



WISH News

Fall 2013

Wanted: A New MAP Van!

"...Thanks to the ladies who make my nights just a little easier to get through. Without you, who knows what would happen to us. Thank-you to all and keep up the great work. Love & respect." - Anon. (woman who uses the MAP Van)

The **Mobile Access Project (MAP) Van** is an overnight **harm reduction** service operated by WISH. It is 'on the road' between 10:00 p.m.—6:00 a.m. seven nights a week. Since 2004, it has been a late-night **lifeline** for sex-working women on the most **isolated strolls** in the DTES and Kingsway areas and across Vancouver.

It is the only female-sex-worker-specific **overnight outreach service** in the city and it meets a critical need, filling the gaps between other supports for women who are often vulnerable to violence, exploitation and serious health issues.

In 2012 alone, MAP Van Staff:

- Made 14,865 contacts with women
- Made 290 referrals to detox and emergency shelters
- Distributed 116,028 condoms
- Exchanged 36,174 used needles for 68,679 new ones
- Distributed 24,578 drinks & snacks

The MAP Van's operational expenses are generously funded by the City of Vancouver and the Province of BC. To read more about the history and activities of the MAP Van, visit <http://bit.ly/1bab06i>.



The MAP Van and MAP Van Staff of the



The current MAP Van has been on the road since 2004. It has over 225,000 kilometres on it and major repairs are looming.

One of WISH's goals in the coming months is to **replace the current van and customize it** so it can accommodate the program's nightly activities. Some of the features the MAP Van needs include a bench for one-on-one check-ins, electrical wiring so staff can keep the lights on without idling and lots of space for storing harm reduction supplies, referral materials and drinks/snacks.

We look forward to sharing good news with you in the coming months!

"We don't say how much we depend on you girls. Thank-you for your kindness and respect for every soul. We couldn't say 'thank-you' for everything in words." - Anon. (woman who uses the MAP Van)

Donor Spotlight— The Sprott Foundation



WISH would like to take this opportunity to shine a 'spotlight' on an outstanding supporter of our programs and services.

We are thrilled to announce that **The Sprott Foundation** has made a commitment to WISH to contribute \$25,000 to the **Peer Safety Patrol Program** every year for three years.

That makes for a total contribution of **\$75,000** towards this innovative supported-employment initiative!

The Sprott Foundation is "dedicated to addressing urgent human need, homelessness and hunger in Canada. It is a leader in providing funding to non-profit ventures which deal with the challenges of hunger and homelessness."

For more information about their extensive philanthropic activities, visit sprottfoundation.com.

The Sprott Foundation's extraordinary gesture came near the end of their previous multi-year commitment to WISH. Between 2011-2013, **The Sprott Foundation** donated \$25,000 every year for three years towards the **WISH Drop-In**

Program that provides hot meals, clean clothing, nursing care and other frontline services to women who are involved in Vancouver's street-based survival sex trade.

Over the next three years, thanks to **The Sprott Foundation**, WISH will be able to continue to provide participants with opportunities to develop



new Tile created by WISH Participant

skills, gain job experience outside sex work and make a positive contribution to their centre and their community.

Once recruited into the program, **Peer Safety Patrollers** are trained in a comprehensive six week curriculum that includes sections on

de-escalating violence, safety and the law, first aid, personal money management, physical self defense and frontline responses to violence against women.

The **Peer Safety Patrol** program is a life-changing experience for many

women. As one participant remarked:

"I was on a dark road which I thought was a one-way street. I had been out of the work force for so long, I thought I could not enter it again. I was wrong – It isn't a one-way street. Since working on the Peer Safety Patrol, my life has changed in the following ways: I have a lot more self-esteem, I have direction, I have stopped using street drugs, I now have positive people in my life. Thanks to the Peer Safety Patrol, I can start to live my life now."

Thank-you to The Sprott Foundation for giving WISH the opportunity to continue to make women's dreams come true. We are so grateful for your leadership in addressing urgent needs in our community!

United Way

United Way campaigns are underway
in many workplaces.

Please think of WISH Drop-in Centre Society if your workplace is
running a United Way campaign.

Thank-you!!

Our Charitable registration # is: 87047 5563 RR0001

The Peer Safety Patrol is generously supported by:

- The Sprott Foundation
- Face the World Foundation
- Vancity
- Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada
- Kairos Foundation
- SFPIRG

An Overnight Refuge: Update on the WISH Drop-In Centre

In March, 2013 the BC Ministry of Housing made an annual commitment to WISH for the sole purpose of keeping the WISH Drop-in Centre open overnight. This was a direct response to the recommendation made in the Missing Women's Inquiry report that existing services for sex-working women be funded to stay open overnight, when women are more vulnerable.

WISH is delighted to report that, as a

"We are seeing a lot more faces and more younger women in their 20's, especially during the overnight hours. A lot of women feel safe being at a non-judgmental, sex-worker only place like WISH during the night."

It didn't take long for word to spread that WISH was open overnight. Now, WISH sees up to 50 women a night during the overnight hours and serves 30-50 breakfasts every day.

Feedback about the breakfasts served at WISH has been very positive. Milk is served with every breakfast and items such as fruit crumbles, baked oatmeal with apples and cinnamon and scrambled eggs with toast have been well-received. There is always hot coffee on in the morning and fresh fruit and yogurt are available with breakfast.

Additionally, nurse practitioners from BC Women's Hospital come to the centre once a week from 8:30-10:30. This makes much-needed nursing care available to women who cannot attend the on-site WISH clinic in the evening (which is open two nights a week).

direct result of being open overnight, we are meeting many women who had previously not used WISH. The new opening hours have made the Drop-In Centre and the many services available there more accessible to them.

According to Heather Muir, WISH Drop-In Centre Coordinator:

WISH is very grateful for the opportunity to be there for women when they need us!

Thank-you to the BC Ministry of Housing for this generous commitment.



Tile by WISH Participant

Holiday Angels Needed!

The giving of gifts during the holiday season has been a longtime tradition at WISH. Every year, generous groups such as the Vancouver Soroptimists and the Rotary Women's Club, as well as many schools and families collect, wrap and donate beautiful gift bags for the women of WISH. The gift bags are full of toiletries, sweets, gloves and accessories and are distributed at holiday meals at the centre and through the Mobile Access Project (MAP) Van.

Since opening overnight, WISH is meeting many women who are new to the centre, so we are anticipating the need for even more gifts this year! If your family, school or community group is looking for a community service project, please consider putting together some gifts for WISH. For more information please call **604-669-9474** or email wishdropincentre@telus.net.



Wish List

WISH is thrilled to report that, since the Drop-In Centre opened overnight in March, 2013, we have been meeting many more women in our community.



The increased hours and numbers of new WISH participants have brought with them a demand for more clothing, shoes and personal care items.

WISH welcomes donations of gently-used:

- **Clothing (shirts, pants/jeans, sweaters, hoodies, outerwear, dresses)**
- **Socks**
- **Clean underwear and bras**
- **Hats and gloves**
- **Shoes and boots**
- **Toiletries (soap, shampoo/conditioner etc. Including hotel sized products)**
- **Toothpaste and toothbrushes**
- **Clean bedding and towels**

WISH can take donations seven days a week, between the hours of 4-6 p.m. Please call **604-669-9474** for the address of the Drop-In Centre.

You may also want to consider holding a clothing/toiletries drive for WISH at your school/place of worship or community group as the holidays approach. Thanks!

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MAP VAN

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wish-vancouver.net

facebook.com/WishDropIn

@WISHWellness



Connect with WISH

A Gift of Safety and Wellbeing.



When planning your **holiday shopping list**, please consider **donating to WISH in honour** of your loved one. You can give online at **wish-vancouver.net** (click the 'donate' button), call **604-669-9474** to donate over the phone or **mail in** your donation. Please let us know your loved one's **name and address** so we can send them a **card** acknowledging your gift in time for the holidays.



Artwork by 2013 WISH Aboriginal Program Participant

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