

FEAR
Khalil Gibran

It is said that before entering the sea
a river trembles with fear.

She looks back at the path she has traveled,
from the peaks of the mountains,
the long winding road crossing forests and villages.

And in front of her,
she sees an ocean so vast,
that to enter
there seems nothing more than to disappear forever.

But there is no other way.
The river can not go back.

Nobody can go back.
To go back is impossible in existence.

The river needs to take the risk
of entering the ocean
because only then will fear disappear,
because that's where the river will know
it's not about disappearing into the ocean,
but of becoming the ocean.

RASS Richmond
Addiction
Services
Society

ANNUAL REPORT 2019/2020

"Be kind,

be calm,

And be safe."

- Dr. Bonnie Henry

President's Report

We acknowledge that we work on the ancestral territory of the Hə́nqəmihəm speaking people.

I would like to acknowledge the commitment, loyalty, courage and creativity of all 19 employees of RASS. The changes resulting from Covid-19 and the unexpected resignation of our ED have both resulted in challenges and adjustments required of all staff members. I will mention the highlights of the RASS Board activities for the 2019-20 year.

Foundry: Having met with the challenge of securing a permanent home for Foundry Richmond, a temporary location was found at VCH's Youth Clinic over 8100 Granville Avenue, Richmond.

Youth Now: We continued to have a representative from the Youth Now program.

Focus on prevention and building community: RASS outcomes in our 4 years strategic plan continued to be focused on these areas including staff training, parenting support, clinical skill development and community engagement.

Seniors Health Issues: The Aging Well Program supports seniors through counselling and prevention with a variety of health needs. We witness positive results especially for our support to isolated seniors.

Part of my responsibility as Board President is to communicate how our agency is doing overall. These are the key strategies that guide our work followed by the quality indicators that measure our performance.

1) To ensure the safety of staff and clients

-We achieved 100% on both of our client satisfaction survey and Patient Safety Culture Tool.

2) To focus on "de-stigmatization" of addiction with an understanding of our multi-cultural and diverse community and to continue to find ways to engage and connect to our community to ensure our services are relevant in Richmond

-This goal was assessed through the number of community prevention activities held, increased membership on social media sites and the number of clients served. The numbers were above and beyond our annual targets.

3) To continuously develop our quality and expertise in providing addiction-related services

-We served 207 parents, a slight decrease from our annual target.

4) To maintain ongoing sustainability regarding finances and human capital for the agency

- The performance indicators showed stable funding or increases in funding sources

Sincerely,

Dianne Milsom, Board President

Richmond Addiction Services Society



Executive Director's Report

Embracing the Changes

2020 is a year of change. "Change is the only constant in life" A Greek Philosopher Heraclitus. We first met with a global pandemic of Covid-19 which hit every one of us around the world. Every aspects of life are impacted from far and near in different extent not only to physical and mental health but also to economy, family, social life, education, employment and environment etc. RASS, while adapting to all the changes arising from the pandemic, has been providing our services virtually through phone or online platform since mid-March. This opens a new era of expansion in different service mode which will not be developing so fast without this global health crisis.

RASS had been the lead agency in the development of Foundry Richmond working closely together with VCH, Foundry Central Office (FCO) and many community partners over the last two years. Having met with the challenge of securing a permanent home for Foundry Richmond, a temporary location was found at VCH's Youth Clinic over 8100 Granville Avenue, Richmond. The Foundry Richmond Youth Centre was soft-launched on July 15, 2020. In transition to the new phase of this Foundry initiative, the roles and responsibilities of the core partnership among RASS, VCH and FCO was revisited. Building on each other's strength, VCH-Richmond takes on the lead agency role while RASS remains as an integral partner in clinical service delivery and community engagement by October 1, 2020.

Building on our goal to include our clients' voices and experiences in all areas of our programs and services, we work closely with Foundry Richmond to create a Youth Advisory Council with 13 amazing young people who actively participating and contributing their talents in the planning of Foundry Richmond and on social media platforms. In engaging the community to address the drug overdose crisis, Opioid Prevention Education Event was organized in the community and among youth. We started having our clients involved in our hiring of staff, development and evaluation of our programs. At our AGM today, we are privileged to have clients share their stories of positive impacts of our services to their lives.

2020 is RASS' 45 th anniversary. In celebration of our years of service in Richmond while in face of the ongoing challenges, we can meet the change with fear or embrace the change with open arms. We believe that RASS will stay resilient and seek every opportunity to improve our services to meet the community changing need.

Sincerely,

Clarence Chan, Interim Executive Director

Richmond Addiction Services Society



Treasurer's Report

Richmond Addiction Services' Society (RASS) continues to perform well for the year ended March 31, 2020.

For the year ended March 31, 2020, the Society had total revenue of \$1,384,788 and operating expenses of \$1,351,139 resulting in a small operating surplus of \$33,649 (compared to a deficit of \$10,260 in 2019). With the addition of deferred capital contributions and amortization of capital assets, the net surplus was \$29,695 (compared to a net deficit of \$14,487 in 2019).

As at March 31, 2020, the Society had total assets of \$1,073,028. As a non-profit organization the Society has been financially conservative and the assets are primarily located in cash and term deposits totaling \$807,716. Current liabilities total \$996,006, and are mostly deferred revenues of \$820,154 received from government agencies and other granting agencies. Assets include an internally restricted fund of \$60,000 that reflects potential liabilities which the Society has to meet in case of emergency.

The Board of Directors approved a balanced budget for the 2020-21 fiscal year. Subsequent to year-end, Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and RASS have decided that Foundry will be operated by VCH rather than RASS. Discussions are underway regarding the transition but there is expected to be no negative financial consequence to RASS. The budget will be amended once details are finalized.

The Finance Committee meets quarterly along with management to review monthly financial statements. They make any necessary recommendations to the Board. They do not foresee any issues for the 2020/2021 fiscal year. Even with a global pandemic, there is no indication that it will negatively affect our financial performance.

Respectfully submitted

Ken Anderson, Treasurer

Richmond Addiction Services Society

Highlights in 2019-2020

The CATS program offered 28 – 3 Day sessions this past fiscal year with 36 students completing the program. There were 57 individual counselling sessions of which 80% were outreach sessions. The CATS programs continues to receive overwhelming support from the school district. 98% of the students found CATS program useful while 94% found the individual counseling sessions useful. 100% of the students found CATS program help them develop more healthy coping skills. Last but not the least, 85% of the students found CATS program impact their use of drug or alcohol.

The Recovery Day program has supported 20 individuals with an average age of 17.7 with about 100 hours of support including mentoring and life skills coaching; education and career exploration & supports; recreation activities and exercise; and referral & aftercare support. The program will bring individual and family counselling, group therapy, life-skill development, 12 step groups, sponsors, employment support, academic support, recreational and creative opportunities like digital and media arts together to promote a substance-free lifestyle.

The Youth and Family program provided 926 individual counseling sessions and 79 family sessions. The program saw 137 clients last year. 14% of these counselling sessions were outreach sessions.

The Community Prevention programs offered 7 sessions in 2 education series on different addictions-related topics including 2 for nursing students; and 5 brain health sessions for the older adults. 376 individuals attended these sessions last year. Over 6,900 community contacts were made this year involving prevention activities.

Community Prevention staff continued the engagement with the Richmond School District (SD38) over the last year, providing unique in-class programming and presentations on holistic health and prevention practices. These programs occurred in more than 5 secondary schools, as well as support to the young parent COLT program. In addition to student engagement, the Prevention staff supported teachers via several Professional Development in-service workshops, along with several education presentations to Parent Advisory Committees at 4 Secondary Schools.

Schools Out is now in its fourth year of operation. This past year Gabby and Alfonso made some great changes to the program that included Bard on the Beach actors coming in to direct the children in stagecraft, a Photovoice initiative that saw the participants in our group take pictures of their environment as a way to express themselves. We also got our first Schools Out alumni come back to the program to volunteer as a youth leader and pass on what he learned to the younger children at Blundell.

The last fiscal year alone, **the Aging Well program team** delivered 664 hours of individual & family counselling, group support work, and integrated case management services!

Testimonials

TOGETHER WE MADE A DIFFERENCE

Testimony from a teacher at McMath Secondary

"Never would I have thought that my involvement with RASS would impact both my life and the lives of my students so greatly. Through RASS, we, as a collective were not only able to learn the theory behind the 5 Life Areas but also how to use this knowledge to implement and adapt our lives to improve them. Junior and Senior leadership students were able to further their familiarity with the 5 Life Areas by participating in a collaborative project where groups were assigned a specific life area that they would present to the Gr. 8 students at our school. The purpose of this project was threefold. First, leadership students familiarized themselves with what the life areas were and how its implementation could benefit and provide them a balanced lifestyle. Second, leadership students had the opportunity to work as a team, collaborate and utilize their public speaking skills. Third, the 5 Life Areas were presented to Gr 8 students, as a proactive measure, in hopes that they might be able to use this knowledge throughout their high school career and the future. Working with RASS is always a pleasure and it is very clear that their vision and services create environments that are loving, sharing, caring and inviting."

Testimony from an Aging Well Program client

"I have been known as a Person of no fixed address. With yourself and the help you are to me is priceless (he has a permanent home and a job now). I really appreciate the opportunity"

- Neil Brown

Testimony from a Youth and Family Program client

The counsellor I have at RASS- I truly would not have made it through this difficult time in my life without. RASS started out helping my young teen but the support didn't stop there. They continued with me as a mother. I have learned so much and continue to grow through this organization. I can't say enough good things about the people or the organization as a whole.. a win win for Richmond!

- Susan Bessette

Testimony from the COLT Young Parent Program

The grounding and check in that we do with Danny provides a space for my students to connect to themselves and explore what they need. During the check ins they learn that their parenting experiences are universal, creating a bond between peers and between Danny. Danny is also a positive father and male influence, which teaches them about male roles in relationships and in parenting. Our connections with RASS help build capacity to parent and cope with day-to-day life.

Testimony from a Youth and Family Program client

Where do I begin?

In the past 2 years the impacts of my involvement with RASS has been all encompassing and life-changing – life SAVING actually -body, mind and soul. I came for support with my son and very quickly the focus shifted to include my own needs as well (something that I knew would happen in the back of my mind and was petrified to admit). I dove into the deep end and spent many, many incredible hours with the lovely Sonia. I am writing now to tell you that after 45 years of daily drinking I have broken one link in the generational chain and have been alcohol free for 630 days .

There are ONLY positive impacts as this is the one domino that puts true living in motion. At first, I noticed the body changes:

Weight loss

Lowered blood pressure

Feeling back in my toes

no headaches

no more medications of any kind!

better poops (sorry but it's true)

Blissful Sleep ALL NIGHT LONG - with the incredible ability to dream again!

Healthy skin, hair and clear eyes

Then came the changes in my mind:

- *I am no longer anxious – ever!*
- *I am less clinically depressed*
- *I remember most things more often (forgetfulness now just due to age)*
- *I am much calmer*
- *I am focused and clear (enough to initiate and complete a long awaited divorce during the pandemic)*
- *I have so many new daily activities*

Meditating

Journaling

Walking

Grounding

Healthy eating

Being grateful

Visiting the river

I know that much of this has to do with removing daily alcohol – but I am certain that the weekly visits for accountability and the compassionate counselling is what helped me stay true to my course. I am ever so confident that 630 days will become 700 and just keep growing. I have the tools in my pocket now to not only handle but thrive and blossom with whatever comes.

On top of all of the above – the most important gifts are those of new and renewed relationships – a new friend in Sonia, a renewed loving relationship with my son, who is making changes in his life as well. Most profoundly is a renewed relationship with myself and the universe.

There are no words to express my gratefulness to the wonderful and life-saving service RASS has provided my family.

I read, dream, love and have hope again!

Contributors and Funders

Funders

Vancouver Coastal Health
The City of Richmond
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United Way of the Lower Mainland
Ministry of Finance—BC Community Gaming Grant
Richmond Sunrise Rotary Foundation
School District #38
Vancouver Coastal Health—SMART Fund
Community Action Initiative – Overdose Prevention and Education Network
Betty Averbach Foundation

Donors and Supporters

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Great Canadian Casinos
Walmart
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Vancity Community Fund
Chris Spencer Foundation
Loyal Protestants Foundation
Numerous Donors

Thank you.

PARTNERSHIPS/COLLABORATIONS

Supporting Families Affected by Mental Illness and Addictions

RASS has continued to be a strong supporter and core operating partner for the Supporting Families Affected by Parental Mental Illness and Addictions program. In the last year, RASS has been significantly pivotal in the continuous operation of the Supporting Families program by being involved in co-facilitating the Resilient Kids, Resilient Younger Youth, and Resilient Older Youth groups as well as helping out with Family Fun Nights and Community Education Events. This partnership with RASS has seen over 95 families served in the past few years with an addition of 12, and growing, new families and clients joining the program in the past year. The Supporting Families Affected by Parental Mental Illness and Addictions program strongly values its incredible partnership with RASS in its collaborative work to provide exceptional services and supports for the many vulnerable families living in Richmond.

City Of Richmond—AnD Podcast

RASS Prevention staff quickly pivoted in the changing current of COVID and the challenge to direct in-person youth engagement by taking to the internet. In cooperation with the City of Richmond, RASS co-hosts a new Podcast called the “AnD Podcast,” featured on the City of Richmond Youth Instagram account. On this approximate weekly podcast, hosts Danny Taylor and Alvin Li have explored topics ranging from coping strategies, summer self-care, return to school stressors, and sociocultural calls for change. Guests have joined for episodes on diet and nutrition, mental health and wellness, and City community centre programming. Averaging over a 100 listens/views a week, this has been a useful way to continue championing youth care and support in the context of the ongoing pandemic.

Richmond Youth Media Program

The Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP) is a free, referral-based program for youth ages 13-24, and was created to meet the needs of hard-to-reach youth in our community. Presented in collaboration with the Richmond Collaborative Committee for Children and Youth and the City of Richmond, and funded by Vancouver Coastal Health's SMART Fund, RYMP provided more than 2,500 hours of programming for 30 youth (including 10 new recruits) last year. Referrals were made by parents, teachers, youth workers, and other RYMP members. In this program, youth learn a variety of media arts through skill sessions, and also have opportunities to showcase their skills at events like the annual U-ROC Awards, Youth Art Mart, Culture Days, and the Richmond Remembers ceremony. Several RYMP members are active on Foundry's Youth Council, and Foundry's social media team.

Foundry—Foundry Richmond

VCH-Richmond will take on operational responsibilities as lead agency for Foundry Richmond. RASS will continue to be an integral partner in the clinical delivery of Foundry Richmond and will continue to provide their expertise to the project. RASS currently supports the two Youth Peer Support team at Foundry and provides the coordination of their social media presence.

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