



**BCAAFC** | BC Association of  
Aboriginal Friendship Centres

News release  
March 13, 2025  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Canada's largest Indigenous Youth Conference Comes to Kamloops**

**KAMLOOPS, B.C.** – The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) is hosting their 21<sup>st</sup> Gathering Our Voices (GOV) Indigenous Youth Leadership Training in Kamloops from March 18 to 21, 2025.

The Kamloops Aboriginal Friendship Society (KAFS) applied to co-host GOV in 2020, but the event was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. BCAAFC has been working with KAFS to reschedule the event and has been warmly welcomed by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Nation and the City of Kamloops.

The conference, which is developed in conjunction with BCAAFC's Provincial Indigenous Youth Council, will be primarily located at Thompson Rivers University with some additional spaces being used across Kamloops. More than 1,000 Indigenous youth ages 14 to 24 will be in attendance, many of whom are in care or have a disability. While BCAAFC subsidizes the event, the youth delegates spend weeks fundraising for their tickets, travel, and accommodation costs and sell out the event every year.

"GOV is a safe and supportive space for Indigenous youth in all walks of life to explore their cultures and expand their leadership skills," said Julie Robertson, Interim Executive Director of BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres. "Last year, we had a youth take our Talent Show Workshop. Since then, they've been performing in their community and had the courage to apply to be a paid entertainer for GOV 2025."

There are more than 100 workshops for the youth to choose from such as ribbon shirt making, the Foster Kid Survival Guide, Bannock making with Kekuli Café Kamloops, and wheelchair basketball. BCAAFC will also be hosting a mini pow wow,

**BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres**  
551 Chatham St | Victoria, BC | V8T 1E1 | [www.bcaafc.com](http://www.bcaafc.com)  
(Office) 250-388-5522 or 1-800-990-2432 | (Fax) 250-388-5502



**BCAAFC | BC Association of  
Aboriginal Friendship Centres**

dance party, talent show, movie night, an Honouring Feast for youth in and from care, an Artisan Market and Exhibitor Fair, and Opening and Closing Ceremonies, which will incorporate performances and keynote speeches from members of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Nation.

For more information about GOV or to donate, visit: <https://gatheringourvoices.ca>

For more information about the Kamloops Aboriginal Friendship Society, visit [Kamloops Aboriginal Friendship Society](#)

### **Quick facts:**

- BCAAFC is the umbrella organization for 25 Friendship Centres across B.C.
- Friendship Centres serve as not-for-profit, Indigenous-led, social service organizations that work to promote, develop, and deliver accessible programs and services that support Indigenous peoples living in urban areas and away from home/

### **Media contact:**

Nicole Hall  
[nhall@bcaafc.com](mailto:nhall@bcaafc.com)  
236-361-9408