



## B.C. First Nations Head Start **Making Traditional Regalia**

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THE SYAYK̓W HEAD START PROGRAM IN SECHELT, B.C. WAS BUSY THIS PAST YEAR REDISCOVERING THE MAKING OF TRADITIONAL REGALIA. The parents and teachers set out to make 'Paddle Vests' for their children's Potlatch and Graduation Ceremonies. Materials were bought, colors were picked, and parents and teachers got busy sewing together.

"Then we hit some snags with the designs and colors. We called an emergency meeting with our elders and we asked them for direction of how we should design, make them and what colors we were to use. The elders were happy to see the parents' interest in making our own regalia. They understood and knew we were just re-learning what we had forgotten. "This is still new to us," our elders said. "All the other native communities also know we are aware of this. They will understand that we are just re-learning." With that said and done, they gave us permission to continue on with how we started."

*"We all learned an important lesson and will research our cultural history for future reference and we will continue to ask our elders for their guidance. We have also started archiving our meetings with our elders on videotape."*