



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGE
BRITISH COLUMBIA

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2019

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Please contact (604) 574-2964 or office@sosbc.org.

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12993-5011 RR0001

SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE BC
302-14225 57th Avenue,
Surrey, BC, V3X 0H6

Located on the unceded traditional territories of the Katzie, Kwantlen, and Semiahmoo Nations.

Some youth names have been changed to protect their identity and confidentiality. Some photos used are meant to illustrate our work and are not images of the children in our Village or programs.



ONCE AN SOS KID, ALWAYS AN SOS KID

By Kistie Singh, Village Director

Recently, while checking in with former youth in care through our Aftercare Program, SOS Children's Village BC staff were glad to be able to connect with an alumni who had graduated a while ago from our Transition to Adulthood Program.

Samantha had spent two close years with SOS BC, receiving support while she worked towards graduating high school and learning to manage her mental health needs. Sadly, Samantha came from a home that was an unsafe place for her to live. Thankfully, she was referred to our Transition to Adulthood Program in the last year of her youth agreement and before she turned 19 and aged out.

We supported Samantha by providing funding to support Wi-Fi and communication needs, supported her in managing her mental health appointments, and provided life skills support to help her transition to independence. With this assistance from our youth workers, she was able to graduate on time! Our team was so thrilled to celebrate her educational win.

Samantha reconnected with SOS BC when we caught up with her a year after she left the Transition to Adulthood Program, and we were happy to find out that she was doing well and soon to be expecting! With all the new changes she was pleased to hear from us and we were able to ensure she had support if and when she was willing to re-engage.

Our Aftercare services are meant for former SOS youth for this exact reason: we continue to be there to uphold our permanency values. We know it is not an easy journey to transition into being fully reliant on yourself, especially during those years from 18 to 25 when most youth in British Columbia have the full support of their biological family.

SOS BC is family for those youth that don't have support from their own. We walk with them for life.

WHAT'S NEW: SOS LIQUIDATION SERVICES

By Ken Miller, Operations Manager of SOS Liquidation Services

SOS Children's Village Thrift Store Foundation first started SOS Liquidation Services as 'Estate Liquidation Services', a new social enterprise intended to raise funds to help cover the administration costs and program growth of SOS Children's Village BC. The original plan was to provide estate liquidation – it soon grew into much, much more.

The service now allows for downsizing for those moving towards retirement, movie set liquidation, and commercial liquidation (end of line, store resets, store closing, and product returns). The concept has grown to the point that we have added storage containers and are looking into expanding our footprint so we can increase product intake. Our future plans include larger retail spaces with increased capacity, product flow, and a wider range of products.

A new facility will also be a base for our volunteer network, a great place to get involved and help serve the community. Recycling will be a big part of what we do. Reusing and repurposing items will help keep them out of the landfill.

In my previous employment, I worked on large scale donations. My team did very well getting commercial products and products from movie sets. Using some of my previous skills we sent out several mail outs to the local movie industry that created a bit of a buzz.

It didn't take long before SOS Liquidation Services received its first donation of props and wardrobe from the production *Search and Destroy* and soon after we received a large donation from *iZombie*. Clothing and housewares from these two collections were sold at the SOS Thrift Stores.

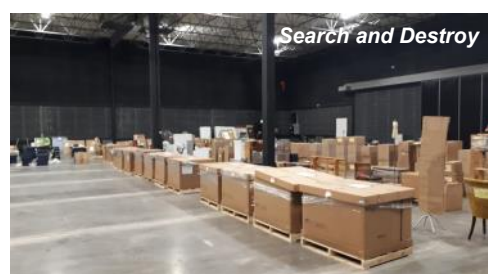
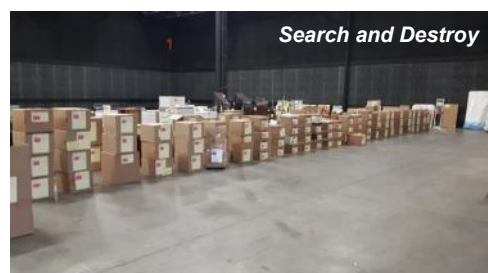
As the service evolves we will expand into commercial consignment. Our goal is to provide a unique shopping experience, and to do that we need amazing products that interest a wide range of shoppers. Additionally, the growth of SOS Liquidation Services will help create awareness for our cause of caring for foster children and vulnerable youth.

I'll leave you with an interesting tidbit: an elderly couple in their 80s saw an ad we placed in the Coffee Shop News and called me to look at liquidating their belongings once their house sells.

I was blown away when I learned that the couple have raised 16 foster children, wow eh!

If you're interested in helping with this new venture and would like more information, feel free to contact me at kenmiller@sosbc.org or (604) 828-6735.

Learn more at: www.sosestate.com.





SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE
BRITISH COLUMBIA



Retirees
Welcome!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!

If you're looking for a fun, rewarding and exceptional volunteer opportunity contact us TODAY! We are looking for dynamic volunteers to join our new SOS Estate Liquidation Services from all areas of the Lower Mainland who are interested in making a difference while using your skills or learning new ones... from organizing and sorting treasures to relocating or evaluating them for resale.

YOU CAN HELP KIDS IN NEED

SOS Liquidation Services provides unique services in the community such as estate liquidation, downsizing, movie set liquidation, commercial/retail liquidation and Gift In Kind donations from the local community. Goods received proudly generate revenue for SOS Children's Village BC foster children and youth at risk.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:





EVENT THANK YOUS

- ♦ Anonymous: \$5,000
- ♦ BMO - Corporate Finance Division BC: \$5,000
- ♦ CareRX and Centric Health: \$3,000
- ♦ Connecting Care: \$5,000
- ♦ Freedom 55 Financial: \$3,000
- ♦ HWG Chartered Professional Accountants: \$3,000
- ♦ Khatoon Jiwa: \$5,000
- ♦ Matthews Campbell: \$3,000
- ♦ Nashreen Tejani: \$4,500
- ♦ Park Place Seniors Living: \$10,000
- ♦ Sodican BC: \$7,500
- ♦ Tom and Kathy Watson: \$3,350

SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE BC FEATURED ON CKNW RADIO

By Catherine Pope, Communications Consultant

In 2017, nineteen youth who were in government care or receiving ministry services, died of drug overdoses. This disturbing statistic was compiled from data published by the coroner and the Representative for Children and Youth, leaving no doubt the opioid crisis is having a devastating impact on the lives of foster kids.

SOS Children's Village BC issued a press release, in an effort to highlight the problem and demonstrate that our care model can actually prevent this kind of tragedy and save lives. CKNW's *Back on the Beat* with John Daly featured SOS BC in an interview on March 2nd.

Listen to the CKNW interview:
omny.fm/shows/cknw/foster-children-and-overdoses-and-jwr-snc-perspect

Read our press release:
www.sosbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOS-BC-Press-Release-Family-Day-Feb-15-2019.pdf

SOS Children's Village BC executive director Douglas Dunn interviewed by reporter John Daly on CKNW Radio, along with SOS foster mom Tamara, on the phone from the Village.



REMEMBERING DEVINE ELDEN

By Lois Bouchard, SOS Children's Village BC Founder

We've said au revoir to another friend from the 'graduating class' – an all too frequent reality of the 8th decade of life. Memories of the past 30+ years with Devine Elden will continue to unfold for a very long time, but some stand out so clearly: the first time we met and talked about children in foster care – she had been a foster mom and knew a lot more about it than I. My observation of the life of a young woman in the final 3 years of her time in care informed me of the challenges; Devine had lived it on the front line.

When we met, I was looking at models of foster care around the world and had chosen the SOS Children's Village as the ideal; I had begun to share the idea with others, and a group of like-minded people had come together to form a Founding Committee exploring the possibility of creating a local SOS Children's Village. Devine's immediate response was: "You're going to need money," followed by: "We could do fashion shows". As owner of Jet Lag Fashions and a vital part of Steveston's business community, she introduced me to another key person in the development of SOS Children's Village BC: the late Ray Martyniuk, popular owner of Cannery Café. We immediately began small semi-annual shows in the café. They grew to occupy ever larger spaces, including Art Knapp's Nursery at Fantasy Gardens and the Austria Vancouver Club that held close to 300.

Devine shared the story of SOS BC with her wide personal and business circle at every opportunity and was strongly influential in its spread and early financing.

We later shared that we'd been rather terrified of each other: I considered her to be a "woman-of-the-world", flamboyant in her fashion and ways; I was a private person, stepping hesitantly into a role of public advocacy. She worried that I was a serious "intellectual" ... as she put it! What I learned was that Devine was wonderfully easy to work with; generous with her time, creative ideas, and resources. She cared about people, particularly those who were struggling and had a large "chosen family". She was one of the many key individuals who paved the way and continued to support the work of SOS BC for the next 30+ years. We learned that neither of us was terrifying at all!

In 2017, she funded the construction of one of five transition suites at the Village for youth aging out of care at 19 years old, naming it for two people who had come into her life in their early teens, and who she had mentored through their developing years; they remained in her life as adults. It was the pinnacle of her engagement and brought her great joy (the plaque to the left of Devine in the photo tells the story of her foster kids).

Missed and remembered forever!

MEET ASHLEY: FORMER YOUTH IN CARE CREDITS SOS FOR HELPING HER ACHIEVE HER GOALS

By Catherine Pope, Communications Consultant



Ashley can't remember how many foster homes she lived in while growing up, but the average number of times a child will be forced to move while in government care is seven.

"Life was not great in foster care," recalls Ashley, now in her early 20's, about her experiences prior to finding SOS Children's Village BC. "The attention and care just isn't there."

She remembers when she was in Grade 11 and urgently needed a root canal. "I was in so much pain. I couldn't bite properly and lost 40 pounds." She desperately needed dental work, but it took the Ministry three months to approve it. By the time she finally saw a dentist, the tooth had deteriorated so much it had to be removed. Later, with the help of SOS BC and someone who knew someone, Ashley obtained dental implants from a generous donor.

After aging out of care at 19 years old and being cut off from government funding, Ashley tried to make it on her own. Like most former youth in care, it was a struggle. In a city with an affordability crisis, just finding stable, safe housing was elusive. A social worker finally told her about SOS BC.

The Village has five Transition to Adulthood (TTA) suites on site. The furnished units are rented at low cost to former youth in care, so they can build the skills necessary to become independent. An SOS BC outreach worker showed Ashley how to manage her finances, apply for a job, cook and shop, and the Village's support services and other families were right there, if she needed them.

"Having support next door if I needed it – and cheap rent – helped me get on my feet," Ashley says. "I learned how to apply for college, write resumes, and do interviews to find a first job." For a job interview, she wore an outfit donated to the SOS Children's Village Thrift Store Foundation. It was a Chanel. She nailed it and got the job.

"Ashley is exceptional at setting goals," says youth worker Sheena. "The TTA program is usually provided for one year, but because Ashley was so committed to achieving her goals and still needed support, she stayed for two."

Ashley now holds down two jobs and has been a full time student at Douglas College since 2017. In June, she'll receive a Diploma in Child and Youth Care and is considering continuing for another two years to obtain a bachelor's degree. As she's in school full time, she's able to access the province's free tuition program for former youth in care.

Ashley is optimistic about her future and credits SOS BC with helping her. "Having a sense of community and knowing there are people there to help you if you need it are important. SOS BC feels like a permanent home."

We are so proud of Ashley and all she has done to achieve her goals. Like all other youth who have lived at SOS BC, she will always have the Village to call home. And when she graduates in June, SOS BC will be at her side to congratulate her.



"SOS Children's Village BC feels like a permanent home."

Do you love THRIFT?

If so... our Kerrisdale location is looking for volunteers to assist us in the day to day running of our busy "thrifty boutique". If you have 3 to 4 or more hours per week to commit we would love to meet you!



Duties:

- Creating a clean and professional friendly atmosphere
- Merchandising
- Assisting guests with their purchases
- Organizing product and displays
- Sorting and replenishing stock

Great Reasons to Volunteer:

- Be a part of the community
- Networking ~ Meet new people and make new friends
- Self-growth & experience
- Learn new skills or utilize the ones you have
- Make a difference while feeling appreciated

If you are Interested:

Email Barb High (Manager of Retail Operations) barbhigh@sosbc.org and Vera Gover (Kerrisdale Store Manager) veragover@sosbc.org with your name, contact information and a bit about yourself.

You can also visit our store location and enquire within (speak to Vera Gover)



Kerrisdale SOS Thrift Store
2319 West 41st Avenue, Vancouver V6M 2A3 P: 604.264.0880



DONATE TODAY And Support Youth Like Ashley

I would like to help change the lives of youth transitioning out of foster care.
Here is my donation of:

- ☐ \$1,000
- ☐ \$500
- ☐ \$250
- ☐ \$100
- ☐ Other \$ _____

Online at
www.sosbc.org

I will become a monthly donor (lowers our admin costs and you also get our *Stories From The Village* e-newsletter):

- ☐ \$50
- ☐ \$25
- ☐ \$20
- ☐ \$15
- ☐ \$10
- ☐ \$ _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Province: _____ Postal Code: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Payment: ☐ Cheque ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ AMEX
Name on Card: _____
Card Number: _____
Expiry Date: _____
Signature: _____

Tax receipts are issued for donations of \$20 and over. The transition program is an example of what your support can do - your donation may be used to support more pressing programs, needs, or services. Mail to SOS Children's Village BC, 302-14225 57th Avenue, Surrey, BC, V3X 0H6.

HAMMER OR HUG?

Foster Kids & Education



THE HAMMER

By Rose Hamilton, Director of Community Partnerships & Donor Stewardship

It all starts with trauma, often before they are born.

Generational trauma can result in addiction and poverty, both of which impact an unborn child. After birth, trauma may continue in the form of neglect, violence, and food/shelter insecurity. In spite of a mother's love for her child, her life may be spiraling out of control, leaving her with few resources and little stability for her family. The child's next trauma arrives at the door when they are taken into care: usually with strangers, sometimes with abuse, and almost always with multiple placements which can number in the dozens in just a few years.

'Placement' is a nice tidy term for dislocation of your entire world.

New caregivers, new 'siblings', new schools, new rules, new neighbours, new dangers, new fears, new social workers. A kid with learning and other disabilities and risks has little chance of getting the diagnostics and Individual Education Plan (IEP) they need. With schools in BC struggling with as few as three education assistants (SEAs) for up to 75 kids who do have a diagnosis, the foster child is further handicapped. They have nobody to consistently advocate for them, no follow-through ... and the child often simply gives up at an early age.

After all, they are already overwhelmed just trying to remember where their new bedroom is, the name of the new caregiver, and wondering if they are going to get in trouble if they ask for new clothes, because all of theirs were left behind at the previous home. Kids end up shutting down, isolated, and angry as ways of coping with their grief and fear.

THE HUG

The SOS Children's Village BC difference? Stability, for starters. A child or youth comes to our Village to stay. Next is that every kid gets a full psycho-educational assessment to determine any learning, emotional, and mental health risks and requirements.

Our Village staff and full-time educator create a complete and regularly assessed IEP, which not only guides them, but is also shared with the child or youth's caregivers, teachers, school principal, SEAs, and Indigenous support worker, as well as their social worker.

In addition to therapy, neurofeedback, and other supports, every kid has Learning Club. Kids of all ages including post-secondary participate. Our experiential learning specialist is available five days a week in a safe and calm on-site environment where one-to-one teaching is the baseline. Summer programs extend the impact of Learning Club, putting into practice skills like math, reading, organizing, and leadership.

Caregivers and youth workers are always 'in the loop' as part of the wrap-around approach. For some of our Transition to Adulthood youth, this is the very first educational helping hand they have ever had.

The result? Our Village has had a 100% graduation rate for five years.

We believe that every child can and will succeed in multiple ways in life – becoming producers rather than problems – given the love, care, encouragement, and practical life support they need in a '360' trauma informed and safe environment. For thousands of foster kids, childhood and schooling are a big 'hammer' that repeatedly smashes their hope and security. At SOS BC, we act on the belief that growing up should be a wrap-around hug that prepares a kid for adulthood with confidence, positive life skills, healing, and resilience ... all built on a foundation of love, family, and belonging.

NICKEL BROS MOVES HEARTS WITH \$5K GIFT



We have just received a generous donation of \$5,000 from Nickel Bros for which we are very excited and thankful.

In addition, we are discussing a long-term relationship between Nickel Bros and SOS Children's Village BC. For over 60 years, Nickel Bros has been the Pacific Northwest's largest and most trusted house moving company. We hope to work with them to find new owners for previously loved homes with SOS BC receiving a donation for matchmaking the prior and new home owners. Nickel Bros recycles homes and gives them new life, SOS BC provides homes and loving support for foster children. What a great partnership.

Thank you Nickel Bros from all the children of SOS BC. We look forward to working together and showing how loved and loving homes can benefit foster children while recycling and saving the environment.



Kids in care have an average high school graduation rate of 40% vs the provincial average of 84%. For Indigenous kids in care, the rate plummets as low as 12%. Why do foster kids have so much trouble in school?

SPECIAL THANK YOUS

- ◆ Arlin Foundation for a grant of \$2,000
- ◆ B & D Autobody for a donation of \$1,000
- ◆ Bartl Alter Ego Trust generously bequeathed \$119,000 to our programs
- ◆ BlueShore Financial for a grant of \$2,500 to our Camp, Recreation, and Cultural Exploration Program
- ◆ Boag Foundation for a grant of \$10,000
- ◆ Ecclesiastical Insurance for a grant of \$15,000 to our Sounds of Learning Music Program
- ◆ ElevatedPrompt Solutions for a donation of \$1,500
- ◆ Elks Lodge - White Rock #431 for a grant of \$1,500
- ◆ Envision Financial Employee's Endowment for a grant of \$1,000
- ◆ Fraser Valley Real Estate Board for a donation of \$5,000
- ◆ KSM Stainless Steel Fabricators for a donation of \$1,000
- ◆ Lions Club of North Surrey for a grant of \$1,000
- ◆ Rogers Communications for a grant of \$15,000 to our Learning Club Program
- ◆ Softlanding Solutions for a \$1,000 donation on behalf of their clients and from their open house
- ◆ Tenmore Property Services for a donation of \$1,000
- ◆ Vancity - Centralized Lending for a donation of \$1,000 from their office fundraising
- ◆ Wellons Canada employees raised \$4,100 for our charity
- ◆ Windsor Plywood Foundation, held at Vancouver Foundation for a grant of \$2,500



 SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGE
BRITISH COLUMBIA

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and give a
foster child
hope for
tomorrow**

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our Free Wills
program

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or [www.sosbc.org/
legacy](http://www.sosbc.org/legacy)



FLYING DOWN HILLS LIKE A GROUSE

By Carmen Chandler, SOS Educator

There's nothing better than slip and sliding down snowy hills when you're a kid. In February, 18 foster kids who live in our Village had a blast with a trip to Grouse Mountain Resort. This was all a part of SOS Children's Village BC's Feather outdoor recreation and cultural programming. Fresh air does the body and mind good. Most kids in the foster care system don't have the opportunity to partake in such activities. But SOS BC is keen on enhancing the development and healing of the foster children in our care by addressing their physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs. Our wrap-around services help them realize their full potential.



