



Connect & Prepare Overview

Together, We Can Build the Future of Emergency Preparedness

The Challenge

British Columbians are vulnerable to earthquakes, wildfires, floods, tsunamis, changing climate and severe weather. Many of us are also vulnerable to emergencies caused by chronic stresses such as declining health or financial instability. And one crucial factor underlies all of these challenges: *The more socially isolated we are, the more vulnerable we are.*

That's why we've developed Connect & Prepare – a ground-breaking approach to **building preparedness** by **strengthening social connections between neighbours**.

We need to be more prepared and connected!

Only 54% of British Columbians say their households have any emergency plans.

Only 13% feel their emergency plans are reasonably complete.

Only 20% have any contacts and plans with neighbours to help each other.*

*Source: BC Government Personal Preparedness Survey Report, 2018.

The Connect & Prepare Solution

Mutual assistance and **preparedness planning** are both vital to survival, safety and overall resilience. *Connect & Prepare* is an innovative, locally-developed approach to meeting both those needs together. Through facilitated presentations, interactive games, and friendly discussions, neighbours get to know each other, learn about acute emergencies and chronic stresses, identify assets and priorities, and implement shared preparedness projects. Each group of neighbours receives free workshops, shared emergency supplies, and access to micro-grants to help them continue to collaborate afterwards. It's fun! And effective...

Connect & Prepare's Effectiveness

Connect & Prepare was piloted in 2018 at three Victoria, BC locations: A condominium high-rise, a multi-unit rental building for seniors with disabilities, and a street of single-family dwellings. The outcomes were overwhelmingly positive. Here is what participants reported:

- 94% of neighbours got to know each other better
- 100% of neighbours became more connected with each other
- 100% of neighbours achieved better understanding of their collective strengths, assets and vulnerabilities in relation to acute emergencies and chronic stresses
- 100% of neighbours took action to be better prepared for emergencies
- Neighbours at all three sites continued collaborating on projects afterwards



The *Connect & Prepare* Team

Connect & Prepare is a collaboration between Building Resilient Neighbourhoods (BRN) and the City of Victoria's emergency management division, Victoria Ready. BRN is a non-profit initiative that brings citizens, groups, organizations, businesses and local governments together to create more resilient communities. The BRN team has decades of experience in citizen networking, resilience building, adult education and group facilitation; learn more about us at our website.

We're Seeking Partners!

To begin to meet the enormous demand we're seeing, starting in 2019 Building Resilient Neighbourhoods and Victoria Ready are planning to deliver *Connect & Prepare* to twenty-seven groups of neighbours in Victoria, including nine social housing buildings through our new partnership with Capital Regional Housing Corporation. And BRN's long-term goal is to take the program well beyond that – across the Capital Regional District and ultimately British Columbia-wide.

Victoria Ready and Capital Regional Housing Corporation are contributing substantial resources to fully cover the costs of their roles. Building Resilient Neighbourhoods receives some funding from philanthropic foundations, but we are currently actively seeking corporate partners who share our vision – A future where all British Columbians are both better prepared and more socially connected with their neighbours. If you share this vision, please contact us today to discuss unique opportunities for promotion through our innovative *Connect & Prepare* program.

info@resilientneighbourhoods.ca
www.resilientneighbourhoods.ca
www.victoriaready.ca

