

BC Partners for Mental Health & Substance Use Information

IMPACT REPORT 2022-2023



At a glance

Welcome to the 2022 Impact Report of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Substance Use Information. Our reach is broad and our impact strong. Together we are helping people across BC make informed decisions and take control of their mental health and substance use.

DIGITAL RESOURCES

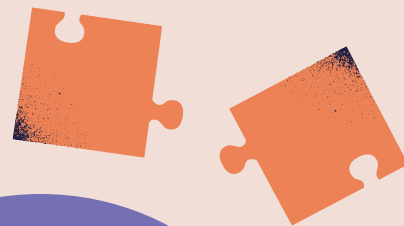
We had **3,037,776** website visits, **33,387** podcast listens and **2,778** information-referral requests.

PRINT RESOURCES

We distributed **47,195** resources including magazines and self-help publications.

EDUCATION EVENTS

8,397 people registered to attend **151** live events

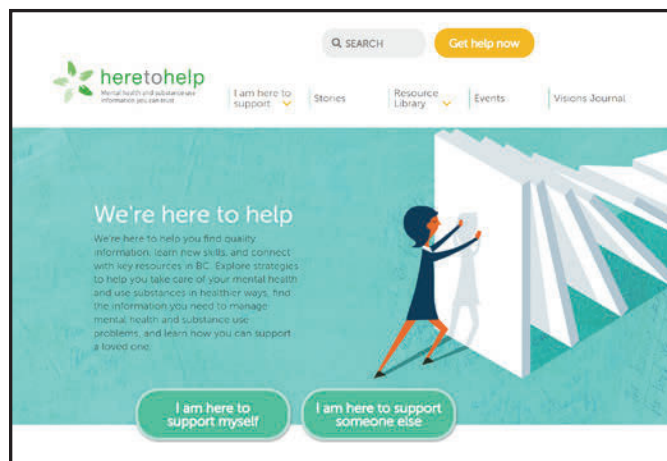


Digital Resources

HeretoHelp.bc.ca

Twenty years after its launch, HeretoHelp continues to be an important source of knowledge on mental health and substance use education for British Columbians—and beyond. People accessed the site more than three million times last year. The website also helps people navigate BC's mental health and substance use systems. Staff and volunteers responded nearly 1,500 individual requests for help or referrals in 2022/23.

The BC Partners use responsive evaluation to improve our work: we learn what people think and feel about our resources and how to make our resources more useful. Based on what we have learned, we are currently improving the site user experience, including making substance use resources more prominent. Visitor survey respondents primarily used information to help themselves, followed by help for family members or patients/clients. Practical *Wellness Modules* and general mental health information were the most accessed HeretoHelp resources. Workbooks, such as *You and Substance Use* and the *Safer Use* series, were the most popular substance use resources. Visitors generally found the website easy to navigate and valued its accurate information.



"I have shared [the] HeretoHelp website with many clients in my practice. I even include the link to it in my email signature."

~ website visitor

"Navigating the mental health system is always very difficult. Having somebody cut through the web and give us the most relevant information directly was very helpful. I would never have gone to the resource without the direction from your team."

~ information-referral requester

Jessieslegacy.com

The Jessie's Legacy website equips BC youth, parents, educators and professionals with evidence-based resources to prevent eating disorders and disordered eating and address body image concerns. Newly created content last year included articles on body neutrality, social media influencers and diet trends, plus a new resource for educators on promoting positive body image. Visitors accessed the site over 57,000 times last year. Jessie's Legacy staff and volunteers helped over 1,200 people with support, information and referrals to services across BC.

DIGITAL RESOURCES

35,223 # video views

71,633 # pdf downloads

15,407 # social media followers

183 # new digital resources

"Our 16-year-old daughter has been dealing with an eating disorder for almost a year now and she has been actively engaging in therapy and has found a good connection with her current team. We have found your referral to the peer support group very helpful. Thank you so much!"

~ information-referral requester

"Thank YOU for making my life so much easier. The website has amazing content and resources for teachers and hopefully it will prevent body image issues for my students."

~ website visitor

Podcasts

The BC Partners recognize the intimacy and power of podcasting in today's media landscape. That's why the Partners support the development and promotion of two podcast series: #OurAnxietyStories and Look again: Mental illness re-examined. These digital resources are free, easy to enjoy anytime, anywhere, and cover a wide range of mental health topics, appealing to British Columbians with lived experience, as well as those who are looking to support their loved ones.

"Just hearing stories reminds me that I am not alone in this struggle and there is hope for healing."

~ podcast listener

#OurAnxietyStories

People from all walks of life share their experiences with anxiety on #OurAnxietyStories. The podcast received close to 8,400 listens in 2022/23. Recent story themes included anxiety co-existing with other conditions, trauma, anxiety in a resource-industry worker and group therapy. After four seasons, evaluation shows that listeners feel they learned more about anxiety and feel less alone—especially important, as anxiety can be a very isolating journey.

"They make me feel seen because I can often relate to the stories that I hear and listen to. I appreciate and admire the bravery of sharing their stories."

~ podcast listener

Look again: Mental illness re-examined

Look again: Mental illness re-examined explores the reality of serious mental illnesses like psychotic disorders and our shared role in helping those who live with them lead the most productive lives possible. The podcast, which features interviews with medical experts, families and people with lived experience of mental illness, offers insights and dispels myths. In 2022/23, Season Three touched on hot-button issues like racism, gender, medications and violence, achieving more than 25,000 listens. Listeners appreciated how the podcast raised diversity as a topic and would like to hear even more from people from diverse backgrounds. Listeners, including people who enjoy visual learning and people with hearing disabilities, also valued access to transcripts.

"I listened to it and have to say it brought tears to my eyes. So good!! I am sharing and know it will touch a lot of hearts. GREAT JOB!!!"

~ podcast listener



Visions Journal

The year was one of innovations for *Visions: BC's Mental Health and Substance Use Journal*, the BC Partners' flagship publication. The magazine, known for featuring stories from diverse people impacted by mental health and substance use concerns, focused on timely issues, including growing up in a digital world, intergenerational trauma and the many faces of neurodiversity. In 2022/23, *Visions* also added more interactive content, artwork and even poetry in its pages. Though the number of issues was reduced to three from four per year to manage costs, the quality of articles remained high. For the first time in its 25-year history, *Visions* selected a guest managing editor from one of the BC Partners agencies besides the Canadian Mental Health Association. This collaboration built capacity and brought new perspectives to coordinating an issue. In the coming year, each issue will be coordinated by a different BC Partner agency, further expanding the diversity of *Visions* offerings.

**"Clients love it...I hope that it
inspires them too. We all need
hope and healing!"**

— *Visions* reader



Survey feedback indicated readers are excited to receive each new issue. They say they read the entire magazine, looking for stories and strategies that can help them better understand and help themselves and others. *Visions* articles helped readers feel less alone and more hopeful that things might improve. Many noted that they are especially impacted by experiential stories. Professionals reported often using *Visions* as a teaching tool. Impacts also extended beyond readers: many *Visions* contributors said the process brought a sense of empowerment and pride, greater respect and empathy for others, increased writing skills and greater self-acceptance and confidence.

Education Events

"I read whatever's there, I love learning about what's going on and the stories being highlighted in each issue. I label the *Visions* issue as a whole as a favourite to check out, I love all of it."

– *Visions* reader

"I find it helpful reading the stories and experiences of others. It makes me feel like I'm not alone and often I pick up on ideas with relatable situations. It also helps me to learn about what to expect as I move forward."

– *Visions* reader



We know people need and deserve access to mental health and substance use information. To understand how this information applies at home, work and school, and in the community, people need real-time chances to learn from and connect with each other through peer-to-peer interactions. That's why, in addition to print and digital resources, BC Partners facilitate in-person and online education events for various audiences across BC. Events build safe communities where people can learn, find empathy and understanding, and destigmatize mental health and substance use challenges. Through events, communities also gain capacity to provide mental health and substance use support. In 2022/23, the BC Partners directly hosted, or supported trusted local agencies to host, 151 events, connecting with almost 8,400 people. Popular events enabled by BC Partners included In the Know, Beyond the Blues, PROUD2BE, Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness Week events, and Child and Youth Mental Health Day events.

"[The Proud2Be event] felt like being part of a community. It's good to know how many thoughtful and knowledgeable people are here trying to support our trans youth."

– Proud2Be attendee

In feedback surveys participants described events as positive, inspiring and affirming. Through participation, people experienced a sense of community and belonging, and felt less alone. Participants said the strategies and tools presented were helpful and informative, and prepared them to better help others. Attendees left feeling supported, hopeful and better equipped to take next steps.

“All of the staff and community partners commented that Beyond the Blues was a great way to connect with the youth at the school. The drop-in events are a useful way to provide information to youth who may not have the courage or ability to reach out for support by themselves. Everyone had a lot of fun and want to have more events like this.”

– Beyond the Blues attendee

“Refreshing! I was prepared to not learn anything I didn’t already know, but I have many great takeaways from the In the Know presentation and following discussions. I appreciate SO much the anecdotes of lived experience, as sometimes parenting children with mental health concerns can feel very isolating.”

– In the Know attendee



Healthy Minds | Healthy Campuses

Healthy Minds | Healthy Campuses (HM|HC) is a province-wide community of practice committed to learning and working together within BC post-secondary institutions to promote mental wellness and healthier relationships with substances. Communities of practice are voluntary groups of people who learn and improve their practice through collaboration. HM|HC engages students, service staff, faculty and administrators to build capacity and shape campus cultures and environments that help all campus community members to thrive.

HM|HC made great progress in 2022/23. New web content helped the community of practice better understand and implement the *Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting University and Colleges*. Two live events also advanced these goals: participation in an international symposium and holding a virtual biennial Summit conference on the theme of Charter activation, which saw more than 200 registrants attend 30 sessions. The community also supported Indigenous undergraduate students on the governing HM|HC Leadership Committee and interacted with students on different campus initiatives they led. An “HM|HC Talks” webinar discussion and regular newsletter communications further facilitated learning and provided exposure to helpful resources. HM|HC is also a support for campuses seeking consultation

advice. Just two examples this year included a graduate student who contacted HM|HC about their thesis on accessibility of mental health resources on campuses, and one campus Student Health Advisory Committee that sought help for a mental health environmental scan. HM|HC advanced relationships with BC Partners through expanded partner involvement in the Summit. Five BC Partners member organizations attended the event, and three made a presentation.

This year HM|HC used a responsive evaluation approach to ask about people’s experiences in a non-directive way. Feedback showed the majority of attendees viewed the Summit experience, in particular, as very positive, with opportunities to reflect, relate, be inspired and connect with others.

“My colleague and I have already begun drafting proposals for three initiatives inspired by the Summit.”

– Summit attendee

“I intend to reach out and connect more intentionally with other strategic priority offices on our campus.”

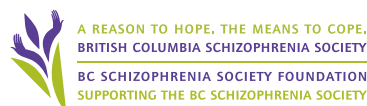
– Summit attendee

Who We Are

The **BC Partners for Mental Health and Substance Use Information**, created in 2003, are a group of seven leading mental health and substance use non-profit organizations. Mental health and substance use issues are complex. By coming together to share knowledge, resources and support, we can better help all British Columbians live healthy, meaningful lives.



BC Partners member agencies include:



**University
of Victoria**

Canadian Institute for
Substance Use Research



A BRANCH OF  **Lookout**
Housing • Health Society



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
British Columbia
Mental health for all



FamilySmart
Together-Centred

jessie's legacy
EATING DISORDERS PREVENTION + AWARENESS
A Family Services of the North Shore program



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heretohelp.bc.ca
2023


BC MENTAL HEALTH
& SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

 **Provincial Health
Services Authority**
Province-wide solutions.
Better health.