



Substance Awareness:  
How To Talk To Your  
Youth about substances

&

Resources

# What We Are Doing in the Schools

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Community approach

Implementing Social Emotional Learning (SEL) & mental health and well-being in classroom teachings

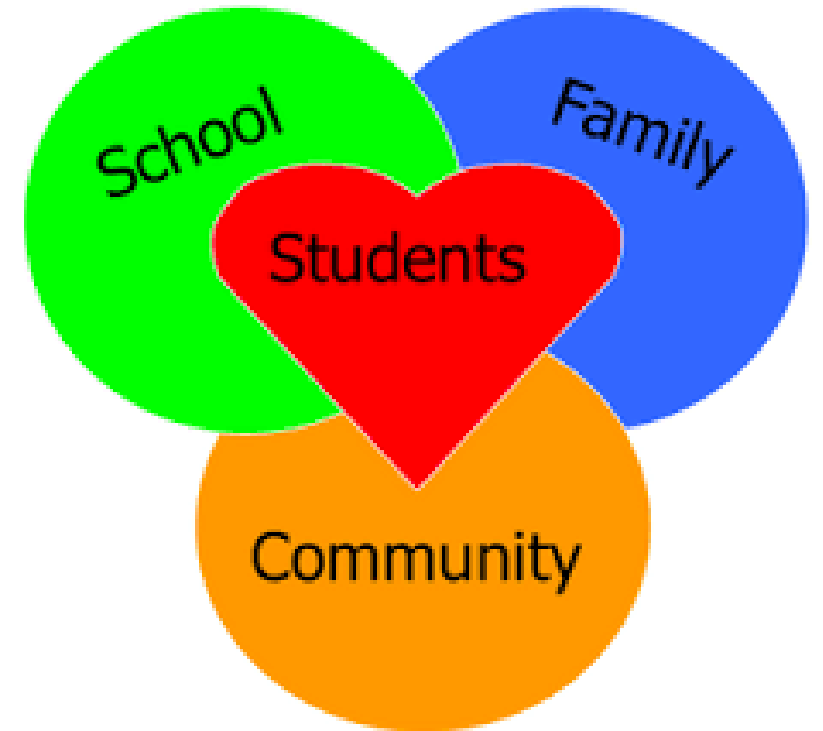
Counselling available

Substance Use

Prevention and

Health Promotion

Worker



# Safe School Specialist: Sean McCarron

INTRODUCTION

WHAT WE ARE DOING AT BURNABY NORTH

ROLE OF SSS

# What are substances?

Anything you put into your body that affects how it functions. 3 ways they can affect the brain:



**Depressants** slow your central nervous system, give a sense of calm (ie: alcohol, opioids)



**Stimulants** wake you up, provide energy, speed up your central nervous system (ie: coffee, cocaine)



**Hallucinogens** alter your mindset, distort reality, make you see and feel things that are not there (ie: LSD, mushrooms)

# Why are people using substances?

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Fun

Escape

Curiosity

On a dare

Peer pressure

Older siblings

Adult examples

To feel grown up

Become more creative

Caffeine – wakes you up

Deal with negative feelings

Relate to others better

Low self-esteem

Coping with stress

Manage sleep

Medicinal use







# People first language

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The person comes first

The person is not labelled as a mental health or substance use disorder

# Language to use

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## SAY THIS...

People who use substances/alcohol/drugs

Substance misuse, harmful use

Not actively using

Youth with depression\*

Mental well-being

Youth without mental health problem or substance use

## INSTEAD OF THIS...

Drug Addict/Alcoholic

Drug Abuse

Clean

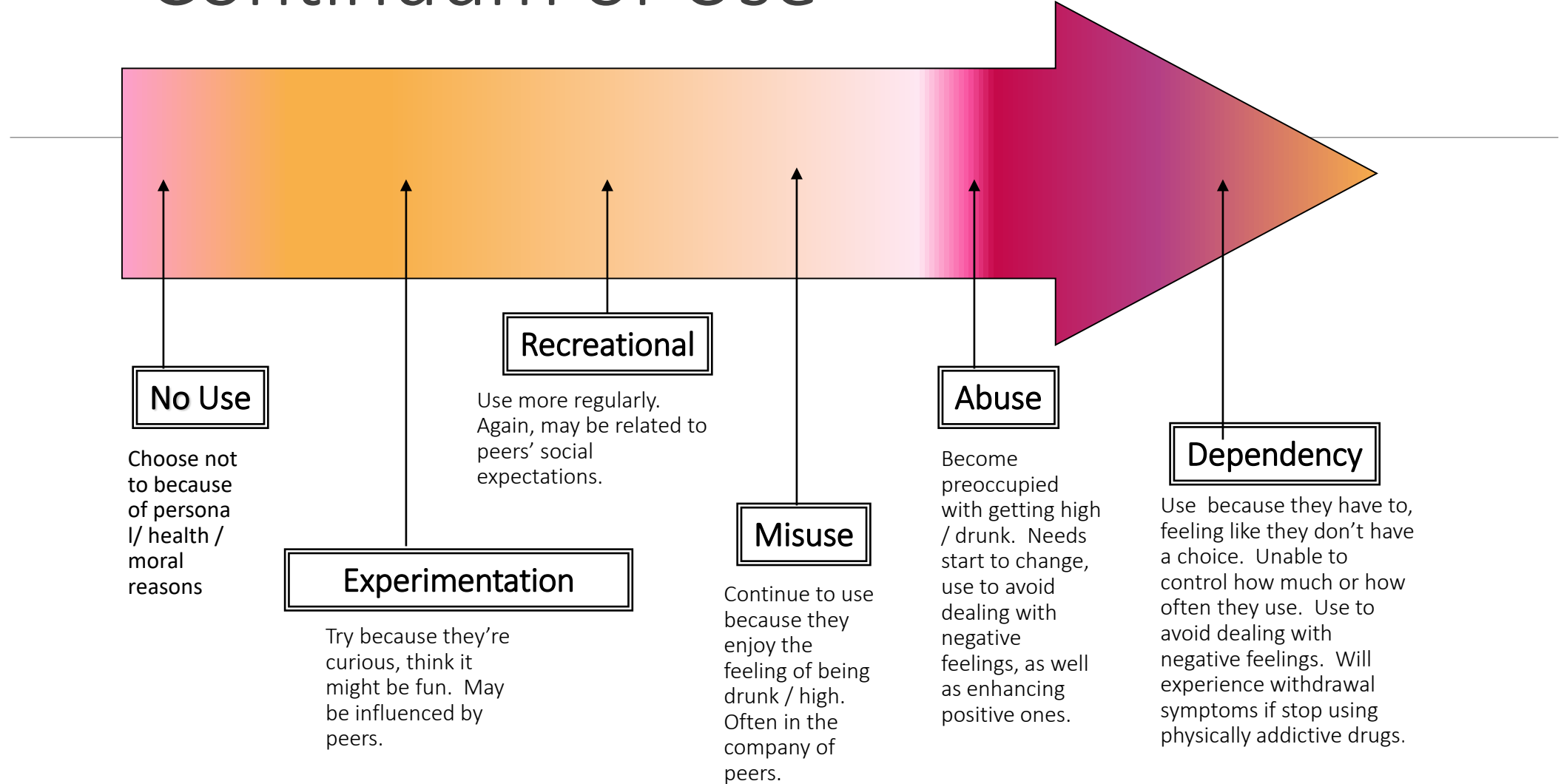
Depressed\* youth/ suffering from depression\*

Mental happiness

Normal/typical youth



# Continuum of Use





# Risk Factors for Substance Use

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Insecure attachment

Early trauma

Exposure to extreme stress and uncontrollable life events

Violence

Parental/family substance use

Mental illness

Genetic



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# When to seek help

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Abrupt change in mood or attitude

Sudden decline in attendance or performance at school

Increased resistance at home or school

Decreased interest in activities

Increased borrowing of money from parents or friends

Heightened secrecy about actions or possessions

# Preventive and Protective Factors

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A caregiver's ability to understand and respond appropriately to a youth's signals is vital to the development of secure attachment

Parental support and approval

Stable family structure

Effective communication and guidance vs authoritarian discipline

Stigma



# Nine Things All Youth Need

1. Structure
2. Consequences
3. Parent-child connections
4. Lots and lots of strong relationships
5. A powerful identity
6. A sense of control
7. A sense of belonging/spirituality/life purpose
8. Rights and responsibilities
9. Safety and support



# Three Core Protective Factors that Support Resiliency

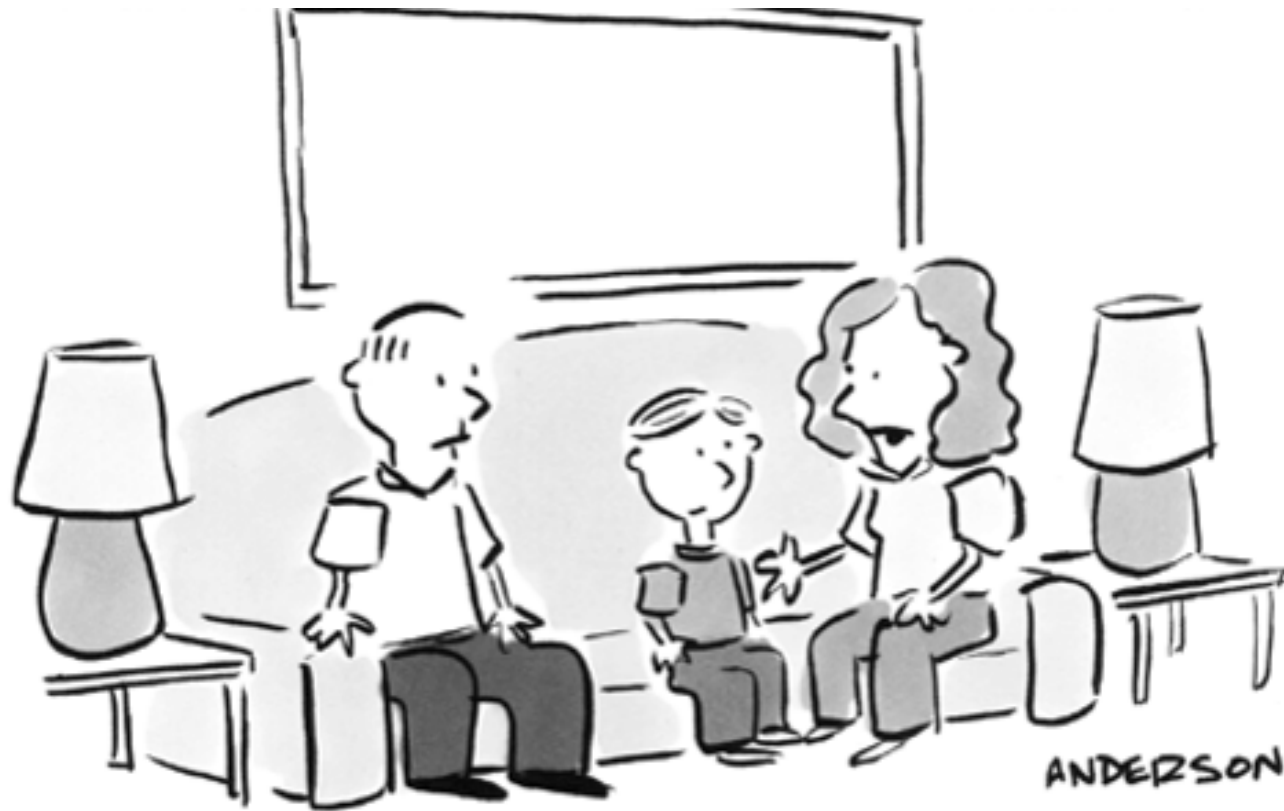
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1. Connectedness (belonging, being seen)
  1. Purposeful conversations- balance of listening, speaking, questions.
2. Opportunities for participation and contribution (meaningful involvement)
3. Self-expectations/personal standards that develop through connecting and participating in relationships with others

Effective Prevention= Caring Relationships



# How do I talk to my youth about substances?



"Your father and I want you to know that you can talk to us about anything."

# Harm Reduction

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Allows us to meet youth where they are at

Allows us to promote safety in youths' lives

Develops relationship without judgment or shame

Respects youths developmental process

Creates an opportunity for relationship

# How do I talk to my youth about substance use?

Parents often put a lot of pressure on themselves to 'get it right,' which can turn conversations into lectures.

How young people respond to these talks has little to do with the content of what you're saying and everything to do with the existing and developing quality of your relationship (trust, respect, understanding, love) with your child.

# Tips on how to start the conversation

## **Be open, loving and involved**

Respect that youth are experts in their own culture, so invite your child to teach you about their world. Make talking and having conversations about a variety of subjects with your kids a regular part of your day.

Praising positive behaviour, showing respect and demonstrating genuine interest in your kids' lives on an ongoing basis will help make you more approachable to them when they are running into difficulties and need someone to talk to about their problems.

Finding time to do things you enjoy together as a family helps everyone stay connected and maintain open communication.

# Tips on how to start the conversation

## Use the news

You can use an external reference like social media, a newspaper article or TV show about substances to start a conversation with your teenage child.

- Ask about what concerns, worries or questions that they have about 'what is happening'.



# Tips on how to start the conversation

## Ask questions, then listen

The best way to talk to your kid about substance use is to listen to them. Ask your child to teach you more about substances by inviting them to tell you what they're hearing, seeing or have learned.

Ask your kids about the kinds of concerns and cautions kids are sharing with other kids about substances and safety; about what steps have kids been taking to keep each other safe.

Ask about what is it like for them for you to be talking about this.





## Tips on how to start the conversation



**Speak from your heart**



Focus on your heartfelt concerns for their safety and a deep regard for their wellness (in contrast to right/wrong, good/bad, obey/punish).



Emphasize your deep caring, commitment to understand and be meaningfully present in their life in contrast to 'setting them straight



Commit to understanding their perspective  
and supporting their well-being

imposing your beliefs about that

# Substance Use Resources

Odyssey I Substance Use Services

Lifeguard app

Fraser Health

- Harm Reduction- <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/mental-health-and-substance-use/harm-reduction#.YfhKAv7MJPZ>
- Community Substance Use Services Clinics- <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/Service-Directory/Services/mental-health-and-substance-use/mental-health-centres/community-substance-use-services-clinics>

Purpose mobile van

Towards the Heart

Wellbeing.gov.bc.ca

Overdose.gov.bc.ca

Moms Stop the Harm

Stop the stigma –BC Government

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/overdose/reducing-stigma>

Burnaby School District Website- Services- Safe and Caring Schools

RCMP-Youth Services



National Child & Youth Mental Health Day



National Child & Youth Mental Health Day

CONNECT AND LEARN WITH US - An Online Event for Parents & Caring Adults

CONNECT AND LEARN WITH US - Online Events for Parents & Caring Adults

## The ABCs of Substance Use and Connecting With Our Kids

MAY 4

Talking about substance use with our kids is important, but we don't always know how. Join us for a conversation with Senior Associates of Youth Substance Use Health Promotion, a Youth Addiction Counsellor, and Parents to talk about the basics of substance use; from pre-experimentation to casual using. We will focus on the importance of our relationships and staying connected to our kids.

*This event will not cover chronic use and addiction.*

Time: 6pm - 8pm

Register at: [familysmart.ca/events](http://familysmart.ca/events)

Cindy Andrew is a mother of two, a former teacher and long time health promoter. She is a senior associate on the team leading The ABCs of Youth Substance Use, a BC government funded project focused on supporting schools - and by extension, parents and caregivers, in addressing substance use with youth. A former program consultant with the Canadian Institute on Substance Use Research, Cindy also works with a Vancouver Island based school district in supporting their health promoting schools related efforts, which includes connecting with and support parents and caregivers.

Angela Lawrence is a parent of 2, a certified educator and a registered clinical counsellor. Angela works to support youth who present with substance use issues.

Art Steinmann brings over 40 years of experience in substance use policy, education, program development, advocacy and health promotion work. Art is a Senior Associate, Youth Substance Use Health Promotion, Bunyaad Public Affairs Inc. From 2005 - 2021 Art was the co-founder, co-developer and Manager of Substance Use Health Promotion and SACY (Supporting and Connecting Youth) for the Vancouver School Board.

Victoria Keddiss is a FamilySmart Practice Manager & Facilitator. Victoria is a mom of two adult children and is grateful for the teachings of her children along the way.

## It's Never Too Late: Healing Parent-Child Relational Stress Using Emotion-Focused Family Therapy (EFFT)

MAY 2

With **Dr. Adele Lafrance**, clinical psychologist, author, scientist, and developer of emotion-focused treatment modalities, including Emotion-Focused Family Therapy

Time: 6:30pm - 7:30pm PST

## Building Connection With Our Kids When It Feels Impossible

MAY 3

With **Diane Evans**, FamilySmart Parent Peer Support Worker, BC Children's Hospitals Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre.

**Tammy Music**, Family Smart Parent Peer Support Worker, Surrey Memorial Hospital, Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Stabilization Unit (CAPSU) and Short Term Assessment Response Treatment (START) Fraser North.

Time: 12pm - 1pm PST

## The ABCs of Substance Use and Connecting With Our Kids

MAY 4

With **Cindy Andrew**, senior associate on the team leading The ABCs of Youth Substance Use, a BC government funded project focused on supporting schools

**Angela Lawrence**, educator and registered clinical counsellor

**Art Steinmann**, Senior Associate, Youth Substance Use Health Promotion, Bunyaad Public Affairs.

Time: 6pm - 8pm PST

REGISTER AT: [FAMILYSMART.CA/EVENTS](http://FAMILYSMART.CA/EVENTS)



[may7icare.ca](http://may7icare.ca)



[may7icare.ca](http://may7icare.ca)



# Mental Health Resources

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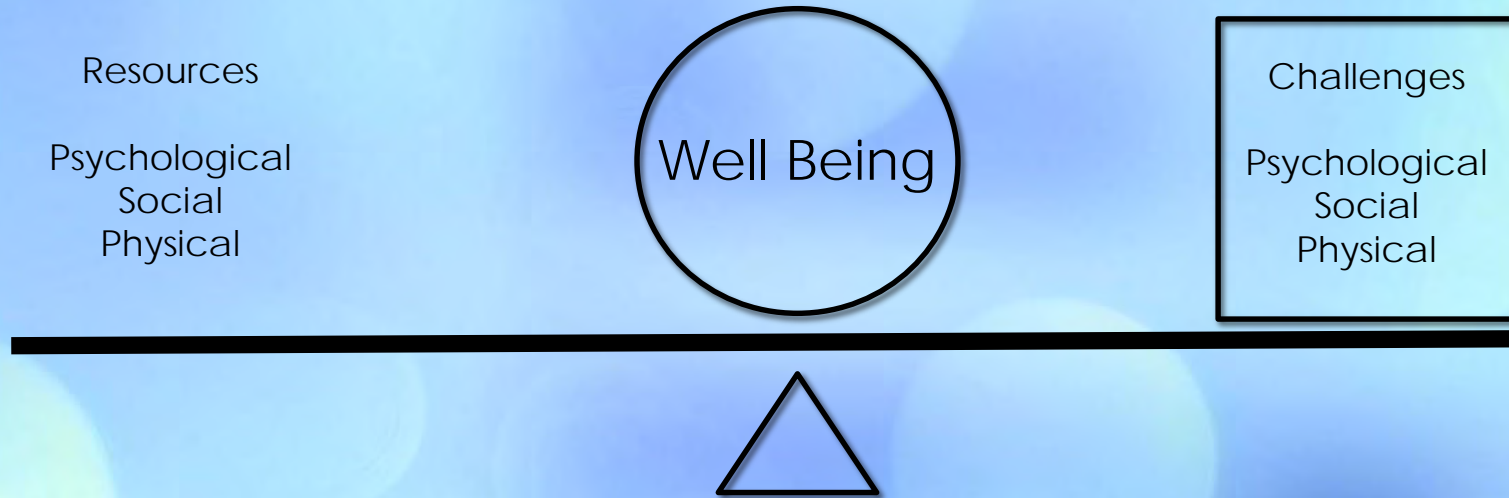
Mental health, like physical health, is a key component of what makes us well

Physical health refers to our bodies, mental health refers to our thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.

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# Well-Being



Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J., & Sanders, L. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing.

# School Supports

- Teachers/Staff
- Wellness Councils
- Safe School Specialists
- Substance Use Prevention and Health Promotion Worker
- Counsellors
- School Liaison Officers
- Check-in, connect you with your counsellor
- On-going mental health literacy and building community
- Ensuring schools are safe, resolving conflict and building community
- One on one and referrals
- Counselling, make referrals to outside counselling (CYMH, Camray, St Leos)
- Bridging safety from school to community

# Youth Drop-in Centres

Open all-year. Lots of activities, book for drop-ins. Have youth workers available to check-in and support you!

## **Creekside Youth Centre**

Instagram: creeksideyouthcentre  
Snapchat: creekoftheside

## **South Central Youth Centre**

Instagram: southcentralyc

## **Edmonds Community Centre**

Instagram: eccyouthcentre

## **Alphabet Soup : Online support for LGBTQ+ youth**

Instagram: alphabet\_soup\_bby

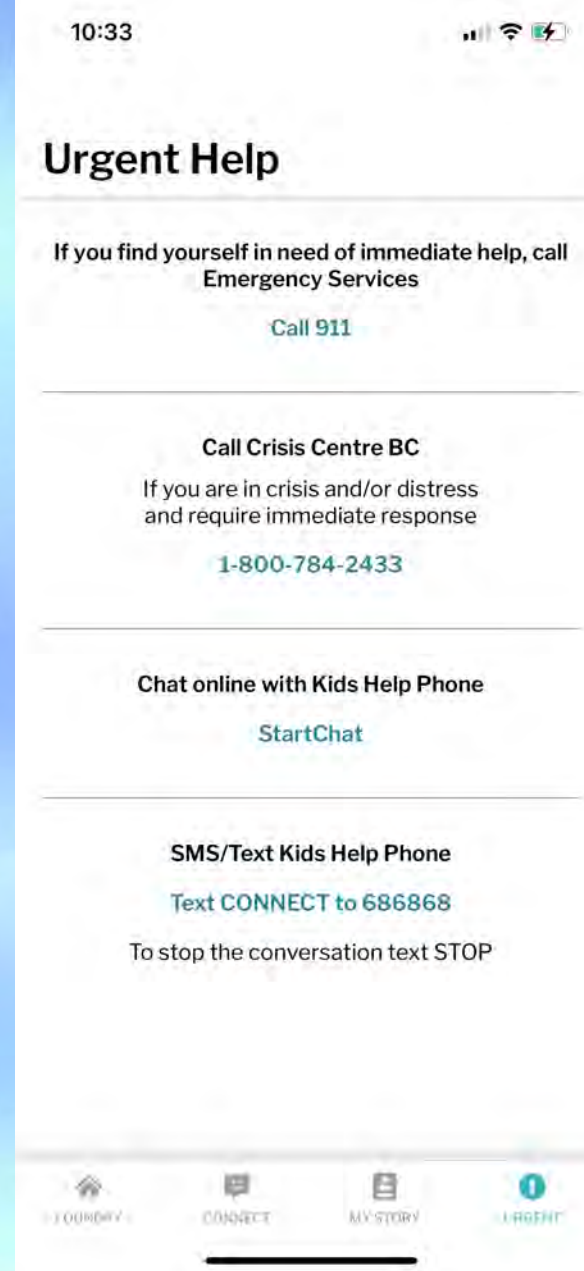
## **Summit Youth Centre**

Instagram: summit\_youth\_centre  
Snapchat: summit\_youth




# Foundry


1260 Granville St,  
Vancouver, BC  
V6Z 1M4  
phone 604-806-9415







**All young people 12-24 can access Foundry services**

# Kids Help Phone <https://kidshelpphone.ca/>

**Kids Help Phone** 


Call a counsellor: 1-800-668-6868 [Donate](#) 

[Get help](#)  [Get info](#)  [Who we are](#) 

 **Text**


Get support right now through our texting service

**TAP TO TEXT**

 **Phone**


Call us for support through our phone service

**LEARN MORE**

 **Messenger**


Access support using Facebook Messenger

**LEARN MORE**

 **Live Chat**

Connect with a professional counsellor online from 7 p.m. to midnight ET

**LEARN MORE**

 **Resources Around Me**

Find a youth program near you

**GO NOW**



# AnxietyCanada.com

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Learn more about what anxiety is, and how to manage it

Videos, apps and resources

Stories from lived experiences



# Victimlink

VictimLinkBC is a toll-free, confidential, multilingual service available across B.C. and the Yukon 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can be accessed by calling or texting 1-800-563-0808 or sending an email to [VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca](mailto:VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca).

It provides information and referral services to all victims of crime and immediate crisis support to victims of family and sexual violence, including victims of human trafficking exploited for labour or sexual services.

VictimLinkBC provides service in up to 150 languages, including many North American Aboriginal languages.

Even if you're not sure if you have been a victim of crime, you can call or text VictimLinkBC at 1-800-563-0808 or email [VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca](mailto:VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca) for assistance. **Your call will be completely confidential.**

# LGBTQ2SAI+ Local Resources

## Pflagcanada.com

- We provide support for all family members & friends. We work to create an environment of understanding so our gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgender children can live with dignity and respect.
- Monthly online zoom meetings



## Qmunity.ca

Youth support services  
"Bra, binder, and breast forms" exchange program  
Free & low cost counselling  
Information & referrals from their LGBTQ2SAI+ friendly directory





FamilySmart  
Together-Centred

Parent Support, Resources  
and Videos, Youth Peer  
Support and Workshops

<https://familysmart.ca/>



# How to advocate for yourself

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- Be prepared
  - Ask someone to go with you/be on the call with you
  - Find the right support
  - At the appointment:
    - Ask questions
    - Be honest
    - Take notes

# Contact Information

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**Jessica Gill- *District Substance Use Prevention and Health Promotion Worker***

- [Jessica.gill@burnabyschools.ca](mailto:Jessica.gill@burnabyschools.ca)

**Jocelyn Bryan- *Mental Health Liaison***

- [Jocelyn.Bryan@burnabyschools.ca](mailto:Jocelyn.Bryan@burnabyschools.ca)

**Sean Mccarron- *Safe School Specialist at Burnaby North***

- [Sean.Mccarron@burnabyschools.ca](mailto:Sean.Mccarron@burnabyschools.ca)