

Heart to Heart

Quarterly Newsletter from ICCS



32,518

bed stays

42%

clients identify as
female

July to
September
2025

428

clients supported
in housing

10

volunteers at the
Drop In Hub

81,295

meals served in
housing

9,200+

meals handed out at
the Drop In Hub





From the Heart

As the air turns crisp and the days grow shorter, I find myself digging out my jacket and umbrella, simple comforts that quietly remind me of the privilege of having what I need when the weather changes. For so many in our community, these small things aren't guaranteed. The shift in seasons can mean the difference between warmth and cold, safety and uncertainty.

It's during this time of year that we are especially grateful for you - our donors, partners, and friends, who help ensure that fewer people have to face those challenges alone. Your generosity allows us to offer more than shelter; it allows us to offer stability, connection, and a chance to rebuild.

The past few months have been full of incredible moments, acts of kindness, growth, and community that remind us of what's possible when compassion leads the way. I hope the stories in this edition of Heart to Heart inspire you as much as they've inspired us.

Thank you for continuing to walk alongside us as we build a community where everyone has the chance to feel safe and supported.

Jennifer

• Development & Communications Manager

Organizational Highlights

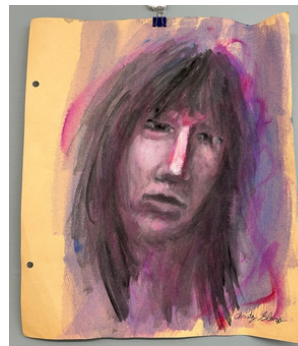
ART HEALS

Our Client Art Wall at the ICCS Head Office is a vibrant celebration of creativity, featuring artwork created by our clients and staff.

Having a creative outlet is an important part of the healing and growth process for our clients. Art allows individuals to explore their emotions, build confidence, and express themselves in ways that words alone cannot. It can be therapeutic, empowering, and a source of pride, helping clients connect with themselves and with the community around them.

We invite you to stop by and take a look during office hours, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Most of the artwork is available for purchase, with half of the proceeds going directly to the artist and the other half supporting ICCS programs.

It's a wonderful opportunity to support local talent, contribute to meaningful programs, and experience firsthand the power of creativity in fostering growth, connection, and resilience.



PHYSIO AT ORCA PLACE

Thanks to the generous support of Mike, a local physiotherapist, and funding from the RDN, Orca Place residents now have access to affordable, on-site physiotherapy. This service has already made a remarkable difference in residents' physical and mental well-being. With sessions available right where they live, clients are gaining strength and confidence. One resident has even set aside their walker after weeks of steady improvement! This partnership is a powerful example of how community collaboration can enhance health, independence, and overall quality of life.

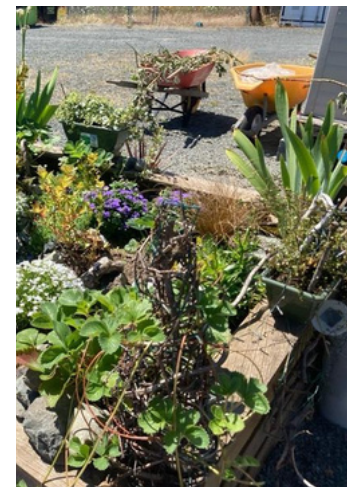
KAYAKING ADVENTURES ON LONG LAKE

Residents and staff from David's Place enjoyed a wonderful afternoon on the water at Long Lake, thanks to the generosity of the Nanaimo Canoe and Kayak Club. For many, it was a chance to step outside their comfort zones, connect with one another, and simply enjoy the beauty of the day. Laughter and encouragement filled the air as everyone paddled across the lake—some for the very first time. One resident, who had always been hesitant around water, bravely got into a kayak and discovered how freeing it felt to glide across the surface. It was an unforgettable day of courage, connection, and joy.



A SEASON OF GROWTH AT NEWCASTLE

It's been a remarkable growing season at Newcastle Place, with the community garden thriving like never before. Residents and staff came together to plant, nurture, and harvest a beautiful variety of vegetables and flowers, making this the busiest and most bountiful season yet. Beyond the fresh produce, the garden has blossomed into a place of connection, where friendships grow alongside the plants and neighbours share in the joy of the harvest. Having this vibrant green space right on site offers clients and staff alike a place to relax, reflect, and celebrate the simple, meaningful rewards of working together.



A FAMILIAR FACE, A FRESH START

While staff were serving food and coffee to guests at the Drop In Hub, a familiar face walked through the door, though he was almost unrecognizable. Recently housed, this guest looked completely transformed: clean, freshly shaved, and sharply dressed, with a radiant smile that spoke volumes. He proudly shared that he was on his way to a job interview and wanted to stop in to thank the staff for their support. His gratitude and confidence were deeply moving, reminding everyone at the Hub why this work matters. It was a powerful moment of hope, dignity, and the strength of second chances.

CELEBRATING A MILESTONE

We're excitedly anticipating the graduation of one of our Mary's Place residents, who is preparing to move into a regular market rental alongside their loved ones. Over the course of their stay, the Mary's Place team has walked alongside them, providing support, guidance, and encouragement every step of the way. This milestone is a powerful reminder of the impact of the program, showing how stable housing can create meaningful opportunities for rebuilding. We are proud to celebrate this success and the positive trajectory this resident is moving toward, thanks to Mary's Place.

ART IN THE GARDEN

Residents at Orca Place recently showcased their talent at a special afternoon art show held in the community garden. From vibrant paintings and intricate sculptures to beautiful fiber arts, the display highlighted the incredible creativity and skill of the residents. The garden provided a welcoming, inspiring backdrop for the event, allowing guests to enjoy both the art and the natural surroundings. It was a joyful opportunity for residents to share their work, connect with one another, and celebrate their artistic achievements. We continue to be impressed by the talent, imagination, and dedication our residents bring to every creation.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AT THE HUB

At the Drop-In Hub, connection and care go hand in hand. The PCO team visits regularly to provide basic wound care while helping guests access important resources, ensuring their health and well-being are supported. In July, the Snuneymuxw First Nation hosted a special Beauty Day, offering nail and hair care, pizza, clothing, and warm conversation. These moments go beyond services, they create opportunities for relationships, trust, and community. Guests leave feeling seen, valued, and cared for. Events like these highlight the power of partnership and compassion in building meaningful connections that support everyone who walks through the Hub's doors.



HEALTHY SNACKS

Residents recently took part in healthy eating workshops, learning how to create nutritious and affordable snacks. These hands-on sessions taught practical skills like meal planning, budgeting, and preparing simple, wholesome recipes. Participants explored new ingredients, experimented with flavours, and gained confidence, all while connecting with fellow residents. Beyond the snacks, the workshops offered a space for conversation, learning, and community building. Residents left not only with tasty, healthy options but also with knowledge and tools to make better choices for their well-being. It's a small step with a big impact.

CELEBRATING ONE YEAR AT DAVID'S PLACE

This August, we're proud to celebrate the one-year anniversary of David's Place Supportive Recovery Program, a space dedicated to providing safety, stability, and support for individuals on their recovery journey. Named in honour of our colleague and friend Dave Drexhage, David's Place carries forward his vision of compassionate, accessible care for those seeking to rebuild their lives.

In just its first year, David's Place has welcomed clients into a structured, supportive environment where they can develop the skills, routines, and confidence needed to move forward. With no financial barriers and stays of up to 18 months, residents are given the time and space to focus on healing and growth at their own pace.

Every day, our staff, volunteers, and community partners bring dedication, care, and encouragement, helping residents feel seen, supported, and empowered. The courage and determination of the clients themselves continue to inspire us all.

We are so grateful to everyone who has helped make this first year a success. Here's to celebrating the many lives changed through David's Place, and to many more years of hope, recovery, and community.



ORCA PLACE TURNS SIX



This July, Orca Place in Parksville celebrates six years of providing stability and support in the Oceanside area. Since opening in 2019, its 52 units have welcomed hundreds of men and women, offering a foundation for rebuilding lives in a community where supportive housing is urgently needed.

The strength of Orca Place comes from its incredible team, staff who bring compassion, dedication, and encouragement every single day. Their work goes beyond providing housing; they help create a space where residents feel valued, supported, and hopeful for the future.

Over the years, Orca Place has become more than a residence, it's a community where connections are built, confidence grows, and residents can take meaningful steps toward independence. Each success, no matter how small, is a testament to the care, commitment, and resilience that define life at Orca Place.

Six years on, Orca Place continues to make a lasting impact, transforming lives and strengthening the Parksville community one resident at a time.

“ David's Place gave me the time, support, and space to start over. For the first time in years, I feel like I can build a future I'm proud of. ”

REFLECTING AND CELEBRATING AT THE 2025 ICCS AGM

At the end of July, the 2025 ICCS Annual General Meeting was held at Generations Church, bringing together staff, donors, volunteers, and board members for an evening of reflection and celebration. Attendees had the opportunity to look back on the past fiscal year and acknowledge the incredible work of our dedicated staff, whose commitment continues to make a difference in the lives of those we serve.



We are especially grateful to our board members for their ongoing guidance and support, helping steer ICCS toward a strong and impactful future. The evening was a wonderful reminder of the strength and generosity of our community, and we look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead.

Volunteer Highlights

Our volunteer-led Art Kit sessions throughout ICCS housing sites continue to bring joy, connection, and inspiration to both residents and volunteers. A recent session at David's Place perfectly illustrates the impact these activities can have.

A volunteer shared how she arrived feeling a little nervous, having planned a collaborative coloring activity that paired residents together. To her surprise, two attendees were new: one had recently returned after some time away, and another had just joined the program. Despite initial uncertainty, the spirit of the activity, focusing on process over perfection helped everyone open up. Residents paired together to complete four collaborative pieces, and one new participant chose to continue creating on his own afterward. He shared that he hadn't drawn anything since graduating high school and that the session made him feel "lifted." Small touches, like signing the backs of the artwork to take home, turned each piece into a meaningful memento of connection and creativity.

Moments like these remind us how art can foster trust, spark joy, and build relationships. One volunteer noted that a returning resident even asked if she would be coming back the next day, saying she was looking forward to it, a simple but powerful reminder of the value of these connections. Through Creative Moments, volunteers and residents alike experience firsthand how shared creativity can bring people together, uplift spirits, and strengthen community.



Sign up to be a volunteer today! Already a volunteer, log into your account to see available opportunities

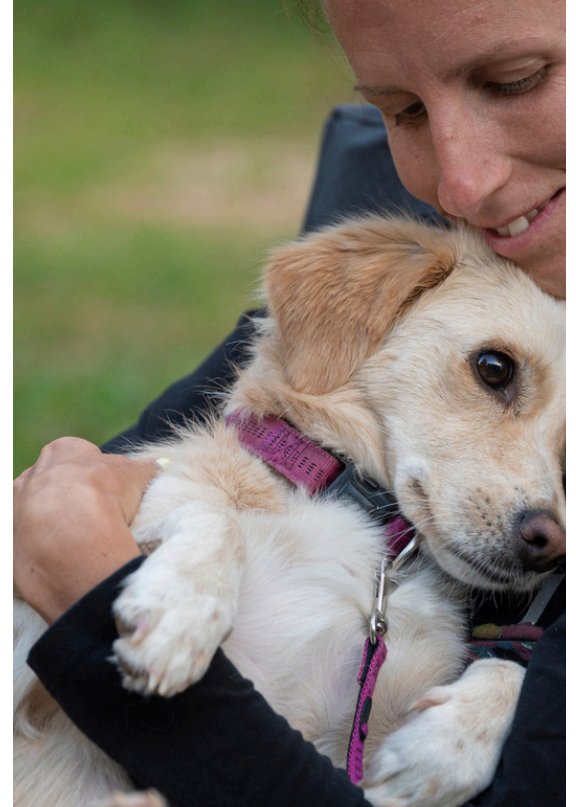
have questions? email Sara at:
volunteercoordinator@iccare.ca

Client Connections

This quarter, a truly meaningful moment in Supportive Housing came when one of our clients, who had been consistently using the Bridge to Housing shelter, was able to move into her own home. She had been facing incredibly difficult news about her health, which left her feeling depressed and hopeless, even considering MAID. Thanks to the dedication and commitment of our Samaritan Place staff, she was offered a room and now calls it home.

Since moving in, it's been inspiring to see her reconnect with life, engaging with other residents, enjoying the courtyard, participating in activities, and showing renewed joy and energy. She was even reunited with her dog, who now lives with her at Samaritan, bringing comfort and companionship.

This story is a powerful reminder of how crucial it is that ICCS staff go above and beyond for every client. By ensuring each person is connected with every resource available and treated as a valued individual, our team helps transform lives. Every effort, no matter how small it may seem, can create hope, restore dignity, and provide the foundation for meaningful change. It's this unwavering commitment to supporting every life that truly makes a difference in our community.



Donor Recognition

From July to September 2025, your generous support has continued to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve - thank you. Every donation helps us offer personalized care and vital resources, whether it's a warm meal, mental health support, or a safe place to call home. Because of you, we can meet people where they are and walk alongside them as they work toward a brighter future.

- Regional District of Nanaimo
- First Baptist Church
- DP World
- Hammond Bay Baptist Church
- Vancouver Island Real Estate Board
- Burgener Research
- All of our individual donors!

MONTHLY DONORS

A huge thank you to all our monthly donors! Your steady support gives ICCS the flexibility to respond to needs, plan programs, and provide consistent care year-round. Together, your generosity makes a big impact, helping us offer housing, meals, and vital services to those who need them most. We couldn't do it without you!



Ways to Support this Season

As we head into the holiday season, there are so many wonderful ways to support Island Crisis Care Society and the clients we serve. From filling Christmas stockings to joining us for the Coldest Night of the Year, your involvement helps bring warmth, hope, and joy to those who need it most. Every contribution - big or small - makes a real difference in the lives of people working toward stability and belonging. We're so grateful for our generous community and for everyone who chooses to stand alongside us, not just during the holidays, but all year long.



Each year, we fill Christmas stockings for all 276 ICCS housing residents to help brighten the holidays. You can donate items or contribute funds and let our elves do the shopping - either way, your generosity helps ensure every client feels cared for this season.

Suggested Items:

- socks
- toques
- gloves
- toothbrushes
- toothpaste
- chap stick
- lotion
- candy
- chocolate
- deck of cards
- puzzle books
- umbrella
- hot cocoa packs
- \$5 gift cards

Donate to ICCS Client Christmas Gifts



Grateful for Recovery

celebrating one year of David's Place



Our Grateful for Recovery campaign is happening now, raising vital funds to support David's Place, our supportive recovery program in Nanaimo. Thanks to the generosity of Rob Grey, every dollar you donate will be matched, doubling your impact. Your gift helps ensure that people on their recovery journey have access to the care, time, and stability they need to rebuild their lives.

Donate to Grateful for Recovery



Coldest Night of the Year 2026 is happening on February 28th, 2026! This marks our 15th year in Nanaimo and 12th year in Oceanside, celebrating years of community coming together for a shared cause. Join us as we walk in support of those facing homelessness in our communities.

Nanaimo



Oceanside



Learn more about all of our programs and ways to get involved on our website

www.islandcrisiscaresociety.ca