



Council of Yukon First Nations

# Kwanlin Dun First Nation **Cultural Orientation** **and Protocols Toolkit**



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# KWANLIN DÜN FIRST NATION (KDFN) SPECIFIC CULTURAL ORIENTATION AND PROTOCOLS

## 1.0 History

The Kwanlin Dün First Nation is home to over a thousand aboriginal people who are not from one tribe or one region, but rather Kwanlin Dün has welcomed people from other First Nations from as far as Atlin and Tagish to the southeast, Old Crow to the north, Little Salmon to the northwest, and the Kluane area to the west. Because of the diversity of people, Kwanlin Dün is made up of several linguistic dialects, however, Southern Tutchone, Northern Tutchone, Tagish and Tlingit are the most common. KDFN is the largest First Nation in the Yukon. In the Southern Tutchone language, Kwanlin Dün means people of the rapids.

For generations the ancestors of people who are now part of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation have lived along the Chu Ninkwän (Yukon River). The Tagish Kwan are the original people who lived and occupied the lands within the traditional territory at the headwaters of the Yukon River. Recent development has destroyed much of the archeological record of the first inhabitants. However recent digs at Annie Lake and Fish Lake have found evidence of seasonal hunting and fishing camps that are more than 5,000 years old. As well, ancient artifacts have been found in several mountain-top ice patches in southwest Yukon. The ancestors of the Kwanlin Dün, Kluane Carcross/Tagish, and Champagne and Aishihik people hunted in these areas. The hunting artifacts, animal bones and carcasses have been dated as far back as 4,500 years.

The waterway now called Miles Canyon through to the Whitehorse Rapids was well known to generations of First Nations people. Ancestors called the area Kwanlin, which in Southern Tutchone means "running water through canyon". Not only was this section of the river an excellent area for fishing, but well worn trails on the banks of the canyon tell of centuries of people travelling overland in search of game. The people were in the area just after the last ice age, harvesting salmon and hunting caribou and buffalo. The banks of the river were lined with fish camps, lookout points, hunting grounds, burial sites and meeting places. The values, language and traditions of the Kwanlin Dün are rooted in this land.

Whitehorse and in particular the area around the Whitehorse Rapids, remained a traditional salmon fishing site for many years, until the construction of the dams below Marsh Lake and at Whitehorse.

The headwaters of the Yukon River were home for the Tagish Kwan, and a regular meeting place for people of other First Nations who came to trade, including the Tlingit, Kaska, Han, Gwich'in and Tutchone. They welcomed other First Nations from as far away as Atlin and Tagish to the southeast, Little Salmon to the northwest and

the Kluane area to the west. The Tagish Kwan would follow the migratory patterns of caribou, moose, elk and other game and fur-bearing animals.

In 1900, Chief Jim Boss (Kishoot) of the Tagish Kwan recognized that his people needed protection for their land and hunting grounds, to offset the growing non-aboriginal population which was encroaching on traditional territory, Chief Boss petitioned the Commissioner of the Yukon, William Ogilvie, for a 1,600 acre reserve at Ta'an Man (Lake Laberge), which he had already surveyed. Instead, a reserve of only 320 acres was granted. Not satisfied with the outcome, Chief Boss wrote to the Department of Indian Affairs in Ottawa in 1902, demanding that over hunting by newcomers be controlled and that his people be compensated for lost land and the impacts on wildlife. The letter contained his famous quote "Tell the King very hard we want something for our Indian, because they take our land and our game". The only response that Chief Boss received was that the police would protect his people and their land. This exchange of letters represents the first attempt at land claims in the Yukon.

In 1956, the Department of Indian Affairs decided unilaterally that there were too many Indian Bands in the Yukon Territory and, for administrative purposes joined six bands to three. This brought the amalgamation of the First Nation people between Marsh Lake and Lake Laberge who, for various reasons, had migrated into the Whitehorse area. Thus, the department of Indian Affairs created the Whitehorse Indian band, known today as Kwanlin Dün First Nation. However, in 1998 Kwanlin Dün split into two distinct and independent groups, Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwach'an Council.

In 1972, a contingent of Yukon Elders, led by the late Elijah Smith, a Kwanlin Dün Elder at that time, presented Prime Minister Elliot Trudeau with a document called "Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow". At the core, their message was a clear statement: "without land, Indian people have no soul – no life – no identity – no purpose". Thus began a Yukon land claim process that still continues today.

In the recent past, aboriginal peoples living along the present-day Whitehorse waterfront along the Yukon River were moved further and further from the city centre and the river. The reserve that was granted within Whitehorse was moved four times between 1915 and 1921 by the Indian Agent Rev. John Hawkesley. The transfers occurred to accommodate the city's growing development as well as to separate the First Nation people from the non-aboriginal community. As a result, the First Nation population found themselves continually displaced and marginalized. By 1948, Ottawa withdrew the status of Whitehorse Indian reserve No. 8 as a reserve under the *Indian Act* and the people of Kwanlin Dün as well as many other Yukon First Nation people found themselves with no solid claim to their traditional land.

In the early 1980's the Kwanlin Dün village was moved to the current location in the McIntyre subdivision within the Whitehorse city limits. During the negotiation of KDFN's land claim agreements, the First Nation became one of the first in Canada to select and receive land within a designated city border.

## **2.0 Current Status in Land Claims, Self Government or Other**

Land claim and self government agreements were signed on February 19, 2005 and came into effect on April 1, 2005. Implementation of the agreements is a major priority for the KDFN government and requires ongoing negotiations with the Yukon and Government of Canada. The First Nation has been working diligently to implement the agreements.

### **KDFN Government Structure**

**General Assembly** – made up of all KDFN citizens. Citizens over 18 can vote. The role of the assembly is to review progress on the First Nation vision, review status of recommendations, establish general policy guidelines and recommend development of laws, budget changes, changes to resolutions and names of persons for appointments to committees and boards.

**Elders Council** – made up of all citizens over 60 years of age. The role of the council is to participate and advise government and citizens, appoint members to Council, Judicial Council and other committees, as well as give guidance in areas of a) enhancing and protecting KDFN traditions and customs b) meeting program and service needs of Elders and c) disputes within and regarding the First Nation.

**Youth Council** – made up of all citizens between 14-20 years of age. The role of the council is to participate and represent youth interests in government, appoint representatives to Council and Judicial Council and give advice on a) meeting program and service needs of youth and giving assistance to young people to learn the clan system, traditions and culture.

**Judicial Council** - made up of 6 members including 3 appointed by Council, 2 nominated by Elders Council and 1 nominated by Youth Council as an observer. The role of the council is to hear appeals regarding citizenship issues, election rules, validity of laws and all matters referred to it by the Council.

**Chief & Council** - leadership is an elected body of 1 chief, six councilors, 1 Elder (non-voting) and 1 youth (non-voting). Each member serves for a three year term.

Chief is responsible for leading the First Nation, presiding at General Assemblies and reporting on the state of KDFN as well as carrying out any other power or function required by KDFN Constitution or law.

Council is responsible for a) implementation of Final Agreement and Self Government Agreement, the Constitution and KDFN laws b) intergovernmental relationships and agreements c) directing administrative departments d) enacting laws e) developing annual budgets and authorizing collection and expenditure of funds f) developing policies g) advising Chief h) establishing committees, corporations and i) reporting to the General Assembly.

KDFN Government Departments include:

- Governance Secretariat
- Heritage, Lands & Resources
- Health
- Justice
- Economic Development
- Community Services
- Finance
- Administration

### **3.0 Communication and Relationships**

The deep connection to the land is vital. The authority and identity of the Kwanlin Dün people comes from and is tied to the land. It is the land that provides a deep sense of place and sense of self. The relationship exists at both the physical and the spiritual level. This relationship gives purpose to our people – to protect the land, which in turn ensures the well-being of the people.

In a small community, relationships are close and everyone knows one another. It means the community is able to come together in times of need and work toward the common good. It also can mean personal disagreements or conflicts are felt on many levels in the community. To prevent misunderstandings, contact the appropriate KDFN department with potentially contentious issues. Learning about and being aware of family networks/dynamics is very important.

### **4.0 Specific Cultural Values and Beliefs**

Kwanlin Dün people follow a matriarchal clan system of Wolf and Crow; due to the diversity and varying traditions, Kwanlin Dün has many art, craft and beading styles, as well as many stories and traditions passed down from the Elders.

Cultural practices continue to play an important role in the lives of the Kwanlin Dün people. Fishing, hunting, trapping and gathering berries and medicinal plants are important cultural activities. They provide not only healthy food, medicines and valuable resource materials for the community members, but also connect the people to the land, to their history, and through the sharing of such bounties, to each other. Sharing is an important dimension of First Nations harvesting; food is provided not only for one's immediate and extended family, but also for Elders of the community.

As a First Nation, Kwanlin Dün comprises of members from a number of First Nation heritages. This means that across the membership there are some variations in cultural values and beliefs. It is important to the people that they respect and honour these differences. Therefore, it is very difficult to define specific practices or protocols as these differ substantially between families depending on their heritage, background and values.

## **5.0 Birth and Death**

Birth and death may be marked by traditional ceremonies from any number of Yukon First Nation traditions. In some families, church communities and mainstream religious ceremonies play an important role in naming, christening and funerals. The importance of the family and community connections is consistent during these times.

## **6.0 Potlatch Traditions**

A potlatch is usually held at the passing of Kwanlin Dün members and a headstone potlatch is held approximately one year later. The potlatch involves a feast where the traditions of the Wolf and the Crow clans are practised including the exchange of money and gifts as well as private ceremonies. It is the role of Wolf clan to work at the potlatch if the person was of the Crow clan and vice versa. There are extensive family connections and every passing is felt very personally. People will travel great distances to pay their respects.

## **7.0 Marriage**

Marriage may be traditional, mixed traditional with non-traditional elements or in line with mainstream cultural practice. The main focus is the sharing of the event with family and community. Some individuals and families still observe the traditional expectation that someone of the Wolf clan marry a Crow and likewise a Crow would marry a Wolf. The traditional purpose for marrying outside your own clan is to “keep the blood lines clean”. The clan is determined by the clan of the mother as it is a matrilineal system.

## **8.0 Traditional Laws**

Traditional laws are from a variety of Yukon First Nation traditions. Traditional knowledge research related to laws is underway in KDFN and other Yukon First Nations. As the traditional laws are further understood, they will be used as the foundation, along with other aspects of traditional values and knowledge to construct a system of administration of justice to further strengthen the community.

## **9.0 Traditional Health and Healing**

Kwanlin Dün is fortunate in having a number of traditional healers and Elders living in the subdivision and in the Whitehorse area. These individuals who are well schooled in culture, language and healing practices are an important resource to community healing initiatives. Individuals with cultural and traditional knowledge and skills in traditional healing methods and ceremony are valuable to the community. These individuals are very important supports to the investment in using traditional methods in land based and culture based healing of trauma, addictions and other issues related to the legacy of colonization and residential schools.



## **10.0 Protocols**

Protocols are the socially and culturally recommended methods to be used to establish relationships and engage in further learning of the history, culture and current practices of the community, individual families and people. Each community within the Yukon has somewhat different protocols and within the community there is a diversity of methods that may be most acceptable to specific families or individuals. This diversity is even more observable within Kwanlin Dün due to the nature of the community and the variety of influences of various Yukon First Nation cultures and the forces of acculturation due to the proximity of Whitehorse. The best approach is to seek advice and verbalize your intent to conform to protocols. If a mistake is made, remain humble and ready to ask for another opportunity to continue learning.

### **10.1 Approaching Elders for advice or teachings**

Elders differ in how they would like to be approached. Some Elders prefer a direct approach led by a phone call to arrange a visit or a meeting. Other Elders prefer that a person seeking assistance work through a broker or family member to arrange a visit which may be in the Elders home or another location. This indirect approach may be seen by some as a more traditional approach. In either case, it may be appropriate to bring a gift of some kind, depending on the nature of the request. Some Elders may hold the belief that tobacco is an appropriate offering to seal a request for assistance. Others may prefer food such as fruit and tea. A blanket is a traditional gift used in some cases. With a more formal request, an offering of an appropriate honorarium that complies with First Nation policy may also be in order. Seek advice from the Elder directly or from a close family member or friend about the most respectful way to make the request. The most important message to communicate is your willingness to understand the applicable protocol and use it to convey respect and gratitude for the wisdom offered.

### **10.2 Accessing and sharing traditional knowledge**

Traditional knowledge has a number of levels. The most commonly known and understood community knowledge or history and common practices may be shared openly and found in publications. One way to understand this level is “community knowledge” in that many people within the community and beyond may have access to it and share it. It may not be considered traditional knowledge depending on how it is defined by the First Nation. Some Elders will say that their job is to be an “open book” and share knowledge with anyone who asks. It is important to them to pass it along to make sure the culture remains strong.

A second level of traditional knowledge is more sensitive and more actively protected by the First Nation. It is less likely to be in written form and remains primarily in the oral domain. The knowledge is embedded in teachings and stories that is passed on from Elder to learner orally as a method of preserving and transmitting cultural understanding. Much of this knowledge may be held in the traditional First Nation language and only fully understood in that language. The

rules of accessing and using this knowledge usually revolve around protection of the knowledge from disrespect, misuse or appropriation by outside influences. In some cases, First Nations will have policies that define the types of traditional knowledge, access, use and protection. In some cases, a third level of knowledge may exist that is seen to be truly sacred and is only available to individuals identified as keepers of specific stories, songs, knowledge, ceremonies or healing methods. Second and third level knowledge is best shared on the land. An Elder will not usually offer knowledge, but will wait to be asked. As one Elder says –“to know your culture is to know yourself.”

Traditionally, the transmission of cultural and traditional knowledge began at birth and was fully integrated into the raising of a child from early years. Cultural continuity deeply embedded in childrearing was interrupted by residential school.

The principles of OCAP – Ownership, Control, Access and Possession which is part of a national policy position on the part of First Nations in Canada is foundational to the way in which KDFN handled traditional knowledge and other information owned by the First Nation.

### **10.3 Home visiting & invitations**

Home visiting for the purposes of service delivery, consultation or research is accepted and appreciated in most cases. Particularly if the family does not have reliable transportation or if travel outside the home is difficult in the case of an Elder or multiple small children a home visit is a very valuable service delivery mode. It is advisable to phone ahead if possible to make arrangements for the home visit in order to make sure the person that you want to meet with is home. A one week notice period is good but a reminder the day before is also advised. A pre-arranged home visit is less intrusive unless there is an understanding that a drop in visit is welcome. For example, an Elder may expect nursing visit once a week in order to monitor a health condition or review medication. In some cases “house to house” is the way to get information out and this is usually done by way of a flyer although a brief drop-in visit may also be part of the plan. In some cases the community may have been notified that the visits are planned.

It is a relatively rare situation, but the personal security of home visiting staff may be an issue with a particular client or household. In that case, it may be advisable for two workers to go together on the visit or at least making sure someone is aware of your visit and when you plan to return. If the visit is necessary and the situation is potentially dangerous and others that you have spoken to about it confirmed the level of risk, it is appropriate to seek the services of the RCMP in making the visit if necessary. The other option is to request that the person meet you in the First Nation offices where you have additional back up.

### **10.4 Dealing with conflict and confrontation**

As in any service delivery role, there may be a situation in which you are confronted with an angry client or a situation of conflict. It is important to remain calm and assess the situation carefully. In some cases, the anger and conflict may

be linked to a history of trauma and abuse that has been triggered by some aspect of the current situation. Act to defuse the situation to the extent possible by backing off physically and not raising your own voice. If you are feeling physically threatened, make sure you have access to a door out of the room. Make an attempt to stay seated and keep communicating in calm terms. If unable to calm the situation you may want to ask the person to leave or leave their home or office with a plan to return to the discussion when individuals involved are better able to communicate.

In a conflict situation with another staff member or a client, do what you can to analyse the conflict within the context of First Nation community dynamics and relevant history. A newcomer to the community may need to assist in bringing all the relevant facts to the table. Options for conflict resolution, both cultural or traditional and modern are available in most First Nations. Explore, with the conflicted parties, options and decide together on the mechanism to be used if a more formal approach is needed.

## **10.5 Meetings**

Meetings are held in a variety of formal and informal ways within KDFN. An informal meeting may be unplanned and a client or colleague may drop into your place or work to see you. If you are able to meet at that time, proceed with the meeting and otherwise reschedule to a more appropriate time.

A more formal meeting or community meetings usually begin and end with a prayer. This is a way of seeking spiritual and ancestral support for the proceedings and investing in a positive intent for a good and productive meeting. An Elder or Elders may be asked to provide assistance with the prayers and their advice throughout the meeting. Meetings may be held in a mainstream method with ordered discussion, motions and voting. Alternatively, a round table or talking circle method may be employed to ensure all participants are provided and uninterrupted opportunity to contribute.

If you are leading or co-leading the meeting, it is important to decide on the meeting method ahead of time, seeking advice as needed. Also, be prepared to change the method or approach to the meeting as needed, depending on the feedback received and the progress being made.

## **10.6 Expected Behaviour**

Individuals occupying professional roles within the First Nation are expected to behave using a professional code of conduct. In addition, cultural values and protocols suggest a respectful and compassionate form of communication. Children and Elders are expected to be treated with additional kindness as they are held in high regard in the community. Providing for "pause time" in communication and making sure not to interrupt, even if someone is thinking about what to say next is important. Humility and a commitment to continuing your learning about cultural protocols and community priorities is also helpful. Expressed gratitude for the

assistance provided by others contributes to forming strong relationships. Generously sharing what you know and your skills to assist people in the community is recognized and the response is often positive. Getting involved in community events is noticed and appreciated. When you encounter negative responses to offers of service or care, keep in mind the legacy of colonization and work to not take negative behavior personally. In addition, be careful about making assumptions about families that may not live fully aligned with mainstream patterns and values but find other ways to care for family and meeting their needs. Family support and connections are a very important resource and need to be understood within a cultural context. As one Elder says – “be prepared to change rather than change the First Nation people.”

## **11.0 Community People, Health and Social Well-being**

The community of KDFN is diverse and has many strengths as well as challenges to health and well-being. The section below highlights a few points and other community documents are available to round out the information.

### **11.1 Population and Demographics**

The Kwanlin Dün registered population as of September 2009 was a total of 956 citizens with 645 living locally, on crown land and 311 living elsewhere. The population is made up of 455 females and 501 males. (Registered Indian Population by Sex and Residence *October 2009*, INAC). Kwanlin Dün First Nation is largely comprised of people of Northern Tutchone, Southern Tutchone, and Tagish descent although some citizens are of other descent.

### **11.2 Education**

Elijah Smith Elementary School offers grades K-7 for KDFN students. The staff includes two native language instructors. Students go to Porter Creek, FH Collins or Vanier Secondary Schools for 8-12. The daycare, Aboriginal Headstart program and House of Learning, all located in the community provide additional services from early childhood through to adult education opportunities. Yukon College provides continuing education programs in Whitehorse.

### **11.3 Health and Social Strengths**

Kwanlin Dün faces unique challenges due to the location in Whitehorse and faces them with resolve and resilience. Access to the resources of the city is a strength.

Kwanlin Dün First Nation is the only Yukon First Nation with transferred authority to operate its own Health Centre. Therefore, the health centre offers a unique range of programs and services to KDFN members, members of other Yukon First Nations living in Whitehorse as well as members of the Yukon public in specific situations such as the delivery of flu vaccine. The Health Department has completed a needs assessment and updates both community health plans and strategic plans yearly to

ensure their work is aligned with community priorities. The commitment to holistic service delivery includes a focus on both physical and mental or emotional health.

The Justice Department offers programming to offenders and victims dealing with the court system or other legal processes. In addition, as the Department responsible for child welfare, Justice is working with the Yukon Government on interim arrangements to ensure greater community control over child welfare related programs, services and interventions. The department is also responsible for the development of the Jackson Lake land based healing programs which is a significant strength in reinvesting in cultural ways of healing. Work with the federal government on the administration of justice is also underway which will eventually provide the community with more options for community based justice related programming. The priorities of the department are also captured in a strategic plan.

The community, under visionary leadership, has made great strides since the signing of their land claim and self government agreements. The commitment of the community to continue to heal, revitalize culture and language and build a strong community remains true.

#### **11.4 Community Challenges and Issues**

The community is aware of a significant drug and alcohol problem which stems from residential school, effects of colonization and intergenerational effects. The ease of access to drugs and alcohol contributes to the situation. Violence in many forms often accompanies unresolved trauma and addiction. The affect on youth is a specific concern as it may lead to early school leaving, unplanned pregnancies and reduction of opportunities for young people. Homelessness, poverty and unemployment are a feature of life for some families as well.

#### **11.5 Community Uniqueness and Spirit**

The uniqueness of KDFN is captured in the preamble to the Constitution of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation. The high level directions of the First Nation are set out as follows.

“Together we are determined:

- To maintain and preserve our relationship with the land, resources and living things on the land in the Traditional Territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, now and into the future;
- To preserve and promote traditional languages, practices and culture;
- To protect our youth and children, instill in them an awareness of their aboriginal identity and values, promote their education and enhance their future;
- To strive for economic, community, spiritual and personal well-being;
- To express and protect our Aboriginal rights and our rights under Kwanlin Dün First Nation Final Agreement and the Kwanlin Dün Self Government Agreement; and
- To exercise effectively the powers of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation.”

## **12.0 Health /Social Plans and Priorities**

Health and social priorities identified through discussions and documents include:

- Child health and well being - including support for parents, the daycare, Aboriginal Headstart program and education including support to schools and the Learning Centre within the subdivision
- Elders – support and care to assist them in staying in their homes and remaining connected to family and community
- Community healing – development of a land based healing program and facility at Jackson Lake to address the legacy of residential school, addictions and individual, family and community histories of trauma

The First Nation is building a Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre which is situated along the Yukon River on KDFN settlement lands. The Cultural Centre will be a gathering place that will reunite the KDFN people to the river. It will also be a source of information and understanding of First Nation history and culture for non-First Nation people and the many visitors who travel through Whitehorse.

## **13.0 KDFN Contact Numbers**

KDFN Main Reception      867-633-7800

### **Relevant Departments:**

|                                  |          |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Health                           | 668-7289 |
| Justice                          | 633-7850 |
| Community Services               | 633-7833 |
| Heritage, Lands and Resources    | 633-7822 |
| Education                        | 633-8422 |
| Dusk'a Headstart Learning Centre | 633-7816 |

To view the full staff directories for each department, please visit [www.kwanlindun.com/directory](http://www.kwanlindun.com/directory)

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# APPENDIX 1: KWANLIN DÜN FIRST NATION AND WHITEHORSE COMMUNITY PROFILE



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This community profile is for the Kwanlin Dün First Nation. A Yukon First Nation located in Whitehorse. The purpose of the community profile is to provide some background information on the community.

## 2.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE

### 2.1 *Yukon Context*

#### **Geography**

Yukon Territory is in the extreme northwest corner of Canada. It is bordered by the Northwest Territories, British Columbia, Alaska and the Arctic Ocean. The territory is 483,450 square km (186,661 square miles), about one third the size of Alaska. Landforms in the Yukon are mainly plateaus bordered and crossed by mountains. The highest range is the Elias Mountains in the southwest where the highest peak in Canada, Mount Logan rises 5,951 metres (19,524 feet) above sea level. The Yukon and Peel rivers drain virtually all of the territory and in the far north, the tundra stretches 160 km southward from the Arctic ocean.

#### **Economy and Transportation**

Mining has historically been Yukon's chief industry and remains important along with tourism. Gold, along with zinc, lead and silver are the mineral of interest and exploration and mining contribute significantly to the Yukon economy.

Air travel is used to access Whitehorse and flights are also available to Dawson City and Old Crow (the only fly in community). The Alaska Highway and the north and south Klondike Highways are heavily used and all communities other than Old Crow are situated along these highways.

#### **Population / Demographics**

The population of the Yukon was 28,674 in 2001 (Census 2001) and has risen to 34,157 by June, 2009 (Yukon Bureau of Statistics Monthly Statistical Review August 2009). This is the highest population on record. The overall population increased 2.6% from June 2008 to June 2009. Thirteen of seventeen communities in the territory showed population increases during the same period. Whitehorse has 71% of the population with 25,636 people with the remaining people distributed throughout 16 other communities. There are slightly fewer women than men – males 17,407 and females 16,750. Persons under the age of 15 years accounted for 16.7% of the population, while 8.2% of the population was aged 65 or over. The 2006 Census recorded 7,580 Yukoners (23%) as being of Aboriginal



identity. According to Statistics Canada, 3,665 of that total were aboriginal males and 3,915 females. The percentage of the aboriginal population aged 15 and over was 72.8% and 18.2% under the age of 15.

## **Health and Social Status**

The overall life expectancy has risen from 73.4 years in 1994 to 75.7 years in 2006. Yukon female's life expectancy is 77.7 years and for males, it is 74.0 years. Life expectancy at birth is lowest for Aboriginal males in the Yukon with an average of 8.8 years less life expectancy than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. Aboriginal males also had the highest increase in life expectancy of 7.3% or 4.6 years from 1994 to 2006. Aboriginal females had the second highest increase of 4.5% or 3.2 years.

The Canadian Community Health Survey (2006) for Yukon aboriginal people reported that 47.4% of self-rated their health as very good or excellent (2396 responses) and 65.7% self-rated their mental health as very or excellent (3319 responses). 21.5% of people over 18 years reported that they had quite a lot of life stress (978 responses). 69.4% felt a strong sense of belonging to their local community (3509 responses).

The Yukon Bureau of Statistics reported the Yukon labour force at 17,500 in October 2009 and of that 16,400 were employed with an unemployment rate of 6.3%. Federal, territorial, municipal and First Nation governments employed a total of 7,000. Private Sector employed 7,300 and 2,100 reported as self-employed.

## **2.2 Kwanlin Dün First Nation Location and Infrastructure**

Kwanlin Dün is located in McIntyre Subdivision in Whitehorse. KDFN has a main administration building, housing office, Justice office, House of Learning, Health Centre, Ashea Daycare and the Na Kwa Ta Ku Potlatch House as well as the Jackson Lake Camp. KDFN is in the process of building the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre along the Yukon River downtown.

KDFN owns and manages more than 250 housing units and is actively working to upgrade and renovate the homes.

## **2.3 Business and Government Services**

### **Business**

Whitehorse is the business centre for the Yukon and the supply centre for most Yukon communities. Significant factors in the economy are the accommodation and food services, education services, health and social services and recreation services, professional services, finance, real estate and agricultural employment in the surrounding area.

The Whitehorse economy still relies on the state of Yukon mining, and many of the businesses that provide services to the mining industry are headquartered in the city. Tourism continues to grow in importance. In the 2008 Business Survey conducted by Yukon Stats Bureau, Whitehorse reported a total of 2,158 businesses with 9,983 employees.

### **First Nation Business**

Yukon First Nations have continued to increase their economic development activities. First Nations consortiums have invested in businesses as diverse as major hotels, office buildings, and a manufacturing company. As well, First Nations tourism businesses operate out of Whitehorse including retail, arts and crafts, outfitting and adventure, and air or helicopter services. In 2008, Yukon First Nations owned 12 businesses and Yukon First Nation Development Corps owned an additional 19. As well, many individual First Nations people own and operate small businesses. In 2008 they made up 5.7% of sole proprietor and partnership businesses in the Yukon (Yukon Bureau of Statistics Business Survey 2008).

Kwanlin Dün citizen businesses include Chase Office Interiors, Coyne & Sons/Kluane Drilling/Nahani Paving, Hi-Grade Holdings, Jerry Wolsynuk Janitorial, Kanoe People Ltd., LogiCOMM, San Jose Logging Ltd., Tadech/i/"k" Drywall, Thibodeau Contracting, Three Aces Contracting, Timberland Plumbing & Heating and Yukon Color. As well, Kwanlin Development Corporation owns Kilrich Industries.

Kwanlin Dün carries out its economic development activities through the Kwanlin Development Corporation. It has recently finalized a Joint Venture agreement with Dominion Construction Inc. in which the two parties will pursue local construction projects. Current and potential projects underway include construction management at risk services for the Yukon Healing Centre (replacement for the Whitehorse Correctional Facility), Whitehorse International Airport expansion, Affordable Family Facility, and Grizzly Valley Subdivision.

Another significant project underway is the development and construction of the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre on the waterfront in downtown Whitehorse. Completion is expected in 2011. This 3,700 sq.m. centre features a longhouse, gallery space, Elders' lounge, meeting spaces and houses the Whitehorse library.

### **Yukon Government Services**

The Yukon government provides a full range of services from education, health and social services, environmental services, economic and community development. Visit [www.gov.yk.ca](http://www.gov.yk.ca) for more information.

### **Government of Canada**

Over time, Federal responsibilities for many services including fisheries, mine safety, intra-territorial roads, hospitals and community health care were transferred to the Yukon government. In October 2001, the Yukon Devolution Agreement was concluded enabling the transfer of the remaining province-like responsibilities for

land, water and resource management to the Government of the Yukon on April 1, 2003. As a result, the presence of the Federal Government in the territory has diminished. The remaining services provided by the federal government are housed primarily out of the Elijah Smith Building in downtown Whitehorse with some services such as Canadian Wildlife Service, Department of Fisheries & Oceans, RCMP etc. are located elsewhere in the city. Please visit [www.gc.ca](http://www.gc.ca) for more information.

### **Non Government Services**

**Skookum Jim Friendship Centre** - provides resources directed at helping community residents including CPNP - Prenatal Drop-ins, Traditional Parenting Program, Youth Diversion Program, Recreation Program and Student Training and Financial Services Program, and an Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centre.

**Kaushee's Place** – Yukon Women's Transition Home offers shelter, outreach, support and advocacy for women and their children fleeing abuse. It is staffed 24 hours a day with a full time child care worker.

**Many Rivers Counselling Services** – is a Whitehorse based organization offering non-emergency counselling for individuals, couples, families and groups.

**No Fixed Address Outreach Van** – six nights a week, provides food, clothing, nursing, harm reduction material and counseling to street-involved people who are at risk coordinated by Many Rivers in partnership with Blood Ties Four Directions Centre, Kwanlin Dün and Kaushee's.

**Alcoholics Anonymous** – a variety of daily meetings are held in the community. Telephone and internet meetings are also available daily.

**Child Development Centre** – provides early supports and services to Yukon children from birth to school age, particularly those whose needs are special.

**Yukon Council on Disability** – provides training and educates people and organizations on how to work with disabilities and provide employment support for persons with disabilities.

**Blood Ties Four Directions** – provides outreach services educating people and supporting those with blood born diseases like HIV and Hepatitis C.

**Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society of Yukon (FASSY)** – provides training, advocacy and support for families and individuals affected by FASD.

**Second Opinion Society** - provides self help alternatives to psychiatry, Drop-in centre with resource library crisis/support, rights advocacy, peer support gatherings and outdoor activities as well as a Community Lunch every Thursday at noon.

**Salvation Army** – provides a 10 bed shelter and serves over 150 meals a day to needy people at noon and 10 pm.

**Mary House** – provides emergency food service on Mondays and Fridays 2 pm-3 pm and serve sandwiches on Tuesdays and Thursdays 2 pm–5 pm

## **First Nation Services**

The self governing First Nation provides a range of services to the community including health, education, heritage, lands and resources and others. The services are funded directly by the federal government or through financial transfer agreements linked to programs and services transfer arrangements that are the method for implementing self government.

Health Centre - the KDFN Health Centre continues to be the only First Nation operated Health Centre north of the 60th parallel. The Health Centre is also unique in its integration of programming that forms a continuous stream from pre-birth to death.

Programs include:

- Walking Club
- Chronic condition screening
- Health promotion activities and
- Traditional knowledge sharing
- Healthy Aboriginal Adult and the Injury & Illness Prevention
- Consultants and other professionals may be brought into the community from time to time to provide special services, information and to deliver programs.

Health Centre clinic services are available on a drop-in basis Monday to Friday from 8:30 - 1:00. A nurse is available to provide health assessments, on-going health monitoring, teaching and education, assistance with illness management, communicable disease control and immunizations, referrals and support.

Doctor's Clinic - offers a clinic once a week and appointments can be made through the Home & Community Care nurse to those who do not have a family doctor.

Lunch 'n' Learn Program - presents topics and discussions over lunch hours on a variety of holistic health issues. Lunch is provided at the health centre on the second, third and fourth Wednesdays of the month and everyone is welcome to attend. The third Wednesday Lunch 'n' Learn is dedicated to a specific disease or condition, such as Living with Diabetes or Heart Disease.

Home & Community Care Program - provides nursing and support services to Elders and others requiring ongoing case management for chronic conditions or other medical situations through home visits, assessments, surveillance, and managed referrals.

Healthy Babies, Healthy Generations (HBHG) - is designed to support parents throughout their pregnancy and for the first 18 months of baby's life. This includes

services such as prenatal care, labor and delivery teaching, monthly luncheons, post-partum care and well-baby clinics.

Immunizations - in addition to the well baby clinics that provide developmental screens, health checks and information, immunizations are given to babies at 2, 4, 6, 12 and 18 months of age.

Sexual Health Information – at the Health Centre provide counseling, referrals, pregnancy testing, the emergency contraceptive pill and communicable disease information, counseling and referrals for testing and treatment.

Outreach Van - Kwanlin Dün Health Services employ the Outreach Van nurses who provide health education to clients related to wound management, sexual health, vein care and infection prevention.