

Changing lives together

Dear North Shore Community,

As we anticipate brighter times ahead, one thing we know for certain is the pandemic will leave a legacy of mental health impacts that will be with us for many years to come. Developing and delivering new and innovative approaches to address mental health continues to be a primary focus for our teams. Over the past number of months we have been intent on building additional capacity within our clinical programs, by adding staff to meet these increasing needs - now and over the next three to five years. Since the pandemic began a year ago, we have progressively been able to reach more people because of your support.

We understand how important it is to meet our community members where they are, with the extended periods of being at home, and the isolation that has resulted for many. This is the driving force behind our new podcast - **Open hearts. Honest conversations.**, which is designed to meet you where you are with relevant conversation that delivers real tools for managing and coping during this difficult time. Hosted by Valerie Dolgin, who has been a clinical counsellor with Family Services of the North Shore for more than a decade, our podcast offers broad and reasonable perspectives, along with a warm inviting place to rest for a little while.

We are so proud and so thankful for the ways our community showed up for our Christmas Bureau program this past year. We know that we need to keep working together because the needs are continuing over this next year. On a weekly basis, we continue to make check-in calls (over 11,000 made), source donations, and deliver essential goods to isolated seniors, individuals, and families who have really struggled this year. Our outreach programs are possible because of the incredible network of more than 550 committed volunteers, who are change-makers driven to support our community in a range of incredibly meaningful ways, 365 days a year.

We have been listening to you - our community. We have tuned in and deepened our understanding of those who are most vulnerable. As we move through these challenging times, we know that by continuing to work together, we will become an even stronger, healthier, and more resilient North Shore. Thank you for being part of a community that believes everyone should have the opportunity to live a full and meaningful life.

With gratitude,


Julia Staub-French
Executive Director


**Family
Services**
NORTH SHORE
Changing lives together



OPEN HEARTS.
Honest conversations.

[Listen now](#)

Our moment TO SHOW UP

Our newest addition

We are so excited to share our new podcast, **Open hearts. Honest conversations.** You can find it on our website, and on your favourite podcast directories. Host Valerie Dolgin will explore topics with the hope of connecting with you around the things that are of heightened importance right now, and that may be challenging you in different ways as we move through this unusual time.

At Thrive

While we have been successful in continuing to offer many of our programs on virtual platforms, we have not forgotten the importance of in-person connections. We worked hard to keep our Thrive Outdoor Program running. This allows parents and caregivers of children 0-6 years the opportunity to play, learn, and connect in our covered outdoor play area at our **Thrive Family Centre Maplewood**, supported by Darwin Properties.

Through our Christmas Bureau

In addition to our regular outreach, and grocery and meal deliveries, we always look for extra ways to show our community we care. In February, we delivered backpacks donated by Cause We Care Foundation filled with Valentine's Day goodies to single mothers in our community.

We will continue to listen, and to respond to the needs of our neighbours who need us most.



We still need your help

If you're interested in putting together **Covid Care Kits** for our clients, please email [Michelle Varley](mailto:Michelle.Varley@thrive.ca).

MEET THE PEOPLE WHO BRING OUR PROGRAMS *to life*



Meet **Joanna Zelichowska**, a registered clinical counsellor who has been working in the field of eating disorders for over 10 years.

Joanna manages the **Jessie's Legacy Eating Disorders Prevention and Awareness program**, which provides prevention education, resources and support for BC youth, families, educators, and professionals. Jessie's Legacy is the provincial leader in the annual Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness (PEDAW) campaign to raise awareness around prevention.

Q: *What is a common misconception around eating disorders? And why is prevention so important?*

A: A common myth is that eating disorders develop as a result of striving to achieve a highly unattainable body type. While a history of dieting is a major risk factor, eating disorder symptoms may also arise in response to stress, anxiety, trauma, or other unexpected hardship.

Facing these challenges can feel like we have suddenly lost control. To regain direction, some people find themselves preoccupied with the areas of their life they can control, like food and exercise. In this way, eating disorders symptoms are a type of coping mechanism.

Eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness. We know the more entrenched eating disorders become, the lower the recovery rate and the poorer the outcomes. Individuals with chronic and severe eating disorders are more likely to require repeated access to expensive life-saving treatment throughout their lifetime. We know prevention and early identification are critically important and can change the trajectory of someone's life. However, prevention resources are scarce, and it can be challenging to get support without a clinical diagnosis. This is why we are so passionate about the mission of Jessie's Legacy.

Tips for starting a conversation with someone you care about:

- Be curious, open, and non-judgmental in your approach, lead with the intention of learning more.
- Don't over focus on the person's eating habits or weight, inquire about what else may be going on in their life.
- Keep the lines of communication open.



Q: What impact has the pandemic had on eating and exercise behaviours?

A: The pandemic disrupted how we live our lives in many ways. We may be working or attending school from home, access to exercise and community centres are limited, and this means that our habits around eating and exercise have likely changed. For individuals who struggled with eating disorders prior to Covid-19, spending so much time at home may have amplified their disordered eating behaviours. Pandemic conditions of fear, isolation, and uncertainty may have triggered either a need to exert control for some or feeling out of control around food for others.

Additionally, many of us are spending much more time online. Social media feeds have been flooded with depictions of rigorous fitness routines, meticulous meal plans, and productive lifestyles. Though portrayed as positive, these depictions create unrealistic expectations that can increase comparison and self-criticism. We know that risk for disordered eating increases when people engage in body scrutiny and rigid eating and fitness habits as a way of managing stress.

Q: What are some tips for managing stress and uncertainty with kids?

A: Here are some tips:

It often depends on the age of the child. In general,

- For younger children, stick to a routine and provide structure. This consistency helps to maintain a sense of security.
- For teens, foster them to create their own routines and daily habits. Allow for space but be present when they come to you.
- Encourage children and youth to ask questions and give them age-appropriate answers and information.



HELPFUL TIPS & RESOURCES:

- **Open hearts. Honest conversations.** podcast on Loving Your Body, Loving Yourself - During a Pandemic
- **Body image concerns self-test**
- **Eating attitudes self-test**
- **In The Know video:** A conversation for families about eating disorders
- Articles around creating structure and routine during a pandemic:
 - *Taking care of your body and mind*
 - *Self reflection*



Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness Campaign

This year's Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness (PEDAW) Campaign focused on the impact of the pandemic with the goal of sharing messages of hope and resiliency. Individuals sent in videos, poems, photographs, and messages of hope. Community partners and organizations across the province participated in our Light Up Purple campaign to raise awareness on February 1st. Find more information on this year's **PEDAW campaign here**.

*If someone you know is struggling with an eating disorder, please email **Joanna Zelichowska** or visit the **Jessie's Legacy Eating Disorders Prevention and Awareness website**.*

 @loveourbodiesloveourselves

  @loveourbodies



UPDATE ON COMMUNITY *support*

We were thrilled with the incredible support we received from our community throughout 2020, and the creative fundraising initiatives. From match campaigns to making and selling heart pillows to virtual brunches and cocktail parties, these efforts raised over \$200,000 for our North Shore neighbours in need.

Our heartfelt thanks goes out to everyone who worked so hard last year to reach this incredible goal, especially **Alison Sawers and the Masks and Hearts team, Beach House Restaurant and the Fuller Family, BlueShore Financial, Bridge Brewing Company, Caffè Artigiano, Deep Cove Brewers and Distillers, Diane Rolston, OPEX Northshore, RBC, Tina Rowntree & the Brunch Committee, Western Stevedoring, and White Spot Restaurants.**

If you have a creative fundraising idea to support Family Services of the North Shore, **Regan Scott, our Coordinator of Development Services**, would love to hear from you! Please visit our website for information on hosting a fundraiser. We would be thrilled to support you in your endeavours!

Gift of securities:

We have received many inquiries about giving a gift of securities to Family Services of the North Shore. If you have earned gains on your investments this year, then donating in this way is easy and can make a real difference in your community!

To make a gift of securities – such as stocks, bonds or mutual funds – please email Lucy Isham-Turner or visit [Give a Gift of Securities](#) on our website.

“ *The tax benefits I received through giving a gift of securities enabled me to make a much larger gift to Family Services of the North Shore than I thought possible. I was able to donate and receive a tax receipt for the full value of the security while eliminating any capital gains tax. It is an easy, efficient, and effective way to give. It is a win-win for you and the charity you support.*

– **Long-term Donor**

THE DIFFERENCE WE MADE *together*



2,500

people supported by the Christmas Bureau (20% increased need from 2019)



1,085
families in need



1,450+

bags of groceries delivered



955
children under 18



2,000+

hot meals delivered to isolated seniors



250
seniors in need

[Read our full impact report here](#)

Connect with us. Contact the development team:

Lucy Isham-Turner, Director of Development:
isham-turner@familyservices.bc.ca or (604) 831-1223

Amy Lynn Taylor, Senior Manager of Development:
taylor@familyservices.bc.ca or (778) 318-3683

Michele Varley, Manager, Volunteer & Community Engagement:
varley@familyservices.bc.ca or (604) 984-9627

Regan Scott, Coordinator, Development Services:
rscott@familyservices.bc.ca or (604) 988-5281



Family Services
NORTH SHORE
Changing lives together

This newsletter is generously sponsored by **tobys Gastropub**.
As a thank you for your patronage, please mention this newsletter for **\$10 off your next bill** when you dine at tobys.



www.familyservices.bc.ca



@FamilyServicesoftheNorthShore



@FSNorthShore

Charitable Registration Numbers: FSNS Foundation 864745575RR0001 * FSNS 119061240RR0001