

Quadra Village Community Centre Youth Programs: The Problem with Losing \$60,000 in Grants and Possible Solutions

The Challenge:

- Quadra Village Community Centre (QVCC) youth programs recently received word that a \$60,000 annual Foundation grant that has been the backbone of its Youth Centre based programs for over 10 years will not be renewed effective April 1, 2018. This represents 2/3 of our Youth Centre based program budget for 2018-19 (excluding MCFD/Children's Health Foundation co-funded Youth Outreach which is at maximum capacity).
- Quadra Village Community Centre is located directly across from the largest concentrated low income housing development in Greater Victoria and in the heart of a low-income, high-density, inner-city area of Victoria. These ingredients serve to create a community where risk factors such as family violence, mental health challenges, addiction and poverty are common for children and youth.
- Over 50% of the youth attending our Youth Centre programs are Indigenous, which amplifies the significance of our programs.
- Youth from other organizations (including Burnside-Gorge) that have lost funding have been referring youth to our programs as an alternative.

The Programs:

The programs affected include:

- Youth Drop-ins (currently offered 3 nights a week)
- The Crew (Life Skills, Team Building, Pre-employment Program for Youth)
- Crisis Response (including responding to suicidal ideation, hospitalization and substance misuse crises), Emotional Response and Family Outreach.
- System Navigation

Other programs winding up this fiscal include due to short-term funding/inability to renew:

- Youth Recreation Nights (2 Nights a week)
- Girls Group and Boys Group (Weekly)

Additional Staffing Impacts:

- We have worked hard to have two staff on for youth drop-ins and during other of the programs which have intensive staffing needs such as Food Skills For Youth, the Food Kart and Crew Events. This loss of funding will limit how often we can provide two staff.

Possible Solutions:

- Short-term bridge funding that would allow us to apply for funding through 2 major local Foundations in 2018-19
- Funding to recognize the critical role that we play with the children, youth and families in Evergreen Terrace (formerly Blanshard Court), Greater Victoria's concentrated low income housing project. Work towards this has begun with BC Housing and the response indicates initial receptiveness to examine the issue.
- Explore whether funding could be allocated given the large number of Indigenous youth served (even though we are not an Indigenous-specific organization).
- Ideas from our valued community partners including Foundations, Government, BC Housing, Non-profits and Individuals.
-

Conclusion

Many of the youth that we serve come to us because they struggle with a sense of purpose and hope that frequently manifests as minimal school attendance/involvement, depression, mental health issues and suicidal ideation. In contrast our success stories include a significant majority of youth who surpass what their parents have been able to accomplish whether in the form of self-esteem, overall wellness, social skills and employment readiness. Our Youth Centre programs including Youth Drop-in (safe environment reducing social isolation and providing positive supports and activities for youth) and The Crew (self-esteem, life-skill, team building and employment building group) are critical to promoting the health and resilience of youth in the short term. In the long-term these programs help youth enter adulthood with good coping skills, self-esteem, life skills and work skills.

Please help us in the ways that you can so that we can continue to offer programs that offer hope and a critical safety net for youth now and in the years to come.

Please follow up with Kelly Greenwell, Executive Director, Quadra Village Community Centre: 250.388.7696 ext.; kelly@quadravillagecc.com

Caring ~Inclusive~Respectful~Community

www.quadravillagecc.com