

# JohnHoward

The John Howard Society of North Island



**Building  
Safer and Healthier  
Communities**

**2022-2023  
Annual Report**

# Annual Report 2022- 2023

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*On the cover: John Howard staff at June 2023 All Staff Training Day.*

## Our Mission

We provide programs and support to help children, youth, adults, and families lead safer, healthier lives.



*‘Sea to Sky’ photo by Chris Cullen*

## Our Mandate

The John Howard Society of North Island provides services to youth, children, adults, and families with diverse needs. Our locations include offices and residential programs, but our work also takes us into schools, homes, and other parts of communities.

We have a holistic approach, recognizing that safer, healthier communities are created through the combined and diverse efforts of citizens, organizations, and governments. We work cooperatively with a broad spectrum of community agencies and committees, while also maintaining involvement in provincial and national organizations that seek to address the social needs of Canadians.

## Who We Are

John Howard has served community justice and social services needs on northern Vancouver Island for 56 years. Beginning as a branch of The John Howard Society of Vancouver Island in 1967, the organization was incorporated as The John Howard Society of North Island in 1989. The society is named after the British prison reformer, John Howard (1726-1790). In 1962 The John Howard Society of Canada was established. There are branches and offices in more than 60 communities across Canada, provincial offices in all 10 provinces and the Northwest Territories, and a national office in Ottawa.

A non-profit society with extensive experience in providing services for youth, children, adults, and families, The John Howard Society of North Island operates numerous programs from 13 locations:

- Campbell River Community Programs/Foundry
- Comox Valley Community Programs/Foundry
- Beech Street, Campbell River
- The Junction, The Station, and Barnett House
- Parksville Youth Justice
- Nanaimo Youth Justice
- Port Alberni Youth Justice
- Port Hardy Youth Justice
- Duncan Youth Justice
- Robron Centre, Campbell River
- Gold River and Tahsis

John Howard programs are situated in the unceded territories of the Kwakwaka'wakw, Laich-kwil-tach, Nuuchahnulth, and Coast Salish peoples. We have a First Nations Elders' Council to advise the agency on matters relating to culture and inclusion. The Elders help to support culturally appropriate programming.

## Our Team



**113** employees



**8** family carehomes



**95** volunteers

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## Our Clients

In the past year, we served **4,112** individuals.

We also provided brief service to **3,467** additional individuals.

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## Those participating in our services are:



**40%**  
male



**55%**  
female



**5%**  
trans/non-binary

**18%**

**Indigenous**

*Our statistical representation in these categories is based on self-identification by persons served.*

## President's Report



*Jay Havelaar*

The past year has been full of challenges and successes. After Wendy Richardson's retirement from her long time position as executive director, we welcomed our own Natalie Meredith to the ED role. Natalie distinguished herself as the top candidate after an exhaustive, countrywide search.

While she expects to continue to grow into the executive director role, Natalie has already shown herself to have some exceptional leadership qualities, particularly in the area of continuous quality improvement. I expect that Natalie will continue to lead our agency for many years to come.

With the opening of Foundry

Comox Valley in June 2022, our slate of services and corresponding number of persons served increased significantly this year. Comox Valley youth and families have expressed gratitude about having a number of helpful services under one roof.

This spring our information technology systems were attacked by hackers demanding a ransom from The John Howard Society of North Island. Although this was a massively disruptive attack, I am pleased to report that minimal information was compromised. Our leadership and IT teams worked round the clock to get our basic systems up and running, and with the assistance of a cybersecurity firm and specialized legal counsel we are rebuilding our infrastructure according to current best practices.

Our ability to weather this attack is a testament to the strength of our leadership and management teams, and to our financial security. Years of prudent financial planning meant we were in a position to be able to afford the best in cybersecurity consultants, with no impact on our

programming. I am incredibly grateful to everyone in the organization for their efforts in managing the fallout from this heinous crime.

This year marks the retirement of our long time director of finance, Colleen Ross. Colleen's contributions to the organization are far too numerous to mention here, and it is characteristic of Colleen's humility that she would not want me to do so. Nevertheless, I take this opportunity to thank Colleen for years of hard work and dedication and wish her a very happy and successful retirement.

Kevin Meier steps into the role of director of finance, and I have full confidence that he will be able to continue Colleen's legacy of judicious financial management.

Finally, I would like to thank Sarah Runyon for her service on the board of directors. Sarah resigned from the board this spring to focus on her law practice.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Havelaar'.



## Executive Director's Report



*Natalie Meredith*

### New Challenges

It is hard to believe that a full year has passed since I stepped into the role of executive director. The significant growth we have experienced over the past few years, coupled with leadership changes, highlighted the importance of taking this next year to stabilize our operations. A plan to do just this emerged after our leadership retreat in January, and we have made significant strides toward meeting the timelines of this plan. This has not been without its challenges though, as we have also experienced a number of barriers this past year and some changes in personnel that we had not anticipated.

Technology has been a challenge this year. Early in the year we experienced some significant issues with our e-mail exchange server. This left us unable to effectively communicate for a couple of weeks while a fix was put in place. As a result of this interruption to our network, we took steps to move many of our services, such as our website and staff training site, to a cloud-based provider. Unfortunately, in mid-May our network was attacked. This led to a considerable disruption while we rebuilt our infrastructure. Moving forward, we will be exploring more effective ways to manage our network. While we have lost some current data, I am confident in our leadership and staff capacity to recover and rebuild.

Despite these significant challenges with our technological systems, our amazing staff team has continued to provide excellent service to our clients, engage in collaborative community partnerships, and be a model of resiliency during these challenging times.

Colleen Ross, our director of finance, has decided to move on to

a much-deserved retirement. She has been a pillar of strength over many years and we will all miss her dedication and knowledge. She is leaving us in good hands, having spent the past couple of years sharing her knowledge and experience with Kevin Meier, our senior accountant who will be moving into the director of finance role. Tricia Murphy, administrative assistant with our Full Time Attendance and 180° programs, also retired recently after 11 years with the agency. Best wishes to all!

Our strategic plan continues to provide direction for our actions as we respond to emerging needs and opportunities, stabilize operations, and strengthen services and staff.

### Responding to Emerging Needs and Opportunities

Over the past year we have seen a steady increase in access to our services. Both our Comox Valley and Campbell River Foundry centres have been responsive to community need. A variety of groups ran at both centres, offering supportive services to both youth and families. Foundry Works and Education employment

## Executive Director's Report

programs in both communities have been actively working with youth to help them gain experience and skills to enter the workforce. The excellent work being done in these programs has been recognized nationally.

Both of our Foundry centres have received funding to operate Peer Support programs. This will assist with the many groups we have operating in both the Campbell River and Comox Valley communities, as well as provide peer-led outreach to youth in need. We have also seen an increase in parents and caregivers accessing supportive services through our Foundry centres. Expansion of our peer support programming will accommodate this need, as well.

We were pleased to be approached by the City of Courtenay to support the implementation of a Situation Table in the Comox Valley. We drew on our experience with this initiative in Campbell River and moved forward in securing the funding. Situation Tables are collaborative community partnerships designed to deal with

situations of elevated risk, and are operating in many communities.

### Stabilizing Operations

We continue to be able to offer extra supports and services for our programs due to the generosity of our many donors. This spring we were thrilled when Stuart Aldred, owner operator of Comox Valley and Port Alberni McDonald's, and his team chose Foundry Comox Valley to be a recipient of their McHappy Day fundraiser.



Our leadership team has been taking an active role in quality improvement processes within the organization. This has included staff engagement activities to better align programs across our communities, while ensuring we are meeting program outcomes and contractual obligations. Feedback from staff has been

positive, with appreciation expressed over the opportunities to share information with one another.

### Strengthening Services and Staff

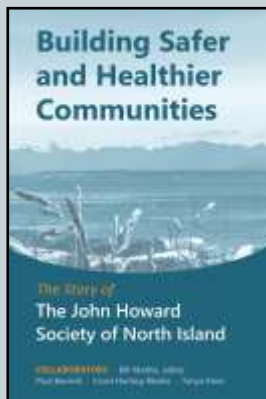
After a break for a couple of years we have formed a new Training Committee to support the professional development needs of our staff. We have long recognized the incredible skills and knowledge of our staff, and discussed how we could leverage this to cross-train and mentor one another. Our first All Staff Day in three years focused on staff-led learning. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive which further reinforces supporting staff-led training initiatives.

### Conclusion

Although it has been a challenging year, we admire and value the resiliency and flexibility of our staff who have continued to provide high quality, responsive services to our clients. We are grateful to our dedicated board members, staff, Elders, contractors, donors, and volunteers. Thank you!

## News from John Howard

### John Howard History Book



We're pleased to announce that we recently published a book about the history of our agency: *Building Safer and Healthier Communities: The Story of The John Howard Society of North Island*. The book recounts how we have grown from a one person, one office organization to the 100+ employee agency operating in 13 locations that we are today. This illustrated history with 134 images chronicles the agency's milestones, achieved through a focus on inclusion, community collaboration, and respectful Indigenous relationships. Copies are available for \$20 each at our Campbell River or Courtenay offices, or we can mail the book (please contact us for shipping charges). We accept payment by cash, cheque, credit card (contact us), or e-transfer: [kevin.meier@jhsni.bc.ca](mailto:kevin.meier@jhsni.bc.ca)

### Spirit of John Howard Award

The Spirit of John Howard Award recognizes individuals who make a major contribution to the people we serve, our communities, and our agency. Last year the Spirit of John Howard Award went to Bill Mathis, editor of our history book, for his tremendous efforts in preserving the agency's history. Bill, a retired John Howard



*Bill Mathis with the Spirit of John Howard Award*

program manager with a writing and editing background, worked with Paul Barnett, Carol Harling-Bleeks, and Tanya Storrs on the book, with help from Wendy Richardson. Bill volunteered upwards of 1,000 hours on the project, wrote much of the text and edited all of it through successive drafts, and organized and edited all of the photos and other illustrations. We now have a record of the first 55 years of our organization, and we are hugely grateful to Bill for all his efforts!

### VIREB Award

Our renovation of 575 10th Street, Courtenay (home of John Howard and Foundry Comox Valley since June 2022) won a Vancouver Island Real Estate Board (VIREB) Award of Excellence! The VIREB awards program says, "A unique but dated and worn building is now modern, clean, safe, and inviting—a benefit for the community." Congratulations to project lead Colleen Ross (John Howard's director of finance), designer Denise Mitchell, Lacasse Construction, and all the others who worked so hard on this significant capital project.



*Before renovation*



*After renovation*

# JohnHoward KidStart

**KidStart** matches volunteer adult mentors with children and youth ages 6-12 who could benefit from building a positive relationship with a buddy, getting out in the community, and having fun. Many of these relationships continue into the teen years, helping young people grow, thrive, and connect with the community they call home.

**A Snapshot:** In the past year, **84** mentees were matched with mentors who volunteered **5,292** hours.

## Areas Served

Campbell River  
Comox Valley  
Denman Island  
Quadra Island  
Cortes Island

## Portion of John Howard budget:

**1%**

## Frontline Staff

**2** part-time  
employees

**85** volunteers

**KidStart is funded  
entirely through  
grants, donations,  
and Gaming funds.**

## KidStart participants are:

**♂ 55%**  
males  
45

**♀ 43%**  
females  
36

**♀♂ 2%**  
trans/non-binary  
3

**73%**  
Indigenous  
46

## From the families and mentors who gave feedback this year:

*“KidStart helped my daughter grow in her confidence. She and her mentor talked a lot about school and how important it is.”*

– Mom

*“It’s a privilege seeing my mentee’s personality opening up, his self confidence improving.” – Mentor*

*“KidStart is life changing and part of ‘the village that raises a child’ for good outcomes in life.” – Mentor*



## Supports to Families

Our **Behavioural Support** and **Youth and Family Conflict Resolution** programs provide the support families and caregivers need when they are facing challenges.

**A Snapshot: 91** families participated in one or more of our support programs.

The Youth and Family Conflict Resolution program served **68** people (youth, adults, and families) over the past year.



### Families who participated are:

**11%**

**Indigenous**

**10** (self-identified)

### Areas Served

Campbell River  
Comox Valley

### Portion of John Howard budget:

**2%**

### Frontline Staff

**2** full-time employees

The Youth and Family Conflict Resolution program focuses on skill building and teaching techniques to help manage challenging behaviours, such as Emotion Focused Family Therapy.

### Feedback from a program participant:

*"Thank you with tears in my eyes. You have been the only person who has helped me through this and I can't thank you enough."*

The Behavioural Support program provided **160** hours of one-to-one support, **9** group sessions, and **81** community events and activities. The behavioural consultant to caregivers works closely with the Foster Parent Support Services Society (FPSSS) Comox Valley coordinator to support foster families with group and community activities.



# Youth Transition to Adulthood

Our **Youth to Adult Transition (YTAT), Collaborative Planning, Barnett House,** and **The Station** programs provide housing and/or life skills support for youth.




**A Snapshot:** In the past year, **148** youth received support from our transition to adulthood programs.

**Areas Served**  
Campbell River  
Comox Valley

**Portion of John Howard budget:**  
**5%**

**Frontline Staff**  
**4** full-time employees  
**2** part-time employees

**YTAT, Barnett House, and The Station participants are:**

 <b>41%</b> males 61	 <b>49%</b> females 72	 <b>10%</b> trans/non-binary 15	<b>42%</b> Indigenous 62
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**From the clients who gave feedback this year:**

100% of youth at The Station worked to complete identified goals.

*“I think Barnett House is a really good and helpful program. It has helped me a lot.”*

*“Barnett House changes people’s lives and I can honestly say it definitely has changed mine in the best way.”*

# Youth Transition to Adulthood

## Learning Skills for Independent Living

At Foundry Campbell River, the Youth to Adult Transition (YTAT) program helps young people learn essential skills for living on their own. In the past year this has included starting regular RentSmart groups for youth, to increase successful tenancies and prevent evictions. The six-module course covers the importance of home, applying for housing, rights/responsibilities/expectations, managing finances, communicating effectively, and taking care your home.

Learning how to cook is another important skill. A twice-monthly cooking group at Foundry focuses on budgeting, nutrition, relationship building, and a self-reflection activity. Foundry mental health counsellors, employment specialists, Elders-in-Residence, and nurses drop into the group to introduce themselves and talk about the services they provide.

YTAT also provides individual adaptive life skills counselling focusing on each youth's needs and goals. This can include financial management (banking,

budgeting, taxes), food security issues, housing, employment, educational/vocational planning, healthy relationships, mental health counselling, healthy activities, and any other goals the youth may want to work on.

## The Station

The Station offers supportive, transitional youth housing in Courtenay for young people. The program accepts referrals for youth ages 16-21. A total of nine young people participated in the Youth Transitional Housing program at The Station over the past year.



*The Station's dining room*

The goal of the program is to support youth to identify and develop skills and capacity for independence, self-reliance, and accountability. Success is defined by the youth and supported by The Station's

staff team. Staff help youth with immediate outcomes such as housing and employment, as well as long-term planning around schooling and career development.

## Barnett House

Barnett House provides five units of transitional housing for youth ages 16-19, with the support of an onsite independent living coordinator. Over the past year, 13 young people lived at Barnett House. Transition planning to safe living situations after residing at Barnett House is a primary goal of the program, but a lack of safe and affordable housing can make this challenging.

One resident said, "Barnett House is a very helpful program for those who need it or want to learn to live on their own. It teaches you everything you need for the real world and has supports for anything you may think of." Another resident said, "I didn't know where I would go until I found this program. It has truly been amazing and transformed me, and I'm so grateful for the people who have helped me along the way."

## Substance Use



Our **Substance Use Counselling, 180°, Youth Outreach, Gold River Youth & Family Counselling, Level UP @ The Station, Peer Support, and Substance Use Prevention & Early Intervention** programs provide support for youth and families.

**A Snapshot:** In the past year, **361** youth and family members received substance use services.

### Areas Served

Campbell River  
Comox Valley  
Gold River & Tahsis

**Portion of John  
Howard budget:**

**25%**

### Frontline Staff

**14** full-time  
employees

**5** part-time  
employees

**9** casual employees

### Substance use services clients are:

♂ **30%**  
males  
110

♀ **62%**  
females  
222

♀ **8%**  
trans/non-binary  
29

**24%**  
Indigenous  
85

### Youth feedback:

*"I love the time I spend with the outreach worker. She always helps me work through problems and get solutions."*

- Youth Outreach client

*"I learned that using substances underage can affect your future. It makes me think about the downsides."*

- Grade 8 student



## Substance Use

### 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth Groups

At Foundry Campbell River and Foundry Comox Valley, 2SLGBTQIA+ youth groups are provided weekly. Both younger (ages 12-15) and older (ages 16-24) groups are offered in each community. The groups are well attended with an average of 6 to 12 youth participating in each group. Island Health and Trans Care BC grants supported the groups this year.

In these social and recreational groups, youth enjoy fun activities, learn about 2SLGBTQIA+ issues from facilitators and guest speakers, and connect with others who share some parts of their identities. In communities with very few 2SLGBTQIA+ services for youth, these groups are a vital supportive and welcoming space.

One youth gave this feedback: "I made friends, felt like I could be myself, and got a break and went outside and had fun with other people my age." Another said, "I think it's a good way to get to know others. It's also an accepting environment and has great advice and teaches others about 2SLGBTQIA+."

### Prevention and Early Intervention

The Early Intervention and Prevention Program provides in-class sessions to educate students ages 12 and up about substance use in Campbell River and the Comox Valley. Topics focus on harm reduction, information about a variety of substances, the benefits of delaying first use, reasons people use drugs, and safe alternative coping strategies. One Grade 8 student gave this feedback: "Thanks, I think kids need to learn about this."

This year in Campbell River, the program supported counsellors at School District 72 to deliver PreVenture workshops to Grade 8 students. PreVenture aims to provide early intervention education to students at higher risk of engaging in substance use.

In the Comox Valley a female identified group in a high school focused on prevention and building on strengths – values, self-compassion, boundaries, healthy coping skills, and healthy relationships. Also in the Comox Valley, a Cooking to Cope group helped youth develop a sense of familiarity and confidence in the

kitchen while using mindfulness tools to engage in the cooking process.



*Making samosas in the Cooking to Cope group*

### Level UP @ The Station

Level UP @ The Station is a supportive recovery program that accepts referrals for youth ages 16-21. While in Level UP, youth reside in one of our five dedicated supportive recovery units. Level UP served 10 youth over the past year. Five were attending school.

Day programming occurs both onsite and in the community with the support of staff. Youth develop individualized day program schedules that reflect and support their personal recovery goals. In summer 2022, day programming included daily outings, life skills groups, SMART Recovery® groups, and several youth obtaining employment.

## Mental Health



**Child and Youth Mental Health Outreach, Foundry Mental Health Counselling, Foundry Psychiatry, and Foundry Works** programs help children, youth, and families.

**A Snapshot:** In the past year, **1,591** children, youth, and families received mental health services.

### Areas Served

Campbell River  
Comox Valley

**Portion of John  
Howard budget:**

**14%**

### Frontline Staff

**7** full-time  
employees

**1** part-time employee

### Mental health services participants are:

♂ **34%**  
males  
545

♀ **55%**  
females  
875

♂ **11%**  
trans/non-binary  
171

**16%**  
Indigenous  
247

### Feedback:

*“The counsellors are very friendly and do a really good job. I feel safe.” - Foundry client*

*“The counsellor made me feel heard and understood.” - Foundry client*

The Child and Youth Mental Health Outreach program works with the family as a whole.

## Primary Care

Our **Sexual Health Clinics** and **Family Practitioners (FPs)** provide primary care services at Foundry Comox Valley and Foundry Campbell River. Services include physical health, mental health, sexual health, gender affirming care, prescription renewals, and other primary care requests as needed.

**A Snapshot:** In the past year, **718** young people received primary care services.



### Areas Served

Campbell River

**Portion of John Howard budget:**

**2%**

### Frontline Staff

**1** full-time employee

**1** part-time employee

Ever since we opened Foundry Comox Valley in June 2022, primary care services there have been in demand. FPs are available during drop-in hours four days per week.

Staff at Foundry Comox Valley and Foundry Campbell River work closely with a number of primary care FPs and public health nurses each week. As well as physical health care, Foundry doctors offer specialized services such as gender affirming care and opioid agonist therapy, plus addiction care.

Public Health nurses provide sexual health clinics weekly at Foundry Campbell River and Foundry Comox Valley. Youth are supported on a drop-in basis.

FPs work with psychiatrists at Foundry to support initial mental health screening and assessment as well as ongoing treatment.







Youth Justice

Our **Full Time Attendance Programs (FTAP)**, **Intensive Support and Supervision Program (ISSP)**, **Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services (YFPS)**, and **Bail Bed** provide a wide range of services from residential programs to community-based one-to-one support.

**A Snapshot:** In the past year, **155** youth accessed our youth justice services.

Areas Served

Campbell River  
Comox Valley  
Duncan  
Nanaimo  
Parksville  
Port Alberni  
Port Hardy

Portion of John Howard budget:

**31%**

Frontline Staff

**17** full-time employees  
**7** part-time employees  
**1** casual employee

Youth justice participants are:



From the youth who gave feedback:

*“A highlight was mountain biking on the trails with my counsellor.”*

*“My carehome is like a second home. Fresh start, new people!”*

*“Come here if you want to work on life issues.”*

*“I’m thankful for being fed and cared for.”*



## Youth Justice

### Full Time Attendance Programs

Early in the year, we made a decision in day-to-day practice to move away from gender-based programming (Oasis and Headstart) and began integrating the programming for all youth where possible. At the same time, the Full Time Attendance Programs (FTAP) continued to offer highly individualized and responsive programming.

The youth attended daily weekday programming that was tailored to each individual. School, counselling, community and leisure skill development, vocational and employment skill development, problematic substance recovery group and individual clinical counselling, cultural activities and events, and strengthening life skills were all part of the daily and weekly routine. We have contracts with Strathcona Regional District to maintain trails and do recycling and cleaning jobs.

After program and during evenings and weekends, the activity and supervision workers spent time with the youth to further increase activity,

vocational, and community participation skills.



*Staff and a youth making chicken wings in Foods class at FTAP*

The transition counsellor continued to be a key component in supporting transition before and after program involvement. The counsellor participates in the initial orientation to program, visits with family, and planning for transition back to the youth's home community, with ongoing support after discharge.

Practice at FTAP continued to be trauma sensitive and culturally safe, and the program has been successful in supporting young people with complex trauma, mental health, and behavior and substance use issues.

### Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services

Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services (YFPS) staff continue to work very closely with community

partners in the criminal justice system, providing training and feedback on trauma-informed, neurodevelopmentally sound interventions for youth involved with criminal offences. Staff are frequently approached to assist other professionals in managing sexually transgressive behaviours in the community that may not reach criminal offence thresholds. As well, the team is available to other John Howard and community programs for therapeutic intervention options for youth with complex, compromised intellectual and developmental presentations. Adapted treatment programs for youth with intellectual or neurodevelopmental disabilities (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Intellectual Disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder) have been developed and incorporated into our work.

The team continues to be involved in the provincial initiative to create a new youth justice framework and to adapt forensic programming to be culturally nimble and responsive. Professional development and cultural learning is an important priority for this team.



Our **Homeless Outreach and Prevention** and **The Junction-Adult Supportive Housing** programs provide assistance in the areas of housing, daily living, and accessing supports.

**A Snapshot:** In the past year, **357** individuals participated in our adult programs.

**Areas Served**  
Campbell River  
Comox Valley

**Portion of John Howard budget:**  
**20%**

**Frontline Staff**  
**12** full-time employees  
**4** part-time employees  
**13** casual employees

**Participants in our adult programs are:**



**Program news:**

Each resident at The Junction has their own self-contained, fully furnished bachelor suite with bathroom and kitchenette. Supportive services are provided on site **24/7**.

In the past year, more than **50%** of The Junction’s **46** residents were **55+**.

In the Homeless Outreach and Prevention program **19%** of clients were age **60+**.

## Adult Programs

### The Junction

The Junction provides 46 units of supportive housing for adults facing homelessness in Courtenay. This flexible and adaptive program works from a strengths-based perspective and considers each individual resident's focus, goals, and barriers to maintaining housing. The Junction is funded by BC Housing on land provided by the City of Courtenay. John Howard operates the facility.

The focus of the program is to support long-term housing stability, which BC Housing defines as 18 months or longer.

This year, Island Health Outreach Services Team (IHOST) doctors, nurses, and occupational therapists played an important role in providing healthcare to residents of The Junction who are not normally connected to medical services. Meeting people where they are at helps save lives. Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) and Intensive Case Management (ICMT) teams also came to The Junction to provide services to the residents. ACT focuses on recovery for clients with serious mental illnesses who

have significant functional impairments. ICMT practices from a harm reduction philosophy to support people who are actively using substances.



*The Junction. Photo by Bill Mathis.*

The Junction provides two meals per day to the residents. At times, staff have stepped up to create meals from their favourite home recipes, which are greatly enjoyed by all. When eating a maple bar, one resident said, "I can taste the love in this!"

### Housing Assistance Program

The Housing Assistance Program in Campbell River connects with individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The program provides information and support to help people find, secure, or maintain housing.

This past spring, the program helped a 79-year-old man secure safe, affordable housing. This person struggles with mobility challenges and survives on a very low income. Due to his situation, he had been forced to move around frequently, living between his car and motel rooms. At the time that he asked for help, he was living in his car in a Campbell River parking lot. He had nowhere to go and didn't know what to do next. The housing assistance worker was able to get him into an overflow room at Evergreen Shelter, and with help from his worker, he was able to secure a permanent, low income unit funded by BC Housing.

The Housing Assistance Program staff worked collaboratively with Caremongering Campbell River, The Salvation Army, and Transitions Thrift Store (Campbell River & North Island Transition Society) to set him up with furniture, dishes, and all the other items he needed for his new space. His landlord reports that he's doing very well, and every time the man sees our housing assistance worker, he tears up and expresses his heartfelt thanks.



## Passing the Torch



*Natalie Meredith and Wendy Richardson*

On September 29, 2022, Wendy Richardson retired after 32 years with The John Howard Society of North Island, the last 15 as executive director. Natalie Meredith took over the helm on September 30, 2022. We are pleased to include profiles of both of them in this year's annual report.

### Wendy Richardson

As she prepared to retire, Wendy said she wouldn't miss the ferry commute from Quadra Island but would miss the staff team and people she worked with for many years, both within the agency and in other agencies and communities.

From the time Wendy started working for The John Howard Society of North Island in 1990 to the time she retired in 2022, the Society went through a period of huge growth. In the past 15 years, the annual budget increased

from \$4 million to over \$10 million. As well, the agency became the owner of four buildings in recent years, starting with Barnett House in 2008. "The agency now owns two facilities for youth housing and two for community programs under Foundry," she said.

As well as making the important decision to purchase rather than rent buildings, the Society also branched out into housing under Wendy's leadership. This includes youth housing at Barnett House and The Station, adult housing at The Junction, and the Housing Assistance Program for individuals and families in Campbell River.

Wendy said one of her highlights during her three decades at John

Howard was leading the agency through the first round of accreditation in 2003. "I was inspired by our first accreditation, and believed we could do even better. Applying for the executive director position seemed the natural next step. Over the last 15 years we've been very focused on organizational priorities like strategic planning and improving systems. I'm proud of the organization we've become. We're known for producing quality programming."

Wendy said another highlight was starting the Cultural Responsiveness Committee, which led to our First Nations Elders' Council. "I've really appreciated the Elders' support and advice."

Bringing all the staff together at All Staff Days also stood out for Wendy. "We're very people centred, both for clients and staff. I tried to build a cooperative culture. We don't sell stuff—the work is done by people."

In retirement, Wendy is an active member of Quadra Island's artisan community. She appreciates having more time for family and healthy living with reduced stress.



## Passing the Torch

### Natalie Meredith

Natalie Meredith had worked for The John Howard Society of North Island for 23 years when she became the executive director in 2022. “I applied for the position because I am passionate about the work we do, the organization, and our values and mission. I felt I could move into the executive director role with a strong understanding of our operational needs,” she said.

Natalie was born and raised in Barrie, Ontario. She completed a BA in Psychology at the University of Waterloo, did a backpacking tour of Europe, and then moved out to BC in 1991 and took time off to have three children. Natalie started with the agency in 1999 as a casual residential program worker at the Headstart and Discovery Centre programs. In *Building Safer and Healthier Communities: the Story of The John Howard Society of North Island*, she recalls the long commute to the Challenge Centre, the camp where the programs were held.

“Back then there was only the old Island Highway to drive from Courtenay, and it would often take

me over one and a half hours to get to the [Discovery Centre and Challenge Centre]. Through the town of Campbell River, up the big hill, over the dam and down to the dirt roads. Partway down the road leading to the camp there was a gate. I still remember arriving for overnight shifts and sometime being a bit frightened about having to get out of my car, retrieve the key, and open the gate. I am sure that was a significant reason why many of our [clients] stayed put.”

Natalie’s first full-time position with the agency was in Odyssey, a substance use treatment program at the Challenge Centre. Over the years she also worked in the Family Home Program (a partnership with PLEA), as a YCJA family support worker, school-based youth and family counsellor in Courtenay, family resource worker at the Full Time Attendance Program in Campbell River, and Collaborative Planning coordinator.

Natalie moved into an assistant manager position with the Intensive Support and Supervision Program (ISSP) in 2011, later adding Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services (YFPS) to her portfolio. In 2018 Natalie completed a Master’s

in Conflict Analysis and Management from Royal Roads University. Around this time she also took CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) training and became a CARF surveyor.

Natalie then took on managing the Housing Assistance Program in Campbell River and, in 2019, The Junction adult housing program in Courtenay. She became director of practice in 2021, supporting managers and staff to continually improve service delivery.

Natalie’s vision for the agency is to strengthen and continue building on the programs and services we provide. “We look for opportunities to break down barriers for people experiencing challenges in their lives, and work collaboratively within the organization and with our partners to support integrated services. This helps us better meet the complex needs faced by our communities.”

The agency’s most important asset is its people, Natalie said. “Our staff do incredible work. Staff are able to bring their ideas and passion to their jobs, and grow and develop within the organization.”

## Our Funders and Donors April 2022-March 2023

### Core Funding

- BC Housing
- Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Providence Health Care Society
- Vancouver Island Health Authority

### John Howard KidStart Grants

- Province of BC-Gaming

### John Howard KidStart Champions

#### Gold (\$100/month)

- Altrusa International of Campbell River
- Benjamin Coyle, Island Owl Mazda
- Blind Channel Resort
- Boston Pizza Campbell River
- Boston Pizza Courtenay
- Cathy Bruce & William Kitchen
- Colleen Ross
- Curtis Wright
- Discovery Community Church
- IZCO Technology Solutions
- Jay Havelaar & Leanne Wood
- Jill Cook
- Judith Hayes
- Judy Storr
- Mason Walker, RE/MAX Ocean Pacific Realty
- Moeller Matthews Chartered Professional Accountants
- Robert Nixon Real Estate
- Rotary Club of Campbell River
- Trail Bicycles
- Wendy Richardson

#### Silver (\$50/month)

- Alan Storr
- Brian Balfe, Balfe Martin Private Wealth RBC Dominion Securities
- Comox Valley Monarch Lions
- Florence Robertson
- Kathi Camilleri
- Crystal Ross
- Mark Ross
- Tanya Storr

#### Bronze (\$25/month)

- Christine Jones
- Colin Brownlee
- Dr. Kerry and Colleen Baerg
- Harmonie Roesch-West
- Marion Waters
- Paul Barnett & Shelly Hollingshead
- Sandy White
- Maureen Williams

### Youth Housing Grants

- The Home Depot Canada Foundation (2)

### Foundry Grants

- Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island
- Federation of Community Social Services of BC-Tech Fund
- Island Health-Community Wellness
- Trans Care BC (2)

### Other Grants

- UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services

### Other Donations Over \$1,000

- 100 Women Who Care Campbell River
- Andrew Sheret Ltd.
- Anonymous summer camp donor-PLEA
- B. MacLeod
- Benefaction-Better Futures Fund
- Blue Devils Swim Club
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Carihi Grad Class
- City of Campbell River
- City of Courtenay
- Comox Valley Dodge
- Denise Mitchell Interiors
- Desjardins-Rogers Hometown Hockey
- Gateway Casinos
- Giving Tuesday donors
- Katarina Smith
- Mastercard-Canada Helps Giving
- Microsoft
- Morson Carson Wealth Counsel
- Njord Marine Service Ltd.
- Rotary Club of Campbell River Daybreak
- Strathcona Sunrise Rotary
- The Promise Project-Isfeld Interact Club
- Timberline Grad Class
- Women for Women 5K & 10K Trail Mix Challenge
- Young Professionals of Campbell River

Heartfelt thanks to our many other individual, group, and business donors who are too many to list.

*Thank you for helping us build safer and healthier communities!*

## Financial Information

### Statement of Financial Position as at March 31, 2023

	2023	2022
<b>Assets</b>	\$	\$
Current Assets	4,145,812	3,831,673
Investments	1,585	4,521
Property and Equipment	6,369,383	6,142,222
	<u>10,516,781</u>	<u>9,978,416</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Current Liabilities	1,782,386	2,085,463
Long Term Debt	854,553	852,740
Deferred Capital Contributions	2,081,860	2,060,928
	<u>4,718,799</u>	<u>4,999,131</u>
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Equity In Property And Equipment	3,408,113	3,201,882
Internally Restricted	-	33,684
Unrestricted	2,389,869	1,743,719
	<u>5,797,982</u>	<u>4,979,285</u>
	<u>10,516,781</u>	<u>9,978,416</u>

### Statement of Operations for the year ended March 31, 2023

	2023	2022
<b>Funding</b>	\$	\$
Government contracts	9,294,088	8,849,274
Unearned revenue	(160,010)	-
Rental revenue	343,566	356,595
Donations and fundraising revenue	295,307	311,456
Deferred Capital Contribution	101,452	73,255
Gaming revenue	60,005	61,517
Interest Income	42,069	-
	<u>9,976,476</u>	<u>9,652,097</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Wages and benefits	7,063,898	6,710,814
Family caregiver fees and expenses	173,416	277,593
Programs	739,945	585,403
Administrative	106,892	96,742
Amortization	365,374	304,613
Facilities	837,343	411,744
Rental supplements	283,694	288,791
Interest on long term debt	25,093	25,800
	<u>9,595,655</u>	<u>8,701,500</u>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenditure</b>	<u>380,821</u>	<u>950,597</u>

*Audited financial statements available on request.*

# Make a Difference!



The John Howard Society of North Island welcomes donations to support our work in building safer and healthier communities. Your contribution will help to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children, youth, adults, and families.

Three of our initiatives that currently need support are John Howard KidStart, Foundry, and the Youth Enhancement Fund.

- **JOHN HOWARD KIDSTART** is a preventative volunteer mentoring program focusing on the positive development of children and youth ages 6-12. Many matches continue into the teen years.
- **FOUNDRY CAMPBELL RIVER AND FOUNDRY COMOX VALLEY** are multi-service centres for young people and families, offering primary care, mental health and substance use counselling, and social services.
- The **YOUTH ENHANCEMENT FUND** pays for special expenses for young people that are not covered by other funds, including urgent dental care and job readiness expenses.

Donations can be mailed, dropped off in person, made online at [www.jhsni.bc.ca](http://www.jhsni.bc.ca) or by e-transfer to [kevin.meier@jhsni.bc.ca](mailto:kevin.meier@jhsni.bc.ca)

## JohnHoward

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CARF accreditation!*

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