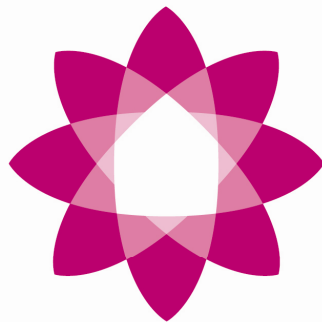


WISH Drop-In Centre Society Annual Report 2011-2012



WISH
Drop-In Centre Society

WISH Drop-In Centre Society

Mission

To increase the health, safety and well-being of women engaged in the survival sex trade in Vancouver.

2011-2012 Board of Directors

Roberta Robertson	<i>Co-Chair</i>	Jen Olson Lund
Edwina Houlihan	<i>Co-Chair</i>	Edna Edgar
Siobhan McCormick	<i>Secretary</i>	Jewel Chapman
Catherine Sun	<i>Treasurer</i>	Sharon Jinkerson-Brass
Adrienne Lee		Caitlin O'Leary
Karen D. Berry		
Jean Gerber	<i>Fundraising Chair</i>	
Kate Gibson	<i>Executive Director</i>	

About the WISH Drop-In Centre Society

WISH Drop-In Centre Society (WISH) is a non-profit organization that offers women who engage in the survival sex trade respite within a nurturing and non-judgmental environment. WISH operates a nightly drop-in centre, the WISH Wellness Centre, through which women can access frontline services, literacy programming, Aboriginal programming, referrals to treatment and shelter and a supported employment program.

The WISH Wellness Centre is open seven nights a week from 6:00pm – 11:00pm. It serves 28,000-32,000 hot meals annually to 400-600 individual women. The Centre is a safe and comfortable space where women can have a nutritious meal, a hot shower, choose clean clothing and personal care items and enjoy a sense of community.

Volunteers are an integral part of WISH and, collectively, they, contributed over 8000 hours of service in 2011/2012! They work at the makeup counter and in the clothing room, help prepare meals and assist in the Learning Centre, offering women encouragement and support.

WISH is also a partner in the operation of the Mobile Access Project (MAP) which operates a van between 10:00pm and 6:00am, offering crisis intervention, harm reduction supplies and friendly emotional support to women all across Vancouver. In 2011/2012, the MAP Van made 16,667 contacts with women living and working on the streets.

WISH prioritizes participant involvement at many levels of the organization. There are three seats on the Board of Directors for WISH participants and there is opportunity for women to give feedback through the monthly Women's Advisory Group meeting. Peer Safety Patrollers are a group of participants trained and employed by WISH to keep staff, volunteers, peers and neighbours safe. Also, women in the Peer Volunteer Program contribute by helping around the centre, assisting with clothing and make-up donations, preparing food and offering support to their peers. The Emerging Voices group at WISH organizes events that lift women's spirits and build community, from the recent Miss WISH Pageant to picnics in the park and holiday celebrations.

The WISH Drop-In Centre Society is a registered charity (#87047 5563 RR0001), generously funded by the Government of Canada, the Province of BC, the City of Vancouver, foundations, corporations, labour organizations, faith communities and individual donors.

Putting our Mission into Action

In 2011, WISH was chosen as a **Top Pick by Charity Intelligence Canada**, in recognition of our **low administrative and fundraising costs, scope of services and ability to achieve measurable social results.**

Charity Intelligence Canada is an organization that undertakes research and analysis on Canadian Charities to help donors make informed decisions. They use a rigorous review process. Each year, they select a list of their 'Top Picks': Charities that stand out for their leadership, cost-efficiency and, most importantly, their ability to put their mission into action.

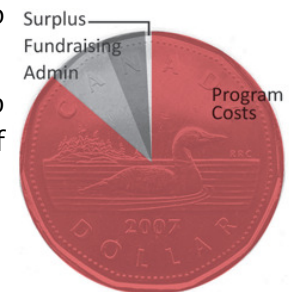
Bri Trypuc, of Charity Intelligence Canada said: "Charity Intelligence is most pleased to announce that the WISH Drop-In Centre Society has been selected as a CI Top Pick Charity 2011. The WISH Drop-in Centre Society excels in addressing a social issue, is cost efficient, and most importantly, has a track record of producing outstanding results for Canadians in need."

The report states: "WISH Clients have a sense of ownership, providing feedback and evaluation of services and providing peer-to-peer support. WISH operates the only nightly outreach van in the area, collecting and re-distributing Bad Date safety information sheets on violence and news to those working on the street."

It points out in its financial overview of WISH that administrative costs "make up only 7.5% of the charity's total value, with fundraising costs representing 14% of donations"

Being recognized by Charity Intelligence is great honour for WISH!

To view the full report, please visit: <http://ow.ly/gC6oj>.



Painting by R.

Our WISH

What do I think about Our WISH?

I love the kindness of the staff.

How we feel like we are totally at home.

The way they make us laugh when we are down and out.

When we need a hug they always give us one, I love Our WISH. They make us feel Whole again and again.

- B.L.

Note from the Board Co-Chairs

2011/2012 was a year filled with challenges and successes for WISH Drop-In Centre Society! The WISH Wellness Centre continued to be a place of respite, learning, friendship and community. Over the course of the year, WISH served 28,000 meals to women at the Centre and the MAP Van made contact with 16,667 women living and working on the streets, providing brief service, referrals and emotional support.

On behalf of the WISH Board of Directors, we would like to thank the many WISH participants who gave their energy, skills and creativity to help make our training and skills development programs successful. The thirteen women of the Peer Safety Patrol program continued to keep the WISH centre safe and clean. Their work was recognized earlier in 2011 when WISH was presented with a *Solicitor General Crime Prevention and Community Safety Award* for the Peer Safety Patrol Program. Ten women in the Aboriginal Culture & Creativity Program completed many beautiful works of art, some of which were on display at the Vancouver Public Library Central Branch this past June. Twenty-four women completed one-pot cooking classes at WISH and four completed the Peer Volunteer Program.

We would also like to thank our colleagues volunteering on the Board of Directors, who bring a tremendous amount of dedication to their work as well as expertise in financial accountability, Aboriginal issues, social justice, strategic planning and the specific needs of the women who use WISH.

To our WISH volunteers—a heartfelt thanks! In 2011/2012, 150 volunteers gave WISH over 8000 hours of service! We are so grateful to our volunteers, all of whom contribute greatly to the kind of non-judgmental, nurturing environment that makes WISH such an essential point of contact for women.

One special highlight of 2011 was that WISH was honoured by Charity Intelligence Canada as one of its Top Picks. Charity Intelligence Canada is an organization that conducts rigorous research and analysis on Canadian Charities. WISH was chosen because of our low administrative and fundraising costs, participant engagement and results. Please see page 3 for more about this special acknowledgement.

Two great concerns over the last year have been the Missing Women's Commission of Inquiry and the closure of PEERS Vancouver. Both severely impact the women we serve. PEERS was the only organization that assisted individuals engaging in sex work to exit the trade. We await the Missing Women's Commission of Inquiry report knowing that many voices—including those of the women most affected by the outcome of the Inquiry and their allies—have not been heard.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Kate Gibson and the staff of WISH for their tireless dedication and positive, non-judgmental service. We would also like to acknowledge our community partners - Capilano University, BC Women's Hospital, BCCDC nurses and AESHA researchers - all of whom work closely with WISH to increase the health, safety and well-being of the women we serve.

We are also humbled by the generosity of the Government of Canada, the Province of BC, the City of Vancouver and the over 350 individual, foundation, corporate, faith-based, labour and community donors who make our work possible. Please accept our heartfelt thanks for your kindness, commitment and support.

We look forward to 2012/2013 and another exciting year of service to WISH!

Roberta Robertson – Co-Chair, WISH Board of Directors
Edwina Houlihan – Co-Chair, WISH Board of Directors



Cedar basket in progress by 2012 Aboriginal Culture & Creativity Program participant

WISH in the Community

WISH lends its voice and support to projects and events in the community that contribute to women's health, safety and well-being. In 2011/2012, WISH participated in the following initiatives:

In 2012, the annual **Women's Memorial March**, in which **WISH participated**, was held on February 14th.

It followed a **rally held on February 13th** to protest the **marginalization of women's and Indigenous voices** at the Missing Women's Commission of Inquiry.



The **Women's Memorial March** is an annual event organized by women from the DTES community to **grieve** the loss of missing and murdered relatives and friends, to **honour** them and to **demand justice**.

- **Sisterwatch**
- **Women's Memorial March Committee**
- **Women First: A Coalition of Women's Organizations**
- **VPD Sex Work Policy**
- **Living in Community**
- **SAFE in Collingwood**
- **Homeless Connect**
- **Under One Umbrella**
- **City of Vancouver Homeless Count**
- **Fair in the Square**
- **City of Vancouver Report on Sex Work**



Murdered Women, Missing Justice rally, February 13th, 2012



*WISH staff at the 2012 Fair in the Square-
Photo Credit: Central City Foundation*

International Women's Day

International Women's Day (March 8th) is a special day for the strong, resilient, creative and courageous women of WISH!

It is a time to **celebrate our achievements** and to **re-focus on ongoing struggles** in our community and around the world

In 2012, **CUPE Local 15** made International Women's Day extra-special at WISH by **donating, preparing and serving a three-course meal** at the WISH Wellness Centre. They secured **door prizes** and decorated the space with gorgeous **flower arrangements**.

This very special celebration was enjoyed by all.

Thank-you, CUPE Local 15!



WISH Program News 2011/2012

ABORIGINAL PROGRAM

- Over 57% of WISH participants are Aboriginal Women
- Aboriginal Culture & Creativity Program meets in-studio twice weekly
- Aboriginal Evenings at the WISH Wellness Centre are open to all
- Aboriginal Support Worker provides individualized service and support to all



EMERGING VOICES

Emerging Voices is a group of women who build community at WISH by organizing fun celebrations and events for their peers. Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving—these are times of the year that can be difficult for the women of WISH. The events put on by Emerging Voices bring women together, lift their spirits and remind them that they are not alone.

MOBILE ACCESS PROJECT (MAP VAN)

- Operated in partnership with P.A.C.E and funded by the Province of BC and the City of Vancouver
- Runs 7 nights a week from 10:00 pm until 6:00 am
- Staff includes women with experience in sex work
- 16,667 contacts made around Vancouver in 2011/2012
- Tens of thousands of harm reduction supplies handed out annually



PEER SAFETY PATROL

Through WISH, women engaging in survival sex work are trained, hired and employed as Peer Safety Patrollers. They in turn maintain a safe zone for WISH participants, staff, volunteers and neighbours around the WISH Wellness Centre. They also do outreach around the Centre, providing harm reduction supplies, referrals and support to their peers.



SAFETY OUTREACH

WISH publishes a weekly report of “bad dates” distributed to more than 260 service providers and police detachments across the Lower Mainland.

WISH Program News 2011/2012

WISH WELLNESS CENTRE

The WISH Wellness Centre provides services in a caring, accepting environment, including:

- 28,000-32,000 hot, nutritious meals per year
- Hot showers
- Clean clothing, make-up and toiletries
- Conversation, friendship, shared activities
- Training & work experience
- Literacy & educational programming
- Aboriginal programming
- On-site health care
- On-site support from Aboriginal Support Worker

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

In 2011/2012 over 150 volunteers provided 8000+ hours of service!

All volunteers attend an orientation and are asked to serve two nightly shifts per month. If you are interested in volunteering, please email wishvolunteers@telus.net for more information.



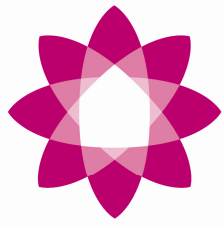
WISH CLINIC

The WISH Wellness Centre has an onsite clinic. For many women who use WISH, the clinic at the Centre is their only link with health care providers. The clinic is open twice a week and is alternately staffed with registered nurses and a nurse practitioner.

LEARNING CENTRE

- Open three nights a week
- Average of 15 learners per evening
- Offers literacy programming, learning and skills development activities as well as opportunities for sharing and creativity
- A partnership between WISH and Capilano University for the past 11 years
- Home to the Women's Advisory Group (WAG), who meet monthly to discuss participant issues, concerns and ideas. Their feedback is presented to the WISH Board of Directors.





WISH

Drop-In Centre Society

WISH is a registered Canadian Charity (#87047 5563 RR0001).

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Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/WishDropIn

Follow us on Twitter: @WISHwellness

To donate online visit CanadaHelps.com and enter "WISH Drop-In Centre"



Raven vest by Lillian H. Program Coordinator, Aboriginal Health & Safety Project