

NO: R057

COUNCIL DATE: **April 28, 2014**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **April 22, 2014**

FROM: **Crime Reduction Strategy Manager**

FILE: **7450-30**

SUBJECT: **Substance Use Awareness Week - May 25 - May 31, 2014**

RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager's Department recommends that Council receive this report as information.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide information about Substance Use Awareness Week (SUAW), being held May 25 to May 31, 2014, as well as to outline the activities and events that are taking place in Surrey to help raise awareness on substance use.

BACKGROUND

Crime reduction is, in part, about implementing effective crime prevention measures that focus on the root causes of crime. Generally such approaches should be comprehensively applied across neighbourhoods and involve a broad range of partners and stakeholders.

The Surrey Crime Reduction Strategy includes a recommendation under the Prevent and Deter Crime strand that focuses on building awareness and educating the public about substance use and abuse. In this context the Crime Reduction Strategy also recommends that Surrey support an annual drug and alcohol awareness week.

DISCUSSION

The City of Surrey, in partnership with Alcohol and Drug Education Services, the B.C. Responsible and Problem Gambling Program, DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society, the Fraser Health Authority, KEYS: Housing and Health Solutions, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, OPTIONS Community Services Society, Pacific Community Resources Society, Servants Anonymous Society, Sources Community Resources Society, Surrey RCMP and the Surrey School District, have once again partnered on the organization of the week. The purpose of the week is to create awareness and increase public knowledge about substance use, gambling and process addictions.

Substance Use Awareness Week utilizes the best practice of promoting awareness about substance use through positive engagement. Using the word “Use” in the title instead of “Abuse” is designed to reach a broader audience and increase outreach to those who don’t identify themselves as having a problem or as being addicted. Information that is distributed during the Awareness Week is focused on education specific to recognizing possible signs in family and friends who may require supports to address a substance use problem.

Substance Use Awareness Week Activities and Events:

- Pre-promotion of the awareness week commenced the second week of April to assist groups and organizations in the planning and organizing of their own Substance Use Awareness events.
- Monday, April 28, a delegation appeared before Surrey Council at the Council in Committee (CIC) meeting to further promote the awareness week and to extend an invitation for broader participation in the “Habit Change Challenge” The goal of the challenge is to have individuals reflect upon how their chosen habit either positively or negatively affects the various aspects of their life. A poster and flyer will be distributed to promote the challenge (Appendix I) and more information can be found at www.surrey.ca/habitchange. Plans are also for the Mayor to proclaim the week of May 25th, 2014 as Substance Use Awareness Week during the Regular Council Meeting;
- A Substance Use Awareness Week event tool kit with fact sheets (Appendix II) has been created for distribution to the public and partners to address common Substance Use topics. The “Host your Own Event Tool Kit” encourages agencies, businesses, families and groups in the community to design their own Substance Use Awareness Week events;
- Materials will also be broadly promoted through Surrey’s Recreation Centres and Libraries starting in early May to help create momentum for the week.
- From Sunday, May 25 to Saturday May 31, 2014 the fact sheets will be posted daily on the City of Surrey’s Crime Reduction Strategy website www.surrey.ca/crimereduction, distributed through the City’s Facebook and Twitter accounts, as well as through partner agencies.
- An information booth will be set up at Central City Mall on May 29, 2014, from 3:00pm and 6:00pm to provide information to the public;

Substance Use Awareness Week Daily Fact Sheet Themes include:

- Sunday, May 25:
 - Prescription Medications
 - Substance Use and Older Adults
- Monday, May 26:
 - Youth Mental Health and Substance Use
- Tuesday, May 27:
 - A Closer Look at Process Addictions

- Wednesday, May 28:
 - Soft? Social? Natural? Drugs – Are they really?
 - Alcohol
- Thursday, May 29:
 - Substance Use and Body Image
- Friday, May 30:
 - Parenting
 - Cool Refusal Skills
- Saturday, May 31:
 - Doda and Afeem

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATION

The City's ongoing efforts in implementing the recommendations of the Surrey Crime Reduction Strategy are assisting in the achievement of the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter, which identifies each of the Crime Reduction Strategy and the Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents as important foundational elements in building a safe community.

CONCLUSION

Substance Use Awareness Week (SUAW) is another example of the City's efforts to collaborate with partners and stakeholders to address community safety issues in Surrey. SUAW is consistent with the recommendations of the Surrey Crime Reduction Strategy and demonstrates the City's ongoing commitment to community safety and crime reduction.



Colleen Kerr
Crime Reduction Strategy Manager

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Appendix I - Habit Change Challenge poster and flyer

Appendix II – Substance Use Awareness Week Event Tool Kit with Fact Sheets

Substance Use Awareness Week

MAY 25 - 31, 2014



Surrey Habit Change Challenge

Show your support May 25 & take the challenge!

Challenge yourself and others to reduce or eliminate a habit, create a healthier lifestyle, and gain understanding about substance use and people struggling with addictions.

How it works:

- 1 Choose a habit that you want to reduce or eliminate or choose to develop a healthy habit that would benefit you.
- 2 Follow the steps on how to add, reduce or eliminate a habit at www.surrey.ca/habitchange
- 3 Use **#SryHabitChange** and share your progress on twitter from May 25 – 31, 2014.

FOR EACH PROGRESS UPDATE YOU WILL BE ENTERED INTO A PRIZE DRAW!

DON'T FORGET TO HAVE FUN! Challenge your parents, children, siblings, teachers and co-workers to see if they can add, reduce or eliminate a habit of their own.

Surrey Habit Change Challenge

Show your support on May 25 & take the challenge!

The Habit Change Challenge is a chance for you to reduce or eliminate a habit, create a healthier lifestyle, and gain understanding about substance use and people struggling with addictions.

How it works:

1. Choose a habit that you want to reduce or eliminate and has negatively affected your health, finances and/or time (i.e. smoking, gambling, gaming). Or choose to develop a healthy habit that would benefit you (i.e. drinking more water, exercising each day).

Choosing a habit to change may be difficult. There are usually things we like about our habits so the key is to really take the time to think about how it affects you. Ask yourself:

- Does this habit create more problems than benefits?
- Does this habit improve my life or take away from it?

2. Follow the steps on how to add, reduce or eliminate a habit.
3. Use #SryHabitChange and share your progress on twitter from May 25 – 31, 2014. For each progress update you will be entered into a prize draw.

Don't forget to have fun! Challenge your parents, children, siblings, teachers and co-workers to see if they can add, reduce or eliminate a habit of their own.



How to add, reduce or eliminate a habit:

Get clear about your reasons. Take a moment to connect with what this habit change means to you. Why this matters to you provides you with motivation.

Pick a date to start and commit to it. **The Surrey Habit Change Challenge begins May 25, 2014!**

Seek support. Having an understanding friend or ally can keep you encouraged. Reach out if it gets hard.

Plan for some withdrawal. Withdrawal simply means our bodies and minds are adjusting to the absence of something they had become accustomed to. Withdrawal can be physical, like a day of headaches without caffeine, or behavioural such as the feeling of missing a mobile device.

Surf the waves of craving. Cravings only last a few minutes and will come and go throughout the day. Over time, the waves of cravings that arise will become weaker and less difficult to surf.

Develop alternatives to the habit. It's easier to stay focused on a more positive path than to keep trying to avoid an old one.

Watch for situations and moods that might trigger a desire for the old behaviour and have a plan for it. A new routine for breaks at work, healthy activities to unwind at home, and developing ways to enjoy social occasions differently may be some examples.

Reward yourself for the changes you've made. This reinforces the change and helps to sustain it as your new normal. Consider whether this is a change you would like to keep in your life. New research shows that after about 66 days, your change will become your new routine!

Take a moment to reflect on your change process and what it took to accomplish it or what got in the way of accomplishing it.

Adult Children of Alcoholics: 604-222-1605 • www.adultchildren.org
 BC Partners for Mental Health and Addiction Info: www.here-to-help.ca
 Centre for Addictions and Mental Health: www.camh.net
 Centre for Addictions Research of BC: www.carbc.ca
 Drug and Alcohol Information and Referral (hot line): 604-660-9382 (toll free 1-800-663-1441)
 Government of Canada National Anti-Drug Strategy: www.drugsnot4me.ca
 Teen Challenge Canada: www.teenchallenge.ca
 Time to Talk: www.timetotalk.org
 The Partnership at Drugfree.org: www.drugfree.org
 Parents. The Anti-Drug: www.theantidrug.com
 Protecting Surrey Schools Together (PSST): www.psst-bc.ca
 Quit 4 Life: www.quit4life.com/index_e.asp
 School District 36 Safe Schools: www.psst-bc.ca

PARTNER AGENCIES
 Alcohol-Drug Education Service: 604-944-4155 • www.ad.es.bc.ca
 BC Responsible Gambling: www.bcresponsiblegambling.ca
 DIVERSEcity: 604-597-0205 • www.dcrs.ca
 Gambling Help Line: 1-888-795-6111
 Keys: Housing & Health Solutions: 604-589-8678 • www.southfraserservices.bc.ca
 Kwantlen Polytechnic University: 604-599-22100 • www.kwantlen.bc.ca
 Options Community Services: 604-596-4321 • www.options.bc.ca
 Pacific Community Resources Society: 604-587-8102 • www.pcrs.ca
 Servants Anonymous Society: 604-590-2304 • www.sasurrey.ca
 SOURCES Community Resource Centres: 604-538-2522 • www.sourcesbc.ca
 Surrey Mental Health and Substance Use Services (Fraser Health Authority): 604-953-4900
 Surrey School District: 604-595-6195 • www.surreyschools.ca

Substance Use Awareness Week

MAY 25 - 31, 2014



Message from the Mayor

Substance Use Awareness Week provides an opportunity to meaningfully engage the community about the topic of substance use.

The development of this toolkit stems from a key recommendation in the City of Surrey's Crime Reduction Strategy, which calls for the development of an engagement tool amongst community stakeholders to help prevent and deter substance abuse.

This toolkit raises awareness of the complexities of addiction, the detrimental impacts that drugs and alcohol can have on individuals, families and the community, and provides tips and resources for those seeking support. It further enhances the response individuals, schools, families, other levels of government and community agencies can have to issues resulting from harmful substance use.

City Council is proud to support Substance Use Awareness Week and invites you to explore this excellent resource.

Sincerely,

Dianne L. Watts, Mayor

What is Substance Use Awareness Week?

Substance Use Awareness Week (SUAW) is a week-long campaign designed to raise awareness about the dangers of substance use. Surrey's Substance Use Awareness Week is May 25 - 31, 2014 and is led by a group of committed community partner agencies working with the Crime Reduction Strategy.

Host an Event in Your Community

Show your support for Substance Use Awareness Week by hosting a ribbon campaign, a speaking engagement for parents, a forum for youth, a school event or any other event you can think of, big or small.

This toolkit provides valuable guidance, tips, tools, and advice to assist your involvement.

Event Ideas For Substance Use Awareness Week

- Awareness Walk
- Community Picnic or BBQ
- Youth Conference
- Workshop for Professionals
- Family Fun Skate
- SUAW Ribbon Campaign
- Forum for Parents
- School Assembly
- Speaking Engagement with a Keynote Speaker
- Pancake Breakfast
- Hold an open house at your agency and share with the public how your work helps substance use prevention or intervention. Invite the public to drop by
- Tie an Informational Booth into an Already Existing Community Event

Awareness is KEY
Get Involved

Create a Team!

Bring together partners and neighbours to help raise awareness and stop substance use.



Event Planning Checklist

6-8 Weeks Before the Event

- Decide on a date.
- Determine the goals and objectives of the event (i.e. awareness, education, prevention activities etc).
- Find like-minded friends or individuals who are interested in helping with the event planning.
- Determine how much, if any, funds are needed for the event.
- Consider finding sponsors to help provide some or all of your supplies and services (i.e. signage, promotion, materials).
- Find out whether you can get your own supplies through donations and in-kind contributions.

4 Weeks Before the Event

- Having a detailed to-do list will help you stay organized and will help ensure a successful event!
- Call a meeting to plan your Substance Use Awareness Week projects and activities. At the end of this document, you will find a list of resources that might be helpful.
- Don't forget to invite others including youth groups, schools, local business associations, religious organizations, senior's centres and service clubs.
- Set your meeting agenda. Don't forget to bring a printed version of this material.
- Brainstorm event ideas as a team.
- As a group, decide what you want to do to bring together members of your community. You will want to involve as many organizations as possible.
- Remember - it doesn't matter if you are planning a large or small event – every little bit helps. Discuss the kinds of things your group members think will interest your community.
- Start planning your great event!

2 Weeks Before the Event

- Confirm that arrangements have been made to pick up things such as sound equipment, podiums or any printed material needed for the event.
- Continue to promote the event.
- If you have sent invitations, follow up with those you have not yet received a response for.
- Create a timeline of the event starting with 'Set Up' and ending with 'Take Down.'
- Create a To-Do list for the day of the event and be sure to include set up and take down tasks in the list.
- Connect with and confirm volunteers – if needed.
- Confirm the time you are able to get in to the location for set up.



1 Week Before the Event

- Make sure all needed supplies have been received.
- Confirm the delivery of any supplies being dropped off at the event.
- Continue to promote and market the event through Social Media and physical flyers/posters.
- Send a News Release to local media.

The Day Before the Event

- Check that all materials are ready.
- Do a final review to make sure everything is ready to go.
- Ensure event tasks are delegated.

The Day of the Event

- Arrive Early.
- Ensure those helping with set up have arrived on time.
- Thank everyone as the event goes on and recognize their hard work whenever possible.
- Take photos.
- Have a fun and successful Substance Use Awareness Week event!

After the Event

- Bask in the greatness of your event.
- Send thank you cards to everyone (volunteers, donors, etc).

Substance Use Awareness Week

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Parenting

Early and consistent communication is key.

Why do kids use drugs and/or alcohol?

A SENSE OF BELONGING – Young people may try alcohol or other drugs to help gain a sense of belonging with their friends and peers. When a child enters their teenaged years, they want to “belong.” Many young people struggle to turn down an opportunity to fit in and be included.

CURIOSITY – Sometimes young people are curious about how alcohol or other drugs might affect them and their behaviour. This curiosity can often influence whether or not they try it.

BOREDOM – A lack of interest or passion in life can often lead to a young person trying alcohol, drugs or tobacco products. These youth experiment for “something to do.”

FUN – People of any age like to have fun. The way we experience the world is easily altered by the use of substances. Young people can be easily influenced by media as the use of substances is often portrayed as a fun experience in television and movies. It is important as a parent that you clarify or monitor the messages your child is receiving.

ESCAPE OR RELIEF FROM PROBLEMS – Young people experience a variety of problems and often the use of substances can be seen as a way to escape. Youth sometimes turn to drugs and alcohol to relieve feelings of depression, fear of failure, and rejection, not knowing that substance use will only worsen these feelings in the long run.

Did You Know?

The top three substances used by BC teenagers are tobacco, alcohol and cannabis.

Recognizing Signs and Symptoms of Substance Use

Adolescence is a time of great change and development; therefore detecting substance use can be difficult. Changes in your child’s mood, temper and attitude as well as changes in sleep habits or interest in friends and hobbies are common during these years. While it is difficult to distinguish typical adolescent behaviour from behaviour associated with substance use, you should look for changes in these areas:

- School performance.
- Friends or peer group.
- Drastic change in weight or physical appearance.
- Eating or sleeping habits.
- Attitudes towards sports and other activities that they typically enjoy.
- Behaviour changes.
- Borrowing money for unexplained reasons.
- Increased secrecy.



How to Talk to Your Kids

Parents face a wide variety of challenging moments. It can be difficult to know how to start the conversation about drugs or alcohol but the most important thing is to open up the lines of communication and to start talking. Here are some tips for talking to your child:

- Start Early.
- Avoid lecturing and scare tactics.
- Try not to put them on the spot.
- Become comfortable with the topic yourself.
- Invite your child to look for the answer together and show them how to find trustworthy information about substances.
- Use your surroundings to your advantage.
- Provide them with refusal skills.

START YOUNG: Start young and use teachable moments.

AVOID LECTURING AND SCARE TACTICS: Avoid using language like “I think”, “You’d better” or “Don’t”; Young people also dismiss scare tactics and exaggerations, especially if they contradict their own experiences.

TRY NOT TO PUT THEM ON THE SPOT: To avoid looking like you are pointing the finger or that the spotlight is on them, when appropriate use your own challenges and experiences as a young person and share what you learned from them.

BE COMFORTABLE WITH THE TOPIC YOURSELF: Educate yourself on the information you are passing along to our child.

IT’S OKAY TO SAY “I DON’T KNOW”: Chances are your child will ask you questions that you do not know the answer to – it’s ok to not know. Tell your child that you will find the answer and get back to them with it. Then be sure to follow through.

USE YOUR SURROUNDINGS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE: Sometimes the best conversations happen spontaneously, the trick is to make the most of those moments. Driving in a car can be a great place to have a difficult conversation. Sitting beside each other can be less threatening and allow for more open discussion.

PROVIDE THEM WITH REFUSAL SKILLS: Let your child know they can turn down offers to use alcohol and other drugs. Let them know that they can use you as an excuse. Try practicing a variety of situations and tactics with your child.

Resources for Parents and Youth

BC Partners for Mental Health and Addiction Information: www.heretohelp.ca
Centre for Addictions and Mental Health: www.camh.net
Drug and Alcohol Information and Referral (hot line): 604-660-9382 (toll free 1-800-663-1441)
Parents. The Anti-Drug: www.theantidrug.com
Quit 4 Life: www.quit4life.com/index_e.asp
Teen Challenge Canada: www.teenchallenge.ca
The Partnership at Drugfree.org: www.drugfree.org
Time to Talk: www.timetotalk.org

PARTNER AGENCIES

Alcohol-Drug Education Service: 604-944-4155 • www.ades.bc.ca
BC Responsible Gambling: www.bcreponsiblegambling.ca
DIVERSEcity: 604-597-0205 • www.dcrs.ca
Gambling Help Line: 1-888-795-6111
Keys: Housing & Health Solutions: 604-589-8678 • www.southfraserservices.bc.ca
Kwantlen Polytechnic University: 604-599-22100 • www.kwantlen.bc.ca
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Substance Use Awareness Week

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Prescription Medications

Recognize Signs and Symptoms of Overuse

Benzodiazepines, more commonly referred to as Benzos, are a class of medications that are usually prescribed to treat sleep disorders and anxiety. Some examples include Ativan, Valium, Clonazepam and Xanax. Unfortunately, approximately 12% of older adults are being prescribed these medications despite the cautions that have emerged. The risks for older adults include:

- Dependence and tolerance (the medication stops working, requiring higher doses for the same result).
- Withdrawal symptoms.
- Memory and coordination problems.
- Daytime sedation.

- Increased risk of falls and motor vehicle accidents.
- The long-term effects of benzodiazepines and benzodiazepine dependence in the elderly can resemble dementia, depression, or anxiety syndromes, and progressively worsens over time.

Benzodiazepines should be prescribed only with caution and only for a short period at low doses. Benzo's should never be mixed with alcohol. If you have been taking a Benzo on a daily basis for longer than 4 weeks, do not suddenly stop taking them as you can experience strong withdrawal symptoms. Consult your doctor.

Did You Know?

Adverse effects caused by prescription medication can be mistaken for the effects of aging.

Myths and Facts about Prescription Medications

MYTH: If a doctor prescribes medicine it must be good for me. I won't get addicted to something prescribed by a doctor.

FACT: Even when a prescribed medication is used as it is supposed to be, there is still a risk of becoming addicted to it. To avoid this situation consult regularly with a doctor.

MYTH: A prescription drug, even if it wasn't prescribed for me, is still safer than any illegal street drug.

FACT: Prescription medications are prescribed by doctors for a specific patient. By taking medication that is not prescribed for you, the possible effects can be just as harmful as street drugs.



Emerging Trends Youth and Prescription Medications

When you hear the term “drug abuse,” you likely think about illegal street drugs like cocaine or heroin, but some of the most commonly abused drugs are prescription medications. Prescription drugs are being sold on the streets, and are very harmful.

- Painkillers such as OxyContin, Demorol, Vicodin and Tylenol 3’s
- Anti-anxiety medications such as Valium and Xanax
- Stimulants such as Ritalin and Adderall

Experts have quoted that 20% of teens have taken prescription medications that were not prescribed for them. Some of the most commonly abused prescription medications are:

Each medication comes with its own risks and side-effects. When used by the person they are prescribed for, and in the correct dosage, they can have the desired outcome. However, when someone who the doctor has not assessed and prescribed the medication to takes it (or the person they are prescribed for does not take them in the dosage they are supposed to), the risks increase greatly.

Getting Help

People who are physically dependent on benzodiazepines may experience withdrawal symptoms if they stop using the drug. The severity of withdrawal symptoms depends on the type of benzodiazepine used, the amount used, the length of time it is used, and whether the drug is stopped abruptly. Withdrawal symptoms can include headache, insomnia, tension, sweating, difficulty concentrating, tremor, sensory disturbances, stomach upset and loss of appetite.

Severe withdrawal symptoms from regular use of benzodiazepines in high doses may include agitation, paranoia, delirium and seizures.

Long-term regular use of benzodiazepines should be reduced gradually, with medical supervision. Contact a doctor or one of the resources listed on this fact sheet.

Resources for Parents and Youth

BC Partners for Mental Health and Addiction Information: www.heretohelp.ca
Centre for Addictions and Mental Health: www.camh.net
Drug and Alcohol Information and Referral (hot line): 604-660-9382 (toll free 1-800-663-1441)
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Servants Anonymous Society: 604-590-2304 • www.sasurrey.ca
SOURCES Community Resource Centres: 604-538-2522 • www.sourcesbc.ca
Surrey Mental Health and Substance Use Services (Fraser Health Authority): 604-953-4900
Surrey School District: 604-595-6195 • www.surreyschools.ca



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Substance Use Awareness Week

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A Closer Look at Process Addictions

Anything that increases the release of “feel-good” chemicals in the pleasure center of the brain can become a compulsion.

We all know that it is possible to become addicted to substances. But substances are not the only things that produce pleasure in the brain and with overuse can develop into problems.

EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

- Video gaming
- Gambling
- Internet
- Social Networking
- Texting
- Shopping
- Exercise

Did You Know?

Gaming, texting, shopping, and social networking are examples of what can become “process addictions.”

How to Tell if a Person’s Activities Are Becoming a Problem

- Constantly thinking or talking about gambling, Facebook, gaming, etc.
- Spending more time or more money than intended.
- Skipping school or work.
- Neglecting friends and family.
- Neglecting sleep to stay online.
- Being dishonest with others.
- Feeling guilty, ashamed, anxious, or depressed as a result of online behaviour, texting, gambling, shopping, etc.
- Withdrawing from other healthy activities.

Getting Help

Regardless of the type of addiction, help is available to anyone who may have a problem or feels like someone they know may have a problem. As is the case with any compulsion or addiction, it is important to consider why you use or do the things you do, and finding alternative and healthier ways to manage.

Myths and Facts

MYTH: Buying lottery tickets for children isn't as bad as buying alcohol for them.

FACT: Parents and teachers believe casino games, poker and lottery tickets are safe for children. Yet children under 19 years are more likely to develop an addiction.

MYTH: I know people who use the internet (or play video games) far more than I do, so my habits can't be a problem.

FACT: Whether something is a problem or not is less about the amount of time spent with that technology than assessing whether any negative impact your use is having on your work, school or relationships is worth the benefits it provides. Deciding to change your own habits can be based on your vision for your best life independent of how other people use technology.



Emerging Trends – Addictions to Technology

Technology has become an essential part of our lives that allows us to be better informed, connected and entertained. However, there is a balance that needs to be achieved between our plugged-in life and our unplugged life. For some people, Facebook, online gambling, video games (Call of Duty, Candy Crush, World of Warcraft) and even just texting can become such a preoccupying focus that other aspects of life begin to diminish.

Some ways to help yourself or someone you know use technology responsibly:

- Take regular breaks.
- Spend more time with friends and family.
- Limit your time and use of technology.
- If online gambling, set a budget of what you are willing to spend and don't go beyond that amount.
- Develop other hobbies.

Resources for Parents and Youth

BC Partners for Mental Health and Addiction Information: www.heretohelp.ca
Centre for Addictions and Mental Health: www.camh.net
Drug and Alcohol Information and Referral (hot line): 604-660-9382 (toll free 1-800-663-1441)
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Teen Challenge Canada: www.teenchallenge.ca
The Partnership at Drugfree.org: www.drugfree.org
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Substance Use in Older Adults

Older adults are at risk of overusing prescription drugs and alcohol.

Life-changing events may trigger the use of prescription drugs or alcohol.

- The loss of a loved one.
- The loss of a job or early retirement.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Trouble with anxiety.
- An unexpected injury or illness.
- Habits formed earlier in life.

Did You Know?

Substance abuse, particularly of alcohol and prescription drugs, often goes undetected among older adults. Providers, for their part, may confuse symptoms of substance use disorders with age-related changes.

Recognizing Signs and Symptoms of Substance Use

The warning signs of substance use are less obvious in older adults. Many of the diseases caused by substance misuse (e.g., high blood pressure, stroke, dementia, or ulcers) are common disorders in later life, so health care providers and family members may misinterpret symptoms. Some warning signs to look for include:

- Bruises, abrasions, and scars in locations that might suggest frequent falls, bumping into objects.
- Empty bottles or cans in the garbage.
- Sleep complaints, observable changes in sleep patterns, unusual fatigue, malaise, daytime drowsiness, apparent sedation.
- Seizures, malnutrition, muscle loss.
- Depression and/or anxiety.
- Unexplained complaints about chronic pain.
- Poor hygiene and self-neglect.
- Unusual restlessness or agitation.
- Complaints of blurred vision or dry mouth.
- Change in eating habits.
- Slurred speech.



How to Talk to an Older Adult about Substance Use

If you suspect an older adult in your life has a problem with drinking or other drugs try to talk to them about it respectfully. When talking with older people put “the person” before “the problem.” Try the following approach:

- Refrain from using terms like “alcoholic” or “addict.”
- Encourage the person to talk about his or her use when they are sober.
- Describe what you see (ie. “I’ve noticed you’ve been having difficulty walking” or “As far as I can see you haven’t eaten much this week.”
- Suggest positive alternatives - “Let’s go for a walk or a drive.”
- Encourage the person to attend activities that he or she enjoys that do not include drinking or substance use.
- If you suspect a person you know has a problem with substances do not hesitate to contact resources for support.

FAQs

CAN YOU DRINK MORE AS YOU GET OLDER?

As people age they become more sensitive to the effects of alcohol, and their bodies process alcohol more slowly. This means older adults are more vulnerable to the negative effects of alcohol.

CAN I COMBINE ALCOHOL WITH OTHER DRUGS OR MEDICATION?

It is important to consult a physician or pharmacist about potential effects and drug interactions before consuming any alcohol while taking medications.

IS IT OK TO TAKE A BENZODIAZEPINE (IE. ATIVAN, VALIUM, CLONAZAPAM AND XANAX) FOR MORE THAN 4 WEEKS?

Benzodiazepines should be prescribed to older adults only with caution and only for a short period at low doses. Benzo’s should never be mixed with alcohol. Always consult your physician.

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Choose NOT to use.

Cool Refusal Skills

What are Refusal Skills?

Refusal skills are a set of skills that can help you avoid situations you don't want to be a part of. Having a good set of refusal skills can help you out of tough situations.

Can't I Just "Say No"?

Of course you can just "say no," but we also recognize that not everyone feels comfortable taking a strong stand in all situations. The pressures from friends, media and even your own curiosity can be a challenge to overcome, but if you find yourself being asked, it can help you stand strong against substances if you are well prepared.

Be Prepared

Without being prepared, it can be easy to feel caught up in the moment and say yes, just to go with the flow and relieve the pressure:

- Practice refusal phrases.
- Have your favourite examples at hand.
- Stay strong.

Did You Know?

We all experience peer pressure – even adults feel pressure to do something that they may not feel comfortable doing. The more tools you have to deal with peer pressure today, the better prepared and more confident you will be.



Check out the strategies listed and think of what you would be confident saying.
Use your own words that would roll off your tongue easily and be appropriate to the situation.

Phrases to Use:

"I'll pass, but it's fine with me if you go ahead."

"I'm not in the mood right now."

"No thanks, I've got a big day (important game) tomorrow."

"I can't. I'm on medication / I'm allergic / I don't react well to that stuff."

"Trust me; I don't think you'd like me on that. I turn into _____."

I'm just not into it."

"I just don't like how it makes me feel."

"Yeah, it looks fun and all, but it is not worth the harassment I will get from my parents and I can't hide anything from them." *(If appropriate, it can help to make your parents the excuse for not wanting to use).*

"Thanks, but don't want to put anything in my body."

"No thanks, I don't believe in doing drugs/drinking."

"I don't need to drink/do drugs to have fun."

Just plain "No" with confidence knowing you will get respect from the friends who matter.

Other Strategies

Find someone in the group who also does not want to use; there is strength in numbers.

Come up with a better idea and see if your peers will want to do something else – "Let's shoot some hoops at my house instead."

Choose the kinds of friends who do not pressure you to use.

If you know your drug facts and are concerned for a friend, share what you have learned without lecturing.

It can be helpful to practice your refusal strategy with someone ahead of time. Play around with different scenarios and come up with different ways peers might try to talk you into using and how you would handle it. Know your reasons why you want to stay straight. Having a clear motivation for saying "no" can help you follow through.

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Substance Use & Body Image

In most advertisements these days, you see either unnaturally thin females or muscular males with bulging abs, pecs and biceps. These images leave people questioning their weight, size and/or body shape. It's no wonder substances marketed for losing weight, increasing muscle or otherwise improving a person's physique are a multi-billion dollar industry. The appeal of taking a substance to achieve the same results as following a healthy diet and exercise regime is tempting to many. These products promise dramatic results in little time; however, if it sounds too good to be true, it usually is.

So you want to be "tough"?

ANABOLIC STEROIDS:

Anabolic steroids are chemical imitations of the naturally occurring hormone testosterone. Most people take steroids to increase their muscle mass and performance in sports and athletics.

With media attention on sports performance and the increasing popularity of mixed martial arts, many males and some females are feeling pressure to achieve the physique of professional athletes and body builders unnaturally. Using anabolic steroids is a risky way to achieve short-term results and increase long-term consequences to health and happiness.

RISKS FOR ALL USERS:

- Acne, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, cardiovascular disease, hepatitis, liver damage, cancer and AIDS/HIV.
- Addiction.
- Sexual dysfunction and infertility, baldness, decrease in size of genitalia and increase in breast tissue in males.
- Infertility and cessation of menstrual cycle, increase in body hair, deepening of voice, and enlargement of genitalia in females.
- Many abusers of anabolic steroids are under 19 years of age. Using at this young age increases the risk of prematurely stunting bone growth.

Reference: National Institute on Drugs Abuse (NIDA) InfoFacts, Steroids, March 2005.

Did You Know?

Users of anabolic steroids are at risk of rage, aggression and psychosis ("roid rage").





What is your body image?

Media plays a big part in how people feel about their body image and the media's ideals of beauty are often unattainable. Most models are approximately 23% below their recommended healthy weight range, and images are digitally enhanced, depicting unrealistic physical proportions. In the past, body image issues have been primarily a focus of girls and women; however, they are becoming increasingly significant amongst men. Many people feel pressured to attain these unrealistic images and turn to weight loss or "diet" drugs for quick results.

WEIGHT LOSS OR "DIET" DRUGS:

- Usually suppress appetite, inhibit the absorption of fat, increase metabolism or purge the digestive system by causing urination or bowel movements.
- Most people who use these substances to lose body weight are actually misusing them as their use is of a non-medical nature.
- Research states that women's magazines have 10 ½ times more ads promoting weight loss products than men's. Over 75% of these magazine covers contain at least one message on how to change appearance through diet, exercise, or cosmetic surgery
- Sadly, most who use weight loss substances do not achieve the results they crave. Media depictions of physical desirability equating emotional fulfillment are false.

Reference: National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) Website; National Institute on Drugs Abuse Website.

Facts

There is an enormous amount of pressure to maintain an unnaturally thin figure in today's society. Many people are tempted to use weight loss drugs and/or diuretics to lose weight.

- Diuretics do NOT effectively aid in weight loss but simply remove retained fluid.
- Using laxatives for the purpose of weight loss can lead to permanent bowel dysfunction.
- Stimulants, such as amphetamines and caffeine, can increase the risk of heart disease, mood disorders and dependency when used for weight loss purposes.
- Youth who use substances are much more likely to also develop eating disorders.
- Using diet drugs can become habit forming.
- Over-the-counter or off-the-shelf diet pills are NOT less potent, they are just less controlled.
- "Herbal" does NOT equal "safe".
- Males are currently experiencing pressure equal to that by females to conform to these unrealistic physical ideals.

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Doda & Afeem

What are Doda & Afeem?

Doda, a powder made from ground poppy husks and sometimes called Dode (plural form), and Afeem, a black tar-like substance, are illegal drugs made from the poppy plant. They are highly addictive substances categorized in the opiate drug group.

Opiates are narcotics containing opium or its derivatives, like heroin and morphine. These addictive drugs have side effects and withdrawal symptoms that change depending on the amount used, an individual's sensitivity to the drug and length of time taken.

Potential side effects of Doda and Afeem include:

- Sleepiness
- Lethargy
- Itching
- Slow breathing
- Nausea

High amounts can be dangerous and can cause death through loss of breath and/or a person choking on their own vomit.

Withdrawal effects can occur as soon as 6 to 8 hours after intake, with the worst symptoms occurring 2 to 3 days after the last use.

The use of Doda and Afeem has been prevalent for decades in many South Asian countries. While the use of these drugs appears to be fairly new to Canada, over the past few years their use has gained more attention. Like any drug, the use of Doda and Afeem can significantly impact:

- Individuals
- Families
- Law enforcement
- Courts
- The community

Did You Know?

Many people who use Doda and Afeem do not fully understand that the substances they are digesting are highly addictive, illegal, opiate drugs.

Facts

FACT: These drugs are controlled, illegal substances punishable under the Canadian Criminal Code. Those found in possession can be charged, convicted and sentenced by the Criminal Justice System.

FACT: Doda and Afeem are NOT safe to use and are highly addictive. They are forms of opium that with frequent use may result in tolerance and dependency. People who use these drugs on a regular basis experience withdrawal symptoms when they attempt to stop.

FACT: Over time, the use of Doda and Afeem can interfere with the ability to participate in work and other healthy activities, as well as negatively impact relationships with family and friends.

Did You Know?

You can get help!
If you or someone you know needs help, contact any of the service providers or partners listed below.



References: Beyond the ABCs: Opioids. Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, 2002. Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. Drugs of Abuse: Opiates. National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1998. Fact Sheet on Opiates. Centre on Addiction and Mental Health, [1998]. Health Canada. Centre for Addiction and Mental Health: Ontario Students Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS)

Recognize Signs and Symptoms of Overuse

Withdrawal effects can occur as soon as 6 to 8 hours after ingestion, with the worst symptoms occurring 2 to 3 days after last use.

Symptoms of overuse may include:

- Dilated pupils
- Muscle cramps
- Irritability
- Watery eyes
- Insomnia
- Jitters
- Runny nose
- Chills
- Stomach cramps
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting
- Profuse sweating
- Tremours
- Shaking
- Panic attacks

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“Soft?” “Social?” “Natural?” Drugs – Are they really?

Research says NO.

Tobacco, Alcohol and Marijuana

There is a tendency to overlook or dismiss the two most costly, dangerous and deadly drugs, alcohol and tobacco. They are legal (for adults), readily available and generally socially accepted. Though it's illegal, marijuana (cannabis) is the third drug generally mentioned with nicotine and alcohol. Previously, these were typed “gateway” drugs. The theory was their use may lead to more-dangerous and addictive substances. It promoted a view that these “soft” drugs were frightening primarily because of this gateway effect to more dangerous drugs, distracting youth, parents, professionals and policy-makers from the fact that these “soft” drugs produce more harms to individuals and society than all of the so called “hard” drugs put together.

TOBACCO – THE “SOFT” DRUG?

Tobacco kills an average of 1 person every 6 seconds. There are over 4,000 dangerous chemicals in cigarettes and they are scientifically engineered to maximize their addictive potential.

- Most people who become smokers start in their teens and over 70% say that having friends who smoke and/or peer pressure is the number one reason for starting.
- Teens who smoke are 7 times more likely to use illegal drugs and 11 times more likely to drink heavily than their non-smoking counterparts.

Tobacco References: Canadian Lung Association Website; National US Institution on Drug Abuse Website.

ALCOHOL – THE “SOCIAL” DRUG?

“I drink socially” is the way some people describe their habit, which is why it's easy to think of alcohol as a “social” drug. Yet often, many people who drink become anti-social, loud, obnoxious, angry, offensive and/or violent, and unfortunately, studies have shown that drinking has been rising consistently over the last 10 years.

Although the majority of Canadians who drink alcohol do so in moderation, alcohol misuse affects too many. In fact, it is estimated that 4 to 5 million Canadians engage in high-risk drinking, which is linked to motor vehicle accidents, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and other health issues, family problems, crime and violence.

The economic impact of alcohol-related harm in Canada is estimated to cost \$14.6 billion per year, according to a 2009 study.

With youth in particular, alcohol is linked to many harmful outcomes:

- Young people between 10 and 24 years of age represented the highest proportion (27%) of people admitted to a specialized trauma hospital in 2002-2003 due to alcohol related injuries.
- In BC in 2009, alcohol was a factor in 65.5% of the traffic fatalities among 16-19 year olds and 54.5% of the traffic fatalities among 20-25 year olds.

Alcohol References: Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse Website; National Alcohol Strategy 2007 Report; Traffic Injury Research Foundation of Canada TIRF-The Alcohol-Crash Problem in Canada: 2009; National Trauma Registry; Health Canada Website; Parliament of Canada: Substance Abuse and Public Policy in Canada: V. Alcohol and Related Harms 2006.

City of Surrey

Crime Reduction Strategy



MARIJUANA – THE “NATURAL” DRUG?

Many youth that argue for the use of marijuana contend that it is a “natural herb” that causes less harm than some legal substances, yet research disagrees. According to a 2009 study, adolescents and young adults who are heavy users of marijuana are more likely than non-users to have disrupted brain development. Pediatric researchers found abnormalities in areas of the brain that interconnect brain regions involved in memory, attention, decision-making, language and executive functioning skills. The findings are of particular concern because adolescence is a crucial period for brain development and maturation.

- Teens who start smoking marijuana before the age of 16 are four times more likely to develop schizophrenia. Research on the connection between cannabis and mental illness reveals that, for all young adults, smoking pot nearly doubles the risk of developing psychosis, paranoia and hallucinations.
- Marijuana THC levels are more potent than they were just 10 to 15 years ago and hugely amplifies the impact on young, still-developing adolescent brains.
- Studies show that cannabis smokers end up with five times more carbon monoxide in their bloodstream than tobacco smokers; as well, marijuana could be expected to harm the airways more than tobacco cigarettes since its smoke contains twice the level of carcinogens.

References: Diffusion abnormalities in adolescents and young adults with a history of heavy cannabis use. Journal of Psychiatric Research, 2009; Information & Facts About Marijuana Use and Mental Illness – From David Suzuki's the Downside of High; Effects of cannabis on pulmonary structure, function and symptoms Medical Research Institute of New Zealand, Pacific Radiology, Wakefield Hospital, and Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences; Cannabis use in adolescence and risk for adult psychosis: longitudinal prospective study BMJ2002; Source Department of Psychiatry and Neuropsychology, South Limburg Mental Health Research and Teaching Network, EURON, Maastricht University Medical Center, Maastricht, Netherlands; Source Mental Health Service, Prince of Wales Hospital, Sydney, Australia. mmb1@bigpond.com; National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA)

Parents Are Key

Substance use, in all forms, should be a wake-up call for parents (or other family member) to ask the question - Why does my child (want to) do drugs? Helping your child manage and adapt to obstacles, like using substances, can help them overcome adversity and go on to succeed in life. However, parenting must also be combined with a supportive school and community setting as well as good physical and mental health. Youth who feel a strong sense of family (and school) connectivity are less likely to engage in poor behaviour and bad decision making – not only about drugs, but also about other risk taking behaviours. Things for parents to remember:

- A caring and supportive relationship with at least one adult is extremely important in helping teens develop into strong and happy adults.
- Positive relationships with parents, peers, grandparents, neighbours, teachers, coaches, etc can help teens develop competence and well-being.
- Children who have two or more adults whom they feel are “important” to them in school are happier, more motivated at school, are more self-confident and concerned about others.

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Alcohol

Recognize Signs and Symptoms of Overuse

The majority of adults in Canada drink alcohol in moderation; however, for some, their drinking becomes problematic. Overuse of any substance can have many negative consequences, including poor health, conflicts with family members and financial strains. A person does not have to drink alcohol regularly to have a problem with it.

Some signs that you (or someone you know) has a problem with alcohol:

- You think about cutting down or quitting.
- You get annoyed when others say that you should quit or cut down.
- Your alcohol use negatively affects your health.
- Alcohol use affects your relationships with family and friends.
- You miss work due to a hangover or go to work intoxicated.
- You have negative interactions with police because of your drinking.
- You have blackouts when you drink.
- You do things when intoxicated that you later regret.
- You go through withdrawal when you stop drinking.
- You use alcohol to cope with any stress or depression.
- You cannot socialize without drinking.

Did You Know?

Alcohol causes more deaths, and costs more to society, than all illegal drugs combined.



Emerging Trends – Alcohol Combined with Energy Drinks

Mixing booze with other substances is never a good idea, but pairing it with energy drinks can be especially hazardous.

Results of a new study published in “Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research” provides some interesting insights. Northern Kentucky University found that combining energy drinks such as Red Bull with vodka or other liquors effectively removes any built-in checks your body has for overindulging. When you drink alcohol by itself, it initially induces a feeling of happiness — a comfortable buzz.

But when you overindulge in alcohol, your body knows it, and starts to shut down: you start feeling tired, sleepy and sedated.

People combining alcohol and energy drinks lose that natural control.

Fatigue is the body’s way of saying it’s had enough to drink. It’s dangerous to trick your body into feeling that you’re not as drunk as you really are (by using energy drinks).

Red Bull contains 80 mg of caffeine, and high levels of caffeine can boost heart rate and blood pressure, causing palpitations. Mixing these drinks with alcohol further increases the risk of heart rhythm problems.



Alcohol depresses the central nervous system, so by mixing the two, you’re sending mixed messages to your nervous system, which can cause cardiac-related problems.

Getting Help

If you are considering cutting down or quitting, talk to your doctor. When someone tries to quit drinking after a long time (or even after a short time of frequent use) – they may go through physical withdrawal. Examples include shaking, depression, anxiety and nausea. You should never detox without medical assistance.

Over time, alcohol or drugs may have played a large part in your life, and you will now need to learn how to live life without using.

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Youth Mental Health & Substance Use

What is Mental Health?

Mental health is referred to as an individual's general feeling of well-being, their ability to enjoy life, find balance, and cope with everyday demands and problems. Good mental health is linked with positive self-esteem, overall happiness and interest in life, work and/or school. It allows people to recognize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to their community.⁽¹⁾

On the flip side, mental health issues refer to the impaired ability to function in life and affects how a person feels, acts, thinks and perceives the world around them. Feelings of low self-esteem, frustration, irritability, stress, anxiety and depression are all examples of common mental health problems experienced by adults, and in growing numbers by youth.⁽¹⁾

What is Substance Use?

According to Health Canada, substance use includes the use of any number of substances that can affect a person's mental state, including alcohol, non-prescription and prescription drugs, and illicit drugs. Use may range from occasional use to full-blown substance misuse.⁽¹⁾

In today's hectic world, youth are feeling more pressure (at school, in sports and at home) and are at times over-scheduled or missing support to manage their feelings. As a result, they will sometimes turn to substances to help cope. Youth who face more severe challenges are more likely to turn to harder substances which can increase the chances of developing more serious disorders often resulting in addiction issues. Learning healthy coping skills and knowing when to ask for help is key!

Did You Know?

- Approximately 1 in 7 children and youth in BC have a mental health disorder.⁽³⁾
- Disorders can include any anxiety disorder, conduct disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, any depressive disorder, substance abuse, pervasive development disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, schizophrenia, Tourette's disorder or any eating disorder.⁽²⁾
- Substance use experimentation in early adolescence can create even more problems for those already coping with mental health issues and can mark the beginning of a vicious spiral into self-medication, or can make existing symptoms worse.⁽³⁾
- It has been reported that youth who have a mental health disorder are more likely to be regular substance users and to use at a riskier level than their peers without such a disorder.⁽⁴⁾
- In many cases, youth will use substances like alcohol and marijuana to relieve symptoms of a mental health issues and youth who face more severe challenges are more likely to use harder substances.



How to Cope and Find Help:

Learning healthy coping skills helps youth deal with the day-to-day stressors and mental health issues they may be experiencing. The key is to pick the most enjoyable coping skill so that they will enjoy it. Some coping skills youth can try include:

- Join in team sports
- Create art projects
- Eat healthy
- Take breaks and rest
- Use relaxation techniques
- Meditate
- Just take a deep breath

Incorporating healthy coping skills, positive support from friends and family, connections to school and engaging in healthy activities such as sports or exercise will help increase overall health and are a good place to start when coping with mental health issues. Recognizing when help is needed is the first step if the situation is more serious. There are many child and youth mental health services offered throughout British Columbia that can be of assistance when help and support is required.

References:

- 1) PARLIAMENT of CANADA - Mental Health, Mental Illness and Addiction: Overview of Policies and Programs in Canada Report 1 – 2003 <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/381/soci/rep/report1/repintnov04vol1part2-e.htm>
- 2) Ministry of Children and Family Development - About Child and Youth Mental Health http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health/
- 3) Here to Help www.heretohelp.bc.ca
- 4) McCreary Centre Society http://www.mcs.bc.ca/fact_sheets_and_powerpoint_presentations

Getting Help

www.keltymentalhealth.ca

www.heretohelp.bc.ca

www.forcesociety.com

www.anxietybc.com

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health/publications.htm

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health/programs_resources.htm

www.viha.ca/mhas/resources/default.htm#info

www.cyc.uvic.ca/naty/directory/counselling.html

www.familynavigator.ca

www.bcmhas.ca/keltyresourcecentr

www.depressionhurts.ca

www.beyondtheblues.ca

Resources for Parents and Youth

BC Partners for Mental Health and Addiction Information: www.heretohelp.ca

Centre for Addictions and Mental Health: www.camh.net

Drug and Alcohol Information and Referral (hot line): 604-660-9382 (toll free 1-800-663-1441)

Parents. The Anti-Drug: www.theantidrug.com

Quit 4 Life: www.quit4life.com/index_e.asp

Teen Challenge Canada: www.teenchallenge.ca

The Partnership at Drugfree.org: www.drugfree.org

Time to Talk: www.timetotalk.org

PARTNER AGENCIES

Alcohol-Drug Education Service: 604-944-4155 • www.ades.bc.ca

BC Responsible Gambling: www.bcresponsiblegambling.ca

DIVERSEcity: 604-597-0205 • www.dcrs.ca

Gambling Help Line: 1-888-795-6111

Keys: Housing & Health Solutions: 604-589-8678 • www.southfraserservices.bc.ca

Kwantlen Polytechnic University: 604-599-22100 • www.kwantlen.bc.ca

Options Community Services: 604-596-4321 • www.options.bc.ca

Pacific Community Resources Society: 604-587-8102 • www.pcrs.ca

Surrey RCMP: www.bc.rcmp-grc.gc.ca

Servants Anonymous Society: 604-590-2304 • www.sasurrey.ca

SOURCES Community Resource Centres: 604-538-2522 • www.sourcesbc.ca

Surrey Mental Health and Substance Use Services (Fraser Health Authority): 604-953-4900

Surrey School District: 604-595-6195 • www.surreyschools.ca



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