



**TAKE A HIKE
FOUNDATION**

June 26, 2025

101 Martin Street
Penticton, BC, V2A 5J9

Dear Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen,

I am graduating!

This year is my third and final year in the program, as I'll be graduating. It has been an amazing three years. I've learned and grown so much.

In my first year, I was very shy and scared because it was an unfamiliar environment with people I didn't know—new staff, new youth. As I grew more comfortable, I started enjoying my time at school. I had endless support from the staff and endless love from my classmates.

In my second year, the start was a lot better than the first. I knew everyone by then. Familiar faces were very comforting. The adventures we went on were really fun, and I'm grateful I got to experience them with my class.

JUST THIS WEEK I JOYFULLY ATTENDED MY OWN CHILD'S GRADUATION. AFTER WITNESSING AND SUPPORTING HIS JOURNEY OVER THE PAST 5 YEARS, I FEEL ACUTELY AWARE OF HOW MANY TAKE A HIKE GRADUATES STARTED HIGH SCHOOL DURING THE LOCKDOWN AND THEN FACED MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AS THEY NAVIGATED ADOLESCENCE. LIVING THROUGH HARD TIMES, MAKES GRADUATION EXTRA SWEET. THIS MOMENT MARKS THEIR SUCCESSES AND IS A TIME TO CELEBRATE THEIR PERSEVERANCE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS. I'M IN AWE OF EVERY ONE OF THEM.

– MARNIE GOLDENBERG, SENIOR DIRECTOR, PROGRAMS

Finally, my third and current year. Most of the youth I knew had graduated the year before, and some staff had also moved on to pursue their futures. At the beginning of the year, it felt a lot like my first. Unfamiliar faces. The environment was the same, even though it felt different. As the year went on, I grew comfortable with the people around me and had so much fun with them.

I'm incredibly grateful for this program. It has helped me grow both mentally and physically. The endless support and love I've received from Take a Hike makes me want to stay in it forever.

Thank you for existing.

With love,

Tegan, Take a Hike Graduate, 2025

*Christina, and
all at the District,
thank you. Stories
like Tegan's are what
you're making
possible with
your gift.
Jaydeen*



P.S. Happy summertime!