youth Care (CYC) program has provided individual support to 48 children in all 3 communities and the Child and Youth Care with Special Needs (CYSN) program has provided individual support to 21 children and youth. These programs provide support to help with learning social skills, how to deal with anger in positive ways, communication skills and building relationships. We receive many clients that have successfully accessed our counselling programs to continue to learn and grow in using skills to cope with mental health and daily difficulties.

We have continued to offer groups all year round and had 75 children attend this setting. The activities offered were felting, painting, pizza making, swimming, watching movies, geocaching, water park fun, BBQ and the historic site.

The Family Connections Program provides supports to families through supervised visits between children/youth and their parents/caregivers. Visits are most often in person for family members and can involve a variety of fun and social activities that families do together. Virtual and telephone visits are arranged when circumstance prevent in person visits. All client referrals are through the Ministry of Children & Family Development. Looking back to 2024 calendar year, 63 clients were supported for supervised visits.



# ADULT SERVICES

The Community Living program is built on folks choosing Connexus to obtain support. Folks, guardians, caregivers and families work with Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) and Connexus to establish plans to succeed at goals established by individuals and/or their families. We proudly support individuals in Dakelh-ne territories, Saik'uz First Nation, Nak'azdli Whut'en, Nadleh Whut'en, Stelat'en First Nations, Vanderhoof, Fraser Lake and Fort St James areas.

The 2024/2025 year has been a year of embracing changes while celebrating growth through set goals and measured outcomes. Friendships have grown and independence has strengthened. It has been rewarding to celebrate the wins, from moving, navigating change, obtaining new employment or being able to complete a task to the level of independence they have sought as the outcome. We are looking forward to another great year of supporting individuals with home skills, life skills, employment and building community.

Connexus holds Ministry of Attorney General contracts for the delivery of three Police-Based Victim Services Programs and the program workers hired by Connexus are situated at the three RCMP detachments. The Victim Service Workers provide a variety of supports to victims and witnesses of various crimes and trauma. In 2024 an average of 38 clients were supported by the three victim service workers per month.

Connexus delivers the Homeless Outreach Program on behalf of BC Housing. This program supports adults 19+ who require immediate assistance on a case-by-case basis for short term. Food security has become a priority support for many through this program. This year there was an average of 4 urgent food bags provided per month to people seeking such support in Fort St. James, Vanderhoof and Fraser Lake.

Connexus delivers the Homeless Prevention Program on behalf of BC Housing. This program supports adults 19+ on a case-by-case basis, and who are in need of a short term rental supplement when the person has non-subsidized rental tenancy.



# HOUSING SERVICES

## Riverside

Riverside Place is a housing complex for seniors 55+ or adults with disabilities. We offer 14 assisted living units and 16 senior supported housing units, consisting of 32 residents. We offer the "Meals on Wheels", and "Seniors Connected Programming" that provide food security and connections for seniors in the community. This year, the greenhouse is thriving, and the seniors are enjoying the opportunity to eat the produce they have grown. Our new deck is being actively used by residents, especially now that the gazebo is fully set up for their enjoyment. We have also had the chance to renovate the basement kitchen, making it more user-friendly.

## Riverglen Townhouses

Riverglen Townhouses is a 34-townhouse complex for low to moderate income families that have children. We are still waiting for the renovations to begin in this building, but we now have a more specific timeline, with work expected to start this fall.

## Parkview Place

Parkview Place is a 20-unit complex that is for independent seniors 55+. Parkview Place has been at full capacity for most of the year, with an active waitlist. We currently have one unit open, which we anticipate will be occupied within the month.

## Neghuni Ghunli-un

It's already been year since the first tenant was moved into Neghuni-Ghunli-un Seniors (55+) Affordable Independent Living 36-unit apartment complex in Fort St. James. Fast forward to today and the complex now has 25 units occupied with more applicants in the queue. Enquiries to tour the facility are welcome. Connexus manages this rent-gearred-to-income facility on behalf of BC Housing.

## Pioneer Place

Pioneer Place is a one story 12-unit Independent Living apartment complex in Fort St. James for seniors. Situated nearby downtown Fort St. James, the complex is walking distance to a variety of everyday services, banks, grocery store, post office, pharmacies, recreation and more.

## Pioneer Lodge

Pioneer Lodge in Fort St. James is assisted living for seniors who need additional support to continue living independently. This 2-apartment complex is adjacent to Pioneer Place. Those qualifying for assisted living go through an assessment process with Northern Health to determine eligibility.

## Westside Court

Westside Court in Fort St. James is a 16-unit social housing complex for adults 19+. The facility is available to single person, small size family or couples. The apartment complex is walking distance to a variety of everyday services.



# LEADERSHIP AND DONORS

## Leadership

### Board of Directors

- Vacant, Board Chair
- Ann McCormick, Vice-Chair
- Bob Storey, Treasurer
- John Alderliesten, Director
- Kevin Crook, Director
- Lynne Stuart, Director
- Eric Scheffers, Director
- Judy Greenaway, Director
- Diane Harder, Director

### Management Team

- Paula Wylie, Executive Director
- Erin Johnson, Director of Operations
- Donna O’Bee, Finance Manger
- Anita Bailey, Finance Coordinator
- Rachel Pritchard, Early Years Manager
- Kris Nielsen, Family Services /Housing Manager
- Gareth Mason, Clinical Services Manager
- Kerry Kennedy, Community Living Manager
- Sandy Ferguson, Social Housing Manager
- Alana Brown, Human Resources Manager

**Connexus Community Resources includes 99 employees and 14 volunteers**

## Funders and Donors

- Ministry of Children and Family Deveopment
- Community Living BC
- BC Housing
- Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Northern Health Authority
- United Way
- Maverick II Enterprices
- District of Vanderhoof
- Sinkut Radiator Service
- Vickie Ford
- Autumn Services
- Union of BC Municipalities
- BC Society of Transition Houses

Connexus received numerous donations under \$500 as well and we want to thank all those who provided in-kind and financial support.

# FINANCES

Below are summarized financial statements which have been compiled from our audited financial statements. These summarized financial statements do not contain all the related disclosures required by Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes. For more information on the entity's financial position, results of operations and cash flows, reference should be made to the related complete financial statements.

## Summary of Audited Statement of Operations

REVENUE	March 31, 2025	March 31, 2024
<b>Contribution Agreements</b>		
Ministry of Child and Family Development	2,590,687	2,738,832
Community Living British Columbia	2,041,394	1,962,870
BC Housing	818,918	761,649
Northern Health Authority	869,917	681,330
Ministry of Justice	395,841	409,945
Public Health Agency of Canada	297,123	359,655
Rental income	1,368,301	1,113,777
Grants and other funding	601,053	460,448
Amortization of deferred capital contributions (Note 10)	80,265	82,349
Forgiveness of debt	77,449	77,450
	9,140,948	8,648,305
<b>Flow through funds</b>	- 318,399	- 332,481
	8,822,549	8,315,824
<b>Funding recoverable</b>	- 18,092	- 327,288
	8,804,457	7,988,536
EXPENSES	March 31, 2025	March 31, 2024
Salaries and benefits	6,520,631	5,857,481
Housing & Facilities	1,160,832	1,295,885
Administration & Program Support	684,606	588,498
Amortization	705,414	424,556
<b>Total Expenses</b>	9,071,483	8,166,420
Other items	8,494	5,004
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses</b>	9,079,977	8,171,424

# Summary of Audited Statement of Operations

ASSETS	March 31, 2025	March 31, 2024
Current		
Cash	2,024,573	1,326,028
Accounts receivable	344,851	433,134
Prepaid expenses and deposits	52,238	41,031
Goods and Services Tax receivable	19,547	137,897
Term deposits - current portion	95,623	1,221,769
	2,536,832	3,159,859
Tangible capital assets & other long-term assets	30,031,804	27,674,802
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>32,568,636</b>	<b>30,834,661</b>
LIABILITIES	March 31, 2025	March 31, 2024
Current		
Accounts payable and accruals	1,325,229	1,869,641
Deferred revenue	177,555	211,100
Current portion of long-term debt	206,589	207,655
	1,709,373	2,288,396
Term loans due on demand (Note 9)	275,308	294,025
	1,984,681	2,582,421
Long-term debt	4,798,341	5,006,098
Deferred contributions related to tangible capital assets	1,563,790	1,792,126
Forgivable loans	10,584,417	10,398,970
BC Housing construction mortgage	8,448,165	5,607,272
	25,394,713	22,804,466
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Unrestricted	315,175	501,810
Invested in Tangible Capital Assets	3,894,085	4,027,860
Internally Restricted	566,200	570,992
Externally Restricted Replacement Reserve	413,782	347,112
	5,189,242	5,447,774
	32,568,636	30,834,661

INDEPENDENCE

CONFIDENCE

WELLNESS

## CARF ACCREDITED



### Connexus Community Resources

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FACEBOOK: @connexus

INSTAGRAM: @connexus\_community\_resources

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