

# People

## Families

# Communities



## FAMILY SERVICES OF GREATER VANCOUVER

FALL 2007

Family Services of Greater Vancouver  
*Strengthening people, families and  
communities since 1928*

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## Music with heart

By the twinkle in his eye, it is easy to see that music is much more than a job to Colin Ford, Sales & Event Coordinator for Long & McQuade Musical Instruments in North Vancouver. But it's the heart and soul that he puts into his volunteer work with homeless and at-risk youth that tell this story loud and clear.

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*“The music program at Directions provides a wonderful example of how easily positive social change can happen in our community when a caring volunteer contributes his talent, expertise, and skills towards addressing a large social issue like homelessness.”*

*—Teri Nicholas,  
executive director*

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was incredibly inspired by the music I was hearing coming out of them. It got me thinking that these kids really need some place to channel this creative energy.”

And thus the music program was born. Since 2000, Colin has been giving free weekly guitar lessons to the youth at ...cont'd on back (page 8)

The idea for a music program for homeless youth came to Colin six years ago, while working at the Long & McQuade store on West Hastings. “Youth from the surrounding streets would often come into the store to try out the guitars. While it was clear they weren't going to buy anything, there was something about these kids that just got to me. I found myself doing a lot of observing and

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SPECIAL INSERT

2006/2007 Annual Report

## Board of Directors

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### Executive Director

Teri Nicholas, MSW, RSW

*“The supportive atmosphere and excellent therapists have made a permanent difference in the way that I relate to myself, my children and my relationships with others.”*

—recipient of FSGV services

Newsletter designed & edited by Leah Zille, Manager of Communications. Please submit any comments, questions or concerns about the newsletter to [lzille@fsgv.ca](mailto:lzille@fsgv.ca).

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter or other mailings from Family Services of Greater Vancouver, please contact Madeline Goheen at 604.731.4951 ext 20 or [mgoheen@fsgv.ca](mailto:mgoheen@fsgv.ca).

# Family Services of Greater Vancouver

## Who we are

At some point in life, everyone gets stuck. Since 1928, people experiencing challenges have been turning to Family Services of Greater Vancouver. We offer support, provide hope, and present opportunities—helping people realize and create possibilities for themselves and for their families. And we do this through a combination of professional counselling, therapy, education, advocacy, planning, and other supportive services.

We know that when we help an individual—be it a child, youth, adult, or senior—or a family, the benefit flows to the entire community.

Embedded in the mission of Family Services is the belief that...

- Every child should have the chance to be nurtured and to thrive.
- Every youth should have the opportunity to reach his/her potential.
- Everyone should have the capacity to meet life's challenges.

We serve people of different age, culture, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, and gender identity in Vancouver, Burnaby, Richmond, New Westminster, and Surrey. We strive to ensure our services are accessible to everyone and reflect diversity.

## What we do

Our services range from prevention to intervention. All of our work is about building healthy, vibrant tomorrows.

- Abuse prevention & trauma treatment
- Addictions treatment
- Adoption services
- Community education & development
- Counselling
- Employee assistance
- Employment services
- Immigrant services
- Intensive family & parenting services
- Support for children & youth with special needs
- Victim support
- Youth services

## Historical moment

In the 1950's & 1960's, there was a noticeable increase in people experiencing marital problems; the divorce was steadily on the rise. This resulted in a breakdown of traditional family life. Family Services of Greater Vancouver was there to help families through these challenges and adapt to a new family dynamic.



## 2007 Walk for a Child another success!

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007, Family Services of Greater Vancouver held the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual **Walk for a Child**. Family, friends, volunteers, and staff came together to support children and raise awareness in the community that every child should be safe. It was a beautiful day for a walk, and the Jericho Park setting couldn't have been more perfect.

We were honored to have Deputy Chief Bob Rich from the Vancouver Police Department welcome our participants and lead the walk. The event concluded with a delicious barbecue provided by M&M Meats. *Music with Marnie* joined in, entertaining the child in all of us.

We are delighted to announce that since its inception three years ago, **Walk for a Child** has raised over \$50,000 for our children's programs. A special thank you to our top fundraiser—board member Nicole Bradbury—who brought in over \$2,000 in pledges this year! With the tremendous support from our sponsors, volunteers, participants, local businesses, family, and friends, **Walk for a Child** has helped make a difference in the lives of many children in our community. Thank you for your support!

For more information (and photo gallery) on the 2007 **Walk for a Child**, please visit [www.walkforachild.com](http://www.walkforachild.com). We look forward to seeing you at next year's walk! Together, we can ensure every child is safe—one step at a time.



### Did you know?

Family Services of Greater Vancouver's community programs rely on donations from individuals, families, corporations, and foundations. Last year, our community supporters contributed \$1 million, helping to make our work with children and families possible. Some of this work includes providing counselling to a child who lives in an abusive home; helping a teenaged mother learn parenting skills and complete high school; and teaching a child alternatives to violence and bullying. But the demand for service is great. We need your support to continue this important work. To donate, please use the form on the back of this newsletter or visit [www.fsgv.ca](http://www.fsgv.ca). Together, we can continue to make a difference.



## Family Services actively working on solutions to end the homelessness crisis

Directions has been recognized by the federal government as an example of best practice in Canada in the provision of services to homeless youth. Last November, Renata Aebi, Director of Youth Services, was invited by the Government of Canada to London, England to present at an international forum on homelessness. In addition to the enormous honour this brings to the agency, Renata brought back a wealth of knowledge to share on how other communities are dealing with the issue of homelessness.

Renata is also serving on an external working group for the Homelessness Accountability Network, an initiative of the Housing and Homelessness branch of the Government of Canada. This is a new initiative tasked with: playing a more proactive role in knowledge development; supporting the creation of sustainable national and regional networks and partnerships; enhancing the community planning process; and improving the Homelessness Partnering Secretariat's ability to measure progress and to report on results at the community and national levels.

## A gift for the future

Have you ever considered how your charitable giving could create a legacy? A bequest to Family Services of Greater Vancouver is a gift in your will and an expression of your values, wishes, and hopes for the future—one that will have a profound impact on the future generations of our community. It is important to have a will so that the people and charities that are important to you are taken care of. If you are thinking about drafting a will for the first time, or planning changes to your current will, consider a bequest to Family Services of Greater Vancouver. We would be happy to discuss with you various ways to leave a legacy that compliment your personal circumstances. For more information, please contact Carey Bornn, Director of Development at [cbornn@fsgv.ca](mailto:cbornn@fsgv.ca) or 604.731.4951 ext 26.

*"Even though it took me a few goes to get the strength, thanks to you we are 'free.' For all that you did for my children and me, thank you seems so short and sweet and not enough...Without your strength and guidance I would not be able to walk down the street without a panic attack...you all are the reason my life has become something wonderful again."*

## New Domestic Violence program in Richmond

Family Services has recently entered into a partnership with the RCMP in Richmond to provide a domestic violence unit for high-risk domestic violence cases in the Richmond community. This is the third such partnership Family Services has entered into, having successfully been working with the Vancouver Police Department & New Westminster Police Service since the mid 1990's.

In this innovative approach to social service delivery, a Family Services' counsellor partners with a specialized police officer, working together to address the crucial social, emotional, and criminal justice needs of victims of domestic violence. The ultimate goal is to improve victim safety.



## Family Services launches provocative Public Service Announcement

It's difficult to read the newspaper or watch the evening news these days without being faced with yet another story about violence destroying lives. Violence—particularly domestic violence—touches the lives of many who come to Family Services for help; not to mention the countless people within our community who never take the step of reaching out for help. It is an issue that affects us all and is tightly woven throughout our agency.

So, when Publicis Vancouver—a local advertising firm with a strong international presence—approached us about developing a pro-bono campaign to help the community understand the issues that families in our communities face, we knew that domestic violence was the obvious issue to address.

The result was a launch earlier this year of our provocative public service campaign. The 30-second television commercial, "Censored" is the first phase of this campaign—representing the reality of domestic violence. The spot begins with obvious tension between a couple that rapidly escalates to violence and ends with the innocent faces of the couple's children who have just witnessed the argument unfold.

"We know that the situation portrayed in the TV spot is one that is all too real for many families in the lower mainland," says Teri Nicholas, executive director of Family Services of Greater Vancouver.

"While it's sure to spark some discussion, we are a voice for many who are voiceless. This commercial provides a springboard to dialogue and to action. Family Services of Greater Vancouver is here to help. And together, with the support, of the community, we will continue to be a positive influence in strengthening the lives of people and families in our community."

## Chief Constable's Commendation

Congratulations to Julie Dingle, a counsellor with the Domestic Violence Response Team in New Westminster, who was awarded a New Westminster Police Service Chief Constable's Commendation.



### Some stats about domestic violence\* ...

*Women continue to suffer more serious and repeated spousal violence than do men and incur more serious consequences as a result of this violence*

*(43% of women reported that the most serious spousal violence they experienced involved being beaten, choked, threatened with or having a gun or knife used against them or sexually assaulted by their current or previous partner)*

*Women are more likely to suffer physical injury and to fear for their lives as a result of the violence endured at the hands of an intimate partner*

*(44% of females reported injury compared to 19% of males; 13% of female victims sought medical attention compared to 2% of male victims)*

*Female victims of spousal violence were three times more likely than male victims of spousal violence to fear for their lives and three times more likely to take time off from their everyday activities because of the violence*

*\* acquired from Statistics Canada, 2004.*

We are tremendously grateful to Publicis for helping us bring this issue to the forefront. In collaborating with them on this project, we found a genuine passion for community and generosity of spirit, in addition to a wealth of knowledge, confidence, creativity, and professionalism. *The commercial can be viewed on Family Services' website at [www.fsgv.ca](http://www.fsgv.ca).*

## Vancouver Police Charitable Union: A common goal



When a child grows up in a home where violence has been prevalent, his/her view of healthy relationships can become rather distorted. We know that when vulnerable children are given an opportunity to learn how to deal with the complex feelings associated with abuse and violence, they have a greater ability to lead happy, healthy, and violence free lives.

So to address this issue, in 2001 Family Services of Greater Vancouver developed the Respect Safety and Violence Prevention (RSVP) program in response to requests from youth, parents, and educators for a program that could teach healthy relationship skills to at-risk children and youth. The objectives of this program so closely matched the values of the Vancouver Police Union Charitable Foundation, that a partnership was formed. For the past three years, the Vancouver Police Union Charitable Foundation has been a significant contributor to the RSVP program.

"We decided to support the RSVP program because of the very similar focus to our own *Immediate Intervention Fund*," says Tom Stamatakis, president of the Vancouver Police Union Charitable Foundation. "We both share the common view that it

*"I would really like to see the RSVP program made available in every one of our elementary schools because the need is just so great. There are groups of students at every school that would tremendously benefit from this amazing program."*

—Jan Sippel, Coordinator of Abuse Prevention, Vancouver School Board.

is important to offer counselling to at-risk children in our community—trying to intervene at a time in their lives when we can affect positive change for children at-risk of being victimized. The ultimate goal, of course, is to try to ensure that these children do not become abusers themselves or see violence as a solution to problems they encounter."

RSVP relies solely on community support to operate. While the response from the community for this program's first five years has been tremendous, continued support is essential in order to sustain this important service and, ultimately, reach more children.

*RSVP is a comprehensive school-based program that works with at-risk, primarily inner-city, children and youth—with many having been exposed to violence in their families. The students who participate in RSVP represent our community's most vulnerable children. It is our mission to see that all at-risk children and youth in our communities—those who are most likely to be involved in violent relationships—are given the knowledge and tools they need to lead safe, respectful, violence-free lives. To date, RSVP has worked with over 3,000 children in 50 schools.*

We thank our community partners:

BMO Financial Group  
 CIBC Wood Gundy Caring for Kids Fund  
 Diamond Foundation  
 The Edith Lando Charitable Foundation  
 Face the World Foundation  
 John Hardie Mitchell family foundation  
 National Crime Prevention Centre  
 Vancouver Police Union Charitable Foundation  
 Vancouver Sun Children's Fund Society

For information on how you can support the RSVP program, please contact Carey Bornn, Director of Development at [cbornn@fsgv.ca](mailto:cbornn@fsgv.ca) or 604.731.4951 ext 26.

### A youth evaluation after participating in RSVP

**This is a picture of me BEFORE the RSVP group**



*Before the group, a lot of the time I was feeling like I was worthless. I was thinking about coming home and being yelled at by my grandma.*

**This is a picture of me AFTER the RSVP group**



*Lately I am feeling very relaxed. I talked to my grandma and she doesn't yell at me anymore. I am thinking about how nice my life is now.*



## Family Services awarded 2007 Cultural DIVERSEcity Award

At Family Services of Greater Vancouver, we have come to understand that it is crucial to our success for our work environment to be reflective of the cultural make-up of the people we serve—recognizing that we can't help people if we don't understand their needs. Diversity is a principal we have embraced, and for over twenty years we have been working towards creating an agency culture where diversity just becomes part of who we are.

So, it was a particular honour for us on March 29, 2007 when our agency was presented with the DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Cultural DIVERSEcity Awards for Business in the not-for-profit category.

Our Values Statement, our Code of Ethics, and our Equity Process reflect steps we've taken to embrace the values of cultural diversity; guiding our staff and volunteers in our work with each other and in the development and implementation of programs to meet the needs of a diverse range of ethno-cultural groups and communities.

In a recent employee climate survey that measured how our staff perceive their working environment, their job, and the agency as a whole, 85% of staff reported that they believe that the agency demonstrates that it values diversity.

We congratulate all organizations nominated for these awards and offer our sincere gratitude to the DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society, and the event sponsors, for highlighting this inspiring work that makes our communities better, richer places to live and to work.

## A new building for FSGV

This past year, Family Services of Greater Vancouver purchased a building at 1638 E Broadway to help ensure long-term financial stability for our services and provide an opportunity to bring more of our services together. Our Employment Resource Centre occupies the third floor of this building and we renovated the second floor to house CEDS - Vancouver, Financial Literacy, Unloading Zone, Community Access Program for Women, Adult Addictions, Problem Gambling, and our IT department.

The moves to the Broadway office meant for some re-shuffling elsewhere in the agency. The Counselling Program from our 1616 West 7th office moved to our Kingsway office, allowing us to consolidate facilities and move our Adoption Agency into the West 7th office. We are most appreciative to our fabulous staff affected by these changes; the moves appeared seamless and brought little disruption to service delivery during this time.

A huge thanks goes out to the fabulous team of volunteers who have been tirelessly working on our Building Tomorrows Capital Campaign to support the purchase of this facility. *Watch for more details about this exciting initiative, coming soon!*



Directions Youth Services Centre (formerly Street Youth Services). In this weekly drop-in program, he teaches between one to twelve youth in the hour-long session. In some cases, it's these weekly lessons that keep the youth coming back to the centre, allowing Directions' staff to help them in other aspects of their lives. This past spring, thanks in large part to a generous donation from the CKNW Orphan's Fund, Directions worked with Colin to purchase some instruments (mainly guitars and bass) and recording gear for the centre to further develop this program. In addition to the weekly guitar classes, Colin has also recently started "Recording 101"—a six-session program that introduces the youth to the basics of recording. An advance recording program is also in the works.

"Words just can't express the tremendous value Colin has brought to the lives of the youth in this program," says Steve Smith, Program Coordinator for the evening resource centre at Directions. "For an hour a week they get a chance to escape from the hardship in their lives and to feel good about themselves as they develop a talent. That little bit of self esteem they walk away with can sure go a long way—working its way into other aspects of their lives. When a kid feels good about himself, it's so much easier to help guide him towards positive change."

But Colin is as humble as he is talented, shrugging off any suggestion that he's gone over and above the call of duty. "I've worked with many professional musicians throughout my years in the music industry, but I have to say, some of these kids are amongst the most creative and imaginative people that I've ever worked with. The high creative level at which they function is simply astounding. It truly has been my great privilege to have the opportunity to work with them and to hear what can emerge when they are provided with opportunities to express themselves. They are the ones who deserve the accolades."

*Directions Youth Services Centre provides Vancouver's youth who are homeless or living in at-risk situations with the tools, support, and guidance they need to go about making healthy, positive changes in their lives. The door to Directions is always open—24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Directions helps youth to navigate and access the many services in place to help them take the next steps with their life—be it to return to their families or home communities, to find and keep a safe place to live, to acquire job skills or find a job, to finish school or improve basic reading, writing, and math skills, to deal with their addictions, to look after their physical or mental health, or any and all of the above. The centre also provides many immediate basic daily needs, such as hot meals, showers, and laundry facilities. Last year, Directions worked with 2,255 youth.*

**YES!** *I would like to help make a difference.* 

**FAMILY SERVICES OF GREATER VANCOUVER**

Please accept my:  One-time donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Monthly donation of:  \$10  \$25  \$50  \$100  \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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 VISA  Mastercard Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_\_\_ (mm/yyyy)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like my donation to go to:  Programs for children and families  Family Services of Greater Vancouver's foundation  
(interest earned supports Family Services' programs for children and families)

**Alternatively, visit [www.fsgv.ca](http://www.fsgv.ca) to make your donation online.**

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I have left a gift to Family Services in my will.  I would like information on leaving a gift in my will.  Please send me your e-newsletter.