



40 YEARS OF RESIDENTIAL SERVICE

From 1969 - 2009

The John Howard Society of the North Okanagan/Kootenay Region of BC began its work in 1961 when a local group of church officials, including Bishop Sovereign, Monsignor Miles and others, hired social worker Bill Hesketh to counsel and support men who had been in conflict with the justice system. By 1969 the Society expanded its services to include housing for homeless and transient men - providing a circle of support that included employment counseling, jobs in the forestry industry and farming, addictions recovery, and mental health services. The philosophy of our organizations is simple - offer compassion, dignity, and hope to those who find themselves on the edges of society and in doing so, build a safer community for all.

The first residence for men was located near the present day Schubert Centre. After it burned down, Hesketh worked with a local ecumenical Council and purchased the present building, a former World War II nurses' residence which was moved from its original site east of the Vernon Jubilee Hospital to the present location on 43rd Street. After months of renovation and hundreds

of hours of volunteer labor, the house began its new life as a residence for men in need.

More recently, Howard House has been reborn under the leadership of Barb Levesque, Executive Director and the present Board of Directors, providing a 24 bed emergency shelter for homeless men, a 14 bed transitional housing program and a 9 bed addiction recovery wing. Much of the funding to day comes from the BC Housing Emergency Shelter Program and the Ministry of Income and Employment Assistance, augmented by the rent paid by the men who live in the transitional housing. Case managers and addictions recovery staff assist each resident to set achievable goals and on-site employment services connect residents with employers and training. Access to legal, medical and dental services can be arranged.

Over the years, Howard House has been a hostel, a halfway house for Federal parolees, an emergency shelter and a transition house for those on their way to a healthy, independent life. But most of all, it has been a home for those who have lost theirs and need a starting point to a new and better life.

OUR PROGRAMS

WorkFirst

Employment and life skills assistance for men who are homeless, at risk

of being homeless, or have been in conflict with the law and need assistance to overcome their barriers to employment. WorkFirst staff can help clients explore employment and training/upgrading options, build a resume, search for employment, and prepare interviews. Life skill services include: budgeting, anger management, grooming and presentation skills, and addictions recovery. Consultation and teaching is by one-on-one and small group sessions.



Addiction Recovery Program:

Provides supported housing at the shelter on 43rd Street for men who are recovering from problematic substance abuse. A harm reduction model is used with the goal of eventual abstinence. Support is provided by individual and group counseling. Integration through volunteering and community activities is encouraged.



Residents paint a West Coast Native mural for the dining room



Garden at Howard House provides food in season and gives residents an opportunity to garden and recreate

Homeless Outreach Program:

Street-level outreach to single adults and families who are homeless and need assistance to find affordable housing. The Homeless Outreach Worker serves individuals, couples, and families who may be living outside or in temporary shelter and connects them with appropriate housing and services. The program seeks to match willing landlords with clients in need of housing. Follow up gives clients added support. Funding for this program is from BC Emergency Shelter Program.

Transitional Housing

Provides 14 single room to low income men needing a stable environment for \$500 a month. Shared washroom and showers, free laundry, all meals included, additional support services (ie. medical and dental) may be available depending on need and resources. Cable connection at additional fee for \$20 a month.

The Mission of the Society is:

To promote and lead effective, just, and humane responses to the causes and consequences of crime and poverty by working directly with individuals, service providers and the broader community.

In furtherance of our Mission, the Society shall use the following methods:

- Provide safe and supportive housing alternatives that meet the needs of people who are homeless, at risk of being homeless, or who are marginally housed.
- Promote public safety through community and social development activities
- Build programs and services for people who have come into conflict with the law and those whose life circumstances and choices put them at risk of coming into conflict with the law
- Review, evaluate and advocate for changes in the criminal justice process
- Engage in public education on matters relating to criminal behavior and crime prevention

Howard House

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Gateway Shelter

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