
“The Provincial News”

The John Howard Society of BC

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National Journal

The John Howard Society of Canada has published the first issue of a new journal. There are a number of articles about BC programs and issues. Pick up a copy at your Regional Office.

Substance Use & Criminal Justice Update

The response to our Policy Statement on this issue has received favourable response. The Board now wishes to focus more specifically on AIDS/HIV/HPC in the prisons. Prior to the next meeting in June, each Region is going to check out what is happening in their Region. Then at the meeting, there will be a half-day workshop with resource people to discuss the issues and develop some action plans.

The Justice Literacy Indicator/JLI

The “Justice Literacy Assessment & Awareness Project” is a Provincial Society project which began in September/’99. The project involves coordinating a series of 2 ½ hour workshops with representatives from the field of Justice and Literacy to discuss the implications of limited literacy on the accused person’s involvement with the Justice process. The workshop gives those working in the Justice System an easy to administer assessment tool, The Justice Literacy Indicator (JLI) that identifies the problem of limited literacy. To date workshops have been held in Nanaimo, Prince George, Vernon, Kelowna, Vancouver, Burnaby and Sechelt. The feedback has been excellent. The following are a few of the excerpts from the evaluation sheets:

- ✓ “Excellent presentation & good set-up to using the Word List”
- ✓ “It would be useful for any justice worker & many other community

resource workers”

- ✓ “Enjoyed experience & knowledge of the presenter”
- ✓ “It hit home. Valuable information”

Lower Mainland Regional Update

The Region recently reviewed their Forensic Programs. Following this process, it was decided to expand the service at the Vancouver Apartment, to submit a proposal for the Provincial Housing Outreach Program and to make some changes to the current structure at South Surrey residence.

The contract to operate the Prostitution Offender program has been renewed.

Nanaimo Regional Update

The Regional Board met in a Planning Session to discuss future direction. Society activities were prioritized with non-government contracted programs given “Core” status. Core programs are Restorative Justice, Think First, Ex-offender Community Assistance and Public Education. Any and all government contracts are viewed as non-essential or optional services and must pay their own way.

North Okanagan/Kootenay Regional Update

The Substance Abuse/Reintegration Program continues to attract parolees at Howard House. The Program aims to update relapse prevention plans from institutional substance abuse programs to the here-and-now of life in Vernon. The reintegration part of the Program encourages and demands of parolees’ real plans and real steps toward a pro-social lifestyle. Howard House judiciously provides financial aid for job-related educational expenses.

Over the past year there has been an average of

22 Federal residents with an average stay of 137 days and an average age of 36. The Transient wing of the house provides shelter for an average of 5 men who are an average age of 39 and stay for 5 days.

South Okanagan/Kootenay Regional Update

The Men's Domestic Violence Program continues to be very busy. Additional funds were received from Corrections to allow for 2 groups a week to operate. Besides the groups, there is also one-to-one counselling.

The Anger Management Program is also very busy. The numbers have doubled over the two year period with an average caseload of 90-100.

Northern Regional Update

The Region continues to have a part in the Sex Offender Treatment Program for adults who are provincially adjudicated. The group now meets at the Forensic offices and we supply one therapist for the program.

Institutional visits, the Family Violence Program in the 2 provincial adult jails, the voluntary Spousal Assault Treatment Group, Employment Counselling, Youth and Adult Buddy Initiatives, Choices, the Federal Parolee Volunteer Program and the Wood Workshop are all progressing well.

Fraser Valley Regional Update

A Community Forum on "Families of Prisoners: Facing the Challenges" was held in February.

This was a partnership with the University College of the Fraser Valley.

Staff initiated the Friends of the Family Program at the Regional Referral and Assessment Centre in November. The staff meet with each group of prisoners during their induction into the Federal system. The men are given brochures and a brief explanation of all agencies providing services to prisoners and/or their families.

Family House continues to be utilized to the maximum.

North Island Regional Update

The Discovery Centre Program for adolescent sex offenders is in its seventh year of operation. The Family Home Program, a partnership with PLEA, is a satellite home program.

The Headstart Program has had some major changes. It was formally designed to serve incarcerated youth in one month cycles near the end of their sentences. However the counts in youth custody centres have dropped drastically. The Program is now a provincial resource for both incarcerated youth and, primarily youth with probation orders.

A new program has been developed in partnership with ADAPT, a Nanaimo based alcohol and drug agency. It is called Withdrawal Management and supports caregivers who are dealing with youth in supportive recovery.

Victoria Regional Update

This year marks 65 years of service by the Society in the Victoria area!!

Manchester House continues to operate at capacity on the Federal and Forensic sides. Referrals to the Alternative Measures Program are increasing again after six months of levels that were 20% below expectations. It doesn't appear that the CAP (Community Accountability Programs) have had any effect on the lower referral numbers.

The Nightlite Program continues with weekly sessions at the office. Presently there is an 8 week Anger Management program that is being very well attended.

Thompson Regional Update

The Society was again part of a community forum on "Not in My Back Yard & Corrections". The forum was hosted by the Kamloops Art Gallery as part of an Art exhibit titled "Corrections".

Lighthouse is continuing to function at full capacity. The first quarterly evaluation has been completed and the project is on target. This project is part of a nine-project evaluation report being conducted by an inter-ministerial team. Victory Inn, the 35 one bedroom complex, has been approved by BC Housing. Construction will hopefully start in the alter part of April.

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Next Provincial Meetings

June 3-4, 2000

Vancouver

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