

2011 / 2012 Year in Review

Jessie's Legacy

Eating disorders prevention education, resources and support

Jessie's Legacy provides eating disorders prevention education, resources and support for BC youth, families, educators and professionals. Through this program, Family Services of the North Shore has become one of the seven BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information.

Jessie Alexander was a young North Shore woman who died of complications from a long-standing eating disorder. The prevention work at Family Services of the North Shore has become her legacy. In addition to web-based services and resources, Jessie's Legacy provides media watch, on-line and telephone support, speakers bureau and psycho-education groups as well as an Eating Disorder Support Group for Parents, Partners and Friends. With the financial support of Telus, we are now able to offer specialized counselling services.

Family FUNdamentals

Family FUNdamentals is a 6-session early childhood development program with the overall goal of fostering a joyful and competent parent/child relationship with food and activity to prevent the onset of eating disorders. In 2011, the program was launched and piloted in four accredited Family Resource Centres (Kamloops, Ladysmith, East Vancouver and North Vancouver) throughout B.C. A detailed evaluation was undertaken. Although results were positive and change took place over the six weeks, suggested edits by the pilot sites are being included in a revised Facilitator's Manual. Comments from parents include: "It's never too early to start learning about this stuff"; "When my 6-year old daughter came to me and asked why she had big thighs, I had no idea what to say" so she registered for Family FUNdamentals.

"I believe eating disorders prevention is vital in the current age as I see so many struggle. This organization is a part of my heart and passion...."



"I have found very useful information on the Jessie's Legacy website and refer clients to it often"

"I loved learning that we are more than our physical appearance".

"I gained a lot of criticism towards social media portraying skinny girls as the only way you can be beautiful"

"I want to congratulate you regarding this (Family FUNdamentals) program. I have heard really good feedback from the staff here and they feel it is extremely beneficial for families".

Speakers Bureau

Our Speakers Bureau presentation is an in-demand prevention tool that we use to help educate elementary and secondary school students throughout the Lower Mainland about disordered eating, body image, and positive self-regard. During the school year, we offer Speakers Bureau presentations by Adler School of Professional Psychology, Community Practicum Masters students who we train. We tie these presentations into a multi-media contest run as part of Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness Week (PEDAW) activities. Students can write poetry, stories, create short films, or create other imagery that messages eating disorder prevention. Over 1200 students were reached through our Speakers Bureau this year.



Caring for our Community

101-255 West 1st St.
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Eating Disorder Support Group for Parents, Partners and Friends

We are now into our sixth year of running this very important group at Family Services of the North Shore. Dealing with an eating disorder is a uniquely difficult experience for everyone in a family, and it can be hard for others who have not had this experience to understand. The group has been variously talked about as a “lifesaver”, a “place I can finally be myself” and “I don’t know where I’d be today if this group didn’t exist”, by the more than 200 families that have been touched by it.

Eating Disorder Counselling

Work performed and partnerships created by the Jessie’s Legacy Program has allowed for the creation of a specialty in eating disorders for individuals and families within our group of counselling programs. Family involvement, understanding, and compassion for the individual who is struggling is an integral part of recovery, as is that individual’s awareness about how the eating disorder affects his or her family. A partnership created with the Be Real Clinic at Lion’s Gate Hospital helps ensure families have access without barriers to this much-needed counseling.

Thank you!

for your generous support of the Jessie’s Legacy Program

Girl Talk

Our *Girl Talk* program is designed as an in-depth, multi-session approach to at-risk issues for early adolescent girls. Disordered eating, healthy weights and healthy nutrition, media deconstruction, positive self-regard and resiliency strategies are presented in a multi-media forum. This 10-12 session approach allows time for a more thorough understanding of the material, while creating a positive cohort experience for participants. Since being introduced to *Girl Talk* by Dr. Gail McVey of Toronto’s Sick Children’s Hospital, during our launch ceremonies in 2010, we are pleased to be able to bring *Girl Talk* to B.C. This year, we ran two pilot programs. One was held in a West Vancouver Secondary School and the other in North Vancouver, to very positive feedback.

Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness Week (PEDAW)

PEDAW is a Province-wide collaboration among health care professionals and interested volunteers committed to raising awareness around the prevention, early intervention and treatment of disordered eating and eating disorders with a focus on healthy body image, resiliency and self-esteem. Launched in February each year, PEDAW projects and events continue throughout the year. The theme for PEDAW 2012 is “Love our Bodies, Love Ourselves” with a focus on youth and body image. A “Love Our Bodies, Love Ourselves” Facebook page was developed and over 5,000 wristbands have been distributed. A successful flash mob took place in three locations in downtown Vancouver.

Family Services of the North Shore is an accredited not-for-profit community based agency that offers counselling, support and education. We also lead the provincial work in eating disorders prevention. Family Services of the North Shore has been caring for the community for over 60 years. Our high-profile, proactive presence throughout the province connects the community through a variety of programs that create an environment for all families and individuals to thrive.

We recognize the continuing contribution of the City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver and the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia.



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