

COMMUNITY *Matters*

COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT

OCTOBER 2024



VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT



The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) acknowledges that it proudly serves the public on the unceded traditional territories of the x^wməθk^wəyám (Musqueam), sḵwḵ wú7mesh (Squamish), and seí íl wítlh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.



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Cover image: Vancouver Police Inspector Tan Tran and members of the Chinese community at the 2023 Lunar New Year Parade

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SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Building positive relationships and mutual trust contributes to safer communities. People need to feel comfortable interacting with police officers so we can work together to improve safety.

VPD STRATEGIC PLAN (2022-2026)

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Strong relationships between police and the communities they serve are critical to public safety. Community input and engagement, driven by trust, is key to informing solutions for public safety issues. The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) actively pursues collaborative outreach with the diverse communities in the city of Vancouver. Our community engagement seeks to build trust, promote cultural awareness, and ensure safety for all communities.

ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Historically, the VPD conducted a resident survey to assess community satisfaction regarding an array of public safety issues, including perceptions of safety, VPD's communication with the public, and satisfaction and awareness of our community programs. The survey is one of the ways we hear the voices of the community and receive important feedback on how our programs and services meet their needs. The last VPD citizen survey was completed in 2022 by an external company, and was offered in English, Chinese (Mandarin/Cantonese), Punjabi, Tagalog, and French. Fifty per cent of the respondents identified as male and 49 per cent identified as female. As with previous surveys, results showed that VPD outreach programming continues to be important to Vancouver citizens.

To be responsive to community concerns, we continue to engage members of our advisory committees, including the Indigenous Advisory Committee, SisterWatch, and the 2SLGTBQ+ Liaison Committee. Advisory committee consultation garners direct feedback on programming, policies, and initiatives.

Moreover, all community partners and organizations engaged through our specialty sections, such as the Diversity, Community & Indigenous Relations Section (DCIRS), provide our staff with important informal feedback.

In addition to this feedback, consultations were conducted by an external company through in-person resident surveys in the Downtown Eastside, with input from over 19 community groups. The survey also included consultation with the Vancouver Police Board and concluded with over 25 community groups providing feedback.

COMMUNITY MATTERS



Recognizing our ongoing commitment to public safety and public service, the VPD has chosen *Serving the Community* as the core of the 2022-2026 VPD Strategic Plan. This report aims to serve as an index of our most notable initiatives and programs engaging Vancouver's diverse communities, including:

- A dedicated Diversity, Community & Indigenous Relations Section (DCIRS).
- Full-time community liaison positions.
- The SisterWatch Committee.
- An Indigenous Advisory Committee.
- 12 Community Policing Centres (CPCs).
- Police officers dedicated to working with 24 neighbourhoods through the community policing centres (CPCs).
- Targeted programming for the safety of women and girls.
- Participation in annual community cultural events.
- Specific community outreach in the Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus community (2SLGBTQ+).
- Annual community satisfaction surveys.
- Youth-directed programming.
- Engagement of newcomers.
- Business community engagement initiatives.
- Community outreach in diverse communities for VPD recruiting.

MAINTAINING SERVICE DELIVERY DURING TIMES OF INCREASED PUBLIC PROTESTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

MAINTAINING SERVICE DELIVERY DURING TIMES OF INCREASED PUBLIC PROTESTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

The VPD managed over 1,000 protests and demonstrations in 2023 — almost double the number from a decade earlier. These gatherings, often motivated by local, national, and world events, impacted the city at large, with many attracting thousands of people. In 2024, demonstrations and protests are projected to continue to rise.

The VPD conducts risk assessments prior to events, and maintains open communication between event organizers and the broader community. We have 178 specially trained officers in our Public Order Unit, supplemented with officers and other resources when needed. We prioritize the staffing of protests and

demonstrations to protect the safety and security of citizens, ensuring equal protection is afforded to everyone regardless of religion, political beliefs, or cultural background. A fundamental function of policing demonstrations is to protect our democratic and constitutional right to assemble and protest.

The VPD's current responses to mass gatherings, protests, and demonstrations will also apply for large-scale events coming to the city in 2024 and beyond — namely, the 111th Grey Cup, the Invictus Games in 2025, and the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Our goal is to connect with local citizens, community groups, and organizations, to identify safety concerns and educate groups on how to facilitate and ensure lawful gatherings. Public education and community consultation and collaboration will remain a priority as we prepare for future events within the city.

Section 2 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*

Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:

- a) freedom of conscience and religion;
- b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;
- c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and
- d) freedom of association.

Under section 2 of the *Charter*, Canadians are free to follow the religion of their choice. In addition, they are guaranteed freedom of thought, belief, and expression. Since the media are an important means for communicating thoughts and ideas, the *Charter* protects the right of the press and other media to speak out. Our right to gather and act in peaceful groups is also protected, as is our right to belong to an association like a trade union.

These freedoms are set out in the *Charter* to ensure that Canadians are free to create and express their ideas, gather to discuss them and communicate them widely to other people. These activities are basic forms of individual liberty. They are also important to the success of a democratic society like Canada. In a democracy, people must be free to discuss matters of public policy, criticize governments, and offer their own solutions to social problems.

Even though these freedoms are very important, governments can sometimes limit them. For example, freedom of expression may be limited by laws against hate propaganda or child pornography because they prevent harm to individuals and groups.

MAINTAINING SERVICE DELIVERY DURING TIMES OF INCREASED PUBLIC PROTESTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS



COMMUNITY POLICING CENTRES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES

In 2023, the [Community Policing Centres](#) (CPCs) delivered a variety of safety presentations focusing on general crime prevention, as well as safety for women, apartment dwellers, stranger danger for kids, and other topics requested by the community. The CPCs also held sessions in emergency preparedness, financial fraud awareness, and closed-circuit television review.

One of the most important contributions CPCs make to neighbourhoods is the interactions with community members. Being involved and engaged directly contributes to people's perception and sense of safety and security. A sampling of key activities for the year included:

- Hastings Sunrise CPC conducted 20 outreach programs and information sessions around seniors' safety with over 400 participants.
- Strathcona CPC continued to participate in door-to-door delivery of information on the grandparent/bail money scam targeting older adults, as the VPD saw a rise in these types of scams.

- Two fraud prevention workshops were held in the Chinese community, with over 300 older adults participating.
- Open invitations and regular safety meetings were held at community centres focusing on general safety tips for older adults; this included a specific focus on the Chinese community.
- The VPD Scam Prevention for Seniors Program delivered information on fraud prevention to 120 older adults at the Sunset Community Centre.
- Strathcona CPC launched its Summer Youth Program at Maclean Housing, providing free breakfast, lunch, and activities for kids aged 9-18 years old.
- The West End Coal Harbour CPC delivered personal safety presentations to 11 groups of English language learners, including Arabic, Turkish, and Portuguese. Thirty people participated in this first online course.

The City of Vancouver, in partnership with the VPD, the Business Improvement Association, other community policing centres, and the Gastown Residents Association are working together to establish a new community policing centre in the Gastown area. The CPC will establish a greater presence in both the Gastown and Hastings Crossing neighbourhoods, where community members can engage with volunteers and neighbourhood police officers to report crime, seek assistance, and participate in safety programs.

CPC volunteers will be trained in overdose awareness and naloxone administration, personal safety and de-escalation, and how to recognize and identify suspicious and/or criminal activity. They will introduce proactive measures and methods, such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and neighbourhood patrols, to help reduce crime, vandalism, and mischief.

DIVERSITY, COMMUNITY, AND INDIGENOUS RELATIONS SECTION



DIVERSITY, COMMUNITY, AND INDIGENOUS RELATIONS SECTION

The roots of the VPD's Diversity, Community & Indigenous Relations Section (DCIRS) were established over 20 years ago, with the over-arching goal to build trust and confidence with the Indigenous and diverse communities in Vancouver. Their primary aim is to improve outcomes for communities experiencing overrepresentation in the criminal justice system, under-reporting of crimes, perceptions of fear and safety, and lack of confidence in the police.

DCIRS provides outreach, develops partnerships, and maintains relationships with various communities and agencies, and acts as a resource for frontline officers who have questions surrounding specific individuals, community resources, or culturally sensitive situations. The section is overseen by an inspector, a staff sergeant, and four sergeants, and currently 16 police officers work alongside four civilian professionals. The DCIRS inspector manages and coordinates activities, and provides leadership, support, and strategic advice to other areas of the VPD regarding Vancouver's diverse communities. The inspector also oversees the Victim Services Unit, which has one civilian manager and six crisis intervention workers.

Strategies used by DCIRS to address safety issues and cultural factors include supporting the VPD Recruiting Services Unit to reflect the community it serves. DCIRS also provides training on cultural safety and awareness to frontline members and recruits. Outreach is also accomplished through local media and participation in community forums, workshops, and events. The Section members regularly meet with representatives from diverse communities, listening to their concerns and providing advice, suggestions, and recommendations.

COMMUNITY POLICE ACADEMY

For over 20 years, Vancouver residents, and community leaders have taken part in the VPD Community Police Academy. Participants represent a cross-section of the community, with diversity in age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and religious backgrounds. The aim of this program is to provide participants with a deeper understanding and a broader perspective of the problems and complex tasks that police officers face each day to help foster understanding between the community and the police. The four-day program is presented at no cost, thanks to funding from the Vancouver Police Foundation (VPF), and includes classroom lectures on topics such as crime investigation and use-of-force, and hands-on activities and demonstrations like firearms training and force options at the VPD Tactical Training Centre. Online presentations by subject matter experts include the evolution of a crime, active deadly threat training, diversity and mental health initiatives, and criminal intelligence. Since its inception, the Academy has engaged over 400 community members.

BRITISH COLUMBIA LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVERSITY NETWORK

The VPD participates in the British Columbia Law Enforcement Diversity Network (BCLEDN), which is a committee of law enforcement agencies promoting enrichment through diversity, supporting members working in diversity, equity, and inclusion, and

ENGAGEMENT THROUGH DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

working to address community issues. In addition to police agencies, other partners include the Canada Border Service Agency, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Metro Vancouver Transit Police, CN Rail Police, B.C. Sheriffs, and B.C. Corrections.

As a result of the BCLEDN transitioning to additional online delivery, police agency participation across Metro Vancouver has increased. Monthly meetings are held both online and in person, where agencies share information and resources, while also learning about specific topics from invited guests. The Network also holds forums on topical issues affecting policing agencies in B.C., such as hate crime, anti-racism, and invisible disabilities. In 2024, the BCLEDN will partner with the Pacific Autism Network to provide decals to people with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The decals will be displayed on their vehicles and homes to inform officers so they can appropriately respond.

ENGAGEMENT THROUGH DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The VPD is committed to diversity and inclusion as a path toward equitable access to policing. Recognizing the value of internal and external strategies is key to moving in this direction. The Department supports broad initiatives that expand upon established programs to further this goal. During 2023 and 2024, the VPD engaged in several activities driven by the community and reflected throughout the organization by member-led initiatives.

DIVERSE ABILITIES COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, EDUCATION, AND AWARENESS

The VPD has continued to collaborate with the Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility to further increase accessibility to police and police buildings for people who are Deaf, Deaf/Blind, or Hard-of-Hearing. Funded by the VPF, the two agencies have been able to provide iPads at VPD Public Service Counters and the Property Office. These iPads allow community members to access ASL communication

through an on-demand application, resulting in clear communication. In 2024, the VPD continues working with the Centre to expand communication strategies at our Public Service Counters.

The VPD was also supported by Wavefront to create a "Visor Card," a two-sided card that includes icons and wording to improve communication between officers and people who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing. One side of the card features words and icons that help police officers indicate their intentions, such as the purpose of a traffic stop, the need to see a driver's licence, or how to pay and dispute a ticket. The other side is for people who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing to use when communicating with police officers.

B.C. WOMEN IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

B.C. Women in Law Enforcement (BCWLE) is affiliated with the International Association of Women Police. The mission of this non-profit organization is:

To unite law enforcement personnel across British Columbia, to create opportunities for everyone to meet and discuss topical issues affecting women in policing, to provide training for issues specifically related to women, and to facilitate networking and mentoring opportunities.

Established in 2019, BCWLE currently has over 540 members from 14 different law enforcement agencies, and is overseen by an 11-member board. Their membership received training and engagement opportunities through the virtual Speaker Series during COVID, which then transitioned to an annual conference that just celebrated its third year. BCWLE also honours their membership through an annual award program, and collaborates with other institutions on discounts for learning and development opportunities. They provide networking opportunities through social events and their annual golf tournament. Beginning in 2023, with the assistance of a grant, they began the student presentation series, and offering scholarships for young women pursuing a career in law enforcement. The BCWLE is funded by sponsorship and membership fees.

ENGAGEMENT THROUGH DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



OUT ON PATROL

Out on Patrol is a non-profit society created by VPD members to support law enforcement members in B.C. who identify as 2SLGBTQ+. Their mission is to build strong, positive, and inclusive connections between law enforcement agencies and the community, focusing on engagement, charitable work, and education. The board of directors are a diverse group of law enforcement members from across B.C. Out on Patrol members have been conducting outreach in the community for the past four years, and received an award from private industry to support their scholarship program. They were engaged in the following activities in 2023 and 2024:

- The Strathcona Bike Smart Program: A community bicycle program based in McLean Park to teach bicycle safety to youth 12 and under.
- International Association of Chiefs of Police presentations for 2SLGBTQ+ police members on officer safety and wellness in relation to peer support organizations.
- In 2023, Out on Patrol presented to 22 school groups and over 1700 students, in ten communities across B.C.

- The VPD Film Festival: A Templeton High School after-school film program.
- The Out on Patrol Peer Support Program is a presentation series delivered to high school or post-secondary students in B.C. that addresses topics such as bullying, 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion, and positive role models in policing. This program will also award six \$4300 scholarships in 2024 for 2SLGBTQ+ youth considering a career in policing.

INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE COMMITTEE

In 2019, at the request of Chief Constable Palmer, an Inclusive Workplace Committee (IWC) was formed to examine workplace culture, develop inclusion strategies, analyze internal processes, and make recommendations for removing systemic barriers. Forty-five employees with diverse backgrounds and from across the department conducted employee surveys, internal cross-sectional dialogues, and reviews of industry practices, seeking to improve the working environment for all VPD staff.

Some key points of change:

- IWC continues to work on addressing barriers to workplace investigations.
- The Committee has redesigned the performance appraisal system to ensure supervisors discuss equity, diversity, and inclusion with each employee during this process.
- IWC has reviewed, identified, and addressed issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the promotional processes for sergeant, staff sergeant, and lateral promotions.
- IWC has implemented a comprehensive inclusion campaign, human rights training, and continues to review policies and procedures.

ENGAGEMENT THROUGH DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION THROUGH POLICY AND PROCESSES

An important pillar for effective, community-based policing is the need for police to be consultative and transparent in how police services are delivered, and how important policies are developed. The VPD achieves this by engaging community members when developing and implementing major policy initiatives, many of which are discussed and approved publicly by the Vancouver Police Board. Transparency is achieved by ensuring the majority of VPD's operational policies are publicly available.

In 2023, the VPD initiated a review of its policies, procedures, and training through an equity, diversity, and inclusion lens. As a result, 70 per cent of VPD policies, along with 20 per cent of all forms, were updated to ensure equitable policing. The review considered the challenges and experiences of equity-deserving groups, including people who identify as 2SLGBTQ+, Black, Indigenous, and people of colour. The VPD respectfully acknowledges the need to address inequities shaped by social determinants, and how policies, procedures, and training can positively impact the goal of addressing inequity.

The VPD is actively engaged in a range of initiatives aimed at addressing anti-Black racism and historic discrimination. In 2023, the Police Board received a report summarizing how the Department is integrating findings from a City of Vancouver interim report into its practices and procedures. Items identified in the report are being addressed through enhanced training, education, awareness, and policy.

For English Language Learners and diverse communities, the VPD website can be translated into more than 100 languages. Forms for reporting hate incidents are provided in 12 languages, and crime prevention material, such as scam prevention for seniors and fraud, have been translated to the most common languages in Vancouver.

WELCOMING NEWCOMERS TO CANADA



WELCOMING NEWCOMERS TO CANADA

Starting a life in a new country is extremely challenging, even under ideal circumstances. Often there are cultural and language barriers. Additionally, some newcomers arriving in Canada hail from war zones or countries where the police are agents of an authoritarian regime. To ease the transition, the VPD works to welcome newcomers, help them understand the role of police in our country, and build trust and understanding. This is accomplished through programs and training.

NEWKIDS POLICE ACADEMY

Funded by the Vancouver Police Foundation, the NewKids Police Academy provides newcomer youth within the Vancouver School System a unique opportunity to participate in applied educational workshops, simulated police training scenarios, and activities directly related to police work. The NewKids Police Academy, in partnership with Settlement Workers in Schools, Vancouver School Board (VSB), aims to create positive relationships with law enforcement. This program also supports newcomer youth in developing a sense of identity and belonging within their communities.

The program is offered twice a year, where 16 participants aged 15 to 19 meet once a week for ten weeks. The focus is on promoting education and awareness around policing through peer and police mentorship. Since 2015, over 270 youth have graduated from the NewKids program, with many subsequently participating in the VPD Cadet program or other VPD initiatives. In the spring of 2024, the program celebrated the 20th group to graduate from the NewKids Police Academy.

MULTICULTURAL OUTREACH: VPD DIVERSITY LIAISON OFFICER

The VPD's Diversity Liaison Officer engages with a variety of communities at events, and through programming and outreach. The liaison provides service to underrepresented communities through programming such as the Community Police Academy and interactive workshops focused on safety. These workshops are in partnership with organizations like Immigration Services Society of B.C.

In response to the conflict between Israel and Palestine, DCIRS increased engagement with local Jewish and Muslim communities, with dialogue focused on security, particularly for places of worship and culturally significant centres. The liaison officer regularly visits and attends prayer at local synagogues and mosques, strengthening community relationships, listening to concerns, and encouraging the reporting of any hate-related or criminal incidents. DCIRS also provides presentations and brochures specific to hate-motivated events/crimes, that explain the various options for reporting to police.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS — LANGUAGES IN MOTION ON-DEMAND LANGUAGE APPLICATION

The VPD acknowledges that the English Language Learners can have challenges accessing police services. The Languages in Motion app facilitates communication between police officers and individuals who are facing language barriers, allowing them to communicate in real time. This on-demand tool will provide more efficient and effective communication, and will be on most police devices by September 2024.

ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH FOR THE 2SLGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH FOR THE 2SLGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

2SLGBTQ+ LIAISON OFFICER

Formalized in 2017, the 2SLGBTQ+ Liaison Officer is responsible for working with various groups within the 2SLGBTQ+ community. In addition to providing ongoing education for VPD personnel, the liaison:

- Facilitates the resolution of issues affecting members of the community.
- Supports other police agencies with 2SLGBTQ+ matters.
- Works with community groups and organization to oversee the Safe Place Program.
- Provides ongoing training of community groups and organizations that service the 2SLGBTQ+ communities.
- Is a member of the City of Vancouver 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee.
- Is a member of the VPD Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Committee.
- Develops 2SLGBTQ+ programming such as Project Elder Pride, and fingerprint services embedded in QMUNITY's Trans-ID Clinic.

PROJECT ELDER PRIDE

Project Elder Pride engages 2SLGBTQ+ adults aged 55+. VPD specialty sections and external partners provide crime prevention workshops on topics such as fraud prevention, elder abuse, intimate partner violence, crime prevention, support services, and other topics relevant to the participants. The workshops are designed to build trust between the community and the liaison officer. In 2023, a partnership was created with two community centres to engage older adults in these workshops.

SAFE PLACE PROGRAM

The first of its kind in Canada, the [Safe Place](#) program was launched in July 2016 with the goal to increase community safety for 2SLGBTQ+ people.



Vancouver businesses display the Safe Place decal in their storefront, and welcome people in need of police assistance, providing safe shelter until officers arrive. Businesses are vetted by the VPD, sign a pledge indicating their support for the community, and confirm their willingness to assist potential victims. Originally developed by the Seattle Police Department, the VPD is the first Canadian police department to launch this program. The City of Vancouver and the Vancouver School Board also partner with the VPD on this initiative, and display the Safe Place decals in schools. To date, there are over 500 participating businesses in Vancouver.

CITY OF VANCOUVER 2SLGBTQ+ ADVISORY COMMITTEE

This committee started in 2012 to better address issues facing this community and to improve relationships between the 2SLGBTQ+ community and City departments, including the VPD. Representatives from the VPD, the City, faculty at the University of British Columbia, the Trans Alliance Society, and 2SLGBTQ+ community members meet six times a year, providing input to city council and staff on issues of concern. They also partner with other agencies

YOUTH-DIRECTED OUTREACH

whose activities affect constituent communities, including initiating and developing relevant projects.

In 2022, DCIRS created the VPD SOGI Committee, comprised of eight community members. They meet quarterly to discuss community issues that are considered to have a direct impact on safety and policing.

RECOGNIZING PRIDE WEEK/MONTH

The VPD recognizes Pride Month in June by raising the Progressive Pride Flag at the Cambie Street VPD headquarters, with City Council and VPD SOGI Committee members present. In early 2024, the VPD Progressive Pride card, pin, and patch were updated; once manufactured, they will be widely distributed internally and externally. VPD members participate in Pride events around the city and support events with plainclothes officers when requested by community organizations.

YOUTH-DIRECTED OUTREACH

The VPD commits extensive resources to youth engagement, through innovative programming that provides positive interactions and nurturing relationships. These efforts help to develop self-esteem and positive life skills while deterring youth from engaging in harmful behaviour, such as gang involvement and drug use. Ultimately, this investment provides youth with the skills and experience to become the best versions of themselves and potential future leaders in their communities.

INDIGENOUS CADET PROGRAM

The Indigenous Cadet Program is a partnership with the Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society to mentor and coach Indigenous young adults, aged 19 to 31 years, who demonstrate a desire to become police officers with the VPD. During their paid internship, the Cadets work with Fleet Services, spend time in specialty section training, experience ride-alongs, engage in cultural activities, and participate in the annual Pulling Together Canoe Journey.



A total of 45 Indigenous participants have completed the program since it began in 2007. Currently, over half of the program graduates work in the field of criminal justice, with 18 working with the VPD either as police officers or as civilian professionals.

BLUE EAGLE COMMUNITY CADETS PROGRAM

Partially funded by the VPF, the Blue Eagle Program supports 20 youth between the ages of 12 and 15 years. The participants have an opportunity to develop leadership skills while learning about Indigenous culture and policing. The program, a partnership between VPD DCIRS, the Indigenous Protocols Officer, and the Vancouver Aboriginal CPC Society, and led by the Metro Vancouver Transit Police Indigenous Liaison Officer, gives Indigenous youth the opportunity to:

- work in a team environment
- help their community
- explore various career options
- take part in a variety of activities
- strengthen physical and mental health
- meet strong Indigenous role models
- increase confidence

Since its launch date in 2021, over 100 Indigenous youth have graduated from the program.

YOUTH-DIRECTED OUTREACH



MUSQUEAM YOUTH ACTIVITIES

In 2023, the VPD supported the re-invigoration of the Musqueam Canoe Club after 35 years of being inactive. Musqueam youth are now able to participate in the annual Pulling Together Canoe Journey in their own Nation's canoe. The annual Musqueam Canoe Races take place every June, with over 50 different teams from the west coast of Canada and the U.S. The Musqueam can now represent their community with youth participating in their own canoe.

The Musqueam Liaison Officer and Musqueam youth leaders organize VPF-funded community-based activities on Saturday nights for Musqueam youth aged 11-17. Musqueam youth can interact and participate in activities that show respect, pride, inclusiveness, honour, and a shared responsibility. Harm reduction and awareness are also discussed.

VPD CADETS

Funded by the VPF, the VPD Cadet Program is a prime example of an initiative designed to instill leadership skills and create a path for youth to pursue a career in policing. The 28-week program is led by VPD officers and support staff, and includes educational workshops, physical training, team-building exercises, and training in life skills, public speaking, and resume-building. Graduates of the program become mentors and peer-to-peer role models for subsequent cohorts.

In September 2023, 92 Cadets began the 10th class of the Cadet Program, with 53 per cent of the class identifying as female and 47 per cent identifying as male. There were 36 different cultural backgrounds represented, and 23 different languages spoken. In the second annual post-cadet survey, it was determined that all objectives were met, with 84 per cent going on to post-secondary education. Cadets also reported they did not feel excluded based on race or ethnicity, gender identity, income level, their residential neighbourhood, or sexual orientation. Other metrics indicated improved self-esteem, communication skills, physical fitness, and community service engagement.

POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE

The Vancouver Police Athletic League is a crime prevention initiative that uses athletic, recreational, and educational programs to foster positive rapport and trust between police officers and youth. Activities include basketball games, soccer camps, running clubs, rugby camps, and the VPD Judo Club. The Judo Club engages with all youth, as well as providing a women-only class for girls and women, which allows girls and women of different cultural backgrounds who are not permitted to physically interact with men to still participate. This registered charity is partially funded by the VPF.

YOUTH-DIRECTED OUTREACH

VANCOUVER POLICE SOCCER AND SERVICE CLUB

The Vancouver Police Soccer and Service Club (VPSSC) is comprised of police officers and civilian professionals primarily from the VPD, but also includes members from other law enforcement agencies in B.C. Every year, the men's and women's teams play in leagues and tournaments locally and across North America. Additionally, the VPSSC are responsible for community initiatives where they engage at-risk youth and new immigrant youth through sports, to help break down barriers they may have with police. The following are three VPSSC youth initiatives.

Annual Soccer Camp

The annual VPD Soccer Camp is run by dedicated VPSSC volunteers from the VPD Canine Unit, VPD Mounted Unit, Patrol officers, School Liaison officers, and members of the Emergency Response Team. The camp occurs over four days in July, providing an essential summer program for youth between the ages of six to nine years. The camp's popularity has increased dramatically over the years and draws in excess of 100 kids.

Paul Sanghera Soccer Tournament

Since 1983, the VPSSC has supported the VPF and the Masonic Lodges of the Lower Mainland, in coordinating the annual Paul Sanghera Soccer Tournament to honour a fallen VPD police officer who tragically lost his life in a fatal car crash while on duty. In 2023 and 2024, in lieu of the annual tournament, members of the Youth Services Section and the VPSSC played a friendly match against the VPD Cadets. A gathering was hosted after the event that included the Sanghera family.

Vancouver Police Soccer and Service Club Free Boot Program

Every year, the VPSSC and community partners deliver 50 pairs of soccer boots, shin pads, and socks to impoverished youth in Vancouver. All of the recipients are involved in community soccer programs but do not necessarily have the means to purchase new equipment. The youth are invited to local sports stores, where they are fitted with new soccer equipment by both police officers and store staff. Two weeks after the fitting, the equipment is delivered to the athletes at a reception held at VPD headquarters. Police officers, youth, and their families share a meal supplied by local restaurants, and build relationships through the love of soccer.

TOTAL RESPECT FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

The Youth Services Section partnered with the Children of the Street Society, a provincial society and federal charity dedicated to preventing the sexual exploitation and human trafficking of children and youth in B.C., to create the Total Respect for Ourselves and Others (TROO) program. Through education strategies, public awareness initiatives, and family support, along with sexual awareness workshops, the program addresses the issues of sexting and the distribution of child pornography among youth. In addition to hosting intensive workshops with older youth, who have a demonstrated need to increase their knowledge and awareness in this regard, TROO also conducts preventative and informational presentations to students in younger grades.

YOU MATTER PROGRAM/CONSENT MATTERS CAMPAIGN

To prevent sexually-based crimes, and ultimately empower youth to build healthy relationships with their peers, the goal of the You Matter program is to educate youth about consent and personal safety, including cyber safety. An extension of this program is the Consent Matters campaign, which launched in 2023 and is aimed at educating youth ages 13-24 about sexual consent.

YOUTH-DIRECTED OUTREACH

HERE4PEERS

Here4Peers, an initiative funded by the VPF, was a partnership between the VPD, the Vancouver School Board, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), and Vancouver Coastal Health. The 80-minute peer-led mental health awareness workshop is delivered to Grades 6 and 7 students by their peers in Grades 10-12. Peer facilitators receive training and support from VPD and CMHA staff. Feedback from students, young adults, school staff, representatives from Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA), and QMUNITY, a nonprofit community centre in Vancouver that serves as a catalyst for 2SLGBTQ+ community initiatives and collective strength, was incorporated into the program to ensure it met the needs of the community.

Over 64,000 students have participated in the workshops since the start of the program, with over 150 workshops completed to-date. Eighty youth facilitators were trained from four different secondary schools. They delivered virtual workshops to elementary schools in four catchment areas, and launched the Let's Talk Mental Health for Kids and Teens video funded by the Vancouver Canucks. In accordance with long-term plans, after successful proof of concept and securing ongoing funding from the province, the Heer4Peers program was transferred to the CMHA, Vancouver Fraser Branch.

ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THE ARTS PROGRAM

This art program is provided to two groups of 15 youth across four community centre sites. Each group learns two art mediums and attends two arts and culture expeditions focusing on resiliency. Projects concentrate on social themes, and are showcased in a weeklong, public exhibition. VPD officers from the Youth Services Section also coordinated photography workshops with 20 youth at local community centres.

SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES FOR AT-RISK YOUTH (SAFARY)

This program, overseen by the Youth Services Section, supports upwards of 45 at-risk youth annually, by providing financial support for individualized recreation, athletic, leadership, and resilience-based activities. The activities include leadership camp, tutoring, driving lessons, art therapy, pottery, first aid certification, basketball, field hockey, volleyball, fitness facility passes, and ski/snowboarding passes.

ENVISIONING NEW CONNECTIONS: OUTREACH RECREATION ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

In partnership with the Britannia and Thunderbird Community Centres, the Youth Services Section oversees the Envisioning New Connections: Outreach Recreation Engagement Program, engaging over 400 youth through 13 community and school-based events. Over 20 families are provided with hampers, primarily consisting of grocery cards, winter coats and boots, other clothing items, and toys.

STREETFRONT ALTERNATIVE

This running club engages students who struggle in traditional classroom settings, and is a partnership with Britannia Secondary School, the Vancouver School Board, and the VPD. Most students in the program live in the Downtown Eastside, 70 per cent of whom are Indigenous, with most children being considered at-risk. Streetfront emphasizes the positive impact of physical activity with a focus on marathon training. The students run 5-10 km every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, as part of their school curriculum. Alumni are encouraged to come back and support participants. In 2023, participants ran three full marathons: Vancouver (50 kids), Victoria (22 kids), Seattle (35 kids), and two half-marathons (35 kids each).

Every year, 15 youth are chosen to go on a Street2Peak major trek, with youth traversing Gros Morne National Park in Newfoundland and Labrador over a two-week period in 2023.

YOUTH-DIRECTED OUTREACH

VPD YOUTH RUNNING CLUB (FORMERLY WINDERMERE RUNNING CLUB)

The VPD Youth Running Club, formerly the Windermere Running Club, provides a supportive and welcoming running environment for students. Previously only offered to high school students at Windermere School, it has now expanded to include youth from Vancouver College, Eric Hamber Secondary School, Gladstone Secondary School, and Vancouver Technical Secondary School. The program goal is to build positive relationships and healthy living skills through running. Runs take place three times per week, with upwards of 40 youth participating. Since its inception in 2017, 350 students have participated in the Club.

ReMAKE

The ReMAKE program, created by a VPD officer, is a partnership with the VPF, and has evolved into a pop-up community trailer. The purpose of the trailer is to reach out to a broader audience with the goal of building positive relationships with the public. The trailer will be used by different sections of the Department in a variety of community outreach initiatives.

SHARE A MEAL

Members of the Youth Services Section and social workers and youth probation officers with the Ministry of Children and Family Development participate in the Share a Meal program. The teams offer food vouchers, provided by the VPF, to share both a meal and a conversation with at-risk youth. Police officers from several units participate in this program. Over 150 food cards and meals were shared between youth and VPD members during 2023.

STRATHCONA FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM

The Strathcona Food Security Program runs every Friday for 45 weeks a year, supporting more than 810 participants from 135 low-income families who experience food insecurity on a regular basis. This program was originally developed to fill the gap over weekends when children are not supported by the school-based food programs they depend on during the school week. This VPF-funded program not only gives back to the community, but provides an important outreach opportunity for the Strathcona CPC Neighbourhood Police Officer Neighbourhood Police Officer (NPO).

The NPO personally assists with the delivery of these food packages, building positive relationships between community members and the police, and establishing a greater mutual understanding of the important issues facing both citizens and the police in the Strathcona area. Some of the impacts of this program have been:

- Children and families provided with dignified access to safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food.
- Opportunities created for community members to share and build on their food skills, knowledge, and experience, including increased awareness of the food system.
- Community resiliency built through social leadership opportunities.
- Trust and positive relationships built between the community and the VPD.

YOUTH-DIRECTED OUTREACH

SCHOOL LIAISON UNIT

The VPD School Liaison Unit maintains an ongoing partnership with the Vancouver School Board (VSB) dating back to 1972. Fifteen School Liaison Officers (SLOs) are assigned to specific schools within Vancouver, providing services to approximately 59,000 students from kindergarten to Grade 12. In addition to the public schools in the city, liaison officers serve all Vancouver private schools. The officers connect with students, providing daily support, and participating in various school-based activities and events. Several unique programs are offered to youth with consideration given to their identified needs.

The program was terminated in April 2021 after VSB trustees passed a motion cancelling it. In November 2022, the newly elected Board passed a motion re-establishing the program, subsequently requesting that the VSB and the VPD collaborate on the implementation of a reimagined SLO program – with consideration for the findings of the Argyle Communications Report. The VPD Youth Services Section considered numerous community consultations and independent research reports to create a plan for the revised program. In addition, various internal VPD sections and committees, and the Vancouver Police Union were consulted. The new model seeks to work with the VSB's Safe and Caring Schools team, expanding upon previous versions of the program to integrate current knowledge and best practices. A smooth reintegration into schools took place at the beginning of the 2023/2024 school year, allowing SLOs to once again provide a high level of service to youth in our schools and communities.

It is the shared mission of the VSB and the VPD to ensure that students, parents, school staff, police, community members, service agencies, and other partners work collaboratively so:



- Students can learn in a safe environment free from discrimination and harm, where they can develop strong self-esteem, responsible behaviour, and respect for the well-being and diversity of others, and to help them reach their intellectual, social, and physical potential.
- Preventative and appropriate intervention strategies can be provided to students who have engaged in risky, unsafe, or otherwise criminal behaviour, and where appropriate diversion and restorative justice principles are applied in accordance with the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.
- Effective and timely communication links are maintained between the VSB, VPD, and all partners.

YOUTH-DIRECTED OUTREACH



MAKING EVERYONE SAFE AND HEALTHY

VPD patrol officers host the VPF-funded *Making Everyone Safe and Healthy* (MESH) sports day, with 200 children from four elementary schools taking part. They learn about healthy lifestyle choices, while having fun and interacting with police officers. This program has transitioned to the Sunset Community Centre, with VPD patrol members continuing to participate.

Through this program, VPD patrol also supports floor hockey for kids, which engages 60 students from Grades 5 to 7 in the Hastings Sunrise community. It has become very successful since it began three years ago.

IRON BULL DOGS HEALTH CLUB (FORMERLY CHURCHILL STRONG)

The Iron Bull Dogs Health Club is a VPF-funded after-school program engaging youth who have run into minor disciplinary incidents and/or who do not normally participate in competitive sports. This program encourages youth to make healthier choices and to build stronger relationships with police, VSB staff, and peers. The workout club has received continued funding for weight training equipment, food, and participation. Interschool competitions occur twice annually, with the VPD

Strength & Lifting Club hosting workshops in support of over 50 students actively participating.

YOUTH COMMUNITY RESPONSE UNIT

The VPD is committed to supporting vulnerable youth in the community, helping them to access needed services so they are no longer victimized, and helping them make positive choices in their lives. Inter-agency collaboration provides opportunity for the VPD to expand their outreach capacity, ensuring that the physical, mental, and social needs of community members can be addressed through referred services.

YANKEE 10

Yankee 10 is a shared initiative between the VPD and Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), partnering police officers with probation/correction officers. The focus of the program is to monitor youth involved in the criminal justice system, and/or youth who are likely to become criminally involved. The Yankee 10 partnership liaises with probation officers in Vancouver, as well as other jurisdictions, conducts nightly curfew checks, attends locations where high-risk youth gather (e.g., local community centres), and assists foster parents/homes with youth engaging in problematic behaviour. Yankee 10 also connects with many other VPD sections, including the VPD Missing Persons Unit, and regularly supports frontline officers.

YOUTH-DIRECTED OUTREACH

YANKEE 20

Yankee 20 partners a VPD police officer with a MCFD youth social worker, providing a coordinated response to support sexually exploited and at-risk youth. The purpose of Yankee 20 is to work closely with community groups, such as UNYA, PLEA Community Services Society of B.C., Network of Inner-City Community Services Society, and Covenant House, to update previously identified youth in the community, and bring attention to new youth in the community. The goals of Yankee 20 and the community groups are to build and maintain relationships with youth, influencing them in a positive manner, and deterring them from negative street influences. This is done by connecting youth with resources and agencies that offer support services to meet their needs.

CAR 86

Since 1977, the Car 86 program has been working with a MCFD youth social worker to provide after-hours assessment and intervention for children deemed at-risk. The VPD officer and social worker work as a team in assessing, managing, and determining appropriate actions that are required to ensure the safety of children. In the most extreme cases, children could be removed from homes deemed to be unsafe and placed into temporary or long-term foster care. In most instances, MCFD will have the parent/guardian agree to a safety plan that they need to abide by ensuring the safety of their children. Car 86 also provides information and resources to families that require help in coping with their current situations.

CONNECTING WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES



CONNECTING WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Past discriminatory government policies, the generational effects of colonization, displacement, and the Residential School system have disadvantaged Indigenous Peoples. The VPD recognizes this discrimination and acknowledges that we all have a responsibility to ensure that systemic racism and discriminatory practices do not continue. Major events have taken place in Canada over the past years, such as the Missing and Murdered Women's Inquiry and Reconciliation Canada. As a result, significant modifications have been made in how we support and work with Indigenous communities, ensuring the most beneficial impacts for both police and community.

Developing a positive relationship between the VPD and Indigenous Peoples remains a priority in the process of reconciliation. To that end, the VPD engages in ongoing initiatives. Importantly, the VPD recognizes that building relationships must be based on mutual respect and understanding, and be led by, and in partnership with, Indigenous communities.

INDIGENOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The VPD and Vancouver's Indigenous community leaders collaborated in creating the VPD Indigenous Advisory Committee, which was established in late 2018. Ten recognized and respected members of Vancouver's Indigenous community, including representation from the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, Métis representation, VPD Executive. They meet quarterly for general meetings, along with two specialty meetings highlighting different emerging areas of policing, such as body-worn cameras. The specific goals/objectives that direct the Committee's efforts include:

- Relationship and trust-building between the Indigenous community and the VPD.
- Eliminating barriers between police and Indigenous residents and communities.
- Supporting education, cultural awareness, and other events to further build trusting relationships between residents, the Indigenous community, and the VPD.
- A procedure for sharing information on current issues within the Indigenous community.

CONNECTING WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

TRADITIONAL CANOE WAKING CEREMONY

In Coast Salish tradition, canoes are “woken up” after the winter before embarking onto the water. The VPD canoe, Nchu’7mut (pronounced In-CHOTE-Mote, meaning One Heart, One Mind), is awakened by members of the Squamish Nation and the VPD Canoe Family, preparing it for travel in a series of reconciliation events throughout the year, including the annual Pulling Together Canoe Journey. This ceremony highlights the important relationship the VPD shares with Vancouver’s Indigenous community.

In 2024, the ceremony hosted the Squamish Nation Ocean Canoe Family, 25 VPD staff, 20 VPD Cadets, and members of the Executive who participated in the waking ceremony.

PULLING TOGETHER CANOE JOURNEY

The Pulling Together Journey is a 10-day annual event promoting unity and understanding between all members of the community, regardless of background or identity. Participants recognized the past by Pulling Together to enhance understanding between public service agencies and Indigenous Peoples by canoeing the traditional highway and strengthening future relations.

This journey aims to strengthen and expand the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and police/public agencies in B.C.

Through the Pulling Together program, the police and Indigenous youth gain valuable insight about each other and the daily issues they face. Police mentors stay fully involved and committed for the entirety of programming, as well as following its completion, resulting in positive and sustainable outcomes.

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

On June 21, the VPD celebrates the annual National Indigenous Peoples Day, recognizing and celebrating the heritage, diversity, and important contributions of Indigenous Peoples. Staff from all areas of the Department interact with the community, receive feedback, and answer any

questions the community may have. This event also serves to capture public interest in policing as a career, with attendance from various VPD representatives, including the Traffic Section, the Mounted Unit, and the Emergency Response Section.

VPD officers participate in multiple events around Vancouver, including a pancake breakfast and a walk to Grandview Park with the Aboriginal Friendship Centre, and celebrations at Trout Lake, Musqueam, and in the Downtown Eastside. Each celebration represents different Indigenous communities and cultural activities where VPD officers can learn and engage with young people, Elders, and all ages in between.

INDIGENOUS PROTOCOL OFFICER

The VPD Indigenous Protocol Officer works directly with the Indigenous community to develop both VPD and community programming, to act as a resource for VPD members, and to serve as a member of the VPD Indigenous Advisory Committee. The officer advises the VPD on all Indigenous protocols related to formal events and integrates these protocols into current VPD ceremonies. They are a dedicated point of contact for community members and agencies to raise concerns which can then be addressed through the VPD Indigenous Advisory Committee. The Protocol Officer also oversees the *On the Land* programming.

Indigenous Protocol Officer

- Coordinates the VPD Indigenous Advisory Committee
- Participates in ongoing recruit training at the Justice Institute of British Columbia
- Participates in the Pulling Together Canoe Journey
- Attends many community events throughout the year (e.g., funerals, marches, and other cultural events)

CONNECTING WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

IPVRAU INDIGENOUS LIAISON OFFICER

An Indigenous female officer, with combined Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Indigenous and Irish Canadian heritage, addresses the specific needs of Indigenous victims of intimate partner violence and sexual assault. They are working to include an Indigenous support worker to partner with the investigator, to support Indigenous victims with resources, and to support them throughout the investigation and any court processes, and beyond.

- Consultation with the Indigenous community on how to best improve reporting and offer culturally safe trauma-informed practices is ongoing.
- Between January and August of 2024, IPVRAU reviewed over 60 Indigenous specific files, reaching out to each victim for management and ongoing supports with FSGV.
- Two Indigenous cultural spaces are used when necessary – one at our Graveley location and one at the Treehouse Youth Advocacy Centre. The Aboriginal Community Policing Centre is also used as a safe space for victims to meet with the IPVRAU Indigenous detective.

THE VANCOUVER ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY POLICING CENTRE

The Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre (VACPC) was founded by Vancouver's Indigenous community to address social justice issues, improve safety for Indigenous Peoples, and strengthen the relationship between the VPD and the Indigenous community through education, awareness, and open dialogue. As a non-profit organization, the VACPC is governed by a board of directors elected by and from members of Vancouver's Indigenous community. In working with the Indigenous community, local organizations, and all levels of government, the VACPC is better able to provide services, programs, and resources to help maintain the security and safety of Indigenous communities in Vancouver. The VACPC provides a safe place where community members can gather to identify, discuss, and address safety issues. Programs offered to the Indigenous community focus

on social development, healing, life skills, support, and counselling, all through a supportive environment.

A dedicated VPD NPO works with the Centre to support staff and community members. The officer plays an integral part in fulfilling the mandate of the VACPC by providing support, representing the VPD, and working with the Indigenous community to communicate their needs and concerns to the VPD. Specifically, the NPO is in a unique position to assist Indigenous Peoples when they report incidents, such as violence or a missing loved one, and when they need to liaise with investigative units.

MUSQUEAM OUTREACH

The Musqueam Nation is in the southwest area of Vancouver. By agreement with the City of Vancouver, the Nation has chosen the VPD as the police for its territory. A dedicated VPD Musqueam Liaison Officer works with the people of the Musqueam Nation providing culturally sensitive police services. This includes speaking engagements to bring awareness of the history of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada, as well as participating in activities to strengthen our relationship with the Musqueam Nation. The Liaison also delivers pro-active initiatives and participates in major events such as the Musqueam Canoe Races and the National Indigenous Peoples Day, and is very active in engaging Musqueam youth.

DID YOU KNOW...

The VPD has six liaison positions to ensure the needs of the Indigenous community are being met?

- Indigenous Protocol Officer
- Indigenous Liaison Officer
- Musqueam Liaison Officer
- Vancouver Aboriginal CPC (VACPC) Liaison Officer
- IPVRAU Indigenous Liaison
- Missing Persons Indigenous Liaison Officer

CONNECTING WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES



INDIGENOUS RELATIONS OFFICER

The VPD has a dedicated Indigenous Relations Officer (IRO) who works with Vancouver's urban Indigenous population to communicate their needs and concerns to the VPD. The aim is to achieve mutual understanding and alignment on community and police issues.

The IRO works with Indigenous Elders, leaders, agencies, and individuals who come to the VPD with requests for assistance in navigating the criminal justice system, or concerns relating to investigations and safety planning. The officer also works with the community to address issues related to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and to support the SisterWatch Committee. The IRO is asked to support the diverse mandates of community agencies through information sessions and Sharing Circles with staff and clients. These community interactions promote cultural safety, take a trauma-informed approach, and have resulted in many trusting relationships with Indigenous youth and adults.

The IRO also works closely with community partners to provide learning opportunities and healthy activities for Indigenous youth, such as hiking and cultural outings, and long-term coaching and mentorship for the youth and young adults who participate in the Indigenous Cadet Program.

The IRO supports the development of the VPD's understanding of racism, reconciliation, Indigenization, and decolonization, and provides direction for the VPD in the creation of internal policies, activities, and training relating to these processes.

INDIGENOUS JOB FAIR

The Diversity, Community, and Indigenous Relation Section hosted an Indigenous-focused job fair in the Hastings Room at the PNE. The fair was centred on connecting job seekers with perspective employers. Organizations that participated in the fair included: B.C. Building Trades, ICBC, the PNE, Automotive Retailers Association, Squamish Nation Training & Trades Centre, Vancouver Fire Rescue, Native Education College, TD Bank, B.C. Emergency Health Services, Translink, Fraser Health, Skilled Trades B.C., Pomerleau Construction, and the VACPC.

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS VETERANS DAY

National Indigenous Veterans Day is a memorial day observed in Canada in recognition of the contributions of Indigenous Peoples to military service, particular in the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War. This memorial day is observed on November 8, and each year the VPD pays tribute to the contributions and sacrifices of Indigenous veterans who bravely served our country.

CONNECTING WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES



ON THE LAND (FORMERLY CULTURAL HEALTH AND LEARNING INITIATIVE)

Implemented in 2021 and funded by the VPF, the multifaceted *On the Land* program encourages healing and learning among policing partners who serve Indigenous communities in B.C. The VPD works in partnership with the Squamish Nation, the Integrated First Nations Unit, West Vancouver Police, Metro Vancouver Transit Police, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Several important initiatives included in this program are sweat lodge ceremonies, canoe paddles, and spirit baths. These activities include Elders, youth, and police members from the communities in which the policing organizations work, with an emphasis on mutual respect and understanding through shared cultural experiences and conversations.

In 2023, the VPD made participation in the *On the Land* program a half-increment course for VPD members. Prior to this, more than 200 police and civilian members participated in the program, along with community organizations, Vancouver Fire Rescue Services, and the Royal Columbia Mounted Police (RCMP).

MOOSE HIDE CAMPAIGN

In 2024, over half a million Canadians joined together on Moose Hide campaign day with the goal of ending gender-based violence. The

VPD participates annually in this campaign with Department-wide education and awareness, and the wearing of the Moose Hide pin in solidarity.

ORANGE SHIRT DAY

This event is commemorated annually on September 30 in honour of Phyllis Webstad, whose grandmother gifted her an orange shirt. On her first day at residential school, all her clothing was taken from her, including her orange shirt which was never returned. VPD staff show support of residential and day school survivors by wearing an orange shirt on this day, and by wearing an orange ribbon pin throughout the year. VPD staff and the Executive participate each year in Orange Shirt Day events in Vancouver, including gatherings at the Vancouver Art Gallery and Grandview Park.

RESTORATIVE COMPLAINT RESOLUTION

In 2022, the Professional Standards Section initiated the Restorative Complaint Resolution process for registered *Police Act* complaints that fall under Division 4 of the *Act*. The process utilizes healing circles to resolve *Police Act* complaints in a culturally sensitive and meaningful manner. The VPD is the first municipal department to use healing circles for *Police Act* complaints, and has received an exemption from the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner (OPCC), as well as a commitment to review the current guidelines under the *Act* for complaint resolution.

ENGAGING WOMEN AND GIRLS

ENGAGING WOMEN AND GIRLS

Although many crimes do not discriminate between genders, women are more vulnerable to certain types of crime. The VPD recognizes that violence against women and girls is an established barrier to gender equality. The trauma suffered by victims of violence can negatively impact their mental and physical health, relationships, and overall well-being.

Further, intersecting social disparities often disproportionately and negatively impacts marginalized groups such as Indigenous women, placing them at increased risk for violent victimization. Research has shown that between 2009 and 2021, the rate of homicide against Indigenous women and girls was six times higher than the rate among non-Indigenous. Indigenous women report being sexually assaulted at a rate triple that of non-Indigenous women (11 per cent compared to 3.5 per cent). Additionally, in 2023, Indigenous women accounted for 27 per cent of female homicide victims in Canada, while only accounting for 4 per cent of the population.

The VPD has developed specific programming, in consultation with the Indigenous community, tailored to prevent further violence against Indigenous women. Additionally, the Department dedicates positions and programming to help ensure the safety of Indigenous women such as the Indigenous Partnership Program. This program is a partnership between the VPD Intimate Partner Violence and Risk Assessment Unit (IPVRAU) and Family Services of Greater Vancouver, and is led by an Indigenous police officer who is supported by an Indigenous support worker.

SISTERWATCH COMMITTEE

Women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside community are particularly vulnerable to violence, injury, and death; crime statistics have never truly reflected the danger facing the women who live there. Whether the cause is fear of reprisals or general distrust of authority, women have traditionally been reluctant to report crimes against themselves and others.

Following the tragic death of Ashley Machiskinic, the SisterWatch Committee began in December 2010 with regular Town Hall meetings attended by members of the Downtown Eastside community and the VPD. These members include the Chief Constable, members of the VPD Executive, senior management, as well as frontline officers. SisterWatch meetings are co-chaired by the VPD Chief Constable and an Elder from the community.

The guiding principle of the Committee is to provide a safe space for women, girls, and 2SLGBTQ+ individuals of the Downtown Eastside, to voice their concerns and stay informed about ongoing police investigations, as well as any advances in community safety.

ENGAGING WOMEN AND GIRLS

WOMEN'S MEMORIAL MARCH

The first Women's Memorial March was held in 1992 in response to the murder of a woman in Vancouver. Out of this sense of hopelessness and anger came a ceremonial march to express compassion, community, and caring for all women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

Decades later, the annual march held on Valentine's Day, continues to honour the lives of missing and murdered women. The event is organized and led by women in the Downtown Eastside because women, especially Indigenous women, have faced violence that has taken the lives of so many, leaving deep voids in their hearts. Individuals gather each year to mourn and remember those lost to violence by listening to their family members, by taking over the streets, and through spiritual ceremonies. VPD participation shows support for the families of missing and murdered women, and is a visible police gesture of respect and support for the Indigenous community.

On February 14, 2024, 23 VPD personnel participated in the 33rd Annual Women's Memorial March. The VPD also supported the Red Ribbon Dress initiative in 2023, which included authorization by the Chief to financially support the Sweetgrass Sisters Society in the creation of red ribbon skirts by community members, for families of women and girls who are missing or who have been killed. This initiative has been supported since 2019.

SEX INDUSTRY LIAISON OFFICER

The role of the VPD Sex Industry Liaison Officer has evolved in the community, moving away from enforcement and into advocacy. This is a proven resource for women, many who live and work in the Downtown Eastside. The Liaison officer assists with:

- Accompaniment to follow-up appointments, such as obtaining audio/video/written statements, victim services, medical appointments.
- Transportation to out-of-town court commitments, like Crown Counsel interviews, courtroom preparation, and testifying in court.



- Assisting with placement in detox or recovery.
- Transitional housing and second stage housing.
- Connecting with community programs that include housing, mental health, employment, and personal development.

Partnerships are essential to the success of the work done by the liaison officer. Community partners include Women's Information and Safe Haven (WISH), the Prostitution Alternatives Counselling and Education (PACE), First United Church, Carnegie Outreach, Vancouver Coastal Health Intensive Case Management Team, Downtown Community Health Clinic, Downtown Eastside residences, detox, recovery and transition houses, and various shelters (e.g., Triage, Al Mitchell Place, Yukon, and the Evelyn Saller Centre).

ENGAGING WOMEN AND GIRLS

ID4ME

The Sex Industry Liaison Officer operates the ID4ME program in the Downtown Eastside, which is designed to assist low-barrier individuals to move forward in their lives by providing them with photo identification. The success of this program has been particularly felt by residents who can use their new ID to open bank accounts, obtain improved housing, and upgrade their education. Since 2015, the VPF has supported ID4ME in acquiring over 700 pieces of identification including birth certificates, BCID, B.C. Services, and Status cards, thereby changing the lives of residents in the community. This is a VPF-funded initiative.

WOMEN'S PERSONAL SAFETY TEAM

In 2013, 16 female police officers of various levels of seniority and experience were recruited as volunteers and trained to form the Women's Personal Safety Team (WPST). Team members volunteer their time to teach women skills and concepts regarding crime prevention and dealing effectively with violent encounters. The workshops are designed to be easily learned and remembered by women with little or no tactical training.

The WPST has several community partners, including SisterWatch and the Right to Play program, that works with Indigenous Youth and the VACPC. To ensure Indigenous women receive training, workshops have been held on Musqueam Nation territory and at the Vancouver Native Housing Society. Safety training has also been provided to female youth and other low-to-no-barrier women's housing in the Downtown Eastside. Approximately 30 to 40 per cent of the participants are Indigenous women.



In 2023, the WPST celebrated their 10th anniversary, presenting to more than 700 women in the Vancouver community. Specific workshops were provided to English Language Learners with interpreters on-site, as well as workshops for diverse communities such as the 2SLGBTQ+ individuals.

THE SHOEBOX PROJECT

Funded by the VPF, VPD civilian professionals participated in the Shoebox Project for Shelters. This program provides women in need (e.g. in shelters, displaced from their homes) with shoeboxes containing approximately \$50 worth of items during the holiday season, such as socks, scarves, toiletries, a gift card, a journal, and a message of hope. The shoeboxes were earmarked for Vancouver area shelters, including the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). In 2023, 26 VPD employees donated 50 boxes, which was up 50 per cent from 2021.

COLLABORATING WITH CITIZENS

COLLABORATING WITH CITIZENS

COMMUNITY CRIME WATCH

The VPD's Community Crime Watch (CCW) program has been operating since 1986. Community members volunteer their Friday and Saturday nights to assist the VPD by reporting incidents such as thefts-from-auto in-progress or identifying stolen vehicles. Volunteers often assist the VPD Traffic Section and have worked on Counterattack roadblocks helping police identify impaired drivers. CCW also assists in searching for high-risk missing persons. Newly implemented projects include a targeted cell phone traffic enforcement initiative and a charitable community outreach program that provides free essential personal products and clothing to at-risk persons in the Downtown Eastside.

With a commitment to this community-based model, the VPD maintains a CCW coordinator who is responsible for the supervision and coordination of all activities relating to the CCW program, deployment of personnel, coaching, evaluation, administration, and planning. The coordinator also takes part and assists in organizing community events, including staffing, scheduling, and training.

The assistance that CCW volunteers provide the VPD is significant. For example, in 2023, 60 CCW volunteers went out on patrol for a total of 6,377 hours. While working with police, their efforts resulted in 15 arrests, 492 violation tickets, 34 immediate roadside prohibitions, and recovery of 11 stolen vehicles. Additionally, volunteers observed 17 individuals experiencing drug overdoses and were responsible for getting medical assistance in time to save their lives.



WATCHING OUT FOR EACH OTHER: BLOCK WATCH

Since 1987, the Vancouver Police Block Watch program has been enhancing community safety. With the VPD's guidance and support, residents work together to increase safety and security by sharing information on crime prevention and staying alert to any suspicious activities. In 2024, the program has grown to 400 groups encompassing over 8,000 members throughout the city.

Block Watch is managed by a dedicated police officer and civilian professional coordinator, offering direct police guidance, support, and training. Block Captains take the lead in community engagement, organizing introductory meetings with the Block Watch constable to educate residents about the program's operations, current crime trends, safety measures, and how to identify and report suspicious and criminal activities.

Continuous support is provided through various training sessions, up-to-date crime data, educational materials, and police participation in local events and block parties – contributing to a more secure and connected Vancouver.

COLLABORATING WITH CITIZENS

COMMUNITY POLICING CENTRES

Vancouver's 12 CPCs hold a unique position among crime prevention initiatives in North America, with a strong partnership between the community and the VPD. Unlike their counterparts in other cities, these centres are not satellite police stations, rather, they are operated, staffed, and governed by members of the community.

The contact information of each CPC is listed:



- **Chinese CPC**
44 East Pender Street, V6A 3V6
Tel: 604-688-5030 Fax: 604-688-5070
info@chinesecpc.com
 - **Collingwood CPC**
5160 Joyce Street, V5R 4H1
Tel: 604-717-2935 Fax: 604-430-4955
info@collingwoodcpc.com
 - **Grandview Woodland CPC**
1977 Commercial Drive, V5N 4A8
Tel: 604-717-2932 Fax: 604-717-2923
info@gwcpc.ca
 - **Granville Downtown CPC**
1263 Granville Street, V6Z 1M5
Tel: 604-717-2920 Fax: 604-717-2922
info@granvillecpc.ca
 - **Hastings Sunrise CPC**
2620 East Hastings Street, V5K 1Z6
Tel: 604-717-3584 Fax: 604-216-0991
info@hscpc.com
 - **Kerrisdale Oakridge Marpole CPC**
6070 East Boulevard, V6M 3V5
Tel: 604-717-3434 or 604-717-3433
Fax: 604-717-3432
komcpc@shaw.ca
 - **Kitsilano Fairview CPC**
78 - 1687 West Broadway, V6J 1X2
Tel: 604-717-4023 Fax: 604-717-4029
kitsfaircpc@gmail.com
 - **Mount Pleasant CPC**
76 Kingsway Avenue, V5T 3H9
Tel: 604-717-0684
info@mpcpc.ca
 - **South Vancouver CPC**
4830 Nanaimo Street, V5R 5G9
Tel: 604-717-2940
info@svpcpc.com
 - **Strathcona CPC**
872 E Hastings Street, V6A 1R6
Tel: 604-717-0622
info@strathconacpc.ca
 - **Vancouver Aboriginal CPC**
1719 Franklin Street, V5L 1P6
Tel: 604-678-3790 Fax: 604-678-3792
coordinator@vacpc.org
 - **West End Coal Harbour CPC**
1267 Davie Street, V6E 1N4
Tel: 604-717-2924 or 604-717-2925
Fax: 604-717-2926
info@wehcpc.com
- All the CPCs carry out a range of community engagement programs, including foot/bicycle patrols, road safety programs, ethnic and cultural education programs, senior safety programs, and victim services.

COLLABORATING WITH CITIZENS

KHALSA DIWAN SOCIETY COMMUNITY POLICING CENTRE

Continuing the engagement and positive relationship building with members of Vancouver's South Asian Community, the South Vancouver CPC partnered with VPD and the Khalsa Diwan Society to open an outreach office in south Vancouver. The Khalsa Diwan Society office is staffed by several volunteers, who welcome visitors to the centre, and a friendly environment where they can seek assistance with their crime and safety concerns. The volunteers are also tasked with foot patrols, organizing safety presentations, and youth games or other activities to help build and foster positive relationships between youth and policing agencies. The outreach office also partners with the [South Vancouver Seniors Hub](#) to provide programming and support for seniors.

While this office was closed during COVID, South Vancouver CPC, the VPD, and the Khalsa Diwan Society are working towards re-establishing this important community connection.

PROJECT 529

Bicycle theft impacts over two million North Americans at an estimated economic impact exceeding \$500 million annually. Project 529 Garage was launched by the VPD as a pilot program in 2015, becoming a tool for police, cyclists, bike shops, and the public to access bike information from one universal searchable database. Owners, shops, and organizations can register bicycles for free very quickly. Project 529 is a modern, simple, and highly efficient bicycle registration/reporting/recovery platform that allows the public and private sectors to address this problem collectively. It permits cross-municipality cooperation through a single database that can scale provincially and nationally.



FAST FACTS

Project 529 B.C. social media followers:

- [X](#) 2,412
- [Facebook](#) 1,199
- [Instagram](#) 780

Project 529 is the largest cycling platform in the province, and has spread nationally and internationally. By the end of 2023, there was a decrease of 65 per cent. This successful bicycle registry and bicycle theft prevention/recovery program has registered over 800,000 bicycles across the province since its inception. Recently, a police specific application was installed on all VPD member devices to further assist police in tracking stolen bikes and returning them to their rightful owners.

BUSINESS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

BUSINESS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

The VPD regularly engages the business community by liaising with retailers and business organizations to exchange crime-related information, providing crime analysis and advice, and to assist with crime prevention initiatives. The VPD Business Liaison Officer is responsible for coordinating education and training for the business community on crime prevention and awareness. This included a collaboration with partners, such as the Vancouver Business Improvement Areas, to create a business crime prevention tips booklet, which is hand-delivered to businesses by CPC volunteer foot patrols. The officer also liaises with Neighbourhood Police Teams and the Property Crime Unit to identify prolific offenders at hotels and businesses. In addition to running trespass prevention programming for members of the Vancouver Business Improvement Areas, over 30 workshops a year are provided to train their 1800 members. Currently, there are over 500 businesses signed up for the VPD-initiated Trespass Prevention Program.

PROJECT ACCESS

Project Access is designed to reduce potential barriers and time delays when responding to emergencies at high-security rental and/or strata residential buildings. Launched in 2014, the Project involves partnering with building strata and rental companies to provide police with a secure method of entry should a resident of their building require immediate assistance. The idea is to work cooperatively to develop infrastructure and processes to provide rapid police access to select buildings during urgent situations through the VPD's communications partner, E-Comm 911.

VANCOUVER SHIELD

In September 2021, VPD launched Vancouver SHIELD and joined the Global Shield Network, a worldwide partnership of police agencies, including the London Metropolitan Police, Antwerp Police, Victoria Police (Australia), Calgary Police Service, and various U.S.



police departments. The Network grew out of the success of the New York Police Department Shield program, where police agencies share information and best practices regarding counterterrorism and active deadly threat detection and prevention.

Vancouver SHIELD is a private/public partnership between the VPD and Vancouver's private and public sector security professionals, which includes faith communities and post-secondary institutions. SHIELD focuses primarily on businesses or establishments that have a high profile, or are responsible for the protection of crowded places. Partnerships are fostered through intelligence sharing, threat briefings, training opportunities, and an email notification system.

BUSINESS LIAISON OFFICERS

Partnering with the Retail Council of Canada and other community partners, Business Liaison Officers run Project Barcode, which was carried out for the fourth time in 2023 and fifth time in early 2024 to respond to property crime and violent shoplifting. The result was the seizure of multiple weapons, over \$100,000 in recovered stolen merchandise each time, and the arrest of over 250 people.

OTHER COMMUNITY LIAISON POSITIONS

OTHER COMMUNITY LIAISON POSITIONS

COMMUNITY POLICING CENTRE COORDINATION OFFICER

The CPC Coordination Officer provides support and guidance to the 12 community policing centres (CPCs) across Vancouver, working in collaboration with the Neighbourhood Police Officers and CPC staff and volunteers to address community concerns. As a representative of the VPD during numerous events, the coordinator establishes working relationships with CPC executive directors and volunteers, creating connection between the VPD, the community, and CPCs.

COMMUNITY SAFETY PERSONNEL

Community Safety Personnel (CSP) are distinct and separate from regular police members, and they are considered a unique element of the VPD. Working within the Community Safety Unit, their primary purpose is to:

- Assist with lower-level, lower-risk tasks, as directed, to provide regular police officers with more capacity to serve the community and to maintain high visibility while patrolling neighbourhoods.
- Assist the VPD at community and public events by providing a visible presence and promoting safety and security where the presence of a regular police officer is not required.
- Act as a liaison between regular police officers and the community, as appropriate, to ensure the VPD continues to effectively serve citizens in Vancouver.
- Assist police officers to maximize their available proactive policing time.

The program also serves a valuable recruiting function; many former CSPs have been hired as police officers in the VPD and other agencies. As of June 2024, 214 have become VPD officers, 25 have been hired by other municipal departments, five by Metro Vancouver Transit Police, and 17 by the RCMP.

COMMUNITY SAFETY THROUGH PROACTIVE COLLABORATION

The VPD engages in proactive activities through collaboration with community partners and deploys three liaison officers to address homelessness, problem premises, and issues relating to licensed establishments. Working proactively, these liaison officers partner with other agencies to resolve community-identified issues, while at the same time reducing criminal activity.

- The Problem Premises Coordinator coordinates multi-agency responses to problem premises. This coordinator works closely with City of Vancouver partners and other agencies with the goal of reducing police resources dedicated to problem premises and improving the quality of living in the surrounding community.
- The Homeless Liaison Coordinator provides daily outreach to the unhoused, including those in encampments and persons identified through Patrol contacts. They provide contact information for appropriate resources and services, partner with the Problem Premise Coordinator, and liaise with other police jurisdictions to mutually assist and exchange information and support the unhoused during extreme weather. Collaboration occurs with Patrol Operations, Neighbourhood Police Teams, City of Vancouver, Vancouver Fire Rescue Services, and Vancouver Park Board. The liaison also connects with various non-profit organizations including Project ZacPac, led by 14-year-old Zac Weinberg, which involves the distribution of hundreds of sleeping bags to homeless individuals and the related wellness checks.
- The Liquor Coordinator focuses on problems arising from licensed premises. Working with internal and external partners, this coordinator focuses on establishments generating significant community and public safety concerns.

RECRUITING INITIATIVES



RECRUITING INITIATIVES

Although the typical age of recruitment for VPD police officers is between 23 and 27 years of age, recruitment efforts begin long before the actual hiring date. VPD police officers act as role models and mentors for youth through direct various programs and initiatives. This investment often leads to an aspiration to become future police officers, and to begin to take the necessary steps and life choices required to do so.

Positive interactions between students and police are not limited to youth programs primarily delivered by the Youth Services Section. Police recruiters also have a positive impact through education and demonstrating what becoming a police officer entails. In addition to VPD youth programming, Recruiting Unit officers regularly attend events, colleges, and universities, engaging and sharing information with students about a policing career. The Unit also works closely with DCIRS to engage communities through programming and events, including 2SLGBTQ+, Indigenous, racialized, and faith-based communities.

Recruiting efforts continued with virtual community relations through the Indigenous Link program,

the Kwantlen Park School, and other regularly advertised Zoom sessions on social media. Recruiting officers attend the celebration of the Nisga'a New Year to share employment opportunities with the Indigenous community and recently collaborated with DCIRS on the Indigenous Job and Career Fair – Opportunities for the Future.

OUTREACH

The Recruiting Unit leverages social media platforms, including X and Instagram, and advertising to enhance its outreach. Advertisements has run on local radio stations, including JRFM and RedFM, to reach and attract new demographics to the VPD, such as South Asian and Asian communities, and young adults of other diverse cultures.

VPD recruiters attended more than 116 separate outreach events in 2023, an increase of 25 per cent over the previous year. In addition to outreach at multiple post-secondary institutions, such as Simon Fraser University, the University of British Columbia, Camosun College, and Lethbridge College, additional events included:

COMMUNITY OUTREACH FOR MENTAL HEALTH

- Westcoast Women's Show
- African Descent Society Festival
- Taiwan Fest
- Pista Ng Bayan
- Ismaili Canada Day
- Carribean Days
- Chinese Lunar New Year
- Vaisakhi Parade
- Polar Plunge
- Pinoy Festival
- KitsFest
- PNE
- Iranian community outreach event
- International Auto Show
- Nigerian community outreach
- All Native Basketball Tournament (Prince Rupert)
- The Sky's No Limit – She is Anything (formerly Girls Fly Too)

Running with a Recruiter

Over 150 participants have come to the first two Run with a Recruiter events, which will be bi-monthly going forward. Applicants or potential applicants have a chance to connect with VPD officers in an encouraging and motivating environment. The program comes with various benefits, including wellness for both participants and officers. Runners have a chance to work on their fitness goals and improve their POPAT/COPAT times, while in a team environment. Workouts consist of a 5- to 7-km run in various parts of the city or a circuit workout to help with strength and endurance.

Women-Focused POPAT

The Women-Focused POPAT (Police Officers Physical Abilities Test) will be back on November 30, 2024. Female applicants have the opportunity to practise and ask questions about the test, as well as the selection process for the VPD. Participants can learn fitness techniques and drills to improve or achieve their passing score.

Women's Workshop

Female applicants are invited to visit the VPD Tactical Training Centre to learn and experience what a day as a police officer may entail by engaging in several scenario-based training sessions. VPD recruiters and Force Options instructors provide a tour of the facility and applicants can test various police equipment.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH FOR MENTAL HEALTH



COMMUNITY OUTREACH FOR MENTAL HEALTH

The VPD, in collaboration with health partners, continues to provide a spectrum of mental health outreach, care, and support to the community. The Vancouver Police Board meets annually with health partners, providing governance and direction to VPD and health working groups. More specifically, Project LINK is a collaboration among the Board, the Vancouver Coastal Health Board, and the Providence Health Care Board. Initiated in October 2011, its goal is to achieve improved outcomes for those living with mental illness and addiction. A major first step was enabling the sharing of information across these police and health organizations. With that in place, LINK was able to make dramatic changes, including the formation of the Assertive Outreach Team (AOT) and the Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACT). These teams have greatly reduced negative contacts with police, emergency room visits, victimization, and criminal justice involvement for those living with mental health and substance use issues.

MENTAL HEALTH LIAISON NURSES

There are currently two mental health nurses assigned to the VPD Operational Command Centre during dayshift hours. Their role is to divert low-risk

mental health calls to treatment sources, instead of having police officers attend. Officers working in the Command Centre review calls and forward appropriate options to the liaison nurse. Once medical records are reviewed, the nurse will reach out to the affected person for an initial assessment. In the majority of cases, the nurse is able to pass timely information on to a mental health treatment source and prevent the necessity of police involvement.

VANCOUVER MOBILE CRISIS DE-ESCALATION TEAM

The VPD is a referring partner to this program, which provides non-police, same-day crisis support for mental health and substance use to people aged 17 and older in Vancouver. Health care assessments and interventions are provided, as well as referrals to health services, including Vancouver Coastal Health and other service providers. The VPD referred 19 clients to the program in 2024.

THE ASSERTIVE OUTREACH TEAM

Created in 2014, the Assertive Outreach Team (AOT) is a health care and police partnership unique to Vancouver. This program serves to stabilize high-risk clients and transition them to the appropriate level of care in the system, by partnering a police officer with a team of health

COMMUNITY OUTREACH FOR MENTAL HEALTH

care professionals, including psychiatric nurses, clinical supervisors, and psychiatrists. The team works together to meet the needs of complex concurrent disorder clients, formulate treatment plans, and navigate intersections of various systems (e.g., criminal justice, health care, etc.).

The Team works with a group of 20 to 30 clients to collaboratively problem-solve issues and provide care in the community on an outreach basis. Early intervention during crisis often reduces admissions to hospital and can lead to better health outcomes for clients and their communities. For example, over a three-month period during the summer of 2023, the AOT decreased client involvement with the criminal justice system by 74 per cent, emergency department visits by 48 per cent, and mental health bed days by 58 per cent. The VPF funded the *Backpacks* and *Food for Thought* initiatives in 2023 to further support AOT clients.

ASSERTIVE COMMUNITY TREATMENT TEAM

The Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACT) provides long-term care to clients in the community. There are now six ACT teams serving up to 420 clients, with approximately ten health care professionals on each multi-disciplinary team. VPD officers are embedded into these six teams, which can also include social workers, nurses, psychiatric nurses, vocational therapists, peer support members, and psychiatrists, providing wrap-around care to clients and improving their quality of life. Provincial ACT standards suggest three positive contacts per client per week, preferably in person. There was a 24 per cent decrease in criminal justice system involvement for ACT clients from July to September 2023, and a 31 per cent decrease in negative police contacts.

CAR 87/88

Established in 1978, VPD's Car 87/88 program is a partnership between a VPD plainclothes police officer and a registered nurse or psychiatric nurse,

who provide urgent mental health assessments or interventions. Working seven days a week, the teams assess, manage, and decide the most appropriate action in the best interest of the client and the community. The program is co-managed, with appointments directed in consultation with VPD by Vancouver Coastal Health. Car 87/88 teams also:

- Assess clients in the community.
- Connect people to mental health and addiction services.
- Support the work of Community Mental Health teams, including outreach, assessments and providing/administering of medication.
- Apprehend clients, where necessary under Section 28 of the *Mental Health Act* or those with active warrants (i.e., Form 4¹ or Form 21²) intended to ensure the individual is supported and/or continues to be connected to a mental health care plan.

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

The VPD developed the Early Warning System (EWS) in 2013. This analytical tool utilizes information from an existing police database to assess individuals who had a mental health apprehension in the previous two years and also engage in criminality. The EWS is used to determine and prioritize early mental health intervention. Each criminal occurrence within an individual's history receives a weighted severity metric that is based on offence type and frequency. This produces a EWS ranking that then determines the priority for police and health intervention and engagement.

On a weekly basis, the VPD shares the top 150 individuals with health partners, in compliance with an information sharing partnership agreement. Working with VPD, health partners have capacity to support the top 50 identified individuals with mental health resources.

¹ Form 4 – Medical certificate issued by a physician to order a person detained involuntarily. When issued, the police officer has the authority to apprehend that individual for the purpose of bringing them to a care facility.

² Form 21 – Director's Warrant issued to peace officers so the officer can immediately apprehend the named patient and transport him/her to a named facility.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH VPD INVESTIGATIVE SECTIONS



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH VPD INVESTIGATIVE SECTIONS

In addition to serving as members on the SisterWatch committee, members of the VPD's Special Investigation Section are partners in The Treehouse Vancouver Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC), a collaborative initiative between the VPD, Family Services of Greater Vancouver (FSGV), B.C. Children's Hospital, the Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD), and the Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society (VACFSS). Funding from the VPF resulted in upgraded facilities.

Treehouse coordinates a dynamic, multi-disciplinary response, which supports the investigation and intervention of child abuse, minimizes trauma, and works to enhance the community's ability to protect children. The team is comprised of a VPD Sex Crimes Unit sergeant and detectives, social workers from MCFD, the VACFSS, victim support workers from FSGV, and contracted therapists. It also includes a service director and coordinator from Treehouse, and an accredited facility dog from the Pacific Assistance Dogs Society. In addition, investigators in the Sex Crimes Unit rely on the support of FSGV for investigation into child abuse, or adult or sexual assault investigations, that are not conducted at Treehouse. For example, FSGV victim services workers support victims by referring them to counselling and/or treatment services, and providing supportive information on the criminal justice system.

VPD's Intimate Partner Violence & Risk Assessment Unit (IPVRAU) investigators and victim support workers attend quarterly meetings at VACFSS headquarters in Vancouver. Other community partners

in attendance include probation officers, MCFD social workers, and various advocacy group representatives. The Unit collaborates with a variety of community partners to help those involved in violent situations with an intimate partner. For example, detectives will often work with the Musqueam Liaison Officer and Musqueam Indigenous Band security when incidents of intimate partner violence occur in the community. This collaboration typically involves offender management and safety planning with the victims. Continued training and sharing of appropriate information are vital to maintaining community relationships that are relied upon to ensure the safety of victims.

Through VPF funding, IPVRAU investigators provide victims of intimate partner violence with tailored safety kits containing gift cards for groceries, toiletries, and phones with data, along with other items. The Unit piloted a program titled the Indigenous Partnership Pilot Program, where an Indigenous detective and a FSGV support worker reach out to victims of intimate partner violence or crimes involving sex offences. The team will then meet the victim off-site at their convenience, with a more trauma-informed approach. The pilot took place between December 2023 and August 2024.

IPVRAU investigators ensure that they develop community connections via presentations and meetings with community members. For example, an IPVRAU sergeant and victim support workers from FSGV present to group participants, including Indigenous women, transgendered persons, sex workers, and those with mental health and addiction issues. The participants are actively involved in relationships or situations that expose them to frequent physical violence – largely intimate partner violence. Select topics are presented, including safety planning, justice system processes,

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH VPD INVESTIGATIVE SECTIONS

counselling, support services, and discussions around bridging the barriers to reporting to police.

In 2015, the Domestic Violence and Criminal Harassment Unit (now named IPVRAU) created the Safety Awareness for Elders (S.A.F.E) program to increase awareness and education directed at victims and potential victims of elder abuse. The program continues today, and includes specific information sessions, training for community organizations, and providing educational materials and the VPD S.A.F.E website to the community and various organizations. The goal is to increase reporting of these offences and ultimately decrease all forms of elder abuse in Vancouver. The program serves Vancouver's diverse communities, with information in multiple languages, and is disseminated through different modes of communication. The program helps the VPD to engage and educate the aging community, increasing positive and trusting relationships with elders who may become, who are, or have been victims of elder abuse.

Major Crime Section investigators initiated the Health & Safety Fair, addressing the increase in calls for service involving seniors. The first Fair took place in 2018 with 370 attendees, 30 community partners, and VPD staff from various sections. In 2023, this initiative saw over 400 seniors attend, with support from over 50 vendors who provided resources to this population. This is a VPF-funded initiative.

Another unit within the Special Investigation Unit is the Counter Exploitation Unit, which has an embedded FSGV victim worker who frequently acts as a bridge between sexually exploited women and the police. This support worker is mindful of the systemic issues that prevent women from disclosing their criminal victimization to the police. In addition to this partnership with FSGV, Unit members will, when appropriate, exchange information related to identified risks, offenders, and exploitative practices, with community partners such as WISH, UNYA, and VACFSS.

VPD Missing Persons Unit investigations have been profoundly impacted by community input. Reports have increased due to community concern and awareness of the issues surrounding these investigations. For example, elderly individuals with Alzheimer's or dementia are more recognizable as high-risk, and this increases public awareness and assistance. Investigators have formed a partnership with Realty Watch and the taxi industry to assist in getting information out to the public for high-risk missing persons. In addition, they assist the Adolescent Psychiatric Unit of B.C. Children's Hospital with developing improved policies in the reporting and follow-up of high-risk youth that go missing from their facility.

The VPD ensures cultural sensitivities in all investigations, including missing person investigation. The Missing Persons Unit currently has access to an Indigenous Liaison Officer, the Indigenous Partnership Program, and works closely with the B.C. Family Liaison Unit.

The Indigenous Liaison position for the Missing Persons Unit will:

- Take into consideration the complex issues surrounding missing Indigenous Persons by strengthening community relations and providing ongoing support to affected families
- Offer culturally safe trauma-informed practices
- Serve as a family liaison and provide ongoing support throughout a missing persons investigation

VICTIM SERVICES UNIT



VICTIM SERVICES UNIT

The VPD Victim Services Unit, as part of DCIRS, provides victims and witnesses with professional, supportive, and timely assistance, lessening the impact of crime and trauma. Services may include emotional support, practical assistance, justice-related information, and referrals to other agencies. Target outcomes include improved safety, reduced risk of further victimization, access to information and support, enhanced criminal investigations, and increased willingness to participate in the criminal justice system.

The Unit follows mandated protocols referring clients to specific community agencies, several of which are tailored towards Indigenous clients. If a victim of crime self-discloses that they are Indigenous to one of the VPD caseworkers, they are referred to Indigenous-focused services such as the Aboriginal Front Door Society. Referrals are also made to Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, SALAL Sexual Violence Support Centre, Battered

Women's Support Services, and other Indigenous, culturally-focused support groups. Additionally, clients may be referred to the VACPC or liaise with their Neighbourhood Police Officer. VPD's investigative sections work with community members and groups in many ways to provide support and outreach.

In May 2023, Lucca, an accredited Justice Facility Dog, retired following eight years of service. Upon his retirement, accredited Justice Facility Dog Sydney joined the Unit and has continued this important work. His role is to compliment the team by providing comfort and support to victims and witnesses of crime and other traumatic incidents. Sydney can be utilized at any point during a police investigation – at the scene of an incident, in police interviews, in follow-up meetings with staff, in Crown Counsel meetings, and as a testimonial aid to witnesses during a trial. His calm and gentle demeanor helps to reduce anxiety and mitigate the impact of stress and trauma on individuals involved in the criminal justice process. The VPF provided funding for the acquisition and for the yearly costs for Sydney.

PROACTIVE GANG AND DRUG PREVENTION ENGAGEMENT

PROACTIVE GANG AND DRUG PREVENTION ENGAGEMENT

In response to the opioid crisis, the VPD called for immediate access to evidence-based treatment services. In a 2017 report, *The Opioid Crisis: The Need for Treatment on Demand*, the VPD presented several recommendations, including the need for expanded support from federal and provincial governments, more funding for evidence-based addiction treatment, and the need to increase public awareness about the risks of illicit drug use.

Since the 2017 report, considerable efforts by the VPD have been made to combat the opioid crisis, as outlined in the 2019 report *A Journey to Hope*. Key highlights include the VPD's work on the Provincial Joint Task Force on Overdose Prevention and Response. This task force, which was created to provide expertise and guidance to the province on actions to respond to the crisis.

DRUG OVERDOSE AND ALERT PARTNERSHIP

VPD's Organized Crime Section participates regularly in the Drug Overdose and Alert Partnership committee, established to prevent and reduce the harms associated with substance use. The membership consists of first responders, including the VPD, regional health authorities, the B.C. Coroners Service, the B.C. Centre for Disease Control, and other partner agencies. They identify and disseminate timely information, including overdose and adverse reactions to contaminated products, and coordinate public health response to these emerging issues. The committee continues to maintain a public website with information on preventing and recognizing overdoses, treatment, take-home naloxone, harm reduction, and health care.

GANG TACKLE

The Gang Crime Unit has organized and held their annual Gang Tackle event every May since 2013. This anti-gang program deters vulnerable youth from a life of crime and violence, instills confidence, and



develops relationships between the youth and VPD officers. A flag football game is held at the University of British Columbia Thunderbird Stadium, with the involvement of members of the Unit, varsity and Canadian Football League football players, and at-risk youth. One of the most exciting aspects of this initiative is the involvement and interaction with current professional football players. This program has proven to have a positive effect on this target group, engaging upwards of 600 youth since it began.

TURNING POINT

The Turning Point program was launched in 2017 as a follow-up to Gang Tackle. Gang Crime Unit members reconnect with higher-risk youth who participated in Gang Tackle. They provide workshops for seven to ten youth annually, including a guided walk of the Downtown Eastside where they engage with residents and hear their stories and life lessons. Following this, they get a sideline experience at a B.C. Lions game and time with players before the game.

PROACTIVE GANG AND DRUG PREVENTION ENGAGEMENT



HER TIME

Although the focus of many gang awareness programs has been delivered through a male-centred lens, women are also victims of gang violence and the tragedies that come with involvement in gang life. Her Time was created by two VPD officers to provide young women with a voice and allow them to actively participate in creating a foundation that will lead to life-long success. Her Time has reached over 60 schools and over 6000 students, educators, and community partners. Proactively, the program provides young women with the tools, resources, and knowledge about the dangers of the gang lifestyle using two playbooks that were created with input from educators, counsellors, and police. They also provide a mentorship program for young women and girls who require one-on-one resources, offering women currently involved in, or at high risk of becoming involved in, gang life, with the opportunity to connect with VPD officers who can aid with an exit strategy.

Her Time launched a helpline that has now helped several young women. Staffed by professional counsellors, it is a resource for individuals who identify as female and find themselves needing assistance with safety issues, mental health, addiction, or who want to speak to a counsellor about a situation. Accessing the helpline has

opened the door for some participants to continue counselling beyond the initial call. This program is partially funded by the VPF.

Her Time has also received international recognition from the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe who have acknowledged Her Time as an example of “best programming” in gang intervention.

DISRUPTING CRIMINAL ENTERPRISES AND GIVING BACK TO COMMUNITIES

Since it began in 2007, the VPD has used the provincial *Civil Forfeiture Act* to refer assets derived from, or used in, illegal activity to the Civil Forfeiture Office. In addition to criminal sanctions, this powerful crime-fighting tool enables the VPD to successfully combat the potential profitability that criminals and organized crime groups seek to gain. The provincial civil forfeiture process results in the disbursement of excess funds via annual grants to advance community safety, address gender-based violence, and support Indigenous healing. In 2023, the VPD referred over \$18.4 million in assets to the provincial Civil Forfeiture Office.

BRIDGING COMMUNITIES WITH RICH HISTORY AND TRADITIONS



BRIDGING COMMUNITIES WITH RICH HISTORY AND TRADITIONS

THE MOTORCYCLE DRILL TEAM

Created in 1954, the VPD Motorcycle Drill Team has historically entertained citizens with displays of riding precision throughout Metro Vancouver, and as far away as Penticton and Seattle. Using Harley Davidson Electra Glide motorcycles, the Drill Team is comprised of police officers of the VPD Traffic Enforcement Unit.

THE VANCOUVER POLICE PIPE BAND

With a long and acclaimed history, the Vancouver Police Pipe Band was formed in 1914, when a handful of police pipers and drummers organized themselves to perform at the opening of a new police headquarters. Enthralled by the display, the Chief Constable at the time authorized the formation of a Departmental pipe band. The band has been in continuous operation since that time, and is the oldest non-military pipe band in B.C., ranking among the most senior police pipe bands in the world.

The Pipe Band celebrated its centenary by performing Guard Mount ceremonies at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle in June of 2014. This marked the first and only time a non-military band has been granted

the privilege in the 350-year history of the iconic ceremony.

The Band recently performed at the 80th anniversary of the D-Day Memorial events in France, and continues to perform at events to commemorate police officers and dignitaries, and at police recruit graduations.

THE VPD LION DANCE TEAM

Proud of their heritage, a group of VPD officers, civilian professional staff, and volunteers from the Chinese CPC came together in 2005 to form the VPD Lion Dance Team. The Team was created to recognize and enhance the multicultural diversity of the VPD, honour the Chinese community's cultural contributions to Vancouver, and build positive relationships with all community members. With support from the VPF, the Lion Dance Team was the first—and still the only—police team in Canada.

Taking part in the Lunar New Year Parade is a highlight for VPD officers each year, who are honoured to recognize the Chinese community's longstanding contributions to Vancouver. The Team has participated in numerous performances at a variety of community events, including the Vaisakhi Day parade and the Santa Claus parade.

A FOCUS ON THE FRONTLINES: COMMUNITY CONTACTS



THE VPD CEREMONIAL UNIT

Formed in 1985, the Ceremonial Unit attends funerals and memorial services for all VPD sworn members, serving and retired, when requested by the family. They also attend services for any sworn member of a Canadian or American police service as a show of support. In addition, the Ceremonial Unit takes part in Remembrance Day ceremonies, and numerous community events when requested by the chief constable.

Members of the Ceremonial Unit, comprised of both servicing and retired police officers, attend ceremonies on their own time.

A FOCUS ON THE FRONTLINES: COMMUNITY CONTACTS

VPD's frontline officers routinely work alongside multiple community partners improving the lives of community members. This work includes advocating for better housing, working out next steps for recovery and treatment, and connecting people with family members.

Frontline members also regularly take part in community ceremonies and events throughout the year. Several patrol officers are active members of the SisterWatch Committee, providing safety

presentations to Vancouver Resource Society Housing for Persons with Disabilities, and partnering with the Sex Industry Liaison Officer by engaging in weekly programs supporting Downtown Eastside sex industry workers.

COMMUNITY CULTURAL EVENTS

The VPD participates in a significant way in community cultural events and campaigns. These activities build relationships and positive engagement that allow the police to have a positive presence in communities. Participation involves all police ranks, ranging from frontline officers to members of the VPD Executive, and includes civilian professionals. The VPD is often involved in organizing and/or securing funding for these important cultural events. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Pulling Together Canoe Journey
- Canada Day
- Moose Hide campaign
- National Indigenous Peoples Day
- Pride Patch and Pin campaign
- Vaisakhi Parade
- Lunar New Year celebrations
- Orange Shirt Day
- National Indigenous Veterans Day

A FOCUS ON THE FRONTLINES: COMMUNITY CONTACTS

THE ROAD TO SAFETY

The VPD's Traffic Section works cooperatively with the Provincial Police Services Division, the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC), the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver School Board, and various other community groups to deliver road, pedestrian, and bicycle safety campaigns, along with several other educational initiatives. Officers in the Traffic Section attend monthly meetings with City of Vancouver Engineering and Traffic Data Management and ICBC to address specific community complaints or concerns about traffic issues from a planning and engineering perspective.

The VPD Traffic Section continues to work on pedestrian safety awareness campaigns, with the primary goal of reducing the number of pedestrians involved in collisions. For example, the VPD has a dedicated School Safety Patrol Team that aims to improve road safety in the city through the education of school children, seniors, and other community groups in pedestrian and bicycle safety.

VPD Traffic officers are regular participants in the annual Cops for Cancer Tour de Coast with the Canadian Cancer Society. They have also recently become involved in supporting the Driven Project, where children with life-threatening illnesses take rides in high performance cars.

ENGAGEMENT WITH EVENT ORGANIZERS AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

VPD frontline police officers routinely communicate with event organizers and community representatives in preparation for special events. This communication is vital to ensuring events are managed safely.

The VPD engages in one-on-one dialogue with organizers and community partners but is also part of a larger working group called the Festival Expediting Service Team, bringing event organizers together to discuss events with representatives from an array of City and provincial agencies, including Vancouver Park Board, B.C. Ambulance Service, and Vancouver Fire Rescue Services.

Organizers and community partners work together to find solutions to problems related to traffic congestion, transit interruptions, waste abatement, and public safety concerns. The collective community input is critical to safeguarding the public and ensuring special events proceed as intended.

CULTURAL SAFETY AND HUMILITY

VPD is committed to delivering culturally safe service, and is continuously developing and implementing Department-wide training and education. We work with our community partners developing culturally safe spaces for victims and witnesses of crime when they are making their report. Examples are the creation of the Indigenous Partnership Program, two trauma-informed interview rooms at both Vancouver police buildings, and a safe space at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre. The IPVRAU has also partnered with Treehouse, creating a soft space for young victims of violence and sexual violence, specifically Indigenous girls, to testify without having to be in court with their attacker(s).

VPD staff are also kept apprised of cultural events and activities through the DCIRS newsletter, and receive information pertaining to equity, diversity, and inclusion through the Inclusive Workplace Committee and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Review Team. The various initiatives allow VPD staff to learn cultural safety and humility through experiential programming and diverse community engagement activities.

To ensure positive engagement with communities, the VPD is committed to making all employees more culturally fluent. As such, DCIRS partners with the VPD's Education and Training Unit and external organizations to provide education and awareness workshops for frontline officers. For example, workshops around Indigenous Peoples and the impact of colonization highlights urban Indigenous communities who have over-represented levels of physical and sexual abuse, alcohol and drug addiction, victimization, and have a history of lacking trust in police. Staff also participate in the *On the Land* programming overseen by the Indigenous Protocol Officer, which involves sweat lodge ceremonies, canoe outings, and spirit baths.

A FOCUS ON THE FRONTLINES: COMMUNITY CONTACTS

The VPD provides several training initiatives to officers and civilians, which includes *Cultural Competency Training: The Circle of Understanding*. The VPD offers education and awareness workshops around the 2SLGBTQ+ community and their experiences to address discrimination, including training on gender frameworks and models contextualizing 2SLGBTQ+ history in Canada, and reflections on 2SLGBTQ+ lived experiences.

Additionally, the VPD has implemented mandatory un-biased police training, which includes three courses – Fair and Impartial Policing, a full-day workshop delivered to all frontline VPD police officers; Trauma Informed Policing; and Intimate Partner Violence training. These important training initiatives illustrate how implicit biases may affect police perception and behaviour, and as a result negatively affect community members. Notably, the training provides specific focus on the effect of bias on Indigenous communities. VPD officers are also required to complete the in-person Crisis Intervention and De-escalation course.

INDIGENOUS RESOURCES FOR FRONTLINE OFFICERS

Effective community work requires face-to-face coordination with someone in a position of trust and respect. The Indigenous Liaison Officer fulfills that role and acts as a resource for frontline patrol members who may have questions about specific individuals,

FAST FACTS

VPD Social Media followers:

- [X](#) 204,211
- [Instagram](#) 40,841
- [Facebook](#) 45,524
- [TikTok](#) 54,848
- [YouTube](#) 4,492
- [Threads](#) 7,496



resources available in the community, or how best to approach situations in a culturally sensitive manner. The Liaison also monitors Indigenous gang activity in Vancouver, and represents the VPD at many community functions and meetings.

WE CARE BLANKETS

According to the 2023 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count, 4,821 Vancouver residents identified as unhoused. Of these, 48 per cent were living unsheltered and 44 per cent were living in sheltered locations. For those sleeping on the streets of Vancouver, comfort and warmth can be difficult to find. Consequently, one of the most requested and sought-after items at shelters are blankets. The VPD *We Care Blankets* program filled this need by supplying nearly 150 brand new blankets through the West End Coal Harbour CPC. This initiative is VPF-funded.

ICARE KITS

The iCare Kits initiative resulted in the creation of 60 personal care kits containing essentials such as water, food, sunscreen, clothing, and a blanket. Also included is a list of support services in Vancouver and a personalized VPD letter with a warm message extending help in a time of need. The kits are distributed annually by experienced police and medical staff, and the Victim Services Unit. This is a VPF-funded initiative.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS THROUGH COMMUNICATION

METRO TEAMS

In response to the public's concern for more community engagement, Metro Teams were developed with some of the 100 new officers funded by the City in 2023. These teams are designed to be both highly responsive to public safety and community needs, and to provide a highly visible police presence in Vancouver neighbourhoods. They are not dedicated to a specific area and move throughout the city, addressing surges in police calls. The officers respond to urgent and unfolding incidents, but much of their time is spent walking the beat and interacting with the community.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS THROUGH COMMUNICATION

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

An important aspect of public safety and policing is education and awareness. The VPD's Public Affairs Section provides Vancouverites with the information they need to help them stay safe. The Section connects with the public on behalf of the VPD through integrated marketing campaigns, news and social media, and video.

Public Affairs works with news outlets to share useful safety information about large public events, such as the Celebration of Light and Canada Day celebrations. The Section also provides warnings about people or events that could threaten public or personal safety, like high-risk offenders, sex assaults, and homicides. They also issue appeals for witnesses, information, and/or video.

Some of the topics addressed by Public Affairs are based on emerging crime trends or immediate public safety needs. Other topics are tied to national or international campaigns to raise awareness about issues related to public safety. Using various mainstream and social media, Public Affairs optimizes public safety information dissemination to the community. To ensure access to information, the Section hosts briefings for the media regarding significant incidents, investigative updates, and public safety issues of public interest. Subject matter experts, investigative

commanders, and community partners are present to answer questions or provide clarification.

The annual VPD Commendation Ceremony takes place every spring, recognizing VPD officers, civilian professionals, and citizens for acts of bravery and going beyond the call. In addition to assisting with the ceremony, Public Affairs staff create the Beyond the Call publication to share the inspiring stories of the award recipients with the community.

Public Affairs manages the VPD.ca website, ensuring it is interactive and easy to navigate, while providing informative and useful crime prevention and safety information. Site visitors have the option to translate the content into more than 100 languages. The Section also distributes materials to celebrate, acknowledge and commemorate important days and events that are important to Vancouver's diverse community.

The staff of the Public Affairs Section implement public safety campaigns, and in 2023/2024-to-date they delivered the following:

- **Senior Safety:** Ongoing messaging is shared in social media regarding frauds that specifically target seniors. The Section assisted with materials for the Scam Prevention Workshop for Seniors, including posters advertising the event and booklets with useful prevention information, both of which were published in multiple languages. In addition, staff also promoted the *Cell Phones for Seniors* campaign, where phones were distributed to seniors in need to use for emergency purposes.

COMING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE: VPD FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES

- **Sex Trafficking:** Working with the VPD Counter Exploitation Unit and their community partners, and with funding from the VPF, the second phase of the Trafficking Awareness through Technology campaign took place November 2023 to January 2024, directed toward young women aged 14-24 years. The more recent campaign built on the first phase, where Vancouver high-school students provided input in focus groups regarding effective tactics for reaching their peers. The campaign included a webpage with storytelling examples, preventative resources, and an online social campaign on TikTok and Snapchat.
- **Consent Matters:** The third phase of this successful awareness campaign is currently underway, concentrating on male, female, and gender-diverse youths aged 13 to 21. Spear-headed by a former VPD Sex Crimes investigator, who recognized a lack of knowledge surrounding consent in many of the investigations she was handling, the campaign clearly defines consent. A series of videos were created with actors role-playing different scenarios, and a webpage offers resources and tips, and information on what to do if you are sexually assaulted.
- **Road Safety:** Public Affairs created a series of videos on road safety, each one targeting a different user group: pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Additional videos were also created targeting certain safety issues, such as pedestrians crossing when it was unsafe, cycling on sidewalks, and distracted driving.
- **Fraud Awareness:** Ongoing awareness about popular scams is done in the VPD social media channels, including rental scams, employment fraud, phishing, bail money scams, and romance scams.
- **Body-Worn Cameras Pilot Project:** In January of 2024, the VPD began this pilot project. The Public Affairs Section created videos and an informative webpage to help with public awareness, education, and input.



COMING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE: VPD FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES

For causes that are important to the community, the VPD works to make a difference by raising awareness and funds. Outlined in the following sections are several examples of fundraising initiatives in which the VPD is involved.

COPS FOR CANCER

Cops for Cancer is a fundraising event where law enforcement and emergency services personnel cycle across regions engaging with communities. The event helps the Canadian Cancer Society fund pediatric cancer research and sends children and their families to Camp Goodtimes, a medically supervised safe, fun, and recreational-based camp program.

In 2024, Cops for Cancer marked their 25th anniversary. Each fall, 10 to 15 VPD officers participate in an 800-km journey across the Lower Mainland and the Sunshine Coast. Over \$54 million has been raised over the 25-year period, with this event remaining the largest funder of pediatric cancer in Canada.

COMING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE: VPD FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES

KOPS FOR KIDS

Kops for Kids is a program that started almost 40 years ago by members of the VPD Motorcycle Drill Team to raise funds to purchase Christmas gifts for vulnerable populations and children throughout Vancouver.

In 2023, through various fundraising initiatives, over \$17,000 was raised almost exclusively from contributions by VPD police officers. As a result, 150 hampers were wrapped and delivered to the Downtown Eastside, and over 200 toys were given to kids in local elementary schools.

VANCOUVER POLICE COMMUNITY FUND

The Vancouver Police Community Fund supports people in particular need of assistance who reside in the community we police. There is a specific focus on inner-city children and families, as well as individuals with physical and mental challenges. The Fund was created because VPD staff wanted to support initiatives within the communities they served. Staff contribute to the Fund through monthly donations.

As a registered charity, the Community Fund supports other registered charities, as well as its own charitable activities, including sponsoring families at Christmas. Funds donated in 2022 and 2023 were \$31,539.91 and \$48,456.26, respectively, and contributions were made to these charities:

- Cops for Cancer
- B.C. Children's Hospital Foundation
- Special Olympics B.C.
- CKNW Kids Fund
- Cystic Fibrosis Canada
- All My Relations Indigenous Society
- Covenant House Vancouver
- Muslim Food Bank
- Jewish Family Services

SUPPORTING SPECIAL OLYMPICS: BC LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics British Columbia is an innovative initiative powered by dedicated law enforcement personnel throughout British Columbia. Law Enforcement members help Special Olympic athletes experience acceptance, achievement, and personal value through sport, while also raising awareness for this important cause. Members of the VPD participate in multiple events with the athletes and other law enforcement agencies.

In 2024, the VPD partnered with the Law Enforcement Torch Run to host a Polar Plunge in March and the Torch Run in May. Law Enforcement members in B.C. raised more than \$300,000 at Polar Plunge events across the province, including approximately \$50,000 raised by Team VPD.

Additionally, in 2023 and 2024, VPD members attended local Special Olympic competitions, including the National Winter Games and Torch Run in Alberta, and the International Law Enforcement Torch Run Conference in the U.S.A. Members cheered on athletes, presented medals to competitors, and championed the cause.

PAN PACIFIC CHRISTMAS WISH BREAKFAST

In support of the Lower Mainland Christmas Bureau, the VPD annually donates hundreds of gifts at the Pan Pacific Christmas Wish Breakfast. Mountains of toys, clothing, and money are collected for distribution to families in need throughout the Lower Mainland. VPD participation includes all sworn ranks and civilian professionals. In 2023, thanks to donations from the Community Fund and the VPF, over \$10,000 in gifts were donated.

COMING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE: VPD FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES



VPD HERO CALENDARS

The annual VPD Police Dog Calendar was started by retired VPD Sergeant Mike Anfield in honour of his wife, VPD Constable Candy Anfield, who lost her battle with breast cancer in 2004. The calendar, featuring pictures of VPD police dogs, is a fundraising initiative with proceeds going to the B.C. Cancer Foundation and B.C. Children's Hospital Foundation. In 2024, the calendars raised just under \$37,000, bringing the total amount raised since 2010 to \$500,000.

In 2023, due to repeated requests from the public, the first Vancouver Police Mounted Unit calendar began, featuring the VPD's horses. The funds raised go to the Vancouver Police Foundation to support VPD programs.

The calendars are made possible by funding from the Vancouver Police Foundation.

LARRY YOUNG RUN

On May 26, 2024, VPD staff, along with their family, friends, and community members, gathered at HMCS Discovery for the 37th annual Larry Young Memorial Run. Sergeant Larry Young, who was a founding member of the Vancouver Police Emergency Response Team, died in the performance of his duties on February 2, 1987. He was an inspiration to younger members of the team and continues to be in spirit. Sergeant Young revelled in the challenge and camaraderie of sport, so it was appropriate to commemorate his death with the Larry Young Memorial Run. An estimated 250 people participated in the 2024 run and enjoyed a wonderful morning in Stanley Park, supported by the VPD Emergency Response Team, Marine Unit, Mounted Unit, Canine Unit, Bike Unit, and the Departmental piper.

The run honours Sergeant Young, and raises money for the Larry Young Scholarship Fund. In 2023, four \$1,000 scholarships were offered to the children of Vancouver Police officers through the VPD Scholarship Committee. In addition, one \$1,000 scholarship was awarded to a graduating David Thompson Secondary Student where Sergeant Young was once an School Liaison Officer.

The run receives enormous community support, and in 2024, local businesses provided generous financial and prize donations. VPD Cadets also participated as both volunteers and participants.

COMING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE: VPD FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES

JEAN UP

For more than 30 years, Jean Up (formerly known as Jeans Day) has been raising funds ensuring B.C. children receive the best health care possible at B.C. Children's Hospital. Every year, the VPD participates by raising funds through its online donation page and by hosting fundraising events, which support the B.C. Children's Hospital Foundation's efforts to provide children with excellence in health care. This action enhances the hospital's ability to conquer childhood diseases, prevent illness and injury, and prioritize the unique needs of children in every aspect of their care.

Throughout May, VPD staff are encouraged to support Jean Up by making an online donation. For two days in May, staff who have donated and participated in the fundraising events are given a Jean Up sticker, and are welcome to wear jeans to work. Thanks to the generosity of online donors, the donations from the Community Fund, and the participants in the fundraising events, over \$6,600 was donated to Jean Up in 2023, and over \$6,300 in 2024. The VPD came in fourth place in fundraising among corporate team sponsors for Jean Up in both 2023 and 2024.



PINK SHIRT DAY

Children and youth face a range of complex social factors that shape their opportunities and outcomes, including bullying. Each year on Pink Shirt Day, the VPD raises awareness to support programs that foster children's healthy self-esteem and bring awareness to bullying. VPD staff wear pink, and a donation is made in the name of the best pink outfit to the CKNW Orphan's Fund by the Community Fund. Pink Shirt Day ties into VPD's ongoing respectful workplace and mental health initiatives.

SENIOR'S HAMPERS

VPD civilian professionals in the Financial Services Section distribute care hampers to seniors with low or no income. In 2021, which was the pilot year, staff partnered with SUCCESS, distributing hampers to low-income independent living seniors

at Solheim Place, Orange Hall, Olympic Village, and 188 Keefer. Thanks to a partnership with local business, staff were able to expand their buying power, distributing two rounds of hampers – one in summer and one in winter. Included in the hampers were basic necessities, such as toiletries (shampoo, conditioner, toilet paper, toothbrush, and toothpaste), home essentials (detergent, dishwashing soap), and food (crackers, chocolates, chips, tea and coffee). For the winter hampers, warm clothing was also included, like toques, neck-warmers, and socks. In the summer of 2022, an additional 53 seniors at Chelsea Manor were reached through B.C. Housing, and the following winter, an additional 50 seniors at 333 East Pender. In 2023, another 100+ hampers were distributed to residents of the May Wah low-income housing and Dogwood Gardens.

VANCOUVER POLICE
FOUNDATION

TOGETHER
WE CAN

SUPPORT OFFICERS
GOING ABOVE & BEYOND



THE VANCOUVER POLICE FOUNDATION

In 1976, a group of Vancouver citizens and business leaders recognized the need for new and creative ideas in policing – initiatives that were not within the VPD’s regular operating budget. They established the Vancouver Police Foundation (VPF) as a registered charity that continues working in partnership with the VPD, funding community engagement programs that prevent crime, improve public and personal safety, and save lives. The vision of the VPF is a safer Vancouver for all.

Through the vision of the VPF founders, and the generous funding from supporters, the VPF has granted over \$15 million to-date towards groundbreaking outreach programs and innovative policing equipment. In 2024 alone, the VPF committed over \$3 million to fund 120+ VPD-led initiatives aimed at building a safer Vancouver for all. The VPF’s key objectives are to:

- Improve public and personal safety
- Prevent crime
- Address equipment gaps and aid the VPD in testing and acquiring new technologies
- Promote community safety

THE VANCOUVER POLICE BOARD



THE VANCOUVER POLICE BOARD

Police in democracies must be free from political interference and accountable to the public. One way in which these needs are balanced is through independent police boards to whom the police report rather than reporting directly to City Council or elected politicians. Police boards hire and supervise the chief constable, collaborate with the chief in setting policing priorities and policies, develop and monitor police budgets, and oversee public complaints about the general management or operation of the Department, its service, or policies.

In 2024, the Vancouver Police Board is marking the 50th year since it was established in 1974 to provide civilian oversight and strategic direction to the VPD. The Board is comprised of eight volunteers, all of whom either live or work in Vancouver, as well as a member of Vancouver City Council. Working collectively, and through public engagement, the Police Board fosters public trust and confidence in police services, ensuring the needs, values, and diversity of Vancouver's many communities inform policing priorities and decisions.

One of the Police Board's top priorities is for interaction between the VPD and the community

to be fair and responsive. One way this is achieved is through the opportunities the VPD creates for citizens to have access and input into policing through community outreach strategies and initiatives that the Police Board monitors. These strategies and initiatives are reported to the Board throughout the year, as well as through the VPD's Annual Business Plan and the Community Matters Report.

The Police Board also creates its own opportunities to hear directly from individuals and organizations interested in, and affected by, policing through public delegations at board meetings, presentations, town halls, and service or policy complaints. In recent years, some of these activities were reduced in response to the pandemic, but the Police Board is taking steps to renew holding meetings in the community and enhancing public engagement. As well, the Police Board holds regular meetings that are open to the public to attend in person or through live webcast on the Police Board's website.

The Police Board welcomes all community input and encourages feedback and comments as they relate to police oversight, asking that they be sent to office@vanpoliceboard.ca.

THE VPD EXECUTIVE



THE VPD EXECUTIVE

Vancouver is a community that celebrates and benefits from the tremendous diversity of its residents and visitors. People of all backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, colour, religions, gender, and sexual orientation comprise the community.

The VPD recognizes that our staff must reflect the community we serve, including the management and leadership levels of the Department. The Executive is comprised of 13 accomplished police officers and civilian professionals (seven men and six women), who represent the diverse and inclusive community we are proud to serve (see Appendix A).

OUR COMMITMENT: SERVING THE COMMUNITY

The VPD continues its commitment to building and sustaining relationships with local communities and cultures. Members of the VPD will continue to regularly meet with community representatives, to develop programming to enhance community safety, and to participate in community forums, workshops, and events. We acknowledge that

enforcement alone is not sufficient to make neighbourhoods safer – collaboration will always form a significant and critical component in the delivery of policing services by the VPD.

The VPD is committed to maintaining and building relationships with Vancouver's diverse communities. These communities include Indigenous, 2SLGBTQ+, newcomers, various neighbourhood groups, and specific vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and youth. Through programs like SisterWatch and the VPD SOGI Committee, the Department has experienced first-hand success in forging strong, trusting connections. Similarly, role-modelling programs, such as Gang Tackle, Newkids Police Academy, Her Time, the Indigenous Cadet Program, and the acclaimed VPD Cadet Program, have resulted in positive relationships with youth throughout the city from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

The VPD is committed to transparency in its actions and remaining accountable in its service to the public. We acknowledge that our success is inherently reliant upon maintaining and strengthening existing relationships with the communities we serve; *community matters* to the VPD.

GLOSSARY

2SLGBTQ+	TWO-SPIRIT, LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUEER, PLUS
AOT	ASSERTIVE OUTREACH TEAMS
BCLEDN	BC LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVERSITY NETWORK
BCWLE	B.C. WOMEN IN LAW ENFORCEMENT
CCW	COMMUNITY CRIME WATCH
CMHA	CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION
CPC	COMMUNITY POLICING CENTRES
CSP	COMMUNITY SAFETY PERSONNEL
CYAC	CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCACY CENTRE
DCIRS	DIVERSITY, COMMUNITY, AND INDIGENOUS RELATIONS UNIT
EWS	EARLY WARNING SYSTEM
FSGV	FAMILY SERVICES OF GREATER VANCOUVER
ICBC	INSURANCE CORPORATION OF B.C.
ILO	INDIGENOUS LIAISON OFFICER
IPVRAU	INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE & RISK ASSESSMENT UNIT (FORMERLY DVACH)
IRO	INDIGENOUS RELATIONS OFFICER
IWC	INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE COMMITTEE
MCFD	MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
MESH	MAKING EVERYONE SAFE AND HEALTHY
NPO	NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE OFFICER
PACE	PROSTITUTION ALTERNATIVES COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION SOCIETY
POPAT	POLICE OFFICER PHYSICAL ABILITIES TEST
RCMP	ROYAL COLUMBIA MOUNTED POLICE
SAFARY	SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES FOR AT-RISK YOUTH
S.A.F.E.	SAFETY AWARENESS FOR ELDERLY
SLO	SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER
SOGI	SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY
TROO	TOTAL RESPECT FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS
UNYA	URBAN NATIVE YOUTH ASSOCIATION
VACFSS	VANCOUVER ABORIGINAL CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES SOCIETY
VACPC	VANCOUVER ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY POLICING CENTRE
VPD	VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
VPF	VANCOUVER POLICE FOUNDATION
VPSSC	VANCOUVER POLICE SOCCER AND SERVICE CLUB
VSB	VANCOUVER SCHOOL BOARD
WISH	WOMEN'S INFORMATION AND SAFE HAVEN
WPST	WOMEN'S PERSONAL SAFETY TEAM
YWCA	YOUNG WOMENS CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

APPENDIX A



CHIEF CONSTABLE ADAM PALMER



DEPUTY CHIEF HOWARD CHOW
OPERATIONS DIVISION



DEPUTY CHIEF STEVE RAI
SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION



DEPUTY CHIEF FIONA WILSON
INVESTIGATION DIVISION



SUPERINTENDENT LISA BYRNE
INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES



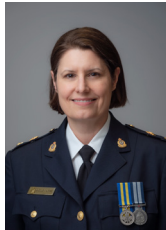
SUPERINTENDENT ANDREW CHAN
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND
MAJOR EVENTS COMMAND



SUPERINTENDENT DON CHAPMAN
OPERATIONS SUPPORT COMMAND



SENIOR DIRECTOR NANCY ENG
FINANCIAL SERVICES



SUPERINTENDENT SHELLEY HORNE
PERSONNEL SERVICES



SUPERINTENDENT ALISON LAURIN
CFSEU-BC



SUPERINTENDENT TYRONE SIDEROFF
INFORMATION SERVICES



SUPERINTENDENT HOWARD TRAN
INVESTIGATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES



SUPERINTENDENT TANYA WHYSKER
FIFA WC26 ISSU OFFICE



VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY MATTERS | COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT