



ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

Welcome to our 2023/24 Annual Report.

This report is filled with helpful information about our services, remarks from staff and management and lots of photos to visually tell the story of Umbrella's last year.

Having experienced a massive growth during and post-COVID, Umbrella is working hard to ensure the infrastructure, staffing levels, and adequate services are in place to continue to grow and support more individuals, and their loved ones.

During the spring of this year we created our ambitious 5 year strategic plan, which will come into effect in 2025. This plan should be approved this summer and the ED and Management will begin discussions on implementation.

The next year looks to be a very exciting one for Umbrella. We are moving to a bigger office, expanding our programs and continuing to ensure that recovery supports are available to everyone, whenever they need it.

We believe that recovery is possible. For everyone.

Mission, Vision & Values

OUR MISSION

Those affected by substance use and co-occurring mental health challenges have access to a broad range of appropriate and connected community supports.

OUR VISION

Umbrella demonstrates excellence in the development and delivery of innovative and unique services to support individuals and their loved ones struggling with substance use issues.

OUR DEFINING VALUES

Diversity	Leadership
Equity	Trust
Inclusion	Hope
Respect	Full Access
Empowerment	Partnerships



How we help



Community Outreach

Umbrella's Outreach Program supports anyone in our community who is struggling with their substance use and wants to make a change.

We work with people from all walks of life. Youth or adults, housed or unhoused, employed or unemployed; no matter what their background or situation is, we can help.

Working with folks seeking recovery requires a client-centered approach, creative thinking, active listening and an understanding of their journey and feelings.

Every person's recovery is different and every individual is unique, but you can count on our outreach workers to meet and support them, every step of the way.

If you, or someone you love needs help, just contact our office.

Jake
Team Lead

Recovery Housing

Umbrella operates three supportive recovery houses in Victoria: Foundation House, Potter House and Cooper House.

Recovery houses are an essential part of the continuum of care for individuals who may need additional support after detox, stabilization and/or treatment.

Umbrella's houses are designed to provide stability, accountability and a sense of community for the residents. By sharing in chores, cooking, and attending meetings, each resident works their individualized recovery program, while learning to rebuild relationships, mentor others and give back to our community.

Every resident's journey is unique and Umbrella supports each resident while they live in our houses, for as long as they need, and continue to do so when they move on.

To access our Recovery Housing programs, please contact the office.

Zack
Former Housing Manager

Kelsey
Current Housing Manager

Island Health Partnerships

Umbrella works in partnership with Island Health to provide outreach and peer support throughout a wide range of services.

These programs include: the Intensive Case Management Team (ICMT), Substance Use Rapid Follow Up (SURF), Addictions Medicine Consult Service (AMCS) at Royal Jubilee and Victoria General Hospital, Rapid Access and Addictions Clinic (RAAC), Corrections, Salt Spring Island Outreach, Encampment Outreach Team (EOT) and the Indigenous Outreach Team (IOT).

In most of these programs, we work with doctors, social workers, nurses and clinicians to provide the most comprehensive care we can for those we serve.

Partnering with Island Health helps Umbrella connect and support folks who otherwise may not reach out. We appreciate and value our partnerships and continued collaborations.

Blake
Program Manager

Transitional Housing

The Transitional Housing sites were bought by BC Housing during COVID to provide housing for people living in shelters and in tent encampments.

Umbrella is contracted at four of those transitional housing sites (Albina, Meares, Muncey Place, and Tillicum) as Housing Overdose Prevention and Peer Support workers. (HOPPS Worker).

Umbrella HOPPS workers provide support to residents living at these housing sites with programming, referrals, harm reduction services, recovery supports, facilitating appointments and client advocacy.

The HOPPS staff also manage, and support education and training for residents while working collaboratively with the housing provider.

Umbrella is grateful to be a part of this program and to work with residents wherever they are at in their addiction.

Sarah
Sites Manager

Kings Lane

Umbrella operates a transitional housing site for eighteen residents on Salt Spring Island.

Kings Lane was created by BC Housing during COVID when our most vulnerable Salt Spring Island residents were moved into the Seabreeze Hotel. Eventually those residents, and others living in Salt Spring, moved to Kings Lane and have since made it their home.

Our staff offer supports to our residents in a variety of ways: paperwork, applications, documents, financial resources, employment assistance, booking and attending appointments, mental health and substance use supports, education, social supports and connecting with other resources on Salt Spring Island.

This close knit community at Kings Lane has become a place of healing, kindness and compassion for the community and each other.

Corey
Site Supervisor

Counselling

The world of mental health and addictions can be very confusing and frustrating.

Our role as counsellors is to help those in the throes of these, especially those who have a loved one involved, to understand what is happening and, perhaps give some support, through listening, for validation.

The information and clarification we offer has been beneficial to many. It may not change the situation but it does offer a welcome solace in a time of great need. Between individual sessions and our family specific groups, we offer something for everyone.

In addition, Umbrella has the honour of supervising graduate students in their final year of studies and they are welcome contributors to our work as well. Their fresh perspectives and energy is a wonderful addition to our dedicated work.

To access our Counselling Program, please contact the office.

Terry
Family Counselor

Office, Groups & Drop-In

The Umbrella office is a place where we offer a warm and genuine welcome to all people: as they are; where they are at in the moment.

At Reception, we greet, we meet, we listen and we collaborate with folks to suggest and provide supports that fit their unique needs.

The Umbrella groups are often of interest to those who are looking to make sense of their challenges and to connect to others who are experiencing similar challenges.

Every Tuesday at 1pm, Umbrella offers drop-in support for individuals and loved ones who need someone to talk to and/or some help with completing paperwork, such as referrals for treatment or detox or applications for housing, and help accessing other resources.

All Umbrella groups and drop-in information is on our webpage at www.umbrellasociety.ca.

Shelagh
Office Manager

School Education

Umbrella was awarded a grant from the Telus Foundation to present to youth about substance use and recovery.

We developed a presentation geared towards grade 8-12 students. Our presentations involve our staff sharing parts of our own recovery stories, educating kids on Umbrella and the services we provide and answering anonymous questions that were submitted in advance.

We always allow ourselves time after the presentation for students who want to connect one on one. We are thrilled that many students have taken advantage of this time.

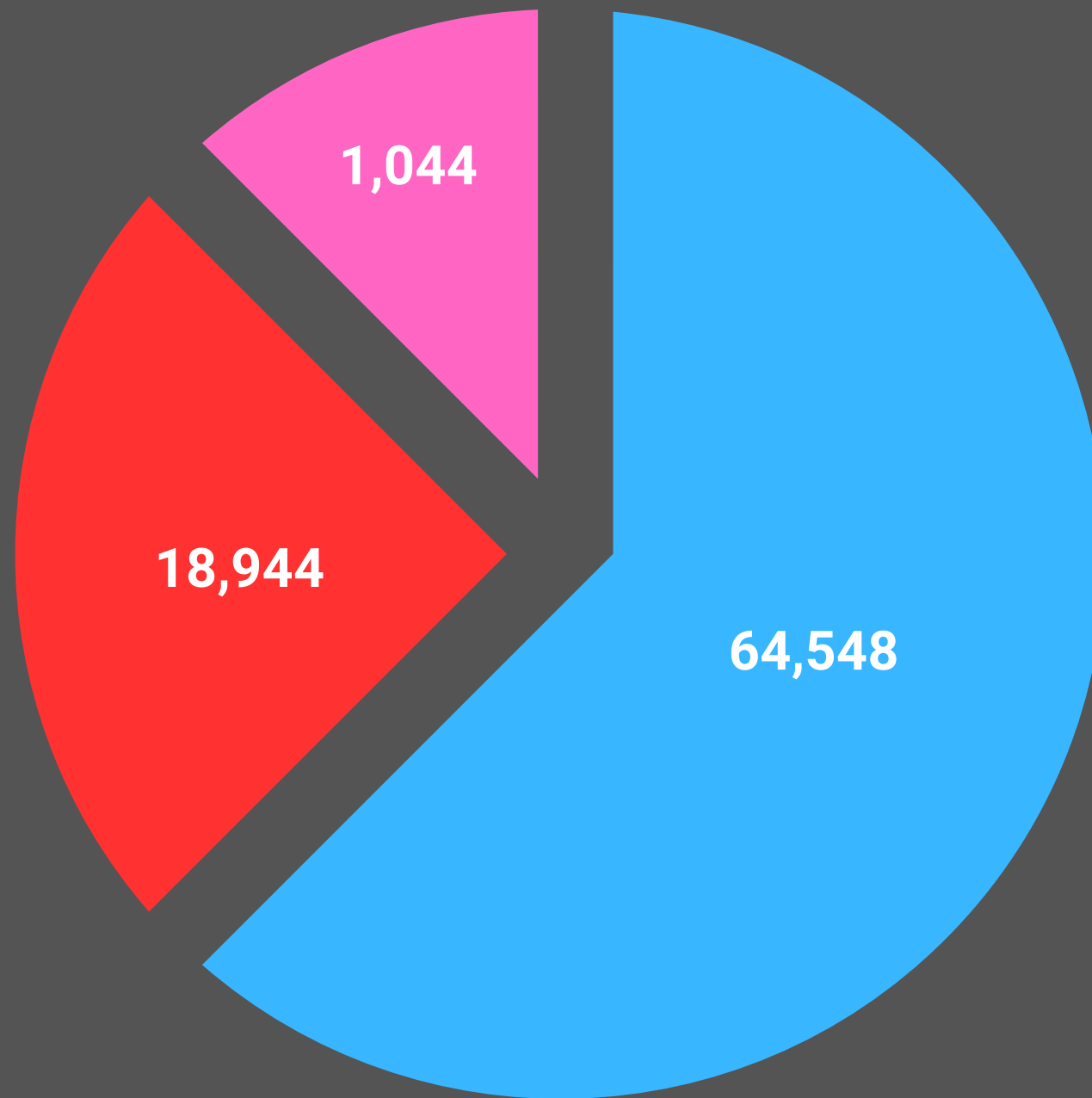
Talking with kids in an honest open way about substance use and recovery is something that I never had in school growing up. I know this type of approach and support would have helped me when my struggles began.

To request a presentation, please contact our office.

Evan

Manager of Education & Training

Who we helped in 2023



 People who accessed
our counselling
program

 Clients who met
with one of our
Outreach teams

 Cups of coffee
enjoyed with our
clients

Other Ways We Help

Season 2 of Umbrella's Comfortably UN-Numb, The Podcast, hosted by Blake, is almost complete.

Have a listen via our webpage or on Spotify, and get ready for Season 3 starting in September.



If you, or someone you love needs a Naloxone kit and/or training on how to use it, please pop into our office and we will get you all set up, free of charge.





We Love our Community



Recovery Campaign



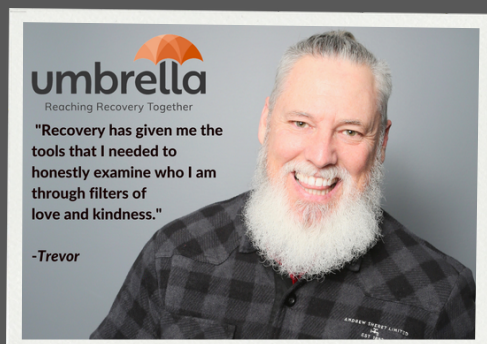
Umbrella's second annual Recovery Campaign was launched during Recovery Month last year.



This campaign is a reminder that recovery is possible.
For everyone.



Look for our next campaign in September, with new faces and inspiring messages; in print, online and on our local buses too!



Riding the Bus



Curse Cloths

Umbrella is grateful to be the ongoing recipient of a local knitting fundraiser.

Started by a previous board member, Jen, she and friends, neighbours and strangers knit curse cloths that are then sold by donation, to support Umbrella.

Knitting these curse cloths has been a passion project for local knitters and a wonderful fundraiser for Umbrella.



There are still knitters out there knitting these awesome cloths, and there are always dishes to wash, so if you would like to secure some f*cking awesome dishcloths for yourself, please reach out to the office and they will connect you.

Out and About



Saying Goodbye to Laura



Louise at the Native Friendship Centre event



Danella, Sharlene and Jacquelin at the United Way kickoff



Evan, Kirsten and Angela at Devin's retirement party



Evan, Jagmeet Singh and Rebecca at an NDP Event



Retired Larry from REES with Evan



Laurie and Sharlene
rocking their GnR shirts at
Costco



Rebecca, Premier Eby and Evan
at an NDP event



Brae at the
Dream it, Be it event



Jake and Evan excited about the
holidays



Sean and Josh at a
UVIC event



Jake, Trevor, Evan on Salt
Spring Island



Rebecca, Corey and Evan
with MLA Gary Holman



Project Re-Connect
Megan, Emily and Jackson



Sharlene & Evan with Devin
at his retirement party



Sharlene and Evan lunching with
Julian, Leah and Cheryl from Our Place



Random Acts of Kindness Day
with Trevor, Evan and Blake at Uptown



Lance, Rebecca, Logan and Evan at the Issues of Substance conference



Jarret, Louise and Adriana at the Recovery Capital Conference



Kelsey at a criminal justice event at Camosun College



HEP C training with Daryl Luster at Umbrella's office



Staff, Board & Dogs



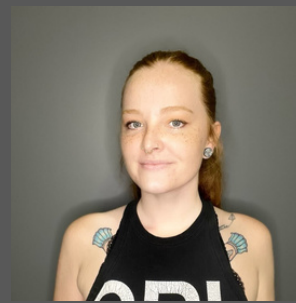
Adrianna



Allysha



Alycia



Alyssa



Amy C



Amy J



Amy R



Angi



Ashley



Autumn



Blake



Brae



Brianna



Bruce



Carly



Cassidy



Cheryl



Cheyenne



Corey



Dave



Derek



Dianne



Dottie



Emily



Erik



Erin



Evan



Heather



Isaac



Jackson



Jake



James



Jarret



Jasleen



Jeff



Jenni



Josh



Kaija



Kailee



Kelsey



Kiana



Kiran



Krista



Lance



Liam



Lilly



Logan



Louise



Lucy M



Lucy S



Luke



Madison L



Madison M



Max



Megan



Nic



Paula



Rebecca



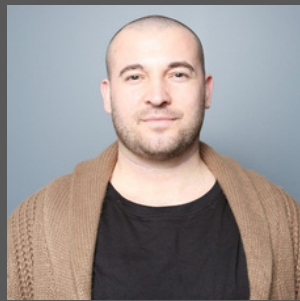
Ross



Sarah C



Sarah G



Sean



Sharlene



Shelagh



Sherri



Sierra



Stefanie



Tara



Terri



Terry



Tina



Tiolu



Trevor



Zack



Zoa

Board Members



Bengy



Bonnie



Cyndi



Guy



Kirstin



Valerie



Wendy

Umbrella Doggies



Ari



Geo



Lyca



Pepper



Misty



We Love to Celebrate



23rd Anniversary



With the great folks at
United Way South Island



Chris from Island Community
Mental Health with Jake



Jennifer from Beacon Services
with Bengy and Jake



Bengy and Jake with our friends at
Victoria Foundation



Trevor with the great team at
Mental Health Recovery Partners

23rd Anniversary



Bengy and Jake with our friends at the Sobering & Assessment Centre



Our awesome VGH Team



Jake with our Native Friendship Centre friends



Spreading cookie love to the good folks at Detox



Smiles and celebrations at Island Health



Lori and Wendy from REES

Christmas Party



Sean, Santa Zack and Josh



Brae and Rebecca



Jake, Evan and Blake



Brianna and Sarah



Megan and Santa



Terry and James



Sean, Jake and Derek



Jarret, Ashley, Lance and Tina

Christmas Party



Jarret and Rebecca



Board Member Bengy
and his wife Laura



Outgoing Board Chair Alison and her
husband Jay



Board Member Kristin and her
husband Dean

Food and Fun



Blake manning the grill



Staff BINGO event



Logan stir frying



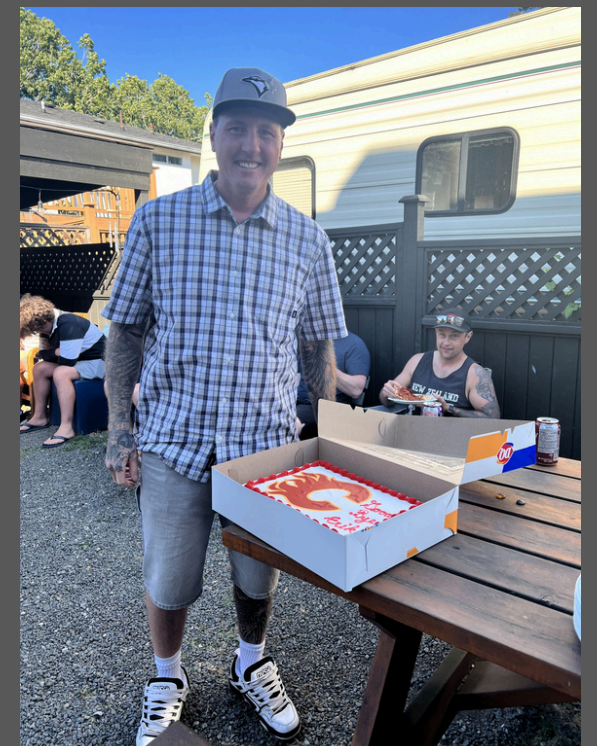
Board Members Valerie and Wendy cooking up something yummy



Anniversary Cookies



Sean prepping for the cooking class at Albina



Celebrating Erik



Max and Nic cooking



Sean got cupcakes!



Josh and Zack working through a recipe



Stefanie, Amy R and Adrianna enjoying lunch and the sun



Trevor feeding the team



Staff and guests enjoying food and friendship



Our Supporters



Our Funders





Jake and Bruce Courtnall from
the Courtnall Society



Evan and the ladies from the
Sovereign Order



Evan receiving a check from
the Sovereign Order on
behalf of the Times Colonist



Sharlene and Rebecca with (some) of Umbrella's Angels



Evan and Sharlene with Simon, Michael and Inga from RBC,



Evan, Erik and Sharlene with
Sushil and Tracy from Victoria
Foundation



Jake at an Island Health
event on SSI



Rebecca receiving a check
from our friends at CUPE



Final Thoughts



Remarks from our ED

Between my personal experiences and working in this field for almost 20 years, I would like to share my observations.

Our Mental Health and Substance Use system is broken. It is so broken that people who ask for help don't receive it, and are often turned away with no resources, options, or hope.

Addiction is not a terminal illness, it is completely treatable. In BC, we lose thousands of people every year to the overdose crisis, and even more to alcohol related deaths.

Recovery is a viable option for anyone in active addiction. Unfortunately, in a lot of the areas where addiction is prevalent, recovery is not being discussed or offered.

We need to do more. We need to do better.

It is unacceptable to not offer recovery options to every person in addiction, and to not have resources available when they are ready. The leadership team at Umbrella are committed to creating more opportunities for people to access more recovery supports, programs and housing.

Umbrella is the only recovery organization in our community, and our team is ready to take the steps needed to be more accessible, more available and help more people recover.

We think every person is worth it.

Sharlene

Remarks from our Board Chairs

Despite facing one of the toughest crises in our community, Umbrella remains a beacon of hope and resilience. Our organization is revered across the South Island for our unwavering commitment to recovery services, a mission we have proudly upheld through both calm and tumultuous times. The surge in the toxic drug crisis has undeniably deepened the challenges we face, with a significant rise in community loss that our staff confronts daily. Yet, it is in these trying moments that the true spirit and dedication of our team shines brightest.

Each member of our team brings not only professional expertise but also a personal understanding and experience of the challenges in the journey of recovery. This unique blend of knowledge and empathy equips them to offer genuine, effective support to those debilitated by addiction. Their ability to empathize and connect, built on shared experiences, enhances their credibility and fosters a deep-seated trust with our clients, making a profound impact on their paths to recovery.

While we celebrate the victories in recovery, we are also candid about the heartbreaks. These moments, though painful, fuel our determination to push for better resources and fill the gaps in addiction services. The long wait times and significant service shortages underscore an urgent need for an expansion of residential-based services and continuity in care to ensure that no one is left behind in their journey toward recovery.

At Umbrella, we believe in the power of community and the promise of recovery. We will continue in our mission of delivering excellent services, working with our community partners to develop better solutions and leading the fight for hope and recovery for all of those that struggle with addiction.

Guy & Bengy

Stay in Touch





umbrellasociety.ca

