



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGE
BRITISH COLUMBIA

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2020

IN THIS ISSUE

- ◆ BUMPY SCHOOL START
- ◆ THRIFTING RETURNS
- ◆ WHEN HUGS AREN'T ALLOWED
- ◆ GIFT OF SECURITIES BENEFITS



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Please contact (604) 574-
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REGISTERED CHARITY #
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 privacy.
Some of the photos are meant to
illustrate our work and are not
images of children in our Village
or programs.



YOU WROTE A HAPPY ENDING TO A BUMPY SCHOOL START



By Kistie Singh, Executive Director

As the summer months rolled to a close within our communities, children and youth were hopeful about back to school being just around the corner. Many families underwent a tremendous amount of uncertainty anticipating the return to school and managing the ongoing impact of COVID-19. As challenging as it was for many, we want to take an opportunity to share the realities of foster parents and children in care during that time.

On the Thursday prior to the Labour Day long weekend, the local school districts asked parents to take the next few days to decide how their children would continue their education, taking into account that COVID-19 still loomed large.

Everyone did the best they could and considered their options: between going back full time, blended studies (in class and online), online only, or in some cases not being able to register confidently, due to an array of complicated and diverse reasons.

For some families the transition of early September was relatively seamless. But for families at SOS BC, the story was more rigid and the experiences more isolating and difficult to maneuver.

Trying to navigate the best route for kids over a long weekend, without vital input from social workers, created a barrier between families and the deadlines imposed upon them. Foster parents were faced with the daunting task of trying to satisfy the practices and needs of both government ministries (education and children/family development), all while trying to make the best decisions for the children they care for.

It was a time of heavy hearts for some of the caregivers out in our Village



community. Some of them manage six children at home, all with specific needs. Here we have evidence of the pandemic's impact on vulnerable families; decisions that satisfy the majority, do not always meet the needs of the minority.

In response to the growing concern of our SOS Moms/Dads, we ensured that our families had the most up to date information from local schools they were attending and districts they were involved in. Our BC Certified teaching and educational leads were put to the task of trying to formulate a plan through the weekend and trying to connect families with guardianship social workers for their support, input, guidance, and approval.

At the end of the weekend, there were a number of kids who simply could not attend school due to medical reasons. For us this created a bigger challenge, how would we ensure their education was suitably continued and supported?

The aforementioned experience taught us that we needed to gear up for the fall, that we needed to make sure lines of communication were clear, and that expectations from families could be met.

Consequently, through access to learning opportunities with teachers at our own Village site, we've prepared for the educational needs of our kids to ensure no one gets left behind. We've modified our spaces to account for outdoor activities – like homework clubs and one on one tutoring – all while honouring our kids needs to socialize and engage with their peers.

Innovation continues to be a theme in our charity's work as we respond effectively to COVID-19 and meeting our mission goals.

Thanks to your monetary support, the bumps of back to school have been smoothed out. We've made sure that our caregivers continue to get the intensive support they need from our program staff as they take on this fall with their foster kids. Because of you, our kids are getting the resources they need to successfully continue their education and development as we continue to navigate a complex COVID-19 environment.

FOUR CARING ORGANIZATIONS TEAM UP TO TAKE ON COVID-19 CHALLENGES

SOS Children's Village
BC is extremely
grateful to:

- 1) Vancouver Foundation
- 2) Vancity Credit Union
- 3) United Way of the Lower Mainland
- 4) City of Vancouver - Local Government

for the operating grant
they awarded SOS BC
through their
Community Response
Fund.

This fund was set up to
support community
through the challenges
of the COVID-19
pandemic.

A special thank you to
each of these four
amazing funders for
supporting our front
line charitable work
with kids in foster care
and vulnerable youth.

vancouver
foundation



VOLUNTEER

All that's missing is **U**!

SOS Children's Village BC's Kerrisdale thrift store is looking for volunteers to assist us in the day to day running of our busy "thrifty boutique". Do you have 3 to 4 or more hours per week to commit? We would love to meet you!

Duties:

- Create a clean, professional and friendly atmosphere
- Merchandising
- Assist guest with purchases
- Organize products and displays
- Sort and replenish stock
- Have fun!

Why Volunteer:

- Be a part of a community
- Network & meet new people
- Self growth & new experience
- Learn new skills or utilize ones you already have
- Make a difference while feeling appreciated

Contact:

- Email Vera Gover (Store Manager) : veragover@sosbc.org; include name, contact information and a bit about yourself
- You can also visit the store location and ask to speak with Vera Gover



Kerrisdale SOS Thrift Store
2319 West 41st Avenue, Vancouver V6M 2A3 P: 604.264.0880
Hours: Tues to Sat 12 pm - 4 pm
www.sosthriftstorefoundation.org

THE RETURN OF THRIFTING + A CALL FOR HELP



By *Shelina Jamani, Corporate Partnerships and Volunteer Recruitment*

After months of closures and loss of revenue, the SOS Children's Village Thrift Stores are back up and running.

Actually "running" is an understatement, the staff and volunteers have taken the COVID-19 bull by the horns and created a safe, inviting space with all health and safety protocols in place.

The return of our long time volunteers has been a blessing, and the recruitment of the newest smiling members of the team has been a lifesaver.

Lots is still going on behind the scenes to continue the high level of safety for our customers; we are so grateful that they are returning, knowing we take this pandemic, and all its changing nuances, seriously.

We continue to need your support both as customers and as volunteers.

Our Kerrisdale store is in dire need of volunteers, only one day a week for four hours is all we ask of you.

If you have the time, want to join a fun and lively team, and enjoy the added bonus of supporting the kids and youth at our Village, please call Vera today at [\(604\) 264-0880](tel:6042640880).

"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children."

– Nelson Mandela



JIM PATTISON BROADCAST TURNS UP THE VOLUME FOR SOS BC



By *William Brennan, Manager of Communications*

Did you happen to catch our first radio ad in a decade, back in May and June? That was the exciting debut of our new partnership with Jim Pattison Broadcast Group and their local stations 93.7 JR Country and 102.7 The Peak.

We would like to thank JPBG for gifting us a generous amount of complementary ads to increase the impact of our advertising campaign. Special thanks to Amanda, Mel, and Rick! With their help in turning up the volume, we are expanding awareness that there is an SOS Village right in here in Surrey, British Columbia, and gaining new donors that will allow our charity to reach more kids in care.

Make sure you're listening to JR Country and The Peak in November. In case you missed our ad, here is the script:

"SOS Children's Village BC is a community of belonging.

They provide foster children, youth, and their families love, support, and stability in a village of homes in Surrey. Extending the reach of the village is needed and your donations can help make that happen.

For one hundred dollars you can help ensure a youth who has aged out of care has the essentials they need.

Help SOS Children's Village BC provide a stable, sustaining environment that nurtures growth and development right here in our own backyard.

Visit sosbc.org."



WHEN HUGS ARE BARRED, OUR FAMILIAL CONNECTION KEEPS US STRONG



By Sarah Osifo, Communications & Development Assistant



Life before the pandemic almost seems like a mirage.

I remember sitting at a pub on campus one March evening with some co-workers. We were indulging ourselves with conspiracy theories, work gossip, and fries. Our exaggerated banter about what the coronavirus was and what it meant for the future of the world was mere tomfoolery at that moment. Our imaginative speculation was an enjoyable opportunity for creative storytelling, rather than a noteworthy prediction of what was about to occur.

I did not know that in two weeks I would be packing my things to leave my friends and my home on campus at SFU, or that I would be spending the next two months isolating myself indoors, adopting new phrases such as 'social distancing' and 'flatten the curve'.

I am sure many of us can recall the moment when the pandemic became very real; life with all its uncertainties became even more vague and unpredictable, a frightening position to be in as a citizen of the Earth.

All of this led me to my current position at SOS Children's Village BC. In my three months of being here, I have had an unforgettable experience.

This pandemic has illustrated to all of us that marginalized communities bear the worst burdens in our inequitable world. Unfortunately, the Village was not exempt from these impacts. Isolation poses a great challenge for our Village youth. Unlike the other kids who have direct access to siblings and caregivers, our youth who live downstairs in Year Intensive Housing have limited opportunities for human connection.



Sheena, the Youth Program Manager, explained that contact has moved to digital mediums. She illustrates that it is difficult to harness relationships over text messages; without that essential human contact the quality of the interaction suffers. Especially during these times, something like a hug or a pat on the back can make all the difference.

Farah, the Village Director, indicated that the biggest challenge for the children was boredom. With decreased social outlets, boredom can be a mentally and emotionally constricting experience for a child.

Yet, despite the challenges, SOS BC staff have combatted these obstacles with creativity, passion, and intent.

It is always a top priority to be available to our kids 24/7. On the day of interviews, I saw Sheena speaking with Edward, one of our Village youth. They were engrossed in what looked like a heartfelt, socially distanced conversation. Sheena later revealed to me that she was not even working that day, but had come to address

concerns that Edward was having related to the pandemic, in addition to the short interview.

This kind of commitment is evident throughout SOS BC.

I have been privy to the genuine love and respect that everyone has for each other in the Village. Mickey, a caregiver, mentioned that despite the chaos in the world, she felt immensely supported at SOS BC. She was not aware that she would be participating in my interviews until 5 seconds after Farah had called her. I was amazed to see the ease and affection these two had for one another over the phone.

They teased each other like sisters and stood for one another like comrades.

Mickey expressed that it was a good feeling to know that she and her children are valued and cared for in a close-knit community. Farah reflected her attitude when she referred to the Village as her home; she has been given the nickname of 'The Wolf' by the kids because she looks after her pack like a wolf does.

If I had to pick one theme to explain what I witnessed at the Village and to summarize the content of the conversations, it would be family.

There is an atmosphere of familial connection at SOS BC. Blood relations or financial stability does not guarantee a loving family. A loving family is a result of individuals who stand for one another, who show up during difficult times, and who make it their responsibility to help each other become their best self, in whatever ways that is possible.

Therefore, thank you, donors, for being a part of our family.



WAYS OF GIVING

Special Capital Gains Exemption



Choosing to donate publicly traded securities that have appreciated in value will extend your tax savings even further. As a matter of fact, most people who choose to donate securities end up with an after tax cost that is less than one half of the gift!

GIFTS OF PUBLICLY TRADED SECURITIES

As we start to approach the end of the year and the stock market has recovered from its March lows, those considering a philanthropic gift should consider a gift of stock instead of cash.

When you donate securities traded on a designated stock exchange directly to SOS Children's Village BC, you benefit from the donation tax credit and the complete elimination of the capital gains tax. As a result, the combined tax savings can be quite impressive.

How It Works

To illustrate the tax effects for a BC resident, let's look at the tax consequences of a \$10,000 gift of publicly traded securities made in 2020*:

- ◆ We will assume the donor initially paid \$5,000, but the stock is now worth \$10,000, so their capital gain is \$5,000 (\$2,500 is taxable)
- ◆ The donor's marginal tax rate is 38.29%
- ◆ The donor has made gifts to other charities worth more than \$200
- ◆ The donor has sufficient income to be able to deduct the entire gift in the current or following five years

The donor will receive a charitable receipt in the amount of \$10,000 (the value of the securities) and pay \$4,950 less in tax (\$10,000 x 49.5%) when filing their tax return. The complete elimination of capital gains results in additional tax savings of \$957 (\$5,000 / 2 x 38.29%).

With the combined tax savings (donation tax credit and capital gains), the net cost of the donation is just \$4,093 (\$10,000 minus \$4,950 tax credit minus the \$957 capital gains tax savings) or 40.9% of the gift.

**This information is for general information purposes only and is not intended to be legal or tax advice. Readers should consult with their own tax and legal advisers with respect to their particular circumstances before taking any action based upon the info contained in this article.*

It's Easy To Make A Gift Of Securities

- ◆ The process of making the gift is very simple as most securities are held electronically and can easily be transferred from the donor's brokerage account to SOS Children's Village BC's brokerage account
- ◆ The donor will receive a charitable tax receipt for their gift valued at the closing value of the securities on the date the securities are received in SOS Children's Village BC's brokerage account

For more information on making a gift of securities to SOS BC please contact Michelle Bernard, Director of Development at [\(604\) 574-2964](tel:6045742964) ext. 108 or michellebernard@sosbc.org. Soon, you can also download the form from our website to fill out on our [Donate Securities](#) page (under "What You Can Do").

THE SUSTAINING SPRING OF MONTHLY GIVING



By Michelle Bernard, Director of Development

I was fortunate enough recently to have a great conversation with one of our monthly donors, who wishes to remain anonymous.

I asked her, "Why have you decided to donate to SOS Children's Village BC through our monthly giving program?"

This was her response:

"One of my life privileges is to be blessed with children, and for my part I need to raise not just good citizens but great citizens. To do this I need to model empathy, honesty, and philanthropy; it is my responsibility to be the change, and a great foundation for my children to witness and to build upon."

It is not enough to talk the talk, we need to walk the walk.

Becoming a monthly donor with an organization like SOS Children's Village BC is not entirely altruistic however; it lifts my spirits knowing that I am supporting vulnerable children in my community. I know now more than ever that every dollar counts, and I hope others will read this and follow suit."

Donating monthly is the most cost effective method of funding we can receive. Monthly giving offers a steady and predictable source of funding.

With a more predictable cash flow we can remain focused on our mission of providing love and care to the children, families, and youth we serve. You can help us walk with kids in care to a sustaining spring by becoming a committed giver.

Please visit www.sosbc.org or call [\(604\) 574-2964](tel:6045742964) to start your monthly gift today.



SPECIAL THANK YOUS

\$100,000+
Estate of Irene Mary Evans

\$50,000+
Anonymous

\$30,000+
Sasamat Foundation

\$10,000+
Chris Spencer Foundation
City of Vancouver
Coast Capital Savings
RBC Foundation
Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society
TELUS Friendly Future Foundation
Vancity Credit Union
Vancouver Foundation
United Way of the Lower Mainland



\$5,000+
Arlin Foundation
Envision Financial - North Delta
G&F Financial Group Foundation
Mary Hull
Ocean Park Foundation
PRS Family Fund
Sodican BC
Windsor Plywood Foundation

\$3,000+
Jacky Kuk
Johanna and Otto Holzapfel
HWG Chartered Professional Accountants
Matthews Campbell
PPI Global



APPRECIATION

Thank you to Coast Capital Savings for a generous grant to our Transition to Adulthood program. Youth leave the foster care system unequipped to deal with challenges such as pursuing education or employment, lack of financial stability, mental health issues, and lack of life skills. This funding provides educational support and mental health therapy to youth at high risk of homelessness to help them pursue educational plans, find a job, and become independent. Thanks for supporting bright futures for youth aging out of care.

Thank you to the RBC Foundation for a generous grant to our Transition to Adulthood program. We are so appreciative of the support we receive from the community to help our youth aging out of care learn the life skills needed to find good jobs. Time and time again, we see that our youth are able to overcome barriers through support like this. RBC Future Launch is a 10-year, \$500 million commitment to empowering Canadian youth to build meaningful careers.



SOS BC ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE RICHMOND SENTINEL

By William Brennan, Manager of Communications

SOS Children’s Village BC was on the front page of the Richmond Sentinel newspaper for their September 15 - 28 edition! We would like express our gratitude to reporter Hannah from the Richmond Sentinel for writing the article after interviewing our executive director Kistie and our founder Lois. To read the piece, Google [SOS village all-encompassing in caring for youth in need](#) and it should be the first result.

Here is an excerpt from the article:

Funding from the [Steveston thrift] store helps with things like education and on-site clinical supports for children and youth in care. But like many industries, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the work of the SOS Children’s Village BC team. They had to close their stores for eight weeks, creating more work for teams intent on supporting the children and youth living in the village. And when the pandemic hit, one youth who had recently aged out of care had a baby. Four staff members searched every store for a specific formula that seemed to be sold out everywhere.

“That’s how we’re managing day-to-day,” says Singh. “We have to wake up, listen to our community, see who needs what and prioritize.”

SOS village all-encompassing in caring for youth in need

By HANNAH SCOTT
Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Within a community of homes dedicated to children in foster care, five youth who have recently aged out of the system live in transitional basement suites. Providing support to youth who have aged out of the more traditional foster care system is a key component of SOS Children’s Village.

The only Canadian branch is located in BC, started by Richmondites Lois and Gilles Bouchard in 1986 after five years of sowing the seeds. The Bouchards received funding for the land from the international umbrella of SOS in 1992.



