

JohnHoward

The John Howard Society of North Island



2024-2025
Annual Report

· Building Safer and
Healthier Communities ·

Annual Report 2024-2025

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*On the cover: John Howard KidStart photo by
Bluetree Photography.*

Our Mission

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



‘Sunrise’ 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 58 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 and philanthropist, 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 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 an Elders and Knowledge Keepers' Circle to advise the agency on matters relating to culture and inclusion.

Our Team



107 employees



10 family carehomes



61 volunteers

Our Clients

In the past year, we served **4,052** individuals.

We also provided brief service to **5,128** additional individuals.

Those participating in our services are:



36%
male



53%
female



11%
gender diverse

25%
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 one of renewal, focus, and optimism. Having made the difficult decision to end our involvement with The Junction housing project last year, we have pivoted to focus our organization's energy on its areas of particular strength: the provision of services to youth and families. I believe that this renewed focus has brought out the best in our management and staff in terms of energy, enthusiasm, and output.

Our new executive director, Tyler Fainstat, has integrated his skills and strengths into the organization seamlessly. Tyler took the first six months of his tenure to really get to know the organization prior to

making any major decisions, but his receptiveness to new ideas, openness to innovation, and relentless positivity made a major impact on the organization during those months. The fact that he was able to steer us through his first accreditation site survey very capably, almost immediately after his start, speaks to his skills as a leader.

More recently, Tyler has highlighted his commitment to renewing our vision for our organization's work with our Elders and Knowledge Keepers' Circle and our relationship with the Indigenous members of the communities we serve. To that end, Tyler organised a two-day Elders' gathering in April to help build that vision. All who were able to attend were inspired by the event, and there is a high level of enthusiasm within the organization to commit to putting the plans developed at the gathering into effect across all of our services. In keeping with this commitment, the board, led by our Elders' liaison Susan Landell, has brought Indigenous cultural practices to our meetings with excellent results.

Also at the board level, we have brought in two new directors in the past year, each with their own unique strengths and expertise. Bill Mathis needs no introduction to many in the organization, having worked as the residential programs manager for many years prior to his retirement. Recently, Bill edited and helped to write the book *Building Safer and Healthier Communities: The Story of The John Howard Society of North Island*. A long-time North Islander, Bill brings his passion for the area to his work as a board member.

Mike Martin joined the board after retiring from a 23-year career with the RCMP. Coming from a large family of traditional knowledge keepers, Mike grew up in the village of Opitsaht on Meares Island and is a proud member of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. Mike's traditional name is ʔakištq̓iʔis (tla-kisht-key-iss), which means "Guardian of the People". I am delighted with Bill's and Mike's contributions to our governance so far and look forward to working with them over the next year and beyond.

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

Executive Director's Report



Tyler Fainstat

As I complete my first full year as ED of The John Howard Society of North Island, I am truly grateful to my colleagues, the board, and the community who have welcomed my family and me into this organization and to our new home. I have been continually inspired by the passion and values-driven approach that my colleagues bring to their work with the youth of the North Island. Clearly, this organization has a deep-rooted, client-centred, and community driven culture which has been nurtured over many decades. Following several years of instability, stemming from the pandemic, leadership changes, and a cyber attack, this past year was focused on building connection

among staff and partners, and re-establishing and building on some past areas of strength for the organization. We also began to look towards the future, starting a critical reflection on how the agency will stay responsive to emerging client and community needs in the years ahead.

Stabilizing Operations

In October of 2024, the organization underwent its three-yearly CARF accreditation survey. Given the data loss from the cyber attack in 2023, preparing for the survey was a particularly challenging task, requiring an 'all hands on deck' approach. Many folks from across the agency came together to contribute to our preparation efforts. I want to give a special shout out to retired ED Wendy Richardson, who provided invaluable mentorship and support in the year leading up to the survey. All of these efforts were rewarded with an outstanding survey report, with the organization praised for the quality of our client driven services, and given a full three-year accreditation. In particular, the surveyors noted the high level of

competence and commitment of staff. Their report states that "there is a healthy culture of mutual respect and embrace of a philosophy to do what it takes to ensure success for the youth served. The youth express appreciation for feeling heard . . ." With the assistance of the retired director of finance/interim ED, Colleen Ross, the leadership team has been working hard on streamlining the agency's accreditation work moving forward.

In order to improve client and staff experience at Foundry Campbell River, the agency engaged in a significant renovation of the building, implementing co-working spaces which help to build collaboration among staff and bring the building design into alignment with the Foundry model. We were also able to renovate the Elder and peer working spaces, in consultation with our stakeholders. While the renovations did mean some prolonged disturbances for staff, services to clients were not impacted, and the feedback on the new space has been very positive. *ED Report continued next page . . .*

Executive Director's Report

Given the recent growth in size and scope of the agency, we decided it was time to implement a new, comprehensive HR Information System (HRIS). After careful consideration, the admin team selected ADP as the preferred software and started implementation in early 2025. In addition, the agency has been working on moving its IT systems over to Office 365. This will stabilize our email and file management systems, which have experienced significant challenges.

Strengthening Services and Staff

My priority this year was to spend as much time as possible engaging with staff, community members, and our board, to understand what is most important to them and where they believe the agency should be focusing its efforts. What I heard universally was the need to strengthen and deepen the agency's relationship with local Indigenous communities, and to understand how to better integrate cultural practices and teachings into our work with youth. This has been a key focus of our agency and mine over this past year and will remain at the forefront moving forward.

In April 2025, a two-day retreat was held which brought together staff, Board members, and members of the Elders and Knowledge Keepers' Circle to set out a vision for working in a good way with Indigenous groups, and for centring culture in our work with clients and in our practices.



Cedar Roses made by 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth Groups with Elder Gina Hunt

This will be continued at the agency's All Staff Day in October. I am deeply grateful to Susan Landell and JoAnn Restoule, and all the Elders and Knowledge Keepers' Circle members, for their guidance and mentorship during the first stages of this journey.

Responding to Emerging Needs and Opportunities

While 2024-25 was a year where the agency focused on building connection and steadying its operations, this did not stop us from exploring new opportunities. In particular, a Youth Housing

Working Group was established to start looking into a potential expanded role for our agency in youth housing within our catchment areas. We engaged an external consultant to undertake youth housing assessments for Campbell River and the Comox Valley. These will provide a valuable starting point for supporting the development of some desperately needed youth housing solutions for this region.

Conclusion

In the coming year, the organization will begin work on developing a new, long-term strategic plan, which will bring the organization and community together around some key goals and objectives. During these tumultuous times, the needs and challenges faced by our clients are stark. I feel incredibly fortunate to work with an organization that is deeply committed to working in solidarity with its clients and community, implementing programs and services that promote social justice and safer and healthier communities.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'M. Fin'.

News from John Howard

Recognizing Years of Service



The John Howard Society of North Island is fortunate to have a very dedicated staff team, many of whom have

been with the agency for several years. We would like to congratulate the following staff on reaching these service milestones:

5 years: Shar Berry, Rachael Greenwood, Stephen Hoelzley

10 years: Sadie Ostler

15 years: Kristy Almond

20 years: Alisha McLain, Angie Prescott

Huge thanks to all of you for your commitment and hard work!

Elders' Retreat

The John Howard Society of North Island is very fortunate to have an Elders and Knowledge Keepers' Circle to advise and support the agency on working in a relational way to the land, culture, and the local Nations. Elders meet monthly with staff, clients, board

members, and other stakeholders to answer questions, provide guidance, and share teachings, reflections, generosity, and wisdom. Elders in Residence spend time with youth and staff in groups and programs.

On April 10-11, 2025, members of the Elders and Knowledge Keepers' Circle, John Howard staff, Sasamans Society staff, board members, managers, and facilitator Wedlidi Speck gathered for an Elders' Retreat on the territories of the K'ate'mot Peoples.



*Elders' Retreat participants,
April 2025*

The purpose of the retreat was to strengthen the organization's relationship with the Elders and Knowledge Keepers' Circle and cultivate capacity for culturally affirming and safer care for the Indigenous youth and families we serve. An agency-wide survey

completed before the retreat provided feedback for discussions.

We are very grateful to begin a renewed dialogue and committed journey towards relational and culturally affirming practice. This process will be ongoing and evolving as we learn from the Elders and the Indigenous youth, families, and staff who we serve and work with.

Campbell River Renovation

The Campbell River admin office/program space went through a major renovation in 2024-2025. Due to demand for our services, a reconfiguration was needed to create more counselling and meeting spaces. This included a new Elders' space (below), shared staff areas, and a sensory room.



The Elders now have a space called Cedar Room with access to an outdoor deck for ceremonies like smudging.



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, **55** mentees were matched with mentors who volunteered **3,465** hours.

Areas Served

Campbell River
Comox Valley
Denman Island
Quadra Island

Portion of John Howard budget:

2%

Frontline Staff

2 part-time employees

53 volunteers

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

KidStart participants are:

♂ 64%
males
35

♀ 34%
females
19

♀ 2%
gender diverse
1

51%
Indigenous
28

From the families and mentors who gave feedback this year:

100% said KidStart had a positive impact on their child/mentee’s life.

92% said KidStart increased their child/mentee’s self-confidence.

“KidStart has allowed my mentee to become more confident in navigating everyday life—the difference is noticeable.” – Mentor

“As a parent I am grateful for the KidStart program. Very pleased and happy!” – Dad

Supports to Families

Our **Behavioural Consultant to Caregivers** 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 **58** people (youth, adults, and families) over the past year.



Families who participated are:

12%

Indigenous

11 (self-identified)

Areas Served

Campbell River
Comox Valley

Portion of John Howard budget:

1%

Frontline Staff

1 full-time employee

1 part-time employee

The Behavioural Consultant to Caregivers program focuses on education and support for MCFD caregivers. The program offers a range of trainings, and supports caregivers to incorporate Indigenous cultural practices into their caregiving through the relational approach taught during Gathering Our Medicine training.

Feedback from a Behavioural Consultant to Caregivers participant:
“I usually come into our meetings thinking we don’t have very much to talk about, and then I leave feeling so much more capable of doing this work because there is always something to learn and new ways of looking at things.”

The Youth and Family Conflict Resolution program counsellor provides support to parents/caregivers and their children to help address conflict within their family. This program’s clients spanned a wide range of ages this year, with the youngest being 12 and the oldest 62. The counsellor also met with youth weekly at Phoenix Middle School.

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, **81** youth received support from our transition to adulthood programs.

Areas Served

Campbell River
Comox Valley

**Portion of John
Howard budget:**

8%


Frontline Staff


3 full-time
employees

3 part-time
employees

1 casual employee

YTAT, Collaborative Planning, Barnett House, and The Station participants are:

 **41%**
males
33

 **49%**
females
40

 **10%**
gender diverse
8

44%
Indigenous
36

From the clients who gave feedback this year:

“The RentSmart course helped me out a lot . . . I was able to find a place on my own and I'm so happy, it's so nice.” – YTAT client

*“I feel like I'm getting my life back on track. I don't know where I'd be right now without The Station.”
– The Station resident*

Peer Support



Our **Peer Support** programs provide emotional, experiential, social, and practical support on a peer level for youth ages 12-24 at Foundry Campbell River, Foundry Comox Valley, and Gold River. Peer Support workers are trained to support youth in their wellness journey. Peer Support offers one-to-one sessions, drop-in, and groups.

A Snapshot: In the past year, **60** youth came to one-to-one Peer Support sessions and an additional **964** attended drop-in and groups.

Areas Served

Campbell River
Comox Valley

**Portion of John
Howard budget:**

5%

Frontline Staff

4 full-time
employees

5 part-time
employees

Peer Support groups offered in Campbell River over the past year included Safe Space Saturday, Art Group, Dylan's Game Show Group, and Creativity with Kennedy. Peer Support co-facilitated Tuesday Table Talk and Phoenix Lunch Connection. In the Comox Valley, Peer Support workers facilitated or assisted with Queer Space, Life in the Fast Brain, Open Mic Night, Jewellery in the Park, special events, and the Mobile Primary Care clinic at Glacier View School. In Gold River, Peer Support offered Youth Art Studio.

Youth feedback:

"I really liked Peer Support. I feel like it provided me with a good outlet and the feeling of talking to a friend without any worries of judgement."

Peer Support staff participate in community events and make presentations to introduce youth to Foundry and other services when requested. This year, Peer Support added a part-time staff position in Gold River.



Substance Use

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

A Snapshot: In the past year, **356** youth and family members received substance use services.

Areas Served
Campbell River
Comox Valley
Gold River & Tahsis

Portion of John Howard budget:
23%

Frontline Staff
16 full-time employees
6 part-time employees
8 casual employees

Substance use services clients are:



Youth feedback:

“I don’t how I would have made it through these years without you.”
– Gold River client

“When I speak to you guys, I know that you are listening.”
– 180° client

“A highlight for me is wanting to be sober and be safe.”
– 180° client

Substance Use

Prevention & Early Intervention

The Prevention and Early Intervention (P&EI) Program provides in-class sessions in Comox Valley and Campbell River middle and high schools to educate students about substance use. Topics include harm reduction, information about a variety of substances, the benefits of delaying first use, reasons people use drugs, and safe alternative coping strategies. This program reached more than 3,400 students in the past year across both school districts.

In addition, program staff provide consultation to families, caregivers, educators, and community partners through workshops and meetings. Our Comox Valley P&EI coordinator presented at the International Adolescent Youth Mental Health Conference to approximately 200 service providers. In Campbell River, our P&EI coordinator was a panel member for the Community Conversations series about the toxic drug crisis held at the library. Topics included “How to Talk to Your Kids About Substance Use”, “Foundry’s Substance Use Resources”, and “Talking to Youth

about Substance Use.”

Feedback included: “I appreciated the clarity of the presentation and the enthusiasm with which it was presented” and “The session was both interesting and informative.”

Mindful Regulation Group



The Mindful Regulation Group was offered to youth in Campbell River in May-June 2024. This was a group for eight young people who wanted to learn skills to help them regulate strong emotions, improve their interpersonal relationships, and live a rich and fulfilling life. The goal was to help youth move away from problematic substance use and self-harm towards skill building to help them deal with the challenges they face. This group was facilitated by a substance use

counsellor with support from a peer support worker. Weekly topics included Mindfulness, Emotion Regulation, Distress Tolerance, Positive Relations, and Walking the Middle Path.

One participant said, “I really enjoyed the group. I liked how it was a smaller group that was mostly the same people every time since I like familiarity. It allowed for me to share and speak more frequently and feel heard and valued. I liked taking turns to share connections and how I felt after each activity or section of the workbook. The group really taught me some skills and how to manage myself and my thoughts. It's made a massive difference.”

Level UP @ The Station

Level UP @ The Station is a residential supportive recovery program in the Comox Valley for youth ages 16-21. Over the past year, 10 youth participated with the average length of stay being 108 days. One youth said, “I feel a lot more confident with my sobriety.” Another said, “The activity workers did great in keeping me engaged but also respecting my boundaries.”



Mental Health

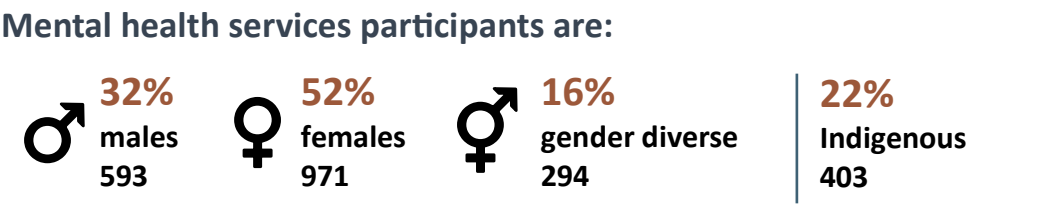
Our **Child and Youth Mental Health Outreach**, **Foundry Mental Health Counselling**, **Foundry Psychiatry**, and **Foundry Work & Education** programs help children, youth, and families.

A Snapshot: In the past year, **1,858** children, youth, and families received mental health services.

Areas Served
Campbell River
Comox Valley

Portion of John Howard budget:
19%

Frontline Staff
8 full-time employees



Feedback from Foundry clients:

“The counsellors are very friendly and do a very good job. I feel safe.”

“I did Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) today. I like that it is helping me learn to manage my emotions.”

Families in the Child and Youth Mental Health Outreach program said they appreciated the connections to other programs and resources.

Primary Care

Our **Sexual Health Clinics, Family Practitioners (FPs), and Nurse Practitioner** provide primary care services on a contract basis 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, **1,156** young people made **5,800** visits to our Foundry centres for primary care services.



Areas Served

Campbell River
Comox Valley

Portion of John Howard budget:

4%

Frontline Staff

1 full-time employee

1 part-time employee

+

several contractors (Family Practitioners, Nurse Practitioner, and Sexual Health Nurses)

“The staff was amazingly helpful, listened to all of my needs, and was very patient with my many questions.”
- Foundry Comox Valley client

Our primary care services experienced a huge increase in demand this year, up from **889** young people making **2,821** visits in 2023-2024.

Of all the youth visiting Foundry Comox Valley in the past year, **37%** came to access primary care services.

FPs and the nurse practitioner work with psychiatrists at our Foundry centres to support initial mental health screening and assessment as well as ongoing treatment.

Public Health nurses provide sexual health clinics weekly at Foundry Campbell River and Foundry Comox Valley. Youth made **1,678** visits to these clinics over the past year.

Youth Justice



Our **Full Time Attendance Program (Compass)**, **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, **178** youth accessed our youth justice services.

Areas Served

Campbell River
Comox Valley
Duncan
Nanaimo
Parksville
Port Alberni
Port Hardy

Portion of John Howard budget:

29%

Frontline Staff

15 full-time employees
7 part-time employees
1 casual employee

Youth justice participants are:

♂ **81%**
males
144

♀ **17%**
females
31

♀ **2%**
gender diverse
3

42%
Indigenous
75

From the youth who gave feedback:

*“I appreciate you so much.
You do so much for me. I
can’t thank you enough.”*
– ISSP client

“Chill staff, good vibes.”
– Compass client

*“This place made me the best
version of myself. I’m forever
grateful for this program and all
the workers.”*
– Compass client

Youth Justice

Full Time Attendance Program

A total of 19 youth attended Compass (FTAP) in 2024-2025. One youth said, “I’m feeling really supported here.”

Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services (YFPS)

Over the past year, YFPS has experienced a continued increase in caseloads, with 52 youth receiving service. Vancouver Island youth probation officers currently hold amongst the highest caseloads in the province. YFPS continues to provide a variety of psychological, psychiatric, and legal assessments to meet each client’s needs. YFPS staff have engaged in specialized training regarding sexual offence treatment for adolescences, and continue to provide in-service training to agency and community partners. A long-term team member provided an in-house training on narrative therapy for the agency’s counselling staff.

The YFPS team had representation at provincial initiatives, including PARCA (Provincial Association of Residential & Community

Agencies) meetings. The team also participated in the agency’s Elders’ Retreat and is involved in the ongoing redesign of services to Indigenous communities. YFPS staff are doing more work with the families of youth we serve, a trend that is likely to continue.

Intensive Support and Supervision Program

John Howard’s Intensive Support and Supervision Program (ISSP) continues to provide responsive service, this year to 107 youth across diverse regions from Duncan to Port Hardy. Often working independently in remote communities, youth justice workers rely on ingenuity and strong problem solving skills to ensure that young people receive meaningful support.

By combining creativity with strong relationship-building, ISSP staff create unique opportunities for their clients. This year, for example, the Nanaimo team secured preferential pricing at the Romper Room Indoor Rock Climbing Centre and Beban Park Golf Course & Driving Range, increasing access to healthy recreational activities that are



ISSP staff go-karting during a team building day

otherwise out of reach for many youth. These efforts help young people achieve both the goals of their court orders and their personal growth.

Through well-developed professional networks, staff also support youth in diverse settings such as attending Individual Education Plan meetings at Cowichan Valley Open Learning Co-op, guiding young people through court processes when family support is absent, and engaging alongside them in Indigenous food harvesting and community ceremonies. ISSP workers regularly de-escalate crisis situations, walking with youth through moments of distress and advocating for their wellbeing with patience and care.

Adult Programs



Our **Housing Assistance** 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, **217** individuals participated in our adult programs. An additional **544** received some form of brief service.

Areas Served

Campbell River
Comox Valley

Portion of John Howard budget:

9%

Frontline Staff

12 full-time
employees

4 part-time
employees

9 casual employees

Participants in our adult programs are:

♂ **42%**
males
92

♀ **57%**
females
124

♀ **1%**
gender diverse
1

29%
Indigenous
62

Program news:

We completed a five-year contract operating The Junction in the spring of 2024. A new service provider, Lookout Housing and Health Society, took over on August 1, 2024.

A BBQ was held at The Junction in July 2024 to welcome the new operator.

In the past year, **22%** of the Housing Assistance Program's clients were age **60+**.

Tribute to David Somerville

Thank You, David

In lieu of a keynote speaker, we have decided to turn the focus of the 2025 AGM to honouring and recognizing David Somerville, one of the longest serving members of The John Howard Society of North Island's Elders and Knowledge Keepers' Circle and a former staff member. David has had a significant impact on the values of the Society, its staff, and clients. This AGM will be a wonderful opportunity for us to gather, to learn about the teachings that David carries, and to express our appreciation for the legacy that he has built at John Howard.

David Somerville, or "Spirit Eagle" as he is known by, lives in the Comox Valley and considers himself the caretaker of the land upon which he lives. The land sits upon the traditional territory of the leeksun Clan, into which David is an adopted family member. He calls his home "Bear Spirit Place".

David was born into the Six Nations Confederacy to the Kanienkeha-Mohawk "People of the Flint". He was raised in a traditional manner by his grandmother until he was the age

of 8. In 1946, at age 10, David came to the Pacific Northwest to live with his birth father, Paul Somerville of the Kanienkeha, and his wife, Daphne Odjig of the Odawa, Pottawatomi, now known as one of Canada's most famous Indigenous artists.



David Somerville

David has had a long career in various roles, including band manager, government adviser, counsellor, and healer. He worked at John Howard as an Indigenous family support worker and in other positions. David is regarded and respected as an Elder and healer. He works with people from all walks of life. David believes that in order for true healing to take place, we must all join together and walk side by side along the sacred path.

The Garden You Left Us *by Wedlidi Speck*

You carried the voice of your grandmother
like a drumbeat in your chest.
It was steady,
and it called us to listen.

You wore leadership the way
cedar wears rain—
absorbing, releasing,
never clinging,
always nourishing the ground
around you.

You healed with words,
with presence,
with the simple courage of walking
in truth.

Adults, youth, families—
you gathered us in the same circle,
and showed us we belonged.

Once, you took a gravel pit,
a scar in the earth,
and turned it into a garden.
That is how I remember you—
transforming what was broken
into a place of medicine.

Brother, mentor, friend—
thank you.

May your spirit continue to move
like the wind
through the songs of our people.
May your teachings bloom
wherever there is emptiness.
May the garden you tended
forever feed us.

Thank you for your service,
for doing the Creator's work,
for caring.

Passing the Torch



Colleen Ross

The John Howard Society of North Island has been through some significant leadership changes over the past two years. Following executive director Natalie Meredith's departure in the fall of 2023, our recently retired director of finance, Colleen Ross, agreed to step in as interim executive director. After a thorough recruitment process, Tyler Fainstat was appointed as our new executive director on August 1, 2024. We are pleased to include profiles of both Colleen and Tyler in this year's annual report.

Colleen Ross

Colleen Ross had worked for The John Howard Society of North Island for 21 years when she retired for the first time in September 2023. Colleen had a

very short first retirement, before returning to fill the position of interim executive director later that fall. Colleen's calm guidance and steady hand over the next 10 months led us through the rebuilding after the 2023 cyber breach, changes to our programming, and the successful search for a new ED.

Looking back on her 22 years at John Howard, Colleen said one of the highlights was the lead up and opening of Foundry Campbell River in 2017. In *Building Safer and Healthier Communities: The Story of The John Howard Society of North Island*, Colleen recalls that opening the first Foundry youth centre in BC was a huge accomplishment for our agency.

"We worked through a major renovation and never closed the doors for client services, even for one day. There was a huge amount of collaboration that went into the project, and we did all that again to open Foundry Comox Valley."

Colleen, who had a second (unofficial) title of 'director of renovations' at John Howard, had a major role in purchasing and renovating buildings. The agency

now owns four buildings, including two Foundry centres and supportive youth housing in both Campbell River and Courtenay. "Purchasing buildings can generate savings as we typically pay less in monthly mortgage payments than rent. We can make cost savings by pooling resources," Colleen said.

Other highlights included working with the Social Media Committee to lead the agency through a re-branding process that developed a new logo based on the JHSBC logo, colours, key words, and a new website. Colleen fondly remembers the "Ticky Box Video" that was created for an All Staff Day and accurately depicted a day in a director of finance's life. She said she couldn't have managed the projects she did without the support she received from staff.

"My job was very deadline driven. I am only as good as the people around me."

While she continues to support us in our accreditation work, Colleen is now enjoying her well deserved second retirement with her husband, Ken, and dog, Chevy, on Upper Campbell Lake.

Passing the Torch



Tyler Fainstat

Shortly after starting in the position of executive director, Tyler was the keynote speaker at our AGM in September 2024. Jay Havelaar, board president, asked him to introduce himself and talk a little bit about his background and what brought him to The John Howard Society of North Island.

Tyler explained that he grew up in North Kingston, which, at least at the time, had one of the highest concentrations of social housing in the country. He experienced and witnessed, every day, the economic disparities and barriers that people encountered, and the marginalization and social exclusion that his community faced in what was otherwise an affluent city. "From the youngest ages I knew that I would spend my life, in some form, fighting for social

justice, and working in solidarity with folks who are struggling."

After travelling extensively and studying development economics in university, Tyler worked for the international medical humanitarian organization, Medecins Sans Frontiers (Doctors Without Borders), for nine years as a project coordinator, country director, and executive director. This took him to the Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Colombia, and Brazil. In Brazil, Tyler met his partner, Paula. After having two kids, they decided to move their family to Canada.

Following their move, Tyler became executive director of The John Howard Society of Kingston. "For me, getting to work with John Howard in the community where I grew up, and where my family lives, was an incredible gift. I was able to help craft new programs for folks living in that area."

After three years in Kingston, Tyler took the position of executive director of The John Howard Society of Ottawa, while Paula, who is a Brazil-trained physician, redid her medical residency with McGill in Gatineau. Tyler greatly

enjoyed his eight years working for John Howard Ottawa, but the climate was not compatible with Paula's southern roots.

"In fact, after living abroad for so many years, I think I had lost a lot of my winter resilience, and we started to look at options for moving our family to a more moderate climate. We made a couple of trips out to Vancouver Island and had decided that we would like to eventually relocate here," Tyler said. As it happened, our job posting for an executive director caught his eye one day, and Tyler came for an interview in March 2024. After spending some time with our board, Tyler felt a deep sense of values and mission alignment. "I knew that this place and this organization was where my family and I needed to be."

Looking back, Tyler said, "My first year at John Howard North Island has surpassed even my highest expectations. The strength of the supportive and collaborative working culture and the values driven approach to client work is truly remarkable. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the entire team for welcoming me into this incredible organization."

Our Funders and Donors April 2023–March 2024

Core Funding

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

John Howard KidStart Champions

Gold (\$100/month)

- Altrusa International of Campbell River
- Benjamin Coyle, Island Owl Mazda
- Blind Channel Resort
- Boston Pizza Campbell River
- Cathy Bruce & William Kitchen
- Christopher Bennett
- Fraternal Order of Eagles #3097 Ladies Auxiliary
- IZCO Technology Solutions
- Jay Havelaar & Leanne Wood
- Judith Hayes
- Judy Storr
- Mason Walker, RE/MAX Ocean Pacific Realty
- Robert Nixon
- Rotary Club of Campbell River
- Tyler Fainstat

Silver (\$50/month)

- Alan Storr
- Anonymous
- Aurora Insulation Services
- Comox Valley Monarch Lions
- Crystal Ross

- Florence Robertson
- Kathi Camilleri
- Tanya Storr
- Willow Point Lions Club

Bronze (\$25/month)

- Anonymous (2)
- Christine Jones
- Dr. Kerry and Colleen Baerg
- Paul Barnett & Shelly Hollingshead
- Mark Ross
- Sandy White
- Trail Bicycles

John Howard KidStart Grants

- Province of BC-Gaming
- Province of BC-Community Prosperity Fund
- Rotary Club of Comox

Youth Housing Grants

- The Home Depot Canada Foundation (2)

Foundry Grants

- Sun Life 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth Wellness (2)

Other Grants

- United Way BC-Period Promise

Other Donations Over \$200

- Adobe
- Anonymous KidStart donors
- Anonymous Foundry donors
- Anonymous summer camp donor-PLEA
- Ardith MacNeil
- A.W. McGarvey Law Offices

- B. MacLeod
- Cagna family
- Catherine Smith
- City of Campbell River
- City of Courtenay
- Colleen Ross
- Comox Valley McDonald's
- Cumberland Community School
- Dr. Janice McLaughlin
- Dr. Russell Williams
- Forbidden Dance Company
- Gateway Casinos-Chances Campbell River
- Giving Tuesday donors
- Holly Tripp
- Isfeld Interact Club
- Jill Cook
- John Woods
- Justus & Sandy Havelaar
- Kim DeLisle
- Lacasse Construction
- Linda Williams
- Margurite Manson
- Mark Tazumi
- Michelle Portelli
- Morson Carson Wealth Counsel
- Orsi Foldesi
- Parker's Appliances & More
- Rotary Club of Campbell River Daybreak
- Sexual Wellness & Education Society of Campbell River
- Sprout Meadows
- Sue-Ellen McDonald
- Vanier Interact Club

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 – March 31, 2025

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Assets	\$	\$
Current Assets	4,890,455	4,884,991
Investments	2,925	1,585
Property and Equipment	6,218,862	6,038,992
	<u>11,112,242</u>	<u>10,925,568</u>
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities	2,105,911	1,531,148
Long Term Debt	775,718	802,822
Deferred Capital Contributions	2,117,524	1,974,692
	<u>4,999,153</u>	<u>4,308,662</u>
Net Assets		
Equity In Property And Equipment	3,298,576	3,235,141
Internally Restricted	33,353	35,452
Unrestricted	2,781,160	3,346,313
	<u>6,113,089</u>	<u>6,616,906</u>
	<u>11,112,242</u>	<u>10,925,568</u>

Statement of Operations year ended March 31, 2025

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Funding	\$	\$
Government contracts	11,354,507	12,003,749
Unearned revenue	(610,268)	(249,277)
Rental revenue	359,974	416,655
Donations and fundraising revenue	123,865	160,183
Deferred Capital Contribution	107,168	107,168
Gaming revenue	126,574	60,006
Interest Income	117,301	74,411
Miscellaneous	8,498	22,888
	<u>11,587,619</u>	<u>12,595,783</u>
Expenditure		
Wages and benefits	8,735,929	8,653,781
Family caregiver fees and expenses	421,229	413,003
Program	1,419,166	1,015,158
Administrative	187,253	187,226
Cyberattack	-	276,665
Amortization	345,534	373,175
Facilities	638,417	591,850
Rental supplements	320,358	272,842
Interest on long term debt	23,550	24,563
	<u>12,091,436</u>	<u>11,808,263</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses	<u>(503,817)</u>	<u>787,520</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 or by e-transfer to kevin.meier@jhsni.bc.ca

JohnHoward

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*Ask about our
CARF accreditation!*

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