



# **RASS**

**Annual Report of  
2020-2021**

# President's Report

We acknowledge that we work on the ancestral territory of the Hən'q'əmin'əm' speaking people and express our gratitude to and support of all Indigenous people.

These are the members of our 2020/21 Board of Directors and I take pleasure in acknowledging their contributions to the governance of RASS:

Sandra Gebhardt: Secretary

Cyrene Beavis: Director at Large

Yasmin Rahman: Vice President

Anand Dhatt: Director at Large

Ken Anderson: Treasurer

Dianne Milsom: President

I would also like to recognize all 14 employees of RASS and the contributions they have made over the past year.

In 2020 to 2021, RASS has continued to adapt to Covid-19 restrictions, but also to more unexpected changes in the RASS leadership and program directions. The Board hired Lise Beauchesne as ED starting in January 2021 followed by her resignation 6 months later. Once again, Clarence Chan stepped in to fill the role of Interim ED and for his temporary leadership we are very grateful.

For the first 6 months of the 2021 year, Lise and Clarence helped to steer RASS in a new direction. Our Aging Well program and addiction counselling services moved to Vancouver Coastal Health. Our lead agency position in the establishment of Foundry Richmond also moved over to be administered by Vancouver Coastal Health. The rationale for this change had to do with the unexpected amount of time it was taking (3 years) to acquire a suitable location for Foundry in the Richmond downtown core. It was felt that a move to a larger organization would represent a more significant presence which in turn would positively influence potential landlords. Indeed, this has now happened, and Foundry is planning to move into its permanent location in 2022.

These changes all took place as the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions made public a paper intended to set the direction of mental health and substance use care for the next 10 years. As described on their website,

"A Pathway to Hope is a plan to begin transforming BC's mental health and substance use service system from its crisis-response approach to a system based on wellness promotion, prevention and early intervention where people are connected to culturally safe and effective care when they need it."

At the beginning of our fiscal year, April 2021, RASS's mandate became the implementation of these changes in direction for young people up to the age of 24.

As of October 12th, 2021, Daniel Remedios has transferred from his position as Prevention Specialist to the job of Executive Director at RASS. Daniel has been a RASS employee for the last 5 years and with his experience in prevention and his commitment to Richmond, he is well positioned to work collaboratively leading the way in wellness promotion, prevention, and early intervention. The Board is excited to be planning a future of substantial changes with Daniel at the helm.

Here is another quote from the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions website that points to other adaptations necessary to support a change in focus in the service system:

"Currently, across an array of ministries, the provincial government spends approximately \$2.5 billion annually on mental health and substance use services with 95% of that spent on specialized, hospital-based or downstream services. This means only a small percentage is spent on early intervention, prevention and long-term recovery initiatives."

Looking ahead, the RASS Board has identified these strategic goals:

**I. To raise awareness about RASS' programs and services with focus on early intervention, prevention, and health promotion.**

**II. To provide leadership in the community to support optimal wellbeing through early intervention, prevention, and health promotion.**

**III. To ensure RASS' financial health and sustainability is strong, robust, diversified, and directly contributing to the future of RASS.**

In conclusion, I would like to thank our 2021 funders, donors, and supporters:

### **Funders**

Vancouver Coastal Health  
The City of Richmond  
FOUNDRY Central Office  
United Way of the Lower Mainland  
Ministry of Finance—BC Community Gaming Grant  
School District #38  
Vancouver Coastal Health—SMART Fund  
Betty Averbach Foundation

### **Donors and Supporters**

Costco  
CSC Community  
RBC Foundation  
Gilmore Park United Church  
Great Canadian Casinos  
Paypal Giving Fund  
Numerous Donors

Sincerely,  
**Dianne Milsom**  
Richmond Addiction Services Society Board President

# Executive Director's Report

According to Zig Ziglar, the American author and motivational speaker, **"It's not what happens to you that determines how far you will go in life; it is how you handle what happens to you."** We have been surfing through the pandemic and adapting to all the changes in 2020. As change is the only constant in life, RASS remains resilient in facing what happened in the past and what is going to happen in the future.

RASS weathered the storm in change of leadership in 2020-2021. RASS' previous Executive Director, Richard Dubras, left RASS in July 2020, and Lise Beauchesne was the new Executive Director in January 2021. Lise left RASS in July 2021.

RASS completed its mission with the Youth and Family Counseling Program and Aging Well Program as of March 31, 2021. The counseling services were transitioned and integrated to the mental health and substance use service of Vancouver Coastal Health Richmond Adolescent Mental Health Team as of April 1, 2021. RASS leverages on our expertise in prevention to embark on a new and exciting journey to provide prevention, early intervention and health promotion services to children, youth, and their families.

At RASS prevention is about relationships. More than merely stopping behavior, prevention includes all the decisions a person makes and the important factors that impact our choices. RASS continues building on the relationships with our community partners to champion the Supporting Families program making over 140 contacts with children, youth and their families; and Richmond Youth Media Lab program supporting youth with over 1,300 hours.

Having sought consultation with our youth, the Recovery Day Program has been renamed as Supporting Youth Program to aptly describe the services in supporting youth with their addiction and mental health challenges through individual coaching, life skills training and connection to services.

We continue engaging youth through our Foundry Youth Peer Support and Foundry Youth Advocates (FYA). Foundry youth have been active on social media and use that platform to speak on topics relevant to youth in our community. FYA has helped to make a total of 79 social media posts on our Instagram.

In engaging our youth in the community staying resilient during this challenging time, our Prevention staff supported youth via a social media 'podcast' in collaboration with the City of Richmond Youth Services. We delivered over 30 episodes on a variety of topics and featured guest hosts from several partner organizations. Over 4,200 community contacts were made this year involving prevention activities.

Strong and healthy relationship with oneself, others and the world are key to stay resilient in this uncertain and difficult time of transition. **Resilience sustains healthy relationship that allows us to bounce back in challenging time.** RASS will thrive for excellence and commit to the optimal wellbeing for all.

Sincerely,  
**Clarence Chan**

Interim Executive Director of Richmond Addiction Services Society

# Treasurer's Report

This is to advise that the Richmond Addiction Services' Society (the "Society") is in a sound financial position as noted on the March 31, 2021 audited financial statements attached hereto.

For the year ended March 31, 2021, the Society had total revenue of \$1,518,946 and operating expenses of \$1,529,650 resulting in a small operating deficit of \$10,704 (compared to a surplus of \$33,649 in 2020). With the addition of deferred capital contributions and amortization of capital assets, the net deficit was \$888 (compared to a net surplus of \$29,695 in 2020).

As at March 31, 2021, the Society had total assets of \$1,428,807. A significant amount of these assets are held for Foundry and are being transferred to them as the Society is no longer the lead agency for Foundry in Richmond. Assets also include an internally restricted fund of \$60,000 that reflects potential liabilities which the Society has to meet in case of emergency.

The Board of Directors has approved a balanced budget for the 2021/22 fiscal year. There has been a significant reduction in both revenue and expenditures as the service agreement with Vancouver Coastal Health has changed with the elimination of Foundry. Details of the 2021/22 budget are attached.

As a small organization like the Society, the Board of Directors believe that the use of budgets, quarterly reviews of financial reports against the budget, and regular board meetings are the most effective and adequate internal control for the Society and also are tools to ensure enough funds are available for the smooth provision of services to our community.

Respectfully submitted,,

**Ken Anderson**

Treasurer, Richmond Addictions Services Society  
September 2021

# Highlights of 2021

## Supporting Youth Program (formerly Recovery Day Program)

The Supporting Youth Program has supported 27 individuals with an average age of 20 with about 124 hours of support including mentoring and life skills coaching; education and career exploration & supports; recreation activities and exercise; and referral & aftercare support.

The program name was changed from Recovery Day Program to Supporting Youth Program after having sought consultation with our youth. The program tag line, "Day by Day". The new program name more aptly describes the services in supporting youth with their addiction and mental health challenges through individual coaching, life skills training and connection to services.

The CATS program offered six 3-day sessions and one separate vaping session this past fiscal year with 7 students completing the program. There were 10 individual counselling sessions of which 50% were outreach sessions. The CATS program has been significantly disrupted and impacted by the pandemic in referrals and program delivery.

## CATS Program

## Community and School Prevention Program

The Community Prevention programs offered education workshops on different addictions-related topics, including three workshop series for the Turning Point Recovery houses in the Lower Mainland. Over 4,200 community contacts were made this year involving prevention activities.

Community Prevention staff creatively provided community engagement during a year nuanced by Covid-19. We continued supporting the Richmond School District (SD38), providing unique class-room-based curriculum programming and presentations on holistic health and prevention practices. These programs occurred in several secondary schools, including support to the young parent COLT program.

In addition to student engagement, the Prevention staff supported youth in the greater community of Richmond via a social media 'podcast' in collaboration with the City of Richmond Youth Services. We delivered over 30 episodes on a variety of topics and featured guest hosts from several partner organizations.



The School's Out Program had to adapt the program in response to the covid-19 pandemic to ensure that it could still be delivered in adherence with the safety standard set by both the Richmond School District and the health authority. Regardless, the leaders adjusted routines and activities throughout all groups that aligned safety protocols but also met the high expectations and standards that the program continues to set throughout the years to help children build on their emotional literacy and resilience through play.

One key undertaking this past year at School's Out was the piloting of a Grade Seven only cycle. The transition from elementary school to secondary can be fraught with anxiety and worry. Connecting Grade Sevens to youth leaders in the community as well as introducing them to services that they can reach out to in time of need is a large piece in their future success in high school. The School's Out program is the connector for the Grade Sevens to the larger community of Richmond. The program delivered 38 sessions for a total of 44 hours of programming, reaching 27 individual students. The program also served 1,376 snacks to the participants.

**Youth and Family Program**

The Youth and Family Program provided 231 individual counseling sessions and 76 family sessions. The program saw 99 clients last year. In response to the pandemic, many counseling sessions were conducted by phone or video online platform. As of April 1, 2021, RASS Youth and Family Program had been transitioned to VCH Richmond Adolescent Mental Health and Substance Use Services.

The Aging Well Program delivered 458 hours of individual & family counselling, group support work, and integrated case management services. As of April 1, 2021, RASS Aging Well Program had been transitioned to VCH Richmond Mental Health and Addiction Services.

**Aging Well Program**

**Foundry Richmond Community Engagement and Peer Support**

The Foundry Peer Support offered non-clinical emotional support, systems navigation, goal setting and advocacy to 625 youth with over 500 hours of services from January to June 2021. Our Foundry Youth Advocates, comprised of 12 youth, is significantly involved in decisions with Foundry Richmond, including being a major part in the decision of location, as well as the interior design theme of the center.

FYA is also a major influence on the design of Foundry Richmond's service request form. The Foundry youth have been active on social media and use that platform to speak on topics relevant to youth in our community such as mental health and thank you to essential workers during the pandemic. FYA has helped to make a total of 79 social media posts on the Foundry Richmond Instagram.

# THE FUTURE OF RASS

RASS is pressing forward in new and innovative ways to support children, youth, and families who face mental health and addiction challenges. Aligning with the Province of BC's Pathway to Hope (a 10-year vision for child, youth, and family mental health and addiction support), RASS is shifting our emphasis from prevention and treatment, towards championing an upstream prevention and early intervention focus. This has invited some changes to the organization.

In April 2021, two youth addiction counselors from RASS joined the VCH Richmond Adolescent Mental Health Team to support the creation of a more integrated mental health and substance use service. At the same time, we also leveraged our expertise in addiction prevention to utilize funding and launch an exciting new prevention and wellness promotion service with a specific focus on children, youth, and families.

RASS programs now address an integrated mental health and addiction response, expanding the scope of our agency beyond addiction-exclusive programming to a more holistic view of wellness promotion and community engagement. We are excited to continue our peer support and youth engagement programming in partnership with Foundry, as well as expanding our after-school support for Elementary aged children. Our community prevention programming dynamically continues to support children, youth, and families to make healthy choices, build effective life skills, and connect with meaningful activities.

In the process of reflection, change and development, RASS refined our Mission, Vision and Tagline:

## MISSION

With a focus on prevention, we provide our community with inclusive and innovative programs to support social and emotional resilience.

## VISION

Optimal wellbeing for all in our community.

## TAGLINE

Excellence in prevention to engage, encourage, and educate.

Along with our new Strategic Plan, we are pleased to introduce you to the new Executive Director of RASS, **Daniel Remedios**! Holding a MA in Community Development from the University of Victoria and possessing a strong background in community mental health, youth empowerment, and non-profit leadership, Daniel will be guiding our agency and supporting our communities as we embark in our new strategic direction.