



## Healing with the Medicine Wheel

The Aboriginal Health & Safety Project at WISH is a program delivered by Indigenous women for Indigenous women who have experience in the street-based sex trade. Through cultural activities and culturally-relevant workshops, participants connect to their cultural heritage, a process that is reclaimative and healing.

Recently, WISH was fortunate enough to have Shirley David, a Resolution Health Support Worker with the Indian Residential School Survivors' Society come in to facilitate a series of workshops on healing from trauma. Many WISH participants experienced the residential school system directly and all have experienced its multi-generational impact.

**Shirley David** (MASW,BISW) is originally from the Git'ksan / Wet'su'weten Nation and grew up in the Williams Lake area.

Shirley graduated with her Master of Aboriginal Social Work and Bachelor of Indian Social Work. She currently works with the Indian Residential School Survivors Society and has over 20 years of educational and counselling experience

This is the third year that Shirley has come to visit the AHSP program at WISH to deliver workshops that promote healing from the profound grief and loss caused by the residential school system.

The workshops are important as they are culturally safe and relevant for program participants. "We integrate traditional approaches into the group by sharing how to use the Medicine Wheel and how they can utilize it as a Balance Wheel or Wellness Wheel in their everyday lives" says Shirley.

At the workshops, women are empowered with some basic tools for coping with flashbacks and understanding their triggers. Shirley gives lots of patient, caring, individual attention to participants.

She says:

"Our goal in working with the group is to provide different options in dealing with feelings, looking at a more healthier way in dealing with trauma ... I hope that each of the ladies will gain empowerment and confidence to start looking at their own healing journey."

According to Alexandria Beverly, Coordinator of the AHSP, feedback on the workshop series from participants is all positive:

"Shirley is very patient and compassionate with our women ... The group seemed to appreciate the exercise about their feelings. Naming and validating feelings is very important. Shirley gave the women the time to discuss and realize that their feelings are normal and can be changed by their commitment and actions".

Naming and addressing the impacts of the residential school system in a safe way with a trained, culturally-sensitive professional is a vital part of healing. As Alexandria says:

"I think it is important for Shirley to come in and talk about residential schools and overcoming the trauma, because so many of us were affected by these schools... Most of us were children hearing the stories from our mothers and aunties, fathers and uncles however as children we thought it was normal. How sad is that. "

*Thank-you Shirley, for sharing your experience and wisdom with the women of the AHSP.*



*Drums by AHSP Participants*

**United Way campaigns are now underway in many workplaces.**

**If your workplace is running a United Way campaign, please think of WISH!**

*We need and appreciate your help!*



# It's All About the Food!

It's hard to believe it's been over a year and a half since the WISH Drop-In Centre opened its doors overnight!



In 2013, the Province of BC made the decision to honour the recommendation in the Missing Women's Inquiry Report that existing services for street-based sex workers

be funded to stay open overnight, when women are most vulnerable to violence. WISH is now open from 6:00 p.m. to 12:00 p.m. seven nights a week...and that means that our kitchen is a non-stop hub of activity!

Last year alone, our amazing WISH staff, peer volunteers and volunteers from the community worked together to prepare and serve:

- **30,530 Dinners**
- **19,885 Breakfasts**
- **13,188 Snacks**

This is a huge accomplishment and one of which we are extremely proud. Women who come to WISH live in poverty, with little to no food security. Providing healthy, nutrient-rich meals at no cost to our participants - many of whom live with compromised immunity and urgently need access to good nutrition - is a



top priority for WISH.



WISH regularly seeks feedback from participants in order to make sure the food we are serving is being enjoyed and is meeting women's needs. This feedback is most often collected through the monthly Women's Advisory Group (WAG) meetings, where women who use WISH have the opportunity to voice their comments, which are then forwarded to the WISH Board of Directors. Recently, WISH set about collecting anecdotal feedback from participants and the results were overwhelmingly positive!

Some of the comments were:

*"I always get a great dish at WISH!"*

*"Thank God for WISH! There were days I wouldn't eat if it weren't for them."*

*"WISH gives me peace of mind and healthy food"*

*"Finally...Community. Thank-you!"*

Food is an important part of building community. In addition to regular meals and

snacks, WISH offers special holiday meals at Christmas, Thanksgiving and other occasions that can be difficult for women who are sometimes estranged from their families. Recently, thanks to funding from the Neighbourhood Small Grants Program, WISH participants enjoyed our annual Summer BBQ.

WISH relies on so many individual donors, corporations, small businesses, foundations, service clubs and community groups to provide us with the resources we need to run our very popular food program!



Their generosity makes a huge impact and we are so fortunate to have their support.

And, of course, our amazing cooks rely on volunteers to prepare and serve up to 120-140 dinners and 50-80 breakfasts every day. If you are interested in volunteering for our food program, please email: [wishvolunteers@shaw.ca](mailto:wishvolunteers@shaw.ca).

**The Food Program at WISH is generously supported by:**

- The Province of BC
- Greenshield Canada
- John Hardie Mitchell Family Foundation
- Hundreds of individual donors!

## Donor Spotlight: Face the World Foundation

WISH would like to extend a special shout-out to our friends at **Face the World Foundation**, who recently supported our Peer Safety Patrol program with a remarkable grant of \$14,000!

Face the World Foundation has been a generous supporter of WISH for many years.

The President of Face the World Foundation is local Philanthropist and Army & Navy President Jacqui Cohen. For over 24 years, she has been raising extraordinary sums through her annual Face the World Gala. These funds are distributed to charities throughout the Lower Mainland that assist women, children, the elderly and the homeless. For more information, visit [facetheworldfoundation.com](http://facetheworldfoundation.com).

*Thank-you, Face the World Foundation, for making such an impact on the lives of people in our community!*

## Trip to the Sunshine Coast

We are delighted to report that our first ever crowdfunding campaign was a success!

Thanks to our generous friends in the community, WISH raised \$1155 to take a group of 10-15 women on a rejuvenating, life-affirming day trip to BC's beautiful Sunshine Coast.

Women will meet in the morning, have breakfast and ride to the ferry terminal together in a rented van to catch the ferry and make their way to Sechelt. Once there, they will have lunch and enjoy walks in the spectacular nature that is so abundant on BC's coast. They will return in time for dinner at WISH.

This trip will be truly uplifting for participants, most of whom rarely, if ever, get to leave the Downtown Eastside.

Thank-you to all who contributed! We look forward to telling you all about the trip.

## The WISH Offices Have Moved!

Update your address books - The WISH offices have moved!

Thanks to the generosity of the City of Vancouver, our offices are now located on the first floor of the building that houses the WISH Drop-In Centre. This will save WISH money and make us able to serve our community even more efficiently. The new address is:

**WISH Drop-In Centre Society**  
334 Alexander Street  
Vancouver, BC V6A 1X3  
T. 604.669-9474 F. 604.669-9479



*Dream catchers created as incentives for the crowdfunding campaign by M.J. and other WISH participants.*

## 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, families and friends of WISH** 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@shaw.ca](mailto:wishdropincentre@shaw.ca). Thank-you!

## WISH LIST

WISH is particularly in need of donated items at this time of year!

We welcome and appreciate 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 8 a.m. - noon \*and\* 3-6 p.m. Please call **604-669-9474** for directions and 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!*

### WISH Drop-In Centre Society

334 Alexander Street  
Vancouver, BC V6A 1C3  
t. 604-669-9474  
f. 604-669-9479  
wishdropincentre@shaw.ca  
[www.wish-vancouver.net](http://www.wish-vancouver.net)



Facebook.com/WishDropin



@WISHWellness

### ADMINISTRATION

Kate Gibson - Executive Director  
Marina Stamboulieh - Fund Developer  
Emily Groundwater - Administrative Assistant

### DROP-IN CENTRE

Anne Vavrik - Drop-In Centre Coordinator (Interim)

### PEER SAFETY PATROL

Eva Botten - Program Coordinator

### ABORIGINAL HEALTH & SAFETY PROJECT

Alexandria Beverly - Program Coordinator

### MOBILE ACCESS PROJECT (MAP) VAN

Mary Shearman - MAP Van Coordinator

*WISH is a registered charity: # 870475563 RR0001*

Connect with WISH

## A Gift of Safety and Well-Being

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](http://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.

You are receiving this newsletter because you have shown support to WISH in the past.

To receive this newsletter by email or to opt out of future correspondence, please email : [wishfundraising@shaw.ca](mailto:wishfundraising@shaw.ca).

WISH respects your privacy. We never sell, trade or rent the information of our supporters. A copy of our privacy policy can be found online at [wish-vancouver.net](http://wish-vancouver.net)