

Heart to Heart

A NEWSLETTER BY ISLAND CRISIS CARE SOCIETY

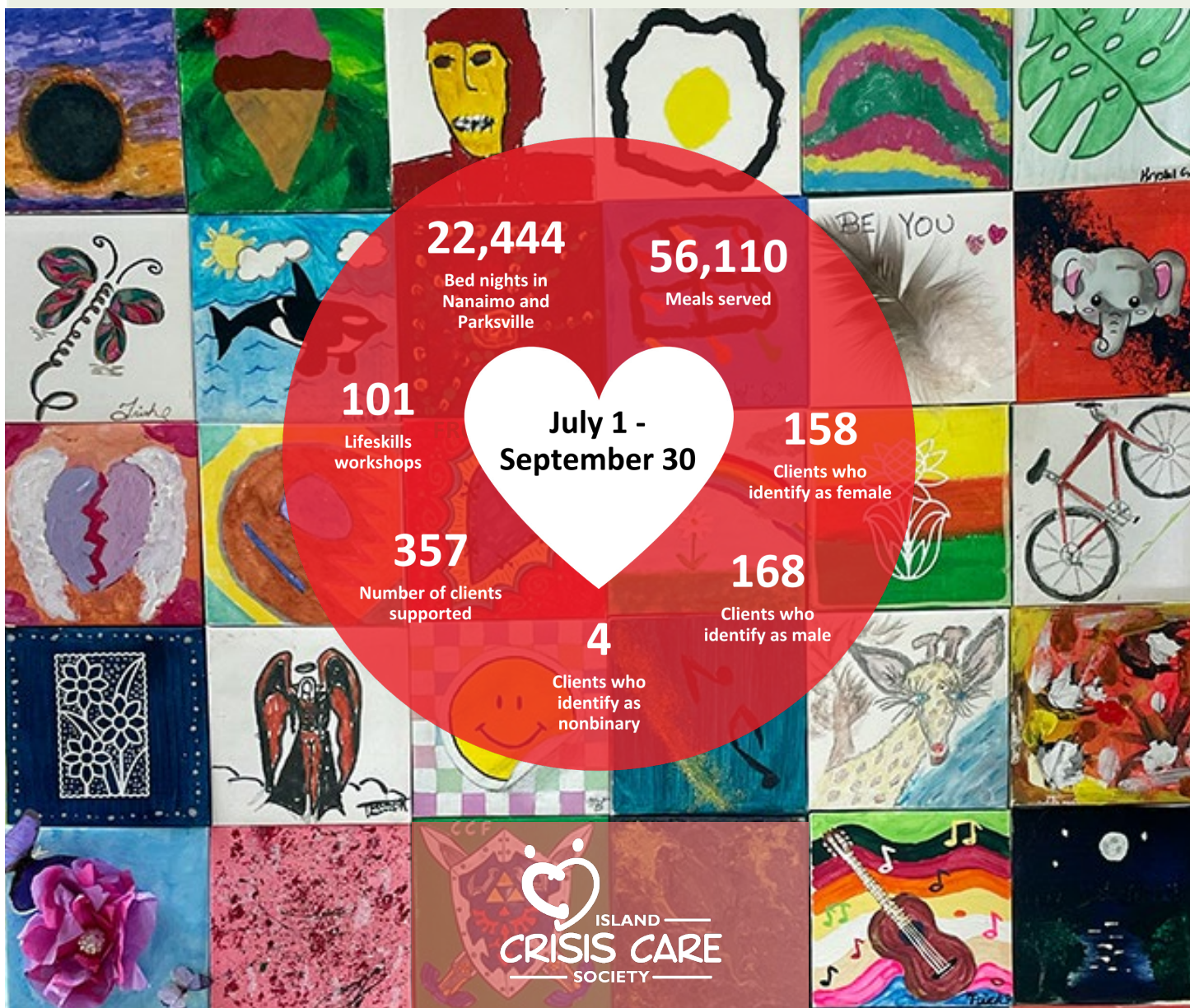
FROM THE HEART

ORGANIZATION HIGHLIGHTS

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WHAT'S NEW



FROM THE HEART

As the nights grow colder and the winds bite deeper, we're reminded how unbearable the nights have become for those without a place to call home. Each bitter gust and drop of rain intensifies the struggle of staying warm, safe, and alive.

At ICCS, we continue to support our 250+ clients and make strides in increasing our programming to bring more people in from the cold. With a safe room, hot meals and a compassionate ear — we're doing more than addressing basic needs. We're offering hope, dignity, and the reminder that no one is truly alone. Each act of kindness is a lifeline, a reminder that someone cares, and a small beacon of warmth and light in a world that can feel overwhelmingly cold. In helping those experiencing homelessness, we not only keep them safe but also bring warmth to our own hearts, knowing we're part of something much larger than ourselves.

There are many ways you can show your support, through donating, volunteering and being part of our upcoming events.

This November, we will be part of the Art Walk in Nanaimo showcasing client art as well as art created by staff.

Art has been an integral part in our programming. We offer self-directed art workshops, allowing clients to express themselves in ways that they may not be able to through words alone. Some of the art in our 2025 Art Heals calendar that can be purchased on our website or in person at our office.

Another way to support our clients is to donate Christmas gifts. Please see page 8 for more details about how you can help.

Coldest Night of the Year 2025 is fast approaching. Plan on being part of this amazing event through registering to create a team, walk and fundraise for this great cause!

In keeping with the CNOY 2025 motto, let's change the tune for people experiencing hurt, hunger, and homelessness... because it's cold out there.

ORGANIZATION HIGHLIGHTS



artwork of David
created by Wayne
(ICCS client)

DAVID'S PLACE

We are excited about our newest initiative, the David's Place Recovery Program, which fills a critical gap in the ICCS continuum of care. This program will offer up to 18 months of housing and wrap-around supports for clients who have begun their recovery journey, helping them build a more stable and hopeful future.

The program provides Assisted Living services in a homelike setting for individuals who have completed treatment and seek support in maintaining a recovery lifestyle.

Last year, ICCS unexpectedly lost one of its valued staff, David Drexhage. Throughout his 10-year career with us, David was a tireless voice of advocacy for more and better recovery treatment programs in Nanaimo.

David's warm personality and deep knowledge of recovery will provide a model and inspiration for the new program. He knew recovery could be seen in a much wider context than just substance use and addiction. Living a meaningful, satisfying, hopeful, and contributing life is something that as an organization we wish for all our clients; and for some that includes the adoption of a lifestyle in which the use of substances is left behind. David's Place will provide an inclusive space for those seeking to develop that lifestyle. We look forward to seeing lives impacted by the program and David's legacy.

ORCA PLACE ANNIVERSARY



In August we celebrated Orca Place's 5th anniversary. Congratulations! You are making a difference in the lives of your clients!

Orca Place, our supportive housing program in Parksville, provides housing, support, and programs to Oceanside residents. Orca place provides a safe, and potentially long-term home for clients who want some independence, but still need support to live on their own.



ON COVER: TILES CREATED BY ORCA PLACE CLIENTS AND STAFF. IN PHOTOS: KRYSTAL GRISWOLD (ORCA PLACE MANAGER) AND VIOLET HAYES SPEAKING AT THE ORCA ANNIVERSARY EVENT.

COMMUNITY KITCHEN

We are so excited to share what we have been up to in the former Nanaimo Bakery space. Seeing the need of an affordable kitchen rental from local organizations focused on food security and food-focused businesses, we have developed the Rising Hope Community Kitchen program.



Walking in the heritage of the Nanaimo Bakery, Rising Hope Community Kitchen provides affordable access to the kitchen space and equipment to the community, enabling the sustainability of locally created food items and enhancing food education.

We support local food entrepreneurs and foster greater nutritional awareness and self-sufficiency among community members. We invite you to follow our page for updates and connect with the Program Coordinator on rental details and opportunities!

www.facebook.com/risinghopecommunitykitchen

LIFESKILLS

For clients who are not yet ready to move towards employment but still want to progress towards community connection, Lifeskills continues to provide workshops that offer emotional and social engagement such as Art Heals and self-care. We



continually see how our ICCS supportive housing clients develop purpose and a sense of belonging.

Lifeskills provides clients with opportunities to engage in multifaceted social, cultural, communication, and creative (Ingenuity) skills building workshops and events. Some examples are the High Tea strawberry socials, cultural

events and Elder talks. These are key components in successful life skills competency development, with the ultimate goal towards re-entry into community connections as more of a whole, positive-minded and capable individual.



Interesting to note is that through the strawberry social events alone, the Lifeskills program welcomed 34 residents!

ICCS has dedicated outreach and support staff to help clients with skills within programs and has seen success when they are able to come alongside clients and build supportive relationships. In many programs, however, most particularly supportive housing programs, there is an assumed level of self-sufficiency

among clients which may not be a universal reality. The Lifeskills programs strives to help support the development of this self-sufficiency so that residents can achieve their greatest potential!

PHOTOS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ALEXIS WITH SUE (ICCS BOARD CHAIR) AT A STRAWBERRY SOCIAL, WITH STACY (SAMARITAN PLACE CLIENT) AT AN ELDER TALK, ALEXIS AT ONE OF HER CU.TJRE WORKSHOPS





PROJECT RISE

“I felt like quitting halfway through. I just didn’t feel confident inside and Emily encouraged me to pursue and I’m really glad she did. I am really grateful I kept going.”

~Aline, Project Rise participant



“The program is great. I am able to add a lot of certificates and courses to my resume.

I’d like to work in a daycare or be an office administrator.”

ALICIA, PROJECT RISE PARTICIPANT



JEFFREY (LEFT, PROJECT RISE GRAD) WITH EMILY (PROJECT RISE COORDINATOR)

Project Rise is a program of Island Crisis Care Society (ICCS) aimed to deliver pre-employment and employment skills training and work placement opportunities to people who have experienced homelessness, but are now ready to re-integrate fully into independence and community life.

Many ICCS clients face barriers to employment and re-connection to the community, based on adversity in their past, and the stigma of their present. This new program aims to fill that gap, supporting clients who have moved towards independence in housing but are unable to access the employment market take the next steps forward to regain the rhythm of community life.

“The program is wonderful, top notch. The content and resources are very organized. I am really impressed with the program.”

~Jeffrey, Project Rise participant

Every cohort goes through a series of workshops and trainings such as essential employment skills (reading, writing, computer, numeracy, job readiness), job skills (customer service, interview skills, food/craft/gardening/ carpentry skills), life skills (time management, communication, budgeting, housekeeping), personal growth (self care, hygiene, interpersonal relationships) and certification in first aid, foodsafe, and naloxone usage.

Following the workshop and trainings part of the program, participants attend a job fair where work hosts interview potential employees. Participants are placed in work opportunities following the interview process. Past and current work placements have included: Kiwanis Village, Pryde Vista Golf Course, Salvation Army, Loaves and Fishes, a variety of landscaping companies, Growing Opportunities Farms, Coop Gas Bars, U-lock storage, Nanaimo Foodshare and Curvavoom.



"I am getting a whole bunch of certificates as part of the course and I hope that will help open some doors for a new job.

Emily (Project Rise coordinator) is wonderful. She really goes above and beyond."

PROJECT RISE PARTICIPANT

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Chaplains are a special part of ICCS, working to ensure the spiritual health of residents and offering an ear to listen intently and without judgement. Gloria is a board member and volunteer chaplain at ICCS who strives to offer light to the community, in whatever capacity she can.



Outside of ICCS, Gloria and her husband are hands-on with the Pregnancy Care Center in Duncan. They have utilized their marketing abilities to set up centers across the country – Alberta, Ontario, and now British Columbia.

As someone who has experienced great loss and encountered the depths of grief, Gloria comes to the residents at ICCS with an open mind and a trauma informed background. Recently, she finished her master's degree credentials from Trinity Western University with aspirations of taking on a new role as a complex trauma counsellor.

Gloria's experience within the realm of trauma and grief as well as her devotion to faith make her an invaluable part of the organization.



KRYSTAL GRISWOLD (LEFT, ORCA PLACE MANAGER) AND SARA SCHREIDER (VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR) AT A VOLUNTEER FAIR

Let's make a difference!
Consider volunteering with us.

With over 10 programs operating with the support of volunteers, we provide a variety of different volunteer opportunities in both Nanaimo and Parksville, including positions supporting clients directly, supporting staff and other volunteers, but also providing support within our programs.

Check out our website for more information:
www.islandcrisiscaresociety.ca/join-us/volunteer-with-us

CLIENT STORY: KASEY

An essential element in dismantling the stigma of homelessness is introducing the individuals affected, humanizing their experiences. With this, Kacey's story is a relevant reminder of the humanity within homelessness, offering an inside look on the lives of those impacted by the housing crisis.

Kacey is a resident of Island Crisis Care Society (ICCS) supportive housing and has been there since 2019. Albeit an adjustment at first, it was a relief to be out of their previous living situation and setting upon new horizons. Kacey's early life was marked by a consistent presence of addiction, mental health issues, abuse, and insecure relationships. Thus, Kacey's living circumstances reflected the outcome of a life they did not choose.

Being the oldest of five siblings, Kacey was parentified due to the inconsistency of their parental figures. Ultimately, any opportunity for choice was taken away from Kacey, as the well-being of their siblings became the main priority. Through the sanctuary of ICCS, Kacey has been able to connect with their inner self and recenter the focus of their life on healing and building a future for themselves. "I've discovered so many quirks about myself as the mask slips off, you know? And I become more myself."

In alignment with their self-discovery journey, Kacey has come to realize they enjoy engaging in creative and mentally stimulating activities, such as crocheting and knitting. Being in a supportive environment has empowered Kacey to pursue their aspirations of helping others, even creating hats for fellow residents to wear during the colder months. "I've made hats for people in the building too, I just, I like to bring joy to people. That's my purpose in life."

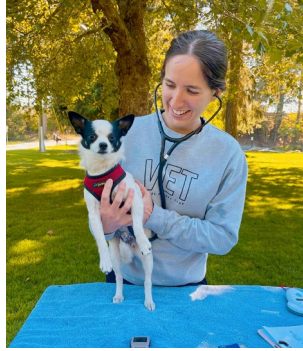
The place we call home and the community that surrounds us greatly influence our ability to build a life and envision a future. Kacey's time at supportive housing has nurtured aspirations that have evolved into achievable goals they pursue each day. Despite our life circumstances, we all have the right to dream, and believing in the attainability of our dreams can greatly alter our current situation. For Kacey, the focal point of their goals has become writing a book that portrays an unfiltered version of their story, serving as a pathway for healing and sharing their journey.

Kacey emphasizes the importance of having a safe space for introducing positive and transformative changes, stating, "I felt a few days ago that I'm going through a good change, but it's going to be hard. Yeah, not going to be easy. It's the only way, though." The programs offered by ICCS have offered creative outlets for residents like Kacey while providing a sense of community to reintegrate into society after periods of isolation or difficulty. Kacey conveys "The staff is amazing, I mean, the staff is just really great. Absolutely, they're so kind and caring." Kacey's journey exemplifies the supportive environment ICCS provides, enabling personal growth and facilitating enduring positive transformations.

DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



PHOTOS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
ST. JOHN'S AMBULANCE,
FANTASTIC BEASTS VETERINARY
SERVICES, PAINTING BY NEIL LAUDER



We thank our donors for their generosity and support.

- The Tool Shed Rentals
- Fantastic Beasts Veterinary Services
- Shar Kare
- Nanaimo Lions Club
- United Way British Columbia
- Neil Lauder
- St. John Ambulance Nanaimo

Thank you all for your care!

A huge shout out to Fantastic Beasts Veterinary Services for partnering up with us to provide essential veterinary care to individuals who are low-income or experiencing homelessness. Thank you for all you do!

Neil Lauder donated 20 of her paintings for our new recovery program, David's Place. The colourful paintings will be a nice addition to the new space!

The volunteers at St. John's Ambulance Nanaimo brought in their therapy dogs to Samaritan Place so clients could spend time with them. Thank you!

WHAT'S NEXT

Come visit us during the Nanaimo Art Walk. Our temporary office located at 321 Wallace street will be transformed into an ICCS art gallery! We will showcase the amazing talents of our clients and staff to the community.

26TH ANNUAL NANAIMO ARTWALK
— nanaimo arts council —
Join Us for our Biggest Annual Event of the Year!
Featuring 60 Artists, in 20 Venues, and Free Shuttle Service
NOVEMBER
Saturday, 23rd 10:00am to 4:00pm
Sunday, 24th 12:00pm to 4:00pm
• Downtown Nanaimo • Victoria Crescent • Old City Quarter

ART HEALS CALENDAR



Get your 2025 Art Heals Calendar filled with artwork created by our supportive housing clients. For \$25 this calendar will not only keep you on track next year, but also inspire at the same time!

Calendars are available for purchase through our web store and can be picked up at our temporary office located at 321 Wallace Street, suite 103, Monday - Friday from 9:30-4:00.

As part of our programming, we offer Art Heals self-directed workshops, allowing clients to express themselves in ways that they may not be able to through words alone. Through the purchase of this calendar you are supporting programs that provide resources to over 300 people daily.

The calendar is 8.5×11 in size and printed on high quality paper. Each month comes with a vibrant art print and a monthly calendar overview.

www.islandcrisiscareociety.ca/shop-page



CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR CLIENTS



Possible Donation Ideas!



Winter Comfort Items

- mini umbrella
- warm socks
- toques, gloves and scarves

Hygiene items

- toothpaste and toothbrush
- Hand/face cream or lip balm
- deodorant

Holiday Season Items

- small flashlight
- journal and pen
- small games, puzzles, or deck of cards
- thermos mug
- hot chocolate or tea packets
- Gift cards to coffee shops or local grocery stores (\$5 or \$10 value)
- Chocolates and other small packaged treats

How can you share some holiday cheer?



Whether it is one item or a few, your contribution will go a long way in brightening our clients holiday. **Donations will be accepted until December 11th**, when our holidays elves will begin assembling the items into a gifts.

Donations can be dropped off at a scheduled time with Jennifer, the Resource Development Coordinator who can be contacted at development@iccare.ca or 250 585 5505 ext. 102

Donate today:
<http://weblink.donorperfect.com/clientchristmas2024>



COLDEST NIGHT 2025



It is that time of year again! Coldest Night of the year 2025 has launched, and the time is now to register to create a team, walk and fundraise for this great cause!

Coldest Night of the Year happens across Canada on the same day each year - this time on February 22nd, 2025. It is a community event, drawing individuals together to support the cause, but to make it happen we also need sponsorship support from organizations that care about our communities, and want to support positive change for its most vulnerable members.

ICCS coordinates 2 separate walks under its CNOY umbrella – one in Nanaimo which will start and end at St. Andrew’s United Church and one in Oceanside, 150 Village Way in Qualicum Beach. In addition to the walk, participants are encouraged to reach out to friends and families to raise funding for ICCS programs. As a peer to peer fund raising event, CNOY builds on participant networks for success.

In keeping with the CNOY 2025 motto, let’s change the tune for people experiencing hurt, hunger, and homelessness... because it’s cold out there.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



cnoy.org/oceanside



cnoy.org/nanaimo

