



## About us...

This Newsletter is brought to you by Vancouver Coastal Health's Family Support and Involvement Team. We assist families with resources, education, information, support, and with facilitating the inclusion of family in the care of their loved ones. We also work with patient and family partners to ensure that clients and families are involved in planning and decision making across Vancouver Coastal Health's Mental Health and Substance use Services. You can find our contact information on the front page.

The *Family Connections Newsletter* is available electronically, direct to your email inbox. If you don't already receive *Family Connections* via email and would like to stay up-to-date about programs and services for families who are supporting a loved one with mental illness and/or addiction, sign up at [www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com](http://www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com)

By going to this website and clicking on the [Family](#) tab you can find our [Community Resource Guide for Families](#), Vancouver Coastal Health's [Family Involvement Policy](#) and much more.

Thanks for reading!

## A Message from the Family Advisory Committee ...

We are very excited to be bringing you our 13th Annual Family Conference on April 25th with guest speaker BC Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, The Honourable Judy Darcy. A poster is on page 8, and more details will follow—stay informed by contacting us or by following our news on [www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com](http://www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com) We hope to see you there!

— Patti Zane, Chair



**2020 Family Conference**  
Mental Health and Substance Use

Saturday, April 25, 2020

CONFUSED  
LOST  
UNCLEAR  
UNSURE  
PERPLEXED

Vancouver General Hospital  
Paetzold Theatre  
899 West 12th Avenue  
Vancouver, BC



Ticket Price \$15

The poster features a central image of a signpost with five directional signs pointing in different directions, labeled 'CONFUSED', 'LOST', 'UNCLEAR', 'UNSURE', and 'PERPLEXED'. The background is a blue sky with white clouds and a rainbow at the top.

## OUR NEW TEAM MEMBER: SKY LEE

We are so pleased to tell you that we have a new colleague working in the role of Family Support and Involvement Coordinator, Acute. She supports families of people whose loved one are in hospital. Her name is Sky Lee. Sky was good enough to answer some questions.



### What is your background?

By training, I am a Social Worker. I have worked for Vancouver Coastal Health since 2008. My background includes working as a Long-Term Care Case Manager in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. I typically worked with Older Adults and their families around chronic diseases, dementia care, substance use, brain injuries, caregiver support, and issues of adult neglect, self-neglect, and abuse.

### What is an Acute Family & Consumer Support and Involvement Coordinator?

- To provide support to family members & consumers who are admitted to the Joseph and Rosalie Segal & Family Health Centre
- run Family Connections Support Groups
- help navigate resources, psychoeducation regarding mental health and/or substance use, support regarding caregiver burnout and coping strategies
- provide support to front line staff in understanding and implementing the family involvement policy including group presentations and one on one family support
- support the Family Advisory Committee and their subcommittee work
- maintain the family resource list
- and much more!

### What are you looking forward to in this role?

Since my background is very “medical”, I am looking forward to learning more about mental health & substance use as a whole – including symptoms, diagnoses, and treatments. I am also looking forward to learning more about the mental health & substance use Recovery Model and how to incorporate families into this model.

I also hope to widely share what our Family Support and Involvement Team does as it is a small but mighty team! I am looking forward to educating staff on the importance of involving family in the care plan & how this can positively impact recovery. Lastly, I look forward to making meaningful connections through running the Family Connections Support Group.

### What else?

I’m a mom of three little ones and I enjoy spending time doing crafts and playing games/doing puzzles with them. I grew up in Toronto, but I consider myself a Vancouverite as I’ve lived here for 20 years now! I love running, crafting, organizing, and I’m also trained in Occupational First Aid!

### How can we reach you?

Email: [sky.lee@vch.ca](mailto:sky.lee@vch.ca)

Mobile 604-290-3817 (no text messages) | Landline 604 875-4111 ext 23500

*I am looking forward to educating staff on the importance of involving family in the care plan*

## SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT AND BEYOND—THE FAMILY’S EXPERIENCE

By Isabella Mori

As a little research project, I asked attendants at a support group about their experience after their loved ones had gone through substance use treatment. Within a short time, I received twenty replies, which goes to show how eager people are to share their experience. The questions I asked were:

- When your loved one was in treatment, what were your hopes for you, your loved one and your family after rehab?
- What were the successes?
- What did not work so well?
- How are you taking care of yourself now?

I was surprised (and have to say, pleased) that three of the topics that were discussed the most were about families taking care of themselves. There were fifteen examples of self care, nine comments about the importance to be engaged in positive relationships, and seven about cultivating a positive attitude.

*I travel once a year, with him, paint and have a photo card hobby/business.*

*Rocky relationships with family are in the past. I have a very close relationship with my loved one. We speak almost every day. I see his growth. And I see the ways in which the drugs affected him. He is reunited with the family. It was not a straight path getting clean! Three years later I am at peace.*

*I try to regularly stop and be thankful instead of always worrying.*

Other topics that people delved into quite a bit was that they hoped their loved one would be able to live a better, fuller life after treatment (there were nine comments.)

*Of course, I hoped for a miracle that would make everything perfect! That said, my realistic hope was that he would make some meaningful connections and discover resources that would be valuable to him, no matter his recovery status. I hoped that he would have a renewed determination to take care of his needs.*

In eight comments, a positive experience with treatment was discussed.

*There were many successes. First, my loved one’s character grew. He became a young man, he matured and was far more aware of his emotions and how they affected him. Second, because I had taken a course offered through the treatment centre, we spoke the same language and I could understand more of what he was going through both emotionally and physically and we became closer. He had the ability to express what he was feeling and I could understand his language and its meaning through our mutual understanding. It brought us closer together and gave us a bond on which to build on. Third, he became more comfortable with himself. He now had a sense of calm about himself that he never had be-*

*“Rocky relationships with family are in the past ... It was not a straight path getting clean!”*

*fore. He was more accepting of himself and comfortable with who he was. He was now willing to accept living in a recovery house and was willing to start building his life back. He now has the ability to write out and set goals for himself and tools to work towards obtaining his goals.*

Seven comments related to the idea that aftercare was not sufficient.

*Lack of a plan once he left hospital except he is certified. "Good luck" is what was said to us as we left. No follow up groups or peer support for him. No remediation programs for his brain health*

Another seven were about their loved one was still using, or using again.

*My loved one relapsed another 2-4 times and it seems, sadly, that this is part of the process to beating addiction.*

Here are more comments that stood out for me from each question.

When your loved one was in treatment, what were your hopes for you, your loved one and your family after rehab?

*The most important hope for me at first was the ability to have a few good night sleeps. As simple as that sounds....that's all I wanted.*

What were the successes?

*He made meaningful connections with health care, social care, and housing. These connections have proven integral for keeping him "on track". The connections were so well developed that he automatically reached out to them within hours of a relapse. This enabled him to reengage with sober living immediately and gain a sense of success. A feeling of success & connection has been beneficial to him and everyone connected to him.*

What did not work so well?

*It took many specialist appointments , like many many, before one worked. Both me and other son had therapy during that time in Van.I am well educated and I can tell you many times I knew more than the specialist and was very very often talked to in a condescending manner. I wish specialists , especially in Vancouver, would acknowledge when they don't know an answer and would work with parents and kids, as parts of a huge problem that does have a solution.*

How are you taking care of yourself now?

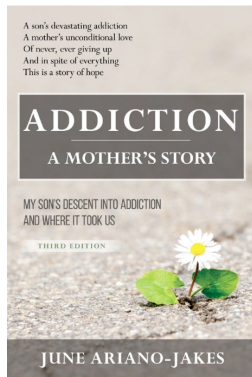
*I had the support of Parents Forever [support group] until my loved one became clean. And for a while after, as I recovered from my pain. PF was important in my life. A big part of my taking care of myself.*

*"The most important hope for me at first was the ability to have a few good nights' sleeps. As simple as that sounds ... that's all I wanted."*



## BOOKS ABOUT ADDICTION

Compiled by Parents Forever, Susan Wright, and Isabella Mori



June Ariano-Jakes

Addiction: A Mother's Story

A Surrey mother follows the 23 year heroin and cocaine addiction of her deeply loved son. It includes stories of all the various "players" that make up the world of drug use and the dramatic consequences of drug addiction within a family.

Carl Hart

High Price: A Neuroscientist's Journey of Self-Discovery That Challenges Everything You Know About Drugs and Society

A neuroscientist shares his story of growing up in one of Miami's toughest neighborhoods and how it led him to his groundbreaking work in drug addiction.

Johan Hari

Chasing the Scream

What if everything you think you know about addiction is wrong? One of Johann Hari's earliest memories is of trying to wake up one of his relatives and not be able to. As he grew older, he realized he had addiction in his family. Confused, unable to know what to do, he set out on a three-year, 30,000-mile journey to discover what really causes addiction – and what really solves it.

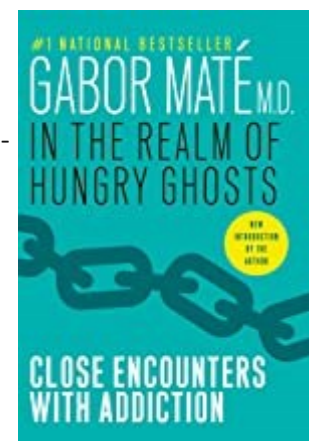
Bruce Alexander: The globalization of Addiction: A study in poverty of the spirit.

This book is about all forms of harmful addictions – the relatively small number centered on drugs and the great many more addictions that have nothing to do with drugs. Alexander sees these addictions increasing dangerously throughout the world. But he also sees them as a recurring feature of Western civilization and to some extent of all large civilizations. Among the book's more surprising and intriguing turns is its examination of addiction (in this broad sense) in writings from other times and cultures, including from ancient civilizations.

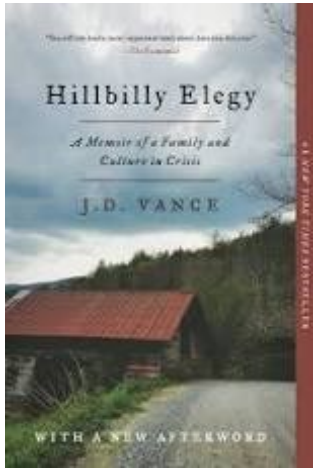
Gabor Mate

In the Realm of the Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters With Addiction

Blending first-person accounts, case studies, research and passionate argument, in In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction, a Vancouver physician takes a panoramic yet intimate look at this widespread and perplexing human ailment.



*“A Surrey mother follows the 23 year heroin and cocaine addiction of her deeply loved son”*



JD Vance

*Hillbilly Elegy*. A memoir of a family and culture in crisis.

From a former marine and Yale Law School graduate, a powerful account of growing up in a poor Rust Belt. Many in Vance’s family were never able to fully escape the legacy of abuse, alcoholism, poverty, and trauma so characteristic of their part of America. Vance piercingly shows how he himself still carries around the demons of their chaotic family history. A deeply moving memoir with its share of humor and vividly colorful figures, *Hillbilly Elegy* is the story of how upward mobility really feels.

Beverly Conyers

*Addict in the Family*

With years of experience struggling with her daughter’s addiction and recovery, Beverly Conyers draws on research, experience, and compelling personal stories from others to explain what families should know about substance abuse, interventions, relapse, and more. Although families can’t cure a loved one’s addiction, they can provide support without enabling, set boundaries, prioritize self-care, and find healing through therapy, spirituality, Al Anon or Nar Anon, and countless other resources that show no one is alone on this journey.

Jeffrey Foote, Carrie Wilkens, Nicole Kosanke, Stephanie Higgs

*Beyond Addiction: How Science and Kindness Help People Change*

*Beyond Addiction* goes beyond interventions and tough love to show family and friends how they can use kindness, positive reinforcement, and motivational and behavioral strategies to help someone change. Drawing on forty collective years of research and decades of clinical experience, the authors present the best practical advice science has to offer. Delivered with warmth, optimism, and humor, *Beyond Addiction* defines a new, empowered role for friends and family and a paradigm shift for the field.



There are many more books out there. If you’re looking for autobiographies by people who have struggled with substance use themselves, try this list here <https://www.shatterproof.org/blog/14-outstanding-books-about-addiction-and-recovery>.

*“Using kindness, positive reinforcement, and motivational and behavioral strategies to help someone change”*

# 2020 Family Conference

## Mental Health and Substance Use

Saturday, April 25, 2020

Vancouver General Hospital  
Paetzold Theatre  
899 West 12th Avenue  
Vancouver, BC



Ticket Price \$15

## JOURNEY TO HOPE

### Speakers:

- \* **The Honourable Judy Darcy**,  
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,  
BC Government
- \* **Yasmin Jetha**, VP, Community Services, VCH
- \* **Tania Culham**, MD, Vancouver Family Physician
- \* **Erika Weikle**, VCH Care Coordinator with  
**Cathline James**, Founder and CEO of Wise-Bites
- \* **Dr. Heather Fulton**, Registered Psychologist,  
Fraser Health & UBC
- \* **Dr. Diane Fredrikson**, BSc, MD, FRCPC  
Psychiatrist, Vancouver/Richmond Early Psychosis  
Intervention

### Panel Discussion:

**HOPE THROUGH SUPPORT**

### Exhibitors:

**BC Schizophrenia Society**  
**Family Advisory Committee, Vancouver**  
**Family Support and Involvement Team**  
**Imagine Inclusion / Photovoice**  
**Mood Disorders Association of BC**  
**Parents Forever**  
**Thrive, Open Door Group**  
**And more**

### Registration

For more information please visit:  
<http://annualfamilyconference.eventbrite.com>

For all inquiries, please contact Patti Zane  
[facvevents@gmail.com](mailto:facvevents@gmail.com)

Limited financial assistance for admission fee is available





## SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES & SUPPORTS



Vancouver Community Substance Use services are provided in a trauma-informed system of care that supports individuals on their self-identified journey of recovery

### YOUTH SERVICES

**Odyssey II program p. 604-879-8853.** 2875 St. Georges St.  
Counselling, peer support, training

**Directions Youth Services Centre (FSGV) p.604-633-1472.** 1134 Burrard St.

**Watari Alcohol & Drug Services: p. 604 254-6995** 301-877 E. Hastings St.

**Nexus Program 604-660-5216/618-4011** 550 Cambie St.  
Counselling, crisis intervention

**Urban Native Youth Association p. 604-254-7732.**  
1640 E. Hastings St—Counselling, outreach, support services

**Ashnola in Keremeos** For youth between 14-18 years  
<http://www.bcmhsus.ca/our-services/provincial-addiction-programs/ashnola-at-the-crossing>

**PEAK House (Youth): 604-253-3381**  
<http://peakhouse.ca/welcome/>

## DAY TREATMENT PROGRAMS

**Intensive day/evening/Weekend non-residential treatment programs. Program length may vary from 6 -12 weeks**

**Vancouver Addiction Matrix Program (VAMP): p. 604 714-3480.** 301 -1290 Hornby St  
Must be abstinent and able to attend 10 hours/week

**Sisters Together Active in Recovery (STAR) Women p. 604-266-6124.**  
220-1200 W.73rd Ave. (West Wing)

**Daytox Program. P. 604 675 2455** 1669 E. Broadway  
For Individuals in early recovery. 10 hours per week.

## SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS

**Prism Alcohol and Drug Services: 604-658-1214**

Offers counselling & groups for SU affected lesbian, gay, bisexual, two spirited, queer & trans people – regardless of sexual orientation

**SHEWAY: 604-216-1699.** 533 E. Hastings St.

Integrated Health Care for pregnant women & new moms (with infants under 18 mo's) dealing with SU issues

**Aboriginal Wellness Program: 604-675-2551** 2750 East Hastings St. Suite 228

Addictions and wellness counselling, group education, victim support and outreach to Aboriginal adults.

**Older Adult MH&A teams: 604 709-6785**

**InSite–OnSite: 604-687-7483.** 139 & 137 E. Hastings St

Providing safe services for injection drug users: safe injection monitoring, harm reduction supplies education, nursing, counseling and case management.

**Needle Pickup Hotline: 604 657-6561**

If you find a needle anywhere in Vancouver, call and they will do pickups.

**Native Courtworkers & Counselling: 604 -985 5355** 520 Richards St, Vancouver

Counselling, support, life skills training

## SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT SERVICES

Substance use treatment services are co-located with other mental health and/or primary care services at various VCH healthcare site's across Vancouver. Services at these sites may include:

- Opiate Agonist Treatment (methadone/suboxone)
- Help with detoxification
- Harm reduction services and supplies
- Assessment & referrals
- Education & information
- Group and individual counseling
- Acupuncture & alternate therapies
- Smoking cessation

**Downtown CHC: 604-255-3151** 569 Powell St (at Princess). Open 7 days a week

**Pender CHC: 604 669-9181** 59 West Pender St

**Strathcona CHC: 604 675-3585** 330 Heatley Avenue

**Evergreen CHC: 604-707-3620** 3425 Crowley Dr (at Joyce skytrain)

**Pender CHC 604-669-9181** 59 W Pender St ( at Abbott St)

**Ravensong CHC: 604-709-6530** 2450 Ontario St

**South Mental Health and Substance Use: 604-266-6124** 220-1200 West 73rd Ave (West Wing)

**Three Bridges CHC: 604-714-3480** 301-1290 Hornby St (at Drake)

**Downtown EastSide CONNECTIONS: 604 675 3600**

623 Powell St - Alley entrance 08.30 -5.30 7days/week

**Rapid Access Addiction Clinic (St Pauls)** B533 -1081 Burrard St., M-F 09.00-16.00.

**Substance-use Treatment And Response Team (START) 604 675-2455** 1669 E Broadway

Home detox and quick access to opioid stabilization for residents of Vancouver

## WITHDRAWAL MANAGEMENT

Providing safe detoxification and stabilization from alcohol and other drugs. To access WDM services call:

**ACCESS Central: Toll Free 1-866-658-1221**

For assessment and appropriate placement in withdrawal (detox) services

**Residential** (Vancouver Detox, Harbourlight )

**Youth Residential Detox** –Directions (FSGV).

**Home based Detox –START** 604 675-2455

## RESIDENTIAL SU SERVICES

Provide safe, structured living environment and support programs

**Central City Lodge (M): 604-681-9111** <http://www.cccares.org/addiction-recovery.html>

**New Dawn/ New Day (F/T): 604-325-0576** <http://www.chrysalissociety.com/Home.aspx>

**Together We Can (M): 604-451-9854** <http://www.twcvancouver.org/main.html>

**Turning Point (M/F/T): 604-875-1710** <http://www.turningpointrecovery.com/>

## Residential Treatment Centers

Intensive therapy programs that may include group, individual and family counseling. 4-12 weeks. A cost for some programs may apply.

**Pacifica (M/F/T):** <http://www.pacificatreatment.ca> p. **604-872-5517**. 1755 East 11<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Co-ed treatment centre

### Heartwood Centre for Women

a 30-bed residential facility that provides integrated treatment for women (19+), including trans women, across British Columbia who struggle with severe substance use and mental health challenges. <http://www.bcmhsus.ca/our-services>

**Burnaby Centre for Mental Health & Addiction** <http://www.bcmhsus.ca/our-services>

A 94-bed facility that provides integrated treatment for adults (19+) with the most severe and complex concurrent disorders in British Columbia.

## ALCOHOL & DRUG FREE HOUSING

### The Addiction Recovery Program (ARP)

An 18 months A&D free supported housing program for people in early recovery pursuing an abstinent lifestyle. Call ACCESS Central: Toll Free 1-866-658-1221



## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

These are some non-VCH services available in the community for people and families affected by alcohol and drugs.

**BC 211:** <http://www.bc211.ca/help-lines/>  
Alcohol & Drug Information Referral Service (24 hour).  
Local: **604-660-9382** Toll Free Line: **1-800-663-1441**

**Vancouver Crisis Centre:** <https://crisiscentre.bc.ca/> **604 872-3311**. 24hr support & information line

**Parents Forever:** <http://www.parentsforever.ca/> Mutual support group for parents and for families ;

**BC Nurse Line** <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca>  
**1 866-215-4700**-24 hour health-related information

**Vancouver Recovery Club:** 604-708-9955  
261 E. 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. 24 hr drop in and referral service

### Self Help Groups

**Alcoholics Anonymous:** <http://www.vancouveraa.ca>

**Narcotics Anonymous:**  
<https://www.vascna.ca/na-meetings-vancouver-bc/>

**Cocaine Anonymous:** <http://www.ca-bc.org>

**Al-Anon:** <http://bcyukon-al-anon.org/meetings.html>  
For family or friends of people with alcohol use challenges

**Nar-Anon:** <http://www.nar-anon.org/find-a-meeting>  
For family or friends of people with drug use challenges

**LifeRing Secular Recovery:** <http://lifering.org/>

**SMART Recovery:** [www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org)  
SMART also has a meeting for families and friends

For more details and additional resources, see <http://bit.ly/VanSUHelp>

## The Family Connections Support Group

The *Family Support and Involvement Team* has a support group for family and friends of individuals with mental illness and/or substance use concerns. The group is co-facilitated by a Family Support & Involvement Coordinator and family member.

We aim to create a welcoming and supportive space in which family members can share their experiences with each other and feel supported and strengthened in their efforts to help their loved ones. The group has a small educational component. Participants also receive twice-monthly emails with the contents of the educational part.

Family and supporters are free to attend on a regular basis or drop in as needed. We hope that having the group on the VGH campus makes it easier for families to attend who are supporting a loved one at the Psychiatric Assessment Unit (PAU), Inpatient Psychiatry or Willow Pavilion, though all family members and supporters are welcome.

**DATE:** Every first Thursday and third Monday of the month

**TIME:** 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** 2nd floor boardroom, Joseph & Rosalie Segal & Family Health Centre, 803 W 12th Ave (at Willow; can be approached from W 10th Ave, behind the Blusson Spinal Cord Centre at 818 W 10th Ave).

A map is at <http://www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com/segal-building-map/>

**For questions or more information please contact:**

[sky.lee@vch.ca](mailto:sky.lee@vch.ca), 604 290-3817 or

[isabella.mori@vch.ca](mailto:isabella.mori@vch.ca), 604 314-9032

*A space in which family members can share their experiences with each other and feel supported*



## MORE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS



**Parents Forever** – Support group for families of adults living with addiction. Group meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday at St. Mary’s Kerrisdale, 2490 W 37<sup>th</sup> Ave., Vancouver. Contact Frances Kenny, 604-524-4230 or [fkenny@uniserve.com](mailto:fkenny@uniserve.com)

**BC Schizophrenia Vancouver Family Support Group** - for family members supporting someone with serious mental illness. Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month. Marpole Community Centre, 990 W 59th Ave, Social room -2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 7:00 – 8:30 pm

**GRASP Support Group** – GRASP offers peer-led mutual support groups for families or individuals who have had a loved one die as a result of substance abuse or addiction. 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month, 7-9 p.m. at Gilmore Community School 50 South Gilmore Ave, Rm 207. Please email [graspvancouverarea@gmail.com](mailto:graspvancouverarea@gmail.com) to register.

**First Nations Talking Circle** - Weekly Talking Circle co-ed group for adult family and clients interested in learning more about First Nations Culture, sharing, expressing thoughts, and experiencing traditional ceremonies. Every Wednesday from 10:00 at the Carnegie Community Centre. Third floor 401 Main Street/Hastings, Vancouver. Contact Perry Omeasoo @ 604-306-7474

**St Paul’s Hospital Family Support Group**- Support for families who have a loved one living with mental illness. Last Thursday of each month, 6-7:30pm. St Paul’s Hospital, 1081 Burrard Street, Room # 451, 4th floor. Please pre-register at 604-682-2344 local 64272

**VCH Eating Disorder Program – Family Support Group** – for friends and family members of individuals living with an eating disorder. 1st Wednesday of each month, 6 – 7:30 p.m., 3rd Floor, 2750 East Hastings, Vancouver. Contact Hella @ 604-675-2531 ext 20689.

**Borderline Talks** - for individuals living with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) or Traits, and their loved ones. Every Wednesday from 6:00-8:00. Coast Mental Health: 293 E. 11th Ave., Vancouver, BC Contact: Coral More, [coralmore@gmail.com](mailto:coralmore@gmail.com)

**Pathways Clubhouse Chinese Family Support Group** – Education sessions for Chinese families who have a loved one living with mental illness. 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month.

1 – 4:00 p.m., Room 345/50, 7000 Minoru Blvd, **Richmond**. Contact Lorraine Ng  
[Lorraine.ng@pathwaysclubhouse.com](mailto:Lorraine.ng@pathwaysclubhouse.com) or 604-276-8834, ext 215.

**BCSS Richmond Family Support group** - email [vanrich@bcss.org](mailto:vanrich@bcss.org), Phone: 778-836-1886

#### **Hope 4 Families Support Group**

This group is a regular support and information meeting for family members of those in the acute care unit at the Hope Centre in **North Vancouver**. Meetings are held every second Thursday from 4-5 PM at the HOPE CENTRE MAIN FLOOR, GROUP ROOM 4. A social worker or family therapist and a family member from the North Shore Family Advisory Committee attend each meeting. The remaining 2019 dates are: Apr.11,25; May 9,23; June 6,20; July 11,25; Aug.8,22; Sept.5,19; Oct.3,17,31; Nov.14,28; and Dec.12.

**Pathways Serious Mental Illness** (formerly Northshore Schizophrenia Society) - groups in **West Vancouver, Tri Cities, Squamish and Whistler**. Call 604 925 0856 or email [info@pathwayssmi.org](mailto:info@pathwayssmi.org)



## BEYOND REHAB — STORIES OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE OVERCOME SUBSTANCE USE

Compiled by Isabella Mori

Here are some stories you can find online about people who have “been there, done that, got the t-shirt” - people who have experienced substance use, gone through treatment and are now clean.

Ryan Hampton has lived through substance use and now dedicates himself to helping others and educating the world about substance use. He was part of the core team that released the first-ever U.S. Surgeon General’s report on addiction in 2016 and was singled out by Forbes as a top social entrepreneur in the recovery movement. His website has a section dedicated to people’s stories. I particularly liked Chris Kelley’s, who went in and out of rehab until it finally stuck <https://ryanhampton.org/tag/voices-project/page/2/>

“It’s been three years now since I left rehab, and about two years since I relapsed. I don’t do any kind of drug anymore, although I still drink occasionally. I’m due to graduate this coming June, and I’ve never been more confident and outspoken than I am today.” This young woman traces her life from the trauma of her house burning down when she was 15 through to her substance use, rehab, using again and her eventual recovery [https://www.representmag.org/topics/addiction/Hooked\\_on\\_Heroin.html?story\\_id=FCYU-2007-11-04b](https://www.representmag.org/topics/addiction/Hooked_on_Heroin.html?story_id=FCYU-2007-11-04b)

Substance use touches everyone, the world over. Here’s a story from Mombasa, Kenya. “Mention any drug, Murad Swaleh will tell you how it tastes.” This man experienced it all—living on the streets, almost dying, losing his marriage, going into rehab, reconnecting with his kids, remarrying, and helping others in recovery now. <https://www.nation.co.ke/counties/mombasa/a-recovering-addict-tale-of-battling-drug-addiction/1954178-5276406-6ynfjt/index.html>

In the UK, Dave talks about how his life has changed since he stopped drinking. “I went to rehab. That got me in the boat. At rehab, I learned why I drink and what I needed to do about it. After rehab, I stayed in the middle of the boat – aftercare, recovery meetings, sponsor, recovery programme, reading, helping others where I can. I’m sober today because I put my alcohol recovery before anything else. It’s too precious not to put it first. Alcoholism is a horrible disease but there is a way out. If you can listen to people who’ve been there and keep showing up, then recovery is there for you.” <https://www.ukat.co.uk/addiction/alcohol/alcohol-awareness-week-2018-change-in-dave-one-year-sober/>

*After rehab:  
aftercare,  
recovery  
meetings,  
sponsor, re-  
covery pro-  
gramme,  
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helping oth-  
ers where I  
can. I’m so-  
ber today  
because I  
put my alco-  
hol recovery  
before any-  
thing else.*