3sXeXa?L "It's All Written Down"

Skokomish Indian Nation

THE SOUNDER

November 2026

p3dyala'qW

" Time of Returning"

Partners Gather in Skokomish to Share Restoration Strategies

On October 8th, the Skokomish Tribe Habitat Department partnered with the Department of Ecology, Bonneville environmental Foundation, Snohomish and Mason Conservation districts to host a Riparian Workshop at the community center. This workshop is part of the Puget Sound Riparian Systems Lead, a regional effort to connect Tribes, researchers, funding agencies, and other partners while giving them the ability share information, exchange ideas, and troubleshoot challenges.

Dave Herrera, Habitat Policy Lead and Tribal member, provided a welcoming and background knowledge on the Tribe's leadership towards riparian restoration over the past several decades. Lisa Belleveau, Skokomish Habitat Manager, and Marissa Newby, Riparian Program Coordinator with Mason Conservation District, gave a presentation on the restoration work done at the River Mile 5 Farm. Other presenters discussed some of the strategies and challenges that come with riparian work. Attendees came from various agencies throughout the Puget Sound.

After the presentations and discussion breakout sessions, there was a field visit to the River Mile 5 Farm restoration project. This site is an excellent example of a floodplain and riparian restoration project that is several years post construction. Over many years, there have been multiple techniques used at RM 5 to enhance salmon habitat quality and connectivity. An overflow channel has been constructed to provide connection between wetlands and the Skokomish mainstem during high water events. Two blind sloughs and flood plain roughening structures have been installed to help direct flow and provide backchannel habitat to prevent fish stranding. Thousands of native plants have been planted throughout the site. On the mainstem large wood has been installed, including several deflector jams and an apex jam, which increases habitat complexity. Groups visited stations to talk about the riparian restoration work throughout the Skokomish watershed, floodplain reconnection, and assisted migration.



Dave Herrera provides a warm welcome



Attendees in discussion groups at RM5



Lisa Belleveau standing next to a Coastal Redwood that the Tribe planted 3 years ago. They've gotten so big



Attendees in discussion groups at RM5

Hood Canal School Welcomes New Behavioral Health Professional

Hood Canal School District has expanded its student support services with the addition of a full-time Behavioral Health Student Assistance Professional through a partnership with True North Behavioral Health Services and Capital Region Educational Service District 113.

Sarah Mathews began her new role on October 1, bringing additional mental and behavioral health resources directly to students and families at Hood Canal School.

Sarah is already a familiar face in the school community, having worked as a paraeducator at Hood Canal since January 2025. Her experience has allowed her to build relationships with students, staff, and families, providing a strong foundation for her new responsibilities. She is also continuing her education as she works toward a master's degree in social work.

In her new position, Sarah works alongside the school's counseling and student support team to help students navigate the social, emotional, and behavioral challenges of growing up. She provides individual and small-group support focused on building healthy relationships, managing emotions, developing coping skills, and addressing challenges such as stress, anxiety, bullying, and peer relationships.

Her work also includes schoolwide prevention and awareness activities designed to benefit all students. Throughout the year, Sarah will coordinate activities and lessons focused on topics such as kindness, gratitude, stress management, substance use prevention, and mental health awareness. These efforts are intended to help students develop healthy habits, make positive choices, and build skills that contribute to their long-term well-being.

An important component of the partnership with True North is helping families access additional mental and behavioral health services. Sarah can connect students and families with professional counseling, assessments, early intervention services, and community resources when more specialized assistance is needed. Having a full-time professional on campus also makes it easier for families to learn about available services and receive help navigating the process.

The new position represents another step in Hood Canal School District's ongoing efforts to support the whole child by addressing students' academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs. By providing both schoolwide prevention programs and more individualized assistance, the district hopes to strengthen student well-being and create additional opportunities for students to succeed.

Sarah is available at Hood Canal School throughout the school week. Families interested in learning more about the services available through True North can visit www.hoodcanal.wednet.edu/page/true-north or contact Sarah at 360-877-5463, ext. 205, or smathews@esd113.org.

Hood Canal School Encourages Families to Stay Connected

Hood Canal hopes families will take full advantage of its school communication app and Rooms messaging system as the school expands its efforts to keep families informed, engaged, and connected with their children's education.

While the Hood Canal School District app has been available since 2024 and Rooms was introduced last school year, the district has made a major push this fall to expand the use of these tools across classrooms. Teachers are increasingly using Rooms to communicate directly with families, share classroom updates, and provide important reminders.

The goal is simple: Make it easier for families and teachers to stay connected and work together to support student success.

One App, Everything You Need

The free Hood Canal School app provides a convenient way to keep up with everything happening at school. Families can access school news, upcoming events, lunch menus, important documents, staff contact information, and announcements, all from their phones.

The app isn't just for parents. Anyone in the community can download it to follow school activities, celebrate student achievements, and stay informed about what's happening at Hood Canal.

The app is available for both Apple and Android devices. Simply search for "Hood Canal School District" in the App Store or Google Play Store. Families are encouraged to turn on notifications so they don't miss important updates.

Rooms Makes It Easy to Connect With Teachers

One of the app's most valuable features is Rooms, a secure, two-way communication system that makes connecting with teachers almost as easy as sending a text message.

Teachers can use Rooms to share classroom announcements, upcoming activities, reminders, and other information. Parents and guardians can read and respond to messages or initiate conversations with their children's teachers.

For families with more than one child, Rooms brings communication from different teachers and classrooms together in one convenient place.

Rooms also offers automatic translation, allowing families to communicate in their preferred language. This makes it easier for families who speak languages other than English to stay involved in their children's education.

Families can choose to receive notifications through text messages, email, or the school app, depending on their preferences.

Although Rooms was introduced last year, Hood Canal School has significantly expanded its use this fall. As more teachers use the system for regular classroom communication, the district wants to make sure every family is connected and receiving these messages.

Not Getting Messages? Your Contact Information May Need Updating!

One of the biggest challenges in reaching every family is making sure the school has accurate contact information.

If families haven't been receiving messages from their children's teachers, it may be because the school doesn't have their current mobile phone number or email address.

Rooms connects families using the contact information stored in Skyward, the district's student information system. When phone numbers or email addresses are missing or outdated, families may miss important classroom messages and reminders.

The district is encouraging all families to make sure their information is current, particularly if they have changed phone numbers or email addresses.

Parents and guardians who are unsure whether their information is correct can contact the school office for assistance.

Getting Connected Is Simple

Families who haven't yet started using Rooms can get connected in just a few steps:

1. Download the app. Search for "Hood Canal School District" in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.
2. Select Rooms. Open the app and tap the Rooms feature.
3. Sign in. Enter the phone number or email address on file with the school, select "Sign in with code," and enter the verification code sent to you.
4. Start connecting! Read classroom announcements, communicate with teachers, and choose how you would like to receive notifications.

Families may also receive text invitations with links to access Rooms. There is no need to remember another username or password.

Stronger Connections, Stronger Schools

Hood Canal School District believes that strong relationships between families and teachers are essential to helping students succeed. When families are informed about classroom activities, upcoming events, and their children's progress, they are better able to support learning at home and partner with the school.

Families needing help getting started are encouraged to contact the Hood Canal School office.

~News from the Land of Littles~



We're so excited to be back. The kids have been playing and learning so much. We've had a few new friends join us and we've done a bunch of fun projects next up is tie dyeing Halloween bags for our trick or treat around the community and getting ready for Halloween and all the holidays coming up!
-Teacher Taliah

Eagle Child Spotlight:

A'naiya is such a sweetheart and so creative! She's so funny and can make a game out of anything! Always such a good friend and so helpful. All of the kids love her so much and can't wait to see her getting off the bus every morning. She's so caring and bubbly her energy is so infectious and she's always down to play or do a project! We all love her so much!



The Orca student of the month is Kaeo! He started headstart at the end of last school year and has grown so much since then. Kaeo finds himself sitting patiently with class work until he feels proud about completing it. Pictured is Kaeo feeling confident about one of his papers and wanting to show his mom and dad with a big smile (also his name tag sticker on his arm says he's Spiderman). Kaeo is a good friend to his classmates and such a wonderful kid to have in class. Can't wait to see how much he grows and learns throughout the school year.







We are getting our routines down in Orca! Our kids are doing so great at sitting for circle and participating in classroom activities. They are also building social and emotional skills through play and interactions with one another. They have been working on recognizing their name, learning letters, colors and shapes. Some of their favorite things that the kids enjoy doing that is helping with their fine motor skills are playdoh, cutting and tracing their name. They feel proud when they write their name or any worksheet and are always so excited to show their teachers. -Teacher Lucille

Deer Class:

The children have settled into their new routine in the classroom. They had such a great time on their outing to McDonalds. We have looked at the letter "F" for Fall activities and recently started with the letter "P" for pumpkin. We will do a few science and math activities around pumpkins. They are very excited and cannot wait for Halloween to arrive.

Deer Child Spotlight:

Wynonna is an independent social butterfly. She enjoys coloring and art projects. She likes and kitchen area and is fond of books.



Bear Class:

Gerald has been working on recognizing his colors, alphabet, and numbers. He's grown so much since he's been in our room. We love having him! With his upcoming birthday, he'll be leaving the bear cub room to move up to head start. We'll miss you Gerald, but we're excited to still see you and to watch you continue to grow every day.



~*Education Department News*~

Tutoring

Our tutors have been working diligently this year to ensure the tutoring needs of our students are being met. If you have a student that needs extra support during or after school, please do not hesitate to contact us at the Education department (360-877-2460) to set up a time to meet and create a plan to support your students' needs.

Tutoring Schedule

Grades K-5 @ Tom's After School Program with Kasiah Brown and Helen Tinaza

- Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

Grades 6-8 @ The Education Building & Tom's After School Program with Leah Andrews

- Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 3-4pm
- Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 4-5pm
- During lunch and recess at Hood Canal School

Grades 9-12 @ The Education Building with Addison Emerson and Hattie Williams

- Monday – Thursday 2:30-4pm

For any questions, comments or concerns please reach out to Amber Hanson, Education Manager, at 360-877-2460 or by email at Amber@skokomish.org.

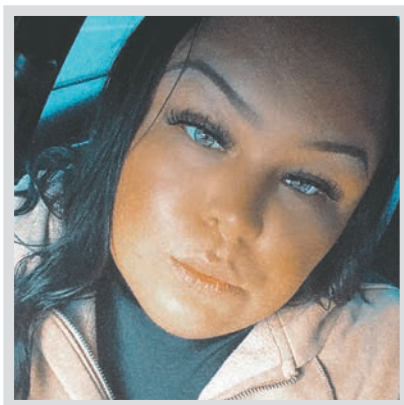
IEP/504 Information Night

The Education Department hosted an IEP/504 information night for parents and it was a success. We had families attend and hear Jill McCormick from PAVE speak about the importance of having an IEP or 504, what the differences between the two are, how to obtain an IEP or 504, the process of requesting an evaluation and the importance of advocating for their student. We also had Hood Canal Staff, ESD Special Ed Coop staff, the Skokomish Behavioral Health Manager and Tuwaduq Family Services staff attend and be available to support our families with any questions or assist them with accessing services.

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) and a 504 plan are both beneficial and designed to help students with disabilities succeed in school by removing barriers. A 504 Plan is used for students who need accommodation and changes to the environment or how the work is done without altering the environment. Some examples a 504 Plan would be used for would typically include extended time on tests or quizzes, frequent movement or sensory breaks, preferential seating and medical accommodation. An IEP is a special education program that provides specialized instruction and related services. Examples that would be included in an IEP are modified assignments, dedicated paraprofessional/one-on-one support, measurable annual goals, and small group or one-on-one settings.

If you believe your student may qualify for a 504 or IEP, please reach out to us in the education department and we can help get you to the right person. Our tutors have experience assisting parents through the process of requesting an IEP or 504 Plan, understanding the timelines, they know the right people to reach out to within the school district and are strong advocates for our students.

Employee Spotlight



We would like to give a shoutout to Hattie Williams. She is one of our tutors here in the education department and has been one of our Shelton High School tutors for the last four years. Hattie always makes it a point to check in with our students at the other Shelton schools in the district and assist them with their academics. Hattie is very dedicated to helping her students thrive and excel while in the classroom and goes out of her way to make sure they have anything they need to be successful. We are glad to have her expertise and compassion for our students in the education department. When Hattie is not working, she enjoys spending time with her kids, traveling for stick-game, fishing and diving. While working full-time, practicing her treaty rights and being a mom, Hattie has received her AA, BA and will soon start graduate school. Hattie received her AA from South Puget Sound Community College in Early Childhood Education and then received her BA from Evergreen State College in Native Pathways. Hattie plans to attend the University of Washington and complete the Master's Social Work Program. Hattie is a hard-working mom that shows her girls' they can do whatever they put their mind to. We are so glad to have you as part of our team here in Education and we appreciate all you do for our youth. Thank you, Hattie!

Fall Words

Find the words in the grid. Words can go across, up, down and in two diagonals.

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~STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS~



Tomisha Grover made it through mid-term week with a smile still on her face! She's been showing up this year for herself and as 11th grader she is locked into keeping good grades while starting to plan for her future of what life looks like after high school ! Looking for new outlets to strive for greatness.



We're excited to spotlight one of our new students this year! Matthew Plant was very eager to join our school and is off to a great start. Matthew loves playing football and is already getting settled into his new environment. We are happy to have him as part of our school community and look forward to seeing him continue to learn, grow, and make new memories this year!



Darrell Williams (Ray Ray) played football this year for Shelton Highschool as a 10th grader at the varsity level, but it didn't just start and stop after practice and games Ray has also maintained good grades throughout the season and has been crushing his academic success since he became a student at Shelton Highschool.



This month's student spotlight is on Soaring Bargala! Soaring is a new student at Hood Canal, and while he may be a little shy at first, once he opens up you get to see what a sweet and fun loving boy he is! Soaring loves playing sports, riding his dirtbike around the new Rez, and spending time at the youth program after school. We're happy to have him here at Hood Canal and excited to see him soar!



Tsi'Tula Grover is our Middle School Student Spotlight of the Month! Tula is a wonderful student who strives to do her best and encourages those around her to do the same. Her thoughtfulness towards others was recently recognized when she received the "Wild Rose" award from her math teacher, Dr Close. Representing Love and Protection, this award was a meaningful recognition of the kindness and encouragement Tula brings to school and our community. Outside of the classroom, Tula participates in volleyball and is looking forward to basketball. She is also a dependable dancer in our cultural assemblies. We are so proud of you, Tula, and the wonderful ways you make the school a better place!

A Vibrant Start to the School Year for TOMS After-School Youth

TOMS After School Program (ASP) gets off to a great start! Each afternoon when the school gets out, the center comes alive with laughter, learning, and connection.

A typical day for TOMS begins at 3:00 p.m. with a balanced meal to recharge after the school day. After eating, we circle up to discuss shared goals and rules before breaking into rotating activity stations.

The program offers a mix of daily experiences to support youth development:

- STEM/STEAM Projects: Hands on activities combining science, technology, engineering, and math to foster problem solving skills and critical thinking.
- Art & Creativity: Projects that build fine motor skills, encourage self expression, and foster social bonds.
- Physical Fitness & Outdoor Play: Energetic gym games and outdoor time that boost cardiovascular health, build physical strength, and support overall mental and emotional well being.
- Cultural Connection: Special guest visits that engage youth with cultural activities, traditional language, and foods!

Highlights from the Fall

September focused on the theme of 'Goal Setting'. Adults and youth collaborated to set personal goals and establish rules for the program year. Students also honored Orange Shirt Day, reflecting on the importance of remembering our ancestors and history. To cap off the month, the annual Youth vs. Staff basketball game delivered high energy and friendly competition with the youth taking home the win!

In October, the program embraced the changing season with an 'Autumn Leaves and Trees' theme. Children gathered natural elements like leaves and sticks to use in art projects. Taking advantage of early release days during school conference week, the program hosted some exciting field trips like roller skating at RollerDome, pumpkin picking at Schilter Farms pumpkin patch, and a movie trip to see the Minecraft movie at Shelton Cinemas.

Staff, students, and families are looking forward to keeping the momentum going for the rest of the school year!

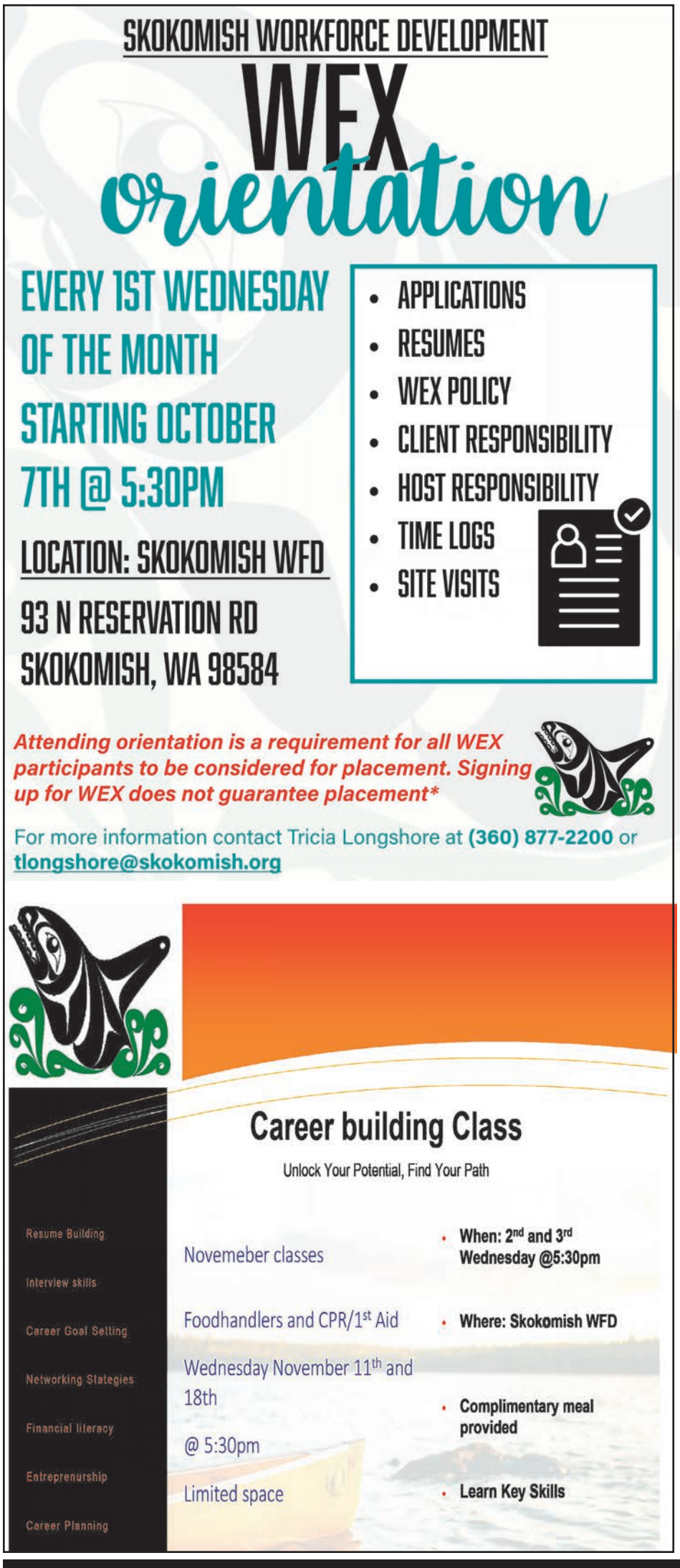
SKOKOMISH YOUTH PROGRAM

CALL FOR CONTRACTORS:

The Skokomish Youth Program is seeking contractors to work with School aged youth in groups. Age range: 5-14.

- Cultural Activities
- Traditional Medicine
- Art Activities
- STEAM Workshops
- Mental Health
- Drug Prevention
- Teen/Tween topics
- Any other workshops/skills you can share

For inquiries contact **Christopher James** at **(360) 490-8161** or **cjames@skokomish.org**



Kindergarten Students Enjoy a Sweet (and Sour!) Learning Experience

Hood Canal kindergartners recently enjoyed a delicious hands-on learning experience as they made their own paletas, traditional Mexican frozen fruit treats.

Art teacher Max Cowdery and librarian Melanie Lankford teamed up to introduce students to paletas, combining lessons about food, culture, and creativity with the fun of making something delicious. Using fresh peaches, freshly picked blackberries, lime, and juice, students explored the ingredients and learned how they could be combined to create colorful, flavorful frozen treats.

Students had the opportunity to see, smell, touch, and taste the different ingredients before helping prepare their own paletas. One of the most entertaining moments came when students sampled fresh lime. For some, it was their first experience tasting the sour fruit, resulting in plenty of surprised expressions, puckered lips, and laughter!

After their creations had frozen, the class gathered for a special paletas party to enjoy the results of their work. It was a wonderful opportunity for students to experience another cultural food tradition while practicing creativity, cooperation, and curiosity.

Experiences like these reflect Hood Canal School's commitment to bringing learning to life through meaningful, hands-on activities. Special thanks to Mr. Max and Ms. Lankford for creating such a memorable experience for our youngest learners. Sometimes the sweetest lessons come with a little sour surprise!

Hood Canal School Brings Fresh, Local Foods to Students

Hood Canal School students are discovering new flavors this fall as the school's Child Nutrition Program expands opportunities to enjoy fresh, locally grown produce and creative, scratch-cooked meals.

Through the school's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), students sample a variety of fresh produce twice a week, with occasional additional offerings. Since the beginning of the school year, students have tried everything from purple bell peppers, Sungold tomatoes, and rainbow carrots to radicchio, Bartlett pears, mandarins, and other seasonal fruits and vegetables.

Some of the more unusual offerings have included candy cane beets from Spring Time Farms in Whatcom County and watermelon radishes from Westwind Organics in Carnation. The program encourages students to explore unfamiliar foods, learn about healthy eating, and discover new favorites.

An important part of the effort is connecting students with Washington agriculture. Much of the produce comes from farms throughout the state, including growers in the Skagit Valley, Whatcom County, and the Puget Sound region. The school has also featured fresh vegetables from nearby Skokomish Valley Farms, providing a direct connection between local agriculture and the school cafeteria.

The emphasis on fresh ingredients and new flavors extends beyond the fruit and vegetable program to the school's daily lunch menu. Hood Canal's kitchen staff has been preparing a variety of scratch-cooked meals, including a recent pulled pork pasta dish that received mixed but enthusiastic reactions from students willing to try something new.

For Taste Washington Day, the cafeteria served homemade apple cider beef stew featuring local beef and vegetables simmered with apple cider. The hearty fall meal proved especially popular with students and highlighted the school's commitment to incorporating Washington-grown ingredients into its menus.

While students may not enjoy every new food they encounter, the school views the opportunity to try unfamiliar ingredients as an important part of nutrition education. Exposure to a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, and freshly prepared meals helps children develop an appreciation for healthy foods and encourages them to make informed food choices.

The expanded offerings also represent a significant effort by Hood Canal's Child Nutrition team, which handles the ordering, receiving, preparation, and serving of a wide variety of fresh ingredients.

Together, the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, locally sourced produce, and scratch-cooked cafeteria meals reflect Hood Canal School's ongoing efforts to provide nutritious meals while helping students learn more about food, farming, and the agricultural resources of their own community.

Resolutions Approved by Skokomish Tribal Council

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-108 A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE SUBMISSION, NEGOTIATION AND EXECUTION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE SPECIAL DIABETES PROGRAM FOR INDIANS (SDPI) FOR 2027.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-109 A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE REVISION OF THE SKOKOMISH GRANT DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW POLICY

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-110 A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE SLD CONTRACT NO. 2026-MC-00113 FOR SKOKOMISH INDIAN TRIBE WITH JOSHUA SNEVA

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-111 A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE SLD CONTRACT NO. 2026-MC-00112 FOR SKOKOMISH INDIAN TRIBE WITH RICHARD WOODROW

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-112 A RESOLUTION ENACTING THE SKOKOMISH HOTEL, LODGING AND OCCUPANCY TAX ORDINANCE S.T.C. 5.07.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-113 A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION FOR THE WA STATE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE'S 2026 MULTIFAMILY HOUSING UNIT (MHU) HOUSING TRUST FUND (HTF) MULTIFAMILY RENTAL TRIBAL SET-ASIDE

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-114 A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A SKOKOMISH ELDERS COMMITTEE



Honoring Tribal Member Veterans and their families:
Thank you for your service
FREE CIVIL LEGAL AID
Hosted by: Skokomish Tribes Civil Legal Aid team

Free coffee and donuts will be available.
First come, first served.

Free legal aid services run approximately 20-30 minutes depending on demand. Additional legal services can be followed up by scheduling appointments locally with the legal team located at the tribe's court building. Other non-legal resources and information will be available for veterans.

Standing Together: Legal Help for the Community

CIVIL LEGAL AID CORNER

As November's observance of veterans' courage and sacrifice approaches, the Tribal Office of Civil Legal Aid is dedicating its first edition of *Standing Together: Legal Help for the Community*, to all veteran tribal members and their families. This issue briefly highlights two resources available to those who have served: VA mortgage benefits and legal assistance for Native veterans.

VA Lowers Interest Rate on Native American Direct Loans

Many Native American veterans want to come home to their tribal lands, family and culture, and the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Native American Direct Loans (NADL) program helps make that possible. The federal program offers direct loans to eligible Native American veterans, service members, surviving spouses and veterans married to Native American non-veterans, with no down payment, limited closing costs and no monthly mortgage insurance. Thousands of borrowers use it each year to buy, build, renovate or refinance homes on tribal lands, and as of Oct. 1, 2026, VA has lowered the interest rate from 2.50% to 2.47%. Congress created NADL in 1992 to help Native American veterans overcome barriers to getting mortgages on federal trust lands.

National Association Offers Legal Help to Native Veterans

The National American Indian Court Judges Association (NAICJA) provides legal assistance to veterans through its Native Veterans Legal Assistance project. The project aims to expand and improve legal services for American Indian and Alaska Native veterans through webinars, legal clinics and online resources. NAICJA also offers resources on other issues veterans and their families experience, including homelessness, VA benefits, health and medical care. They also provide resources on pro bono programs and medical-legal partnerships.

Tribal members who want more information about the programs described above, can contact the Tribal Office of Civil Legal Aid.

In addition, suggestions and requests on coverage for specific legal news or information can be sent using this QR code. Once a month, all participants who complete the form via the QR code go into a random drawing to WIN a gift card at a local store! Be sure to provide your name and contact information AND answer all mandatory questions at least, to be eligible.



DID YOU KNOW…

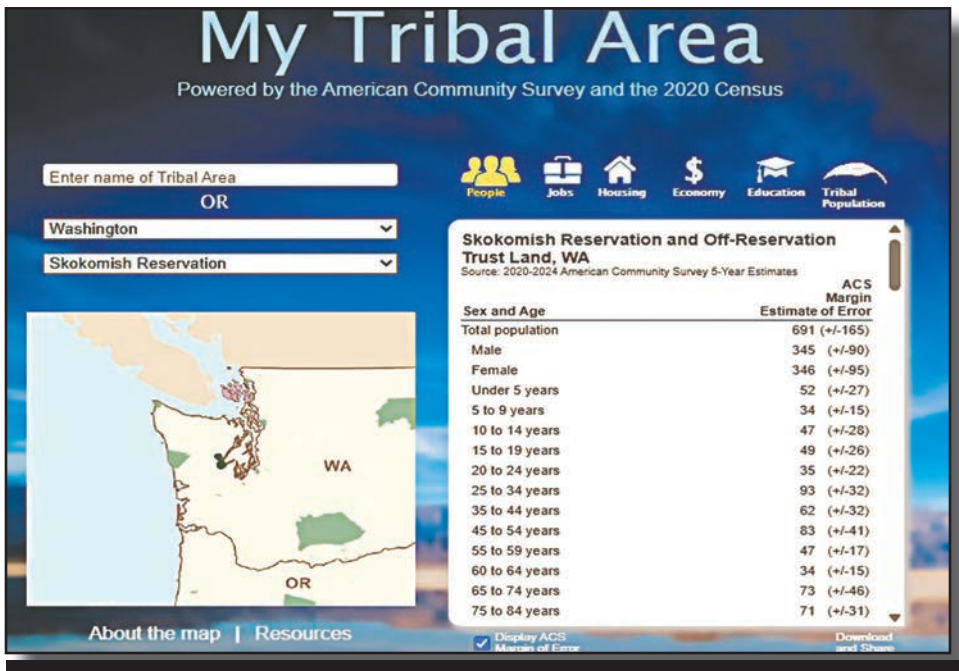
The Census Bureau collects survey data from households and businesses every month of every year and employs thousands of interviewers to collect these data. One of the most important household surveys is the American Community Survey (ACS), which provides current data for our community and is used for grants, planning, and funding. Every county in the country has sample housing units (addresses, not specific people) selected each month to participate in the ACS.

Tribal leaders, businesses, and nonprofit organizations can use data from this survey to:

- Obtain grants, like Tribal Heritage Grants, to preserve tribal culture
- Apply for financial aid for fuel, electricity, and housing
- Plan for projects to improve roads, schools, and senior centers
- Develop education and job training programs

If your home is sent a survey, please respond! You can go online, call, or wait for a Field Representative to visit your door. Please get in touch with Bobbi Blacketer with any questions or concerns at 360-426-4232 or email bblacketer@skokomish.org.

For more information about the ACS for the American Indian and Alaska Native population, visit www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/information-for/aian.html





Plastics, Peanuts, and Foam—Oh My!

Attention Skokomish Community! We are excited to announce that our recycling program at Dan Cush's Recycling Center is now accepting all types of plastic bags, as well as Styrofoam, packing peanuts, soft foam, plastic film, and bubble wrap.

You can find us located directly behind the Tribal Center. Please help us protect our environment and prevent petroleum-based pollution by bringing these materials to us. We are open 24/7.
Thank you for doing your part and recycling with us!







American Diabetes Month: Changing the Story

Written by: Augusta "Gussy" Wilbur

November is American Diabetes Month, a time to focus on prevention, early detection, and care for diabetes. Diabetes affects many families in Indian Country. Because it has impacted generations of Native people, it can sometimes feel as though becoming diabetic is inevitable. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Many of us have seen loved ones live with diabetes and suffer from complications such as blindness, amputations, kidney disease, dialysis, and early death. These experiences can make diabetes seem like a normal part of life, but there is hope. Through education, prevention, and healthy choices, we can help change that story.

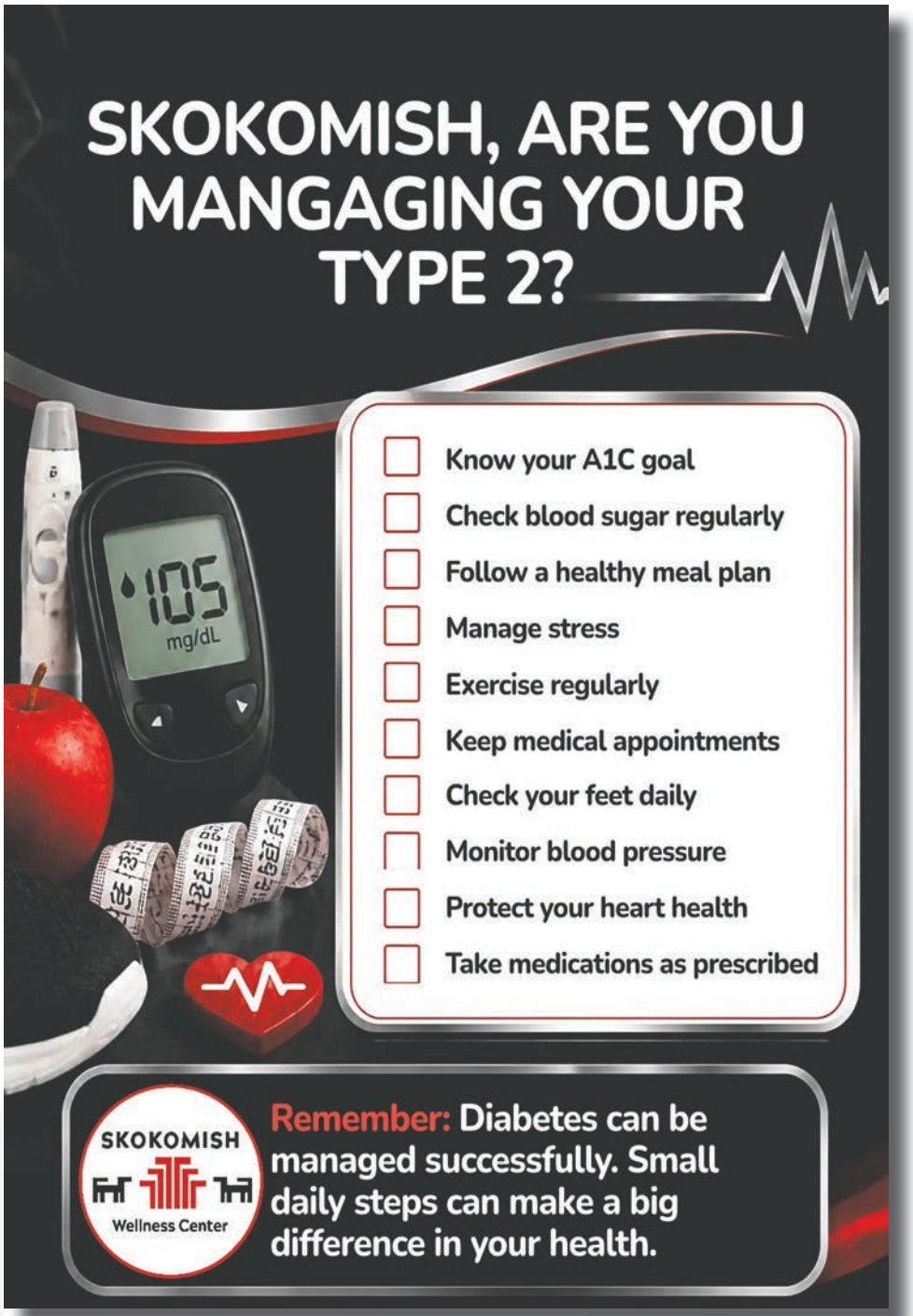
When we look at the tremendous historical and cultural changes that have occurred in Tribal communities, we can better understand some of the health challenges we face today. Social determinants of health, including access to healthy foods, healthcare, and opportunities for physical activity, all affect our well-being. Just as important is having a sense of hope for the future.

When I was young, I proudly made pies for my grandmother and brought them to her. As I got older, I realized how much her diabetes affected her health. I learned that too much sugar was harming her body and that she wasn't making enough insulin to keep her blood sugar under control. That realization opened my eyes to how deeply diabetes had impacted my family and our community.

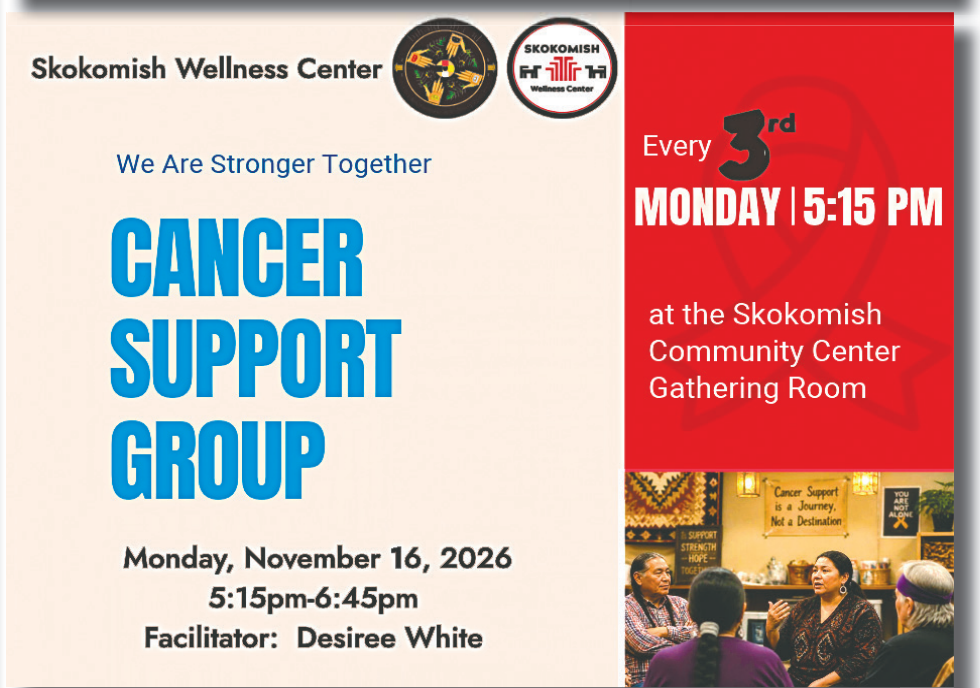
I feel terrible about putting sugar in the pie for my diabetic grandmother. Guilty. We all love, care and respect our grandmothers and our elders. I have learned that we need to respect their diet as well too, by properly following the diabetic rules, so that the food we make will be good medicine, the best medicine.

It also taught me that change is possible. By making healthier choices, staying active, getting regular screenings, and supporting one another, we can help keep our elders, families, and future generations healthy. This American Diabetes Month, let's work together to create a healthier future and show that diabetes is not inevitable.

Together, we can change the story of diabetes in our community.







Taking Control of Your Plate: Easy Alternatives to Ultra-Processed Foods

Ultra-Processed Pitfalls

Researchers define ultra-processed foods (UPF's) as "industrial ready-to-eat or ready-to-heat formulations made of little or no whole foods". These foods often contain excess sugar and fat, few vitamins and nutrients, and potentially damaging food additives.

The U.S. faces a growing epidemic of preventable diet-related chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and obesity. Researchers have found links between the consumption of ultra-processed foods and a range of negative health outcomes, including cardiovascular disease, obesity and certain cancers. It is estimated that 70% of the U.S. food supply is comprised of foods commonly considered ultra-processed, and that children get over 60% of their calories from such foods.

The FDA is committed to taking an action on foods that may be considered ultra-processed to help consumers improve their dietary patterns and reduce the prevalence of diet-related chronic disease.

Reference: American Association of Medical Assistants, CMA Today, Jan/Feb 2023 and www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-food-labeling-and-critical-foods/ultra-processed-foods

Common examples

Soda, energy drinks, and sweetened beverages
Chips and packaged snack foods
Candy and many desserts
Fast food and frozen meals
Hot dogs and some processed meats
Sweetened breakfast cereals
Packaged cookies, cakes, and pastries
Instant noodles and some flavored microwave meals

Healthier swaps

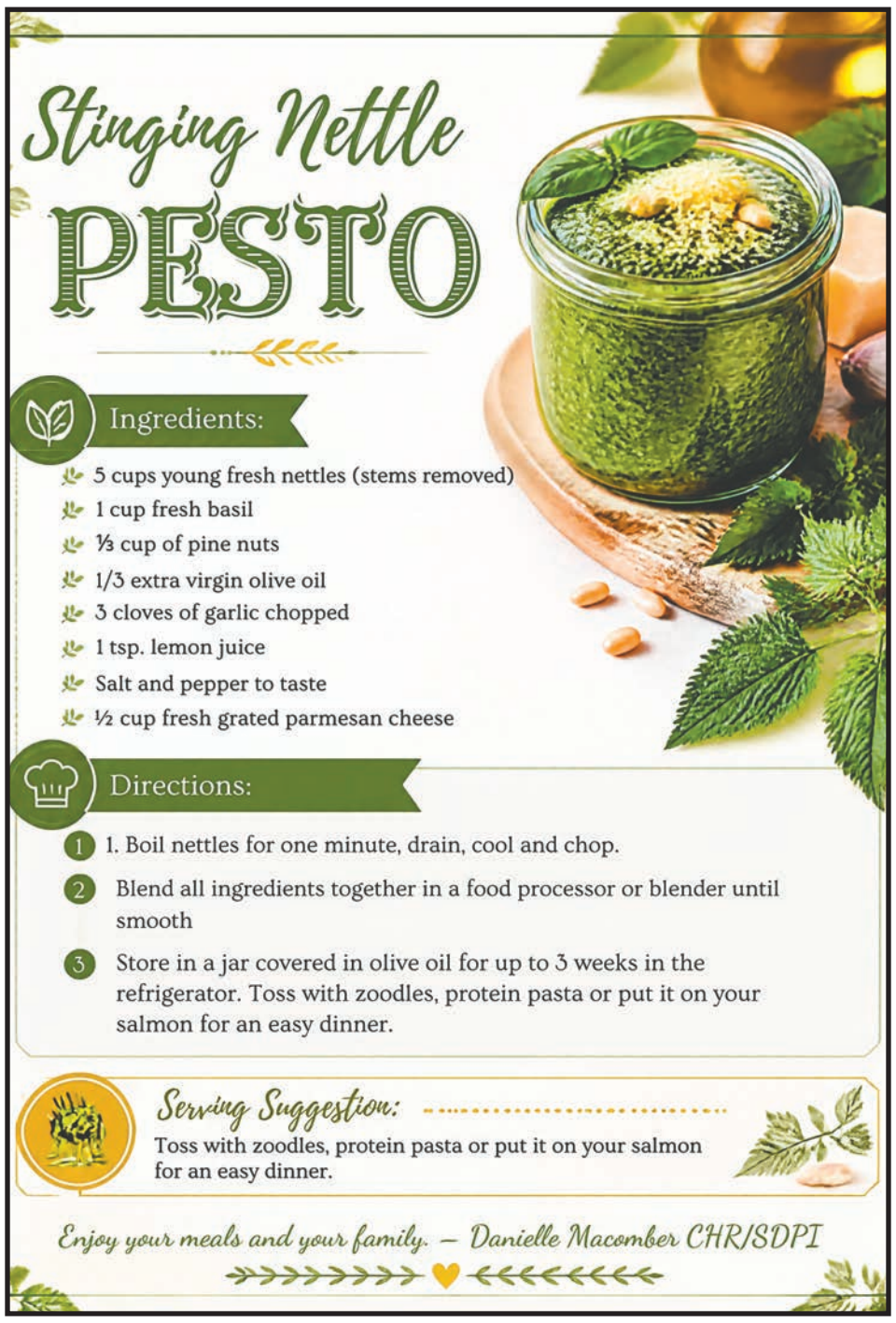
Sugary cereal: Oatmeal + berries + nuts
Snacks: Chips nuts, popcorn, or vegetables + hummus
Beverages: Soda water, sparkling water, or unsweetened tea
Packaged dessert: Fruit + plain yogurt
Processed meat: Beans, fish, chicken, or eggs
Frozen processed meal: Rice/whole grains + vegetables + beans or lean protein

A simple approach

You don't have to eliminate all processed food. Start by reducing foods that are high in added sugar, sodium, and refined carbohydrates, and increase whole or minimally processed foods.

For American Indian/Alaska Native Communities

Traditional foods can be a particularly meaningful way to emphasize minimally processed foods, for example: fish, wild game, beans, corn, squash, berries, wild rice, and other locally traditional foods.



Purchase Orders and Dental Specialists

Comprehensive dental treatment often involves coordination between the Skokomish Dental Clinic and dental specialist providers. Patients may see a dental specialist for root canal therapy, multiple extractions, denture related services, or pediatric services for young children.

The Purchased and Referred Care (PRC) program provides eligible patients with funding for covered dental services. If a PRC eligible patient requires covered dental care from a dental specialist, a purchase order request will be submitted for review. If approved, the purchase order will be sent to both the dental specialist office and the patient. The patient can then schedule their dental appointment with the specialist provider. The Skokomish Dental Clinic can also assist patients to schedule with dental specialists and coordinate transportation when requested.

Tips for expediting the Purchase and Referred Care process:

1. Update your registration with the Skokomish Wellness Center every year.
2. Provide current dental insurance information to the Skokomish Wellness Center.

Tips to make your visit with a dental specialist as smooth as possible:

1. Follow any specific instructions provided by the specialist office.
2. Bring a list of all your current medications and be able to describe your health history.
3. Bring a copy of your insurance information and identification with you.
4. Bring a copy of your referral.
5. Arrive early to your appointment to complete any needed paperwork

Very important!

If you are going to miss your appointment for any reason, please contact the specialist provider as soon as possible. Most offices require 24 to 48 hours advance notice to cancel or reschedule an appointment. No-showing appointments will result in not being able to be seen by the specialist provider again.

The Skokomish Dental Clinic is fortunate to work with our dental specialist providers. Our goal is for Skokomish patients to receive the best and most timely care possible. Please contact the Skokomish Dental Clinic as soon as possible with any questions or concerns you may have regarding your referral to a dental specialist.

Skokomish Dental Clinic: 360-426-5755

Changing the Conversation About Tobacco

Written by: Desirée White, MPH

Most people can recall when they started smoking commercial tobacco. According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, nearly 90% of people who smoke begin before the age of 18. For many, that first cigarette comes from seeing family members smoke, peer pressure, curiosity, a desire to fit in, or a sense of rebellion and independence.

Often, we hear people say, “It’s so hard to quit,” or “I can’t quit because it helps my anxiety.” While there are many factors that make quitting difficult, one of the biggest is nicotine addiction. Nicotine acts quickly on a young, developing brain, creating a dependence that can last for years or even decades.

I remember my own experience with cigarettes. I was 15 years old. My mother smoked, and like many children of smokers, I spent years breathing secondhand smoke while riding in the car with her. Eventually, curiosity got the best of me.

One day, my little sister, her childhood friend, and I walked down the railroad tracks, far enough away from home that we wouldn’t get caught. We had a cigarette and were determined to try it. I took my first puff and immediately thought I was going to die. I coughed, my chest burned, and I vowed right then and there that I would never smoke another cigarette.

I kept that promise.

Unfortunately, my sister and her friend did not. Both became addicted and remained smokers for nearly twenty years.

Seeing people struggle with nicotine addiction and suffer from smoking-related illnesses is heartbreaking. As a public health professional, I’ve spent years educating people about the risks. Cigarette smoke contains thousands of harmful chemicals. When inhaled, it reduces the amount of oxygen available to the body. Oxygen is essential because it allows our blood to carry nutrients and supports the organs that keep us alive and healthy. Smoking damages the lungs, heart, and blood vessels and contributes to illnesses such as COPD, emphysema, diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

I could spend all day talking about the harms of commercial tobacco, but that’s not really the point of this article. The point is that my perspective on tobacco has changed.

Before attending a Native Tobacco Conference in Minnesota, I believed tobacco itself was the enemy. In my mind, nothing good could come from it. If I had my way, tobacco would disappear entirely. I viewed it the same way some states have historically treated wild marijuana plants: find them, destroy them, and eliminate the possibility of future harm.

Then I attended the conference.

What I learned challenged everything I thought I knew.

I learned that tobacco (sqiwat) and commercial tobacco are not the same thing.

For generations, Indigenous peoples used traditional tobacco as a medicine and a sacred relative. Raw tobacco leaves were used topically as poultices and antiseptics. Tobacco was used to stop bleeding, care for minor wounds, provide comfort, and support healing practices. More importantly, tobacco played a significant spiritual role.

During the conference, elders and traditional healers spoke about tobacco as a way to communicate with the Creator. Tobacco was used to carry prayers, accompany ceremonies, bind agreements, honor commitments, make offerings, and strengthen relationships within the community.

Tobacco was not viewed as a commercial product.

It was viewed as a gift, a relative.

Over time, colonization and forced assimilation disrupted many traditional practices and teachings. As commercial tobacco products became widely available, tobacco’s sacred purpose became overshadowed by addiction, profit, and disease.

Today, smoking rates among Tribal communities remain higher than many other populations. Tobacco-related illness and death continue to affect Native families across Indian Country. Every statistic represents a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, sibling, cousin, or friend.

As public health professionals, it can sometimes feel discouraging. We create programs, recommend policies, provide education, and promote cessation resources, yet change often feels slow. At times, it can seem as though people don’t care.

But I don’t think that’s the reality.

I believe we need to change the conversation.

Instead of talking only about what tobacco does to us, perhaps we should also talk about what happened to our relationship with tobacco.

During the conference, we were asked two questions that have stayed with me ever since. I’d like to ask those same questions to our community:

1. What is Skokomish’s relationship with tobacco?
2. What is traditional tobacco teaching us about living well?

As part of this effort, I created a survey to better understand how community members think about tobacco and what resources are needed to support those who want to quit. Your feedback will help guide future education, prevention, and cessation efforts.

If you’re ready to quit commercial tobacco, help is available.

Kirk Fowler, our Substance Use Disorder Professional and I, can help you develop a quit plan, provide accountability, and connect you with resources such as nicotine replacement therapy and other cessation tools. You can also access support through the Washington State Quitline and the American Indian Commercial Tobacco Program.

Quitting isn’t easy, but healing is possible.

If you’ve been working hard to improve your health, manage a chronic condition, or simply feel better day to day, quitting smoking may be the most important step you can take. The body has an incredible capacity to heal, but it cannot function at its best when it is under constant stress from commercial tobacco use.

Today could be the day you begin that journey.

Not because someone told you to quit.

Not because you feel guilty.

But because you deserve the opportunity to breathe easier, live healthier, and reconnect with the teachings that recognize tobacco not as a product of addiction, but as a sacred relative deserving of respect.

?uc Sedbec ti ?aySi?iSu?wat
(Stay on a good path)

(Tobacco Survey)



November is Alzheimer's Awareness

Alzheimer's is a brain disease that causes a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills.

Early signs of Alzheimer's

- Forgetting recent conversations or events
- Losing items and being unable to retrace steps
- Asking the same questions repeatedly
- Getting confused about dates, places, or familiar routes
- Struggling to find the right words
- Having difficulty managing bills, medications, or familiar tasks
- Experiencing changes in mood, personality, or judgment

Stages of Alzheimer's

1. Early stage (Mild): May forget recent information, repeat questions, or struggle with planning, but can still live independently.

a. Forgetting recent conversations or events; struggling to find the right words;

b. Becoming frustrated or anxious about memory problems

c. Difficulty planning, organizing or managing finances

d. Repeating questions or misplacing items

2. Middle stage (Moderate): Confusion and memory problems become more noticeable. May need help with dressing, preparing meals, or managing daily routines.

a. Changes in sleep, mood or personality

b. Needing help with dressing, bathing, or choosing appropriate clothing

c. Forgetting personal history or names of familiar people

d. Confused about the date, location or time

e. Getting lost in familiar places

f. Wandering, suspicion or agitation may occur

3. Late stage (Severe): May have difficulty communicating, recognizing loved ones, walking, swallowing, and caring for themselves. Usually needs extensive assistance.

a. Limited ability to communicate

b. Little awareness of surroundings

c. Difficulty recognizing loved ones

d. Needing help with eating, dressing, and personal care

e. Increased vulnerability to infections and other complications

f. Difficulty walking, sitting, or eventually swallowing

Progression of Alzheimer's

Symptoms often worsen gradually over several years. The middle stage may last for many years. The time spent in each stage varies significantly from person to person. Seek prompt medical attention if confusion or memory problems appear suddenly or worsen sharply over hours or days.

Infection, medication side effects, dehydration and other conditions can cause sudden confusion and should not automatically be attributed to Alzheimer's.

How to help prevent Alzheimer's disease: 7 habits that support brain health

1. Exercise regularly: Aim for about 150 mins of moderate activity per week (i.e brisk walking, swimming or cycling). Exercise supports blood flow to the brain and cardiovascular health

2. Eat a Mediterranean-style diet: Emphasize leafy greens, berries, beans, nuts, whole grains, fish, and olive oil. Limit highly processed foods, excess salt, sugary drinks and fatty meats. The MIND diet is another brain-health-focused option

3. Prioritize sleep: Most adults should aim for 7-9 hours every night. Seek medical advice for persistent insomnia, loud snoring or pauses in breathing during sleep. Sleep apnea can affect brain health.

4. Keep your brain engaged: Read, learn a new language, play music, do puzzles or develop a new skill. Choose activities that challenge and interest you.

5. Stay socially connected: Spend time with friends and family. Join a club, volunteer or participate in group activities. Meaningful social interaction helps support emotional and cognitive well-being

6. Protect your heart and blood vessels: Work with your provider to manage high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, and excess weight. Avoid smoking and limit alcohol use. These steps can reduce important risk factors for cognitive decline.

7. Protect your hearing and head: Work with your provider to evaluate hearing problems and use hearing aids when recommended. Take steps to prevent falls and

8. wear a helmet for activities with a risk of head injury.

A simple daily brain-health routine checklist:

- Walk or exercise for 30 minutes
- Eat vegetables, fruit, nuts, or whole grains
- Do something mentally stimulating
- Connect with a friend or family member
- Keep a consistent sleep schedule
- Take prescribed medications and manage blood pressure

<u>Treatment for Alzheimer's</u>

There is no cure for Alzheimer's, but there are treatments that may change disease progression, and drug and non-drug options that may help treat symptoms. Consult your healthcare provider to discuss medications that treat symptoms or newer treatments that can slow disease progression.

Quick Facts: Native Americans and Alzheimer's

- One in six American Indian and Alaska Native adults aged 45 and older report memory or thinking difficulties.
- Between 2020 and 2060, the number of American Indian/Alaska Native individuals aged 65 and older living with dementia is projected to increase four-fold.
- The vast majority (92%) of Native Americans say that it is important for Alzheimer's and dementia care providers to understand their ethnic or racial background and experiences. However, only 49% of Native Americans say that they have access to culturally competent providers.
- 61% of Native Americans say that affordability of care is a barrier.
- More than one-fourth (27%) of Native American caregiver's report being treated with less respect than others.
- Four in 10 (40%) of Native Americans believe that medical research is biased against people of color and only 65% believe that an Alzheimer's cure will be shared fairly, regardless of race, color or ethnicity.

References: www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia, www.cdc.gov, www.chatgpt.com



INDIAN CHILD WELFARE & COMMUNITY HEALTH REPRESENTATIVES

P.OSITIVE I.NDIAN P.ARENTING

Join our Heartful Parenting Course and learn how to nurture your child's and family's growth with empathy, understanding, and love.



Our Class Offers:

- Practical Tools for Managing Stress.
- Strategies for Building Trust and Mutual Respect.
- Tips for Maintaining Patience and a Positive Attitude.

JOIN US

November 2nd 5:15pm-7:15pm

Skokomish Community Center Gathering Room

SKOKOMISH Wellness Center

Warrior's Path Crime Facts and Safety Tips
Gun Safety:

Safety and respect around firearms is imperative to keeping ourselves and community safe. If you own or stumble upon a firearm here are some quick tips to maintaining safety when handling:

- Always treat all firearms as if they are loaded
- Never point at anything you wouldn't intend to shoot
- Keep your finger off the trigger
- Store in a lockbox, use a gun lock, and out of reach of minors
- Do not attempt to operate while under the influence

Free gun locks can be obtained from Warriors Path please call 360-462-7954 for more information

Eben Card
Victim Services Manager
Ecard@skokwellness.gov

South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency

USDA Foods Program Delivery Date



Skokomish
Friday, November 13th

Across from Tuwaduq Family Services
10:00am-1:30pm



NOTE: *Please stick to the monthly schedule for the USDA Commodity Food Program. Food distribution staff have other duties that they are responsible for on the days they are not issuing commodities.*
If you're unable to make the date, please call and schedule an appointment with appropriate staff.

For USDA Food, call SPIPA at 360.426.3990.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Skokomish WIC

Women, Infants, and Children
WIC provides healthy foods & nutrition information for you and your child up to age 5.

For appointments and questions, contact:
Debbie Gardipee
360.463.4439
dgardipee@spipa.org

SPIPA main number: **360.426.3990**

Next WIC date:
November 3rd, 9-3
SPIPA IPC, phone appts.

Phone and in person appointments. Date subject to change.

WIC WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN



SPIPA Resiliency Food Grant

Eligibility
You must present Skokomish Tribal ID at time of pick up.
There are no income requirements, but please allow priority to elders and low income households. **No pick ups for others, you must be present to receive a box.**

Availability
Boxes will be available monthly on a first come, first serve basis (limit one box per household) during commodities and diaper distribution. Each month will feature different items.

For a Limited Time
SPIPA is partnering with Washington State Department of Agriculture and regional farmers and vendors to provide Tribal members with fresh produce, meat, eggs, and breads.

SKOKOMISH November 13th

At the Community Center

10:00am-1:30pm
or while supplies last

For more information, please call SPIPA at 360.426.3990





A GIANT THANK YOU to everyone who came to the DV/Voc Rehab dinner on Oct 21st. It was an amazing turnout of the community. Without the community support of the Domestic Violence Program the outreach and information would not be possible. Again, Thank You to all who came to the dinner you are so very much appreciated.



Elders Enjoy Cowlitz Luncheon and Prepare for Winter Bazaar

It's been another busy and enjoyable month for our Skokomish Elders.

We recently traveled to Cowlitz Intertribal Luncheon, and we had 13 elders ride the elder's bus and 6 drove up on their own. We would like to thank the Cowlitz Tribe for inviting us and for hosting such a wonderful event. The bingo was a lot of fun, and the food was outstanding! It was a great opportunity for our Elders to visit, enjoy good food, and spend time together.



On October 15, 2026, we held our Elders Advisory Meeting. We had 9 elders participate, and it was a great meeting with lots of good energy and conversation. We talked about some ideas for possible upcoming activities and heard some great thoughts from our elders. Thank you to everyone who took the time to participate and share your ideas. Your input is important in helping us plan activities for our Elders.

Our next Elders Advisory Meeting will be Thursday, November 19th, after Elders' Lunch, at the community center lunchroom, we hope to see you there.

Our Elder's Exercise is still going strong! Exercise is held Tuesdays at 10:30 am at the Skokomish Community Center Gym. We encourage our Elders to come participate. It's a great way to get moving, visit one another, and have some fun together. Come join us, we would love to see you there.

The Annual Winter Bazaar hosted by the Culture Committee is scheduled for Sunday, December 6, from 10 am to 3 pm at Skokomish Community Center. The Elders Program will be having a table at the Winter Bazaar as a fundraising activity for the elders' program. We will be having a bake sale, and other donated crafts made by our Elders to sell. Please stop by our table, support the Elders program, and pick up something delicious and for Christmas to take home. Any questions please call Perry Carrington at (360) 968-3416 or (360) 426-7788. Hope to see you there.

Rez Photo of the Month Answer



The young brother and sister in these photos are none other than: Rachel LaClair and Ben Tinaza. Gone too early but never forgotten.

Tamela,

Well its another trip around the sun and it is shining on you! You have accomplished so much for yourself this year. I am so proud of you, even though you are making me older by you having another birthday! Thanks for taking such good care of my grandson. He truly is an amazing young man who is blessed to call you mom.

Happy 29th ;) Love Dad

Tribal Members with Birthdays in November

1st
Kayti Deese
Kale Wingfield

2nd
Mona Miller
Cheyenne LaClair

3rd
Karl Miller
Mary Pavel
Ava Tinaza
Roxsanne White

4th
Richard Gouley
Tami LaClair

5th
Tom Pulsifer Jr.
Brandie Sweitzer
Corbett Gamber, Jr.
Ira Stong-Villines

6th
Mona Allen
Darrel Smith
Bo Tinaza
Russell Cagey

7th
Perry Carrington
Jonathan Dominquez
Denny Hurtado
Denise Miller

8th
Delveda Kenyon

9th
Mark Kremen
Lyle Wilbur
Aya Byrd

10th
Alfred RC Smith

11th
Tahnee Miller

12th
Jasmine Johnson-Krise
Abigail Wilbur

13th
Aaron Johnson
Ben Peters

14th
Logan Longshore
Setiva Smith

16th
Willow Grover

17th
Anita Peterson

18th
Billy Allen
Joey Andrews

20th
Antoinette Longshore
Tom Longshore

21st
Marty Allen

22nd
Kingston Andrews
Oto Villines

23rd
Leslie Lincoln
Ruth Peterson-Bluebird
Diane Mitchell

24th
Marcy Tinaza
Nellie Capoeman

25th
Carrie Ann Smith
Marvin Cultee Jr.

26th
Timber Ware

28th
Lawrence Kenyon, III

29th
Spilyay Miller
Sayalts Miller

30th
Richard Henry
Calista Miller

Skokomish Indian Tribe
80 N Tribal Center Road
SKOK, WA 98584

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Rez Photo of the Month



Can you name the young siblings in these photos?
Please turn to page 15 for the answer! Good luck!

Rez Sudoku Puzzle of the Month

7		6						
5		4		9		6		8
		9		1				4
6		7			9			
2			7		1			9
			8			3		7
3				5		9		
9		1		4		8		3
						2		1

Fill the empty squares with numbers 1 to 9 so that each row across, each row down, and each 3x3 square contains all the numbers from 1 to 9. Good Luck!

The Sounder

3sXeXa?l “It’s All Written Down”
North 80 Tribal Center Road
Skokomish Nation, WA 98584
Phone: (360) 426-4232 ext 2053
Fax: (360) 877-5943
E-Mail: sounder@skokomish.org
Mark Warren, *Editor*

Letters to the Editor are published at the discretion of the Editor, as space permits. No letter which contains defamatory or malicious statements will be published. Any letter which contains questionable material will be sent to our legal office for review. All letters must contain the writer’s signature, address and telephone number. Letters not signed will NOT be published. The Editor reserves the right to edit a letter for content, clarity and length.

Views and opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are those of the writer of the letter. They are not endorsed by the Sounder, Tribal Administration, Tribal Council or the Skokomish Indian Nation as a whole. The deadline for the sounder is the third Thursday of every month.