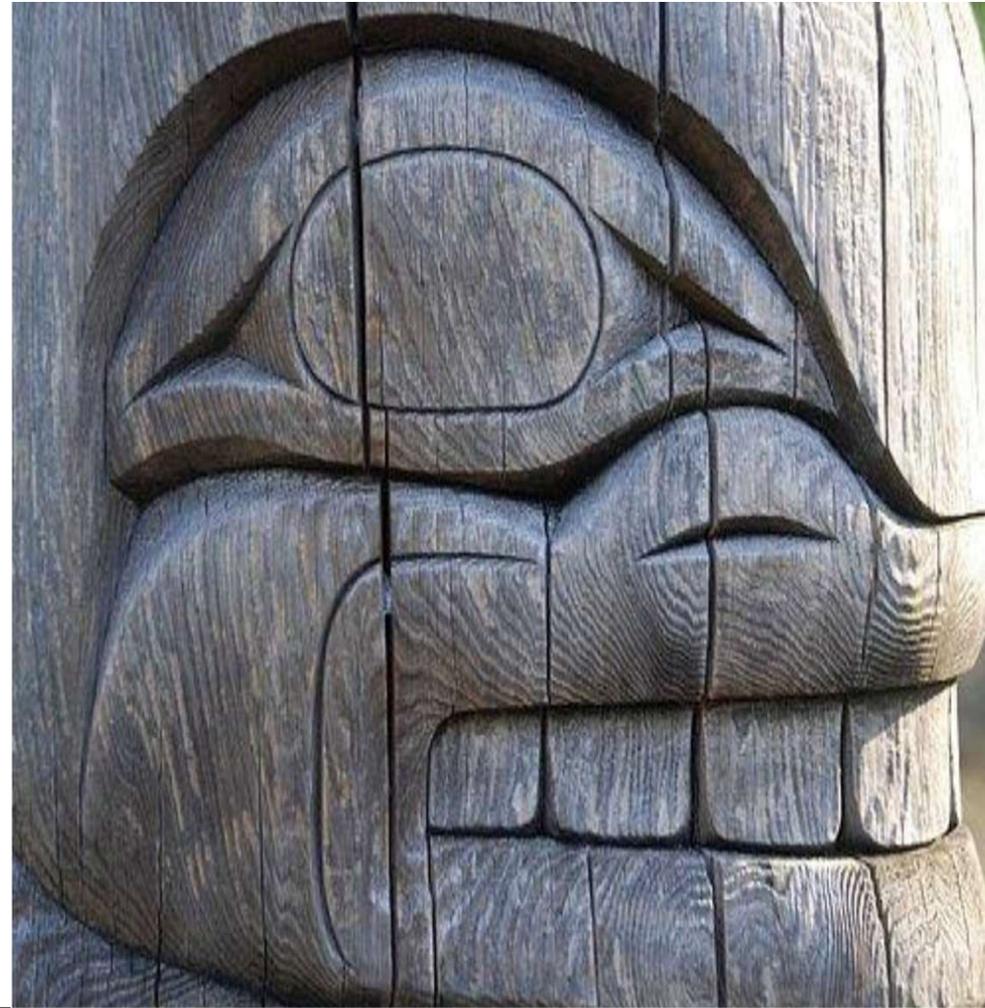




Housing that Connects Us:
Innovative Community Programs to Build
Social Connection in Housing

We acknowledge the homelands of the Indigenous Peoples of this place we now call Canada, and honour the many territorial keepers of the Lands on which we work.

Today, we are presenting from the **ancestral and stolen** homelands of the x^wməθk^wəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətał (Tseil-Waututh) peoples. We feel indebted to them for caring for this land.



Webinar Instructions

- Everyone will **remain muted**.
- Feel free to **introduce yourself** in the Chatbox (e.g., name, pronouns, organization, territories you are calling from).
- You can turn on automatic closed captioning using the **CC feature** in the toolbar.
- There will be a **question period** at the end – please use the “**Q&A**” feature to ask questions at any time.
- The webinar is being recorded and will be posted on [Healthy Aging CORE](#) – slides will also be made available.

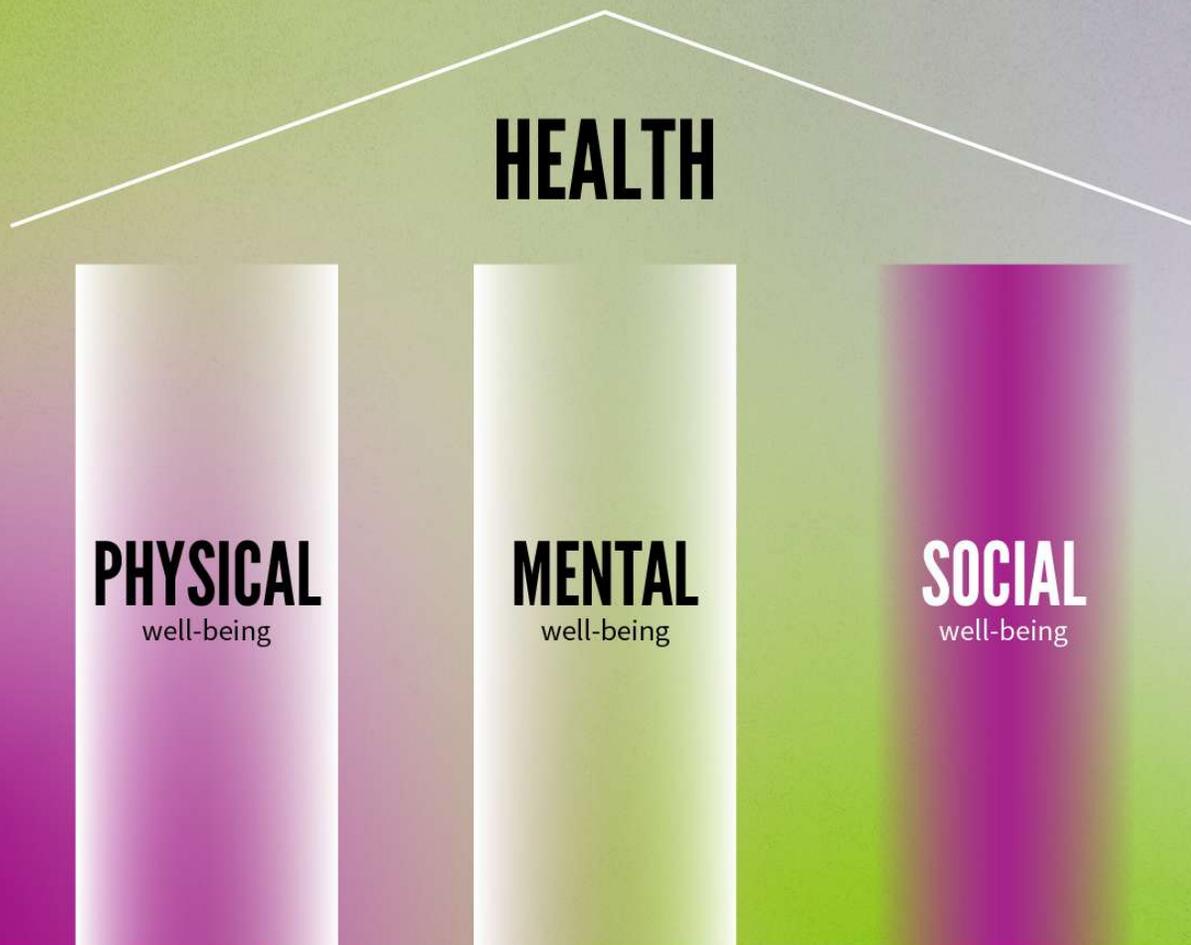
Webinar Series: Housing that Connects Us

- Hey Neighbour Collective and United Way BC's Seniors Housing Working Group are excited to be co-hosting a three-part webinar series on building social connection in housing.
 - **March 6:** Innovative Community Programs to Build Social Connection in Housing
 - **April 14:** The Benefits of Being an Enabling Host
 - **TBA:** Age-Friendly Sociable Design



SOCIAL HEALTH: THE MISSING PILLAR

WHO defines health as complete **physical, mental** and **social well-being** – social health is not optional.



DOWNLOAD OUR REPORT:
[BIT.LY/WHO-CSC-REPORT](https://bit.ly/who-csc-report)



Webinar Agenda

1. Context Setting: Hey Neighbour Collective & Social Connection
 2. Presentations on Community Programs
 - Claudine Matlo, West End Seniors' Network
 - Jenny Konkin, Whole Way House
 - Stacy Barter, Building Resilient Communities
 3. Panel Discussion with Presenters
 4. Audience Q&A
 5. Wrap-Up
- 
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Stacy Barter

Executive Director,
Building Resilient Neighbourhoods
&
Director of Learning & Evaluation,
Hey Neighbour Collective



Setting the Context

**Connecting
housing, social
well-being and
resilience**



HNC brings together...



How might
we...

How can we **work together**
to foster more multi-unit
housing communities

which are **socially
connected, age-friendly,
neighbourly, health-
promoting and resilient?**

Origin Story



2018-19 Pilot



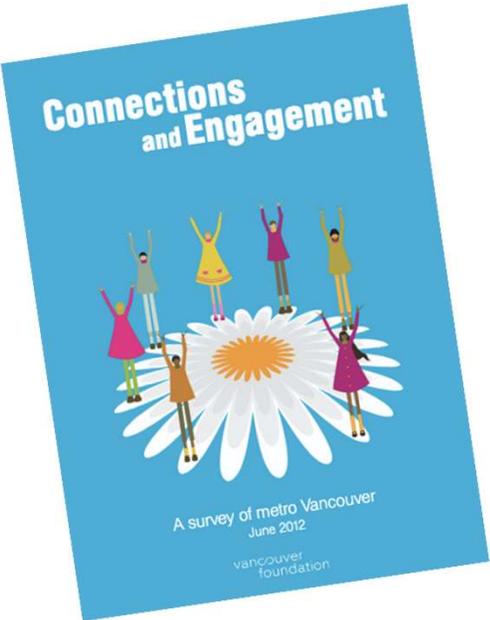
Chronic loneliness and social isolation can be as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day and increases risk of premature death by as much as 50%.



Strong social connections and supports are protective for physical and mental health and against cognitive decline.



Where you live matters



Knowing neighbours' names	56%	81%
Frequency of conversations or helping out neighbours	23%	48%
Trust of neighbours	40%	60%
Feeling alone	39%	22%

Vancouver Foundation, 2012

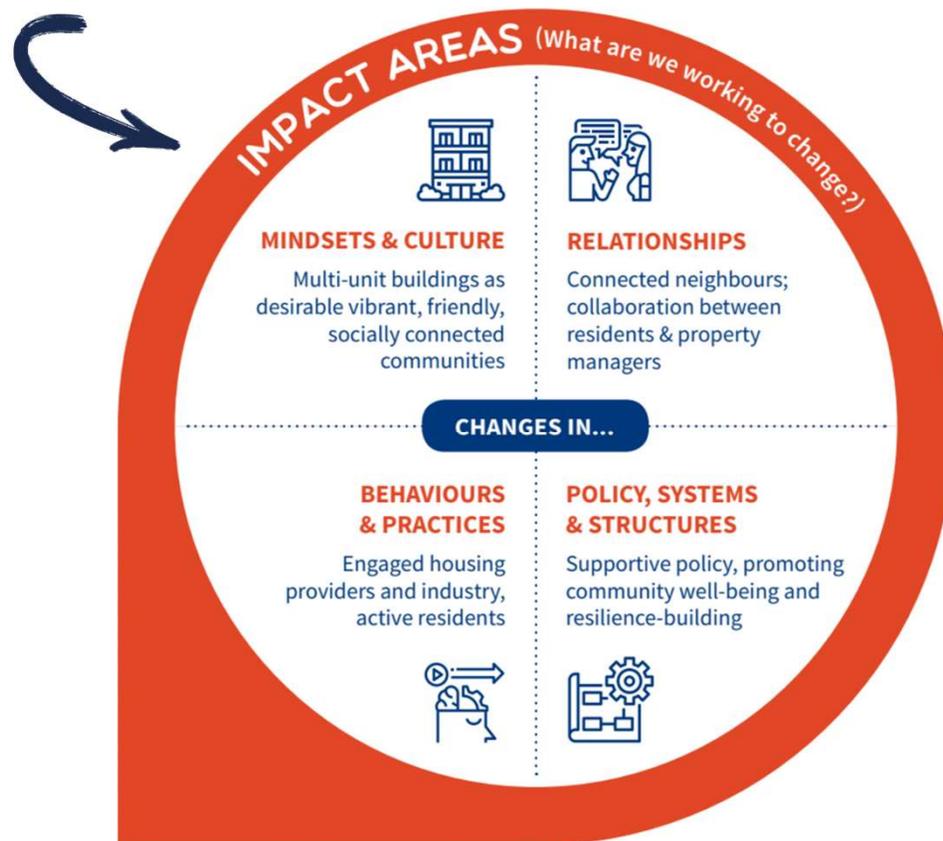
Working Towards

- ✓ Measurable increase in social connectedness and resilience
- ✓ Positive transformation on the ways multi-unit buildings are engaged, managed and designed
- ✓ Shifting attitudes, beliefs and values about desirability of living in multi-unit buildings



Theory of Change

Impact Areas



What supports these changes?

- ✓ *Engaged, Safe & Empowered Residents*
- ✓ *Pro-active Landlords & Housing Operators*
- ✓ *Improved Housing Design*
- ✓ *Supportive Policy*

ECONOMY

Vancouver is in a 'full-blown crisis' for housing affordability: Report



By Amy Judd & Angela Jung • Global News

Posted April 3, 2024 6:52 pm • 4 min read

Global News Hour at 6 BC

Home affordability still out of reach for many



CBC VANCOUVER



FOR SUBSCRIBERS THE THIRD ACT

We need to start treating loneliness like a public health challenge. Here's why

As Canada shifts toward "super-aged" status, it needs a national strategy on loneliness, advocates say.

Updated Sept. 20, 2024 at 2:34 p.m. | April 5, 2024 | 3 min read



A group of researchers, advocates, policymakers, physicians, health-care workers and social service providers is calling on the federal government to create a national strategy to combat loneliness.

2024

British Columbia

Seniors' advocates fear a growing wave of homeless people over 60 as stock of affordable housing dwindles

The 2023 Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver showed 22% w

2023



Hannah Mondriwa · CBC News · Posted: Dec 23, 2023 10:00 AM PST | Last Updated: December 23, 2023



Cran Campbell, 75, said he's apartment in Langley is sla (CBC)

VANCOUVER SUN

Life Opinion Business Shopping Homes Puzzmo Healthing Driving Remembering ePaper Newsletters

This advertisement has not loaded yet, but your article continues below.

News / Local News

Hundreds who died from heat exposure in B.C. were mostly seniors found alone in unventilated suites, says coroner

At least 486 sudden and unexpected deaths have been reported since Friday — a number which is likely to grow

David Carrigg

Published Jul 01, 2021 · 3 minute read

31 Comments

2021

The Bigger Picture

And the Moment We're In

2019

**Social
connectedness
helps people be
less lonely and
improve health**



2025

**Social
connectedness
saves lives and
creates
resilience to all
kinds of
challenges:
climate change,
health, aging,
etc.**





POLYCRISIS:

A time of great disagreement, confusion, or suffering that is caused by many different problems happening at the same time so that they together have a very big effect (*Cambridge dictionary*)

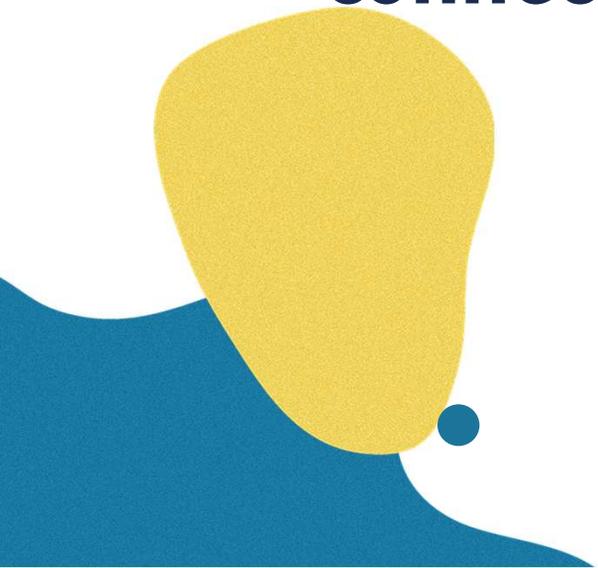


MULTISOLVING:

When people work together across sectors to address multiple problems with one policy or investment (*Multisolving Institute*)



**‘Multi-solving’ time has come, and
fostering neighbourly social
connectedness and resilience in multi-
unit housing is a
cross-cutting solution.**



Hey Neighbour Collective Pillars



***Demonstration
Programs***



***Policy &
Systems
Change***



***Sociable
Design***

Spectrum of neighbourly interactions

Building design

Buildings can be designed to encourage residents to bump into each other and linger in common spaces

Building design & programming

Social programming can help residents make the jump from acquaintances to meaningful relationships. The design of physical spaces facilitates successful programming.

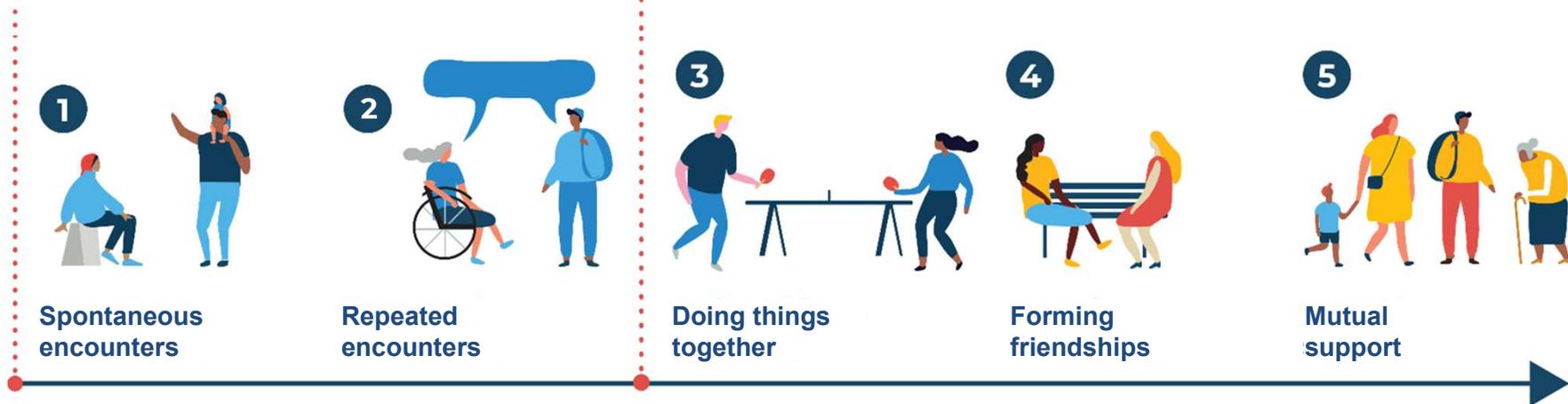


Image: Happy Cities

Demonstration programs





7 Demonstration programs

Led by...

3
Housing operators

2 Non-market rental housing, 1 market rental housing

3
Community-based organizations



90+
Buildings

Made Up of...

6,300+
Households

Social Connectedness Programming Works!



70 - 100%

New or deeper connections



70-90%

Increased sense of belonging



70-73%

More likely to ask for or offer help to a neighbour



60-90%

Increased leadership capacity



60-86%

Increased sense of safety



30 - 100%

Gained access to additional community services

Learning

Partnerships are Powering this work!

Housing operators can be “enabling hosts” (and benefit from third party partnerships).

Place-based community organizations can bring community development expertise and connections to other local resources...

BUT are chronically under-funded and often unable to sustain the work over time.



Impacts on Community-based Organizations

- Expanded reach/outreach.
- Better leveraging of resources.



Impacts on Housing Operators

- **Improved relationships with residents.**
- **Enhanced brand profile.**
- **More stable tenancies.**
- **Supportive benefits from partnerships.**
- **Better emergency preparedness.**
- **Reduced conflict.**
- **Happier staff.**
- **Organizational policy change and improvement.**



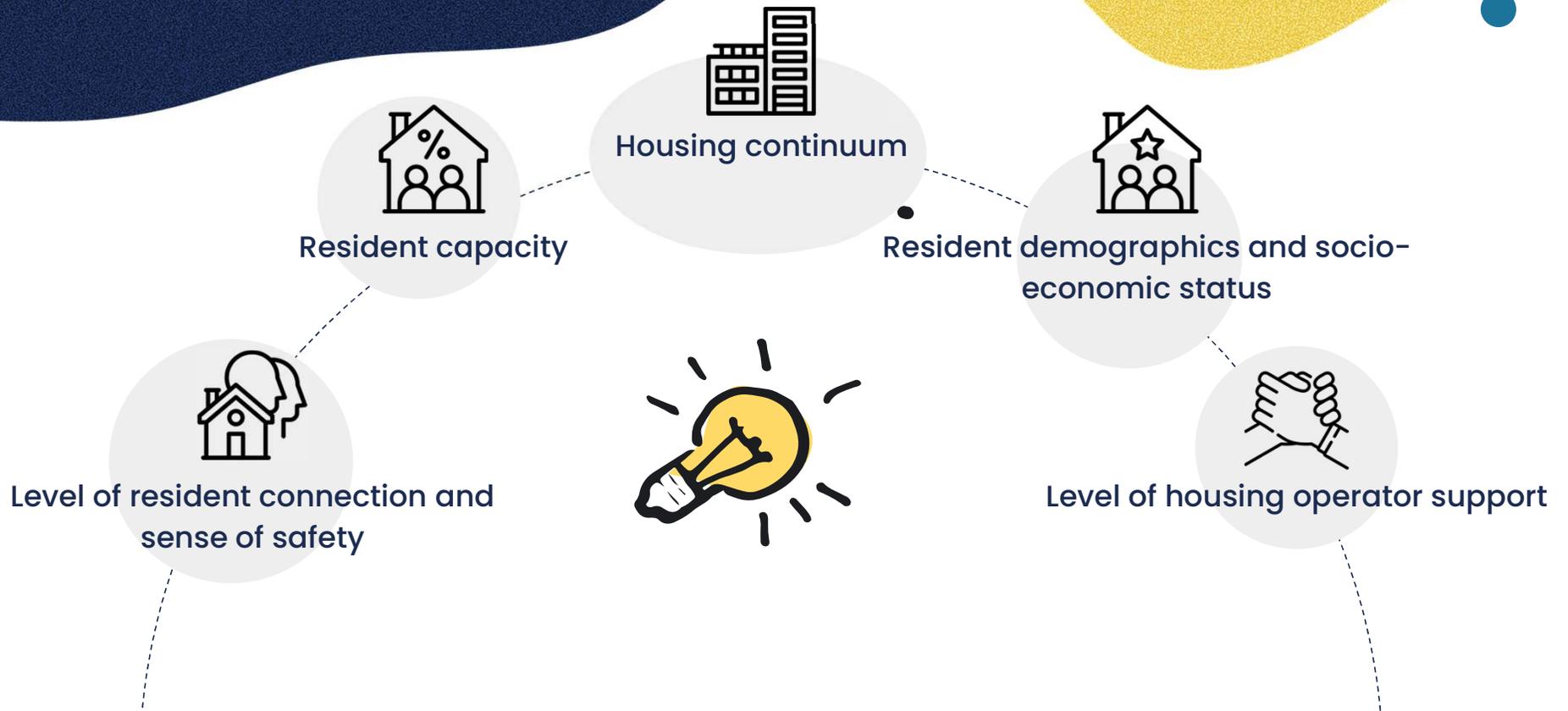
Reputationally, it's fantastic if we're the landlord of choice for people... there are intangible benefits that come from that through recommendations and referrals and those sorts of things."

"It's a lot less work to manage a happy building than an unhappy one."



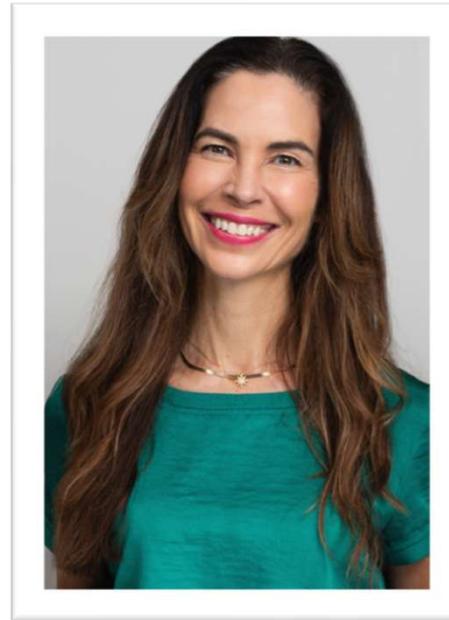
Diverse contexts need diverse approaches

Learning



Claudine Matlo

Executive Director,
West End Seniors' Network





**WEST END
SENIORS'
NETWORK**



Housing that Connects Us:
Innovative Community Programs to Build
Social Connection
in Housing



Visit Our Website
wesn.ca

Claudine Matlo
March 6, 2026



Our Mission and Vision

Mission

- To enhance the quality of life of older adults by providing social, recreational, educational and supportive programs and services that foster connection and inclusion in the broader community.

Vision

- A Vancouver community that supports and empowers older adults to live involved, healthy and fulfilling lives.



The Oasis Model

Three site examples



The Oasis Model

Oasis is an innovative model that offers programming for older adults living within a NORC (naturally occurring retirement community). Oasis is unique as it seeks to empower older adults to identify their needs and determine the services and activities which best meet those needs (Donnelly et al, 2019). Oasis includes programming - developed by members - designed to foster movement, healthy nutrition and socialization to support older adults to age within their communities.

The Three Pillars of Oasis:

Nutrition
Physical Activity
Social Engagement





WESN Oasis site summary

New Continental - start June 2024

01

Senior specific building
Independent living with 120 units
Some people receiving in home care
Large mix of physical abilities

Roddan Lodge - Started August 2024

02

11 storey 213 unit building located in
Vancouver Downtown Eastside
More than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the unites are at the
provincial shelter rate
Complex population, substance use,
mental health needs

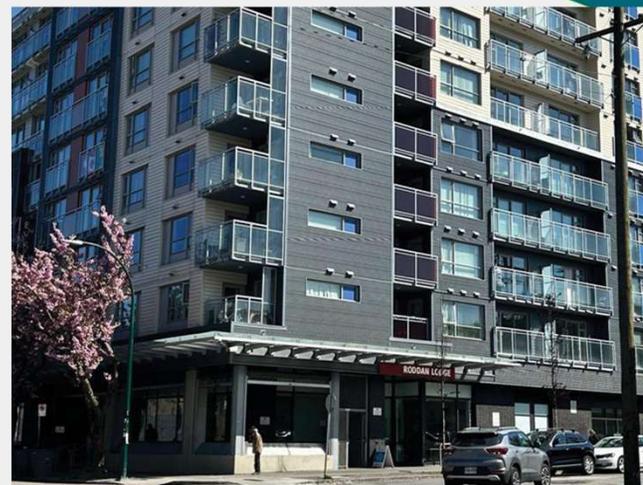
03

Nicolson Towers - Started October 2025

240 Low to moderate income seniors
People with varying substance use
issues were housed (all ages) Bloom
group working to return the building to
seniors only.

Roddan Lodge -

- Located in the heart of East Vancouver - in one of the most complicated neighbourhoods in Vancouver
- Home to those 55 years and older or those under 55 with a disability (moved to 45 years due to low occupancy)
- 213 units
- Evelyn Slayer Community Centre located below
- Incredible common space with Kitchen
- Community Gardens, BBQ



*“You withdraw, begin to distrust others,
and become isolated.”*

*“Being terrified to enter and exit through
the front door means I do not accept
invitations or go to cultural gatherings
after 5pm.”*



Roddan Lodge



1 Challenges

- Building trust - people concerned the program will 'go away' and don't want to experience another loss
- Lack of trust of BM / owners
- Safety concerns
- Expectations of what OASIS can and cannot do
- Diversity - older adults, substance use / abuse, mental health, and all with a concern for their safety

2 Successes

- Start with the familiar
- Keep it simple and consistent
- Monthly planning session with tenants
- FOOD - planning, cooking when possible and eating together

3 Volunteer role(s)

- The Volunteer Champion (Jojo)
- In the buildings we are in there is a need for a staff person to be "in charge" - responsible for issues and power dynamics that can occur
- The tenant/ Volunteer led program builds trust (most of the time)
- Roles need to be clear

4 Scaling

- Community Partnerships = Building Community
- In-Kind partnerships - food supports
- Co-funded models
- Engaging Tenants in funding Oasis?

"The challenges are various as RL is in the DTES and we have a very active block with the drop in center being on the ground floor we truly are a bit of an Oasis there. " (Guy - RL/NT Oasis Coordinator



Oasis at the New Continental Seniors Building - located Downtown South

- Seniors Independent Living
- Over 110 seniors in the building
- Building had been under renovation (water issues) for over a year prior to Oasis beginning
- Feelings of mistrust of people coming into the building from the outside
- Very large variety of both mobility and interest among the tenants



Site 3 - Nicolson Towers - started Oct 2026

- Located in Vancouver's West End
- Nicolson Tower is a 20 story high rise that is home to approximately 240 low to moderate income households.
- Bloom Group owns and operates and is committed to maintaining Nicolson Tower as below market affordable housing.
- Residents must be able to live independently and be committed to the community aspects of the facility, which includes shared amenity spaces.

Some residents are initially hesitant to change or see us as strangers in the building. Over time, as they see that we genuinely care and help them connect with others, they begin to trust us and feel motivated to come out of their homes and participate. One of the best things that have helped us here is good food with fresh ingredients and this has truly made many folks come down and very much appreciate and become advocates for our program (NT Oasis Coordinator)



Learning together -



The power of invitation

Best Practice Lessons

- FOOD!! Social opportunities + food security
- Have a set schedule; tenant ownership of some activities
- Start with what is familiar - Bingo @ NT

Know your people

Build trust.... Build Community

- Consistency is key.
- Process of discovery to bring people out of their suites
- getting to know people one on one

Partnerships

Everyone is your partner

- Through support of CoV staff a door knocking campaign was initiated to invite people to attend the Christmas Lunch - 50 people attended.
- Positive relationship with the BM / owner can make all the difference

“Just letting them see that we are not leaving and are here to help give folks a place to talk, and think positively about their lives has made a huge difference here.” (Farnoush, NC/NT Oasis Coordinator.



**WEST END
SENIORS'
NETWORK**



Thank you



604-669-5051



www.wesn.ca

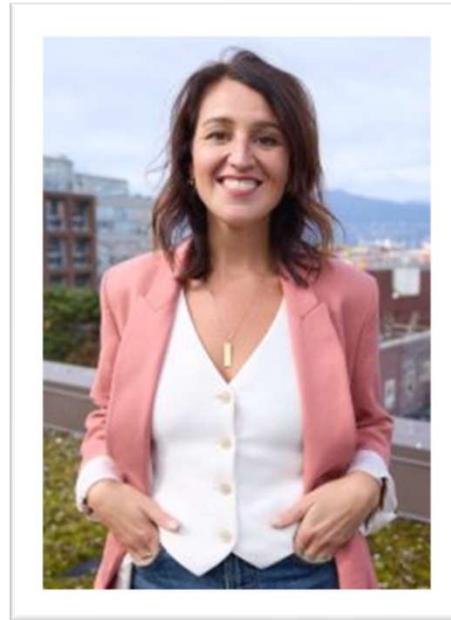


executivedirector@wesn.ca



Jenny Konkin

President & Co-Founder,
Whole Way House



WHOLE WAY HOUSE

2 0 2 5



Building Healthy Communities in Housing

S u p p o r t i n g S e n i o r s t o A g e W e l l i n P l a c e



Introducing the Whole Way House Model

Whole Way House partners with non-profit housing providers to deliver onsite community-building and tenant support programs that foster healthy, connected communities. We serve low-income veterans, seniors, and people with disabilities, helping them feel at home and supported to age well in place.

Our services are tailored to tenant needs, with staff onsite 3–7 days per week. By creating safe and welcoming environments, we empower at-risk seniors to maintain stable housing, access vital healthcare and community resources, and thrive with dignity and belonging.



Current Overview

800+ Residents

8 Sites (7 independent, 1 supportive housing)

6 Housing Partners

20 Staff

4 Municipalities

\$1.3M ANNUAL BUDGET





WHOLE WAY HOUSE
RECONNECT. REBUILD. RECENTER

Our Model

Key points:

- Onsite, multi-unit buildings
- 40-210 residents
- As needed services- adapts 2-7 days
- Based on trust & accessibility
- Third party support provider

Two-Pronged Approach

Response to Homelessness

1. We bring homeless or inappropriately housed seniors and veterans off the BC Housing waitlist into our supported model to ensure successful tenancy
2. We have a 97% retention rate for those we bring into housing

Prevention of Homelessness

1. We support those who are currently housed but are at-risk of decline and homelessness
2. Non-profit housing providers are facing a crisis with seniors who are declining in independent housing
3. Seniors who don't qualify for assisted living are being hospitalized or facing crisis evictions



OUR PROGRAMS: PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL & FINANCIAL WELLNESS



RECONNECT	REBUILD	RECENTER
<p>Coffee Club A great way to start the day, have a reason to get ready and get out of isolation and into a relaxed and positive community setting</p>	<p>Food Bank Rides/Food Security Programs Providing transportation and assistance getting to the food bank. Free shopping programs. Grocery delivery assistance. Meal delivery coordination.</p>	<p>One-on-One Tenant Support Open office hours onsite for various types of support and navigation (English & Chinese)</p>
<p>Games/Puzzles/Drop In Ice breaker to connect in a healthy way and have fun</p>	<p>Special Outings Walking clubs, city exploration, museums, picnics, beach days, forest walks</p>	<p>Financial Support Budgeting, banking assistance, taxes (more on next slide)</p>
<p>Family Dinner/Holiday Meals Building a sense of belonging and family by sharing a sit-down meal that is served with a smile to celebrate together</p>	<p>Hearing Tests/Foot Care/Haircuts onsite Coordinating hearing test providers to come onsite to give free hearing tests & hearing aid fittings</p>	<p>Hospital Visits Emotional and practical support, coordinating with hospital staff for discharge and follow up</p>
<p>Art & Music Therapy Art Hour, Music Trivia, Karaoke and our Listening Stations, seniors are invited to engage, reminisce and share laughter across cultures and language barriers</p>	<p>Educational Workshops & Tax Clinics Scams and fraud prevention, technology classes and more for life-long learning, seniors safety with the VPD. Onsite tax clinics to ensure seniors don't lose their benefits & can complete rent review</p>	<p>Move in/out Support Welcome Home package, monthly home success checks, home set up, door tags for safety checks</p>
<p>Birthday Parties Celebrate so they know they are valued</p>	<p>Seated Exercise Class Stay physically fit, active and engaged (all levels)</p>	<p>Clean Units Teams of volunteers come to clean homes for a full reset and easier upkeep</p>
<p>Light Lunch/Super Soups Enjoying a casual meal together at a table with friends and neighbours – Food Security</p>	<p>Community Committee Tenant-led committee to provide input and activity calendar planning</p>	<p>Health Care Coordination/Home Support Advocating for assessments, coordinating treatments, appointment accompaniments</p>

Vital Tenant Support Services: One on One Support



Coordinating Health Care

- Requesting case manager assessments (for home support, OT, higher care, early identification of dementia, stroke, etc)
- Medical appointment reminders
- Requesting medical appointments
- Providing more insight into baseline behaviour and changes
- Requesting a case manager to assess needs for higher care

Coordinating Health Care Continued...

- Ensuring tenant is aware/understands their follow up
- Coordinating pharmacy deliveries/pick up
- Work closely with Home Support team for basic home and care needs (supplying personal hygiene items, cleaning supplies, snack for meds, etc)

Financial Support/Housing

- Pension/SAFER/OAS/GIS application assistance
- Annual rent review assistance
- Tax clinics
- Provide safe escorted trips to bank
- Budgeting assistance
- Coordinating rent payment
- Coordinating access to free tax services
- Accessing Bloom Group Adult Guardianship Program

Housing Applications & Government Forms

- Applying for Government ID
- Bank account assistance
- Income Assistance/Disability/Pension/SAFER/OAS/GIS application assistance
- Assistance with housing applications for appropriate housing along the continuum

Food Security

- Assistance with groceries
- Coordinating meal delivery services
- Rides to the Food Bank
- Onsite food markets

Hospital Care & Coordination

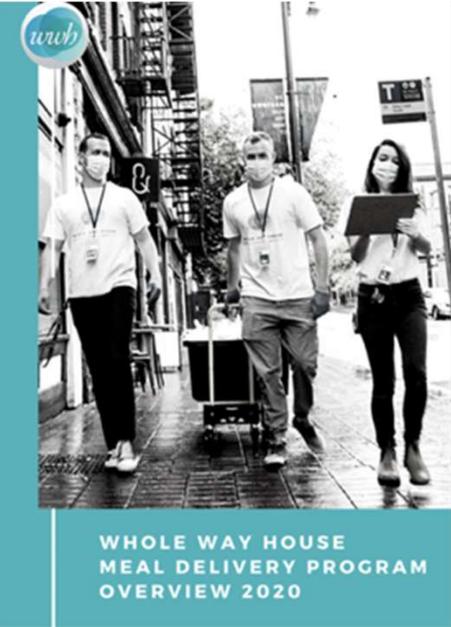
- Ensuring rent is paid during extended hospital stays
- Coordinating with hospital staff before discharge to ensure after care is in place

Clean Units

- Regular home wellness checks to identify any potential issues
- Help residents, especially those with mobility issues, maintain clean rooms by providing shared supplies, volunteer groups, light support
- Coordinating affordable housekeeping

Reduce Vulnerability/ Heighten Safety Measures

- Ensure their funds are safe
- Identify elder abuse
- Community Meetings/Open Forums
- 24 hour tenant "seen" checklist



EXTREME HEAT

Some people are more affected by the heat than other people. Those who should take extra care: people over 65, people with multiple health conditions, people who use substances, people on certain medicines, people who are pregnant, and young children.

Signs of Heat Exhaustion	Signs of Heat Stroke
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in Rash heavy Sweating feeling Dizzy feel Sick or Throw Up rapid Breathing and Heartbeat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache • Trouble Concentrating • Muscle Cramps • Extreme Thirst • Dark Urine and Urinate Less
<p>Anyone with these signs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to a cool space. • Give plenty of water. • Cool the skin down with water. 	<p>Anyone with these signs: Call 9-1-1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submerge all or part of the body in cool water. • Remove their clothes and cover them with wet towels.

The best way to prevent a heat-related illness is to spend time in a cool space.

Get Off

- Somewhere with air conditioning such as a library, community centre, cafe, or someone else's home.
- If off with water. Take a cool shower or put your feet and legs in a cool tub.
- Wear a wet shirt. Put damp towels on your skin.
- Don't rely on fans as the only way of cooling your body during extreme heat, as this cannot lower your body temperature or prevent heat illnesses.

Keep the space cool

- If shades and blinds closed during the day.
- If you have air conditioning, keep doors closed to trap cooler air inside.
- If you don't have air conditioning, open doors at night to let cooler air in.
- If fans in front of open windows to pull air from outside into your home.

Check-in

- Notice how you feel and watch for signs of heat illness in those around you.
- Monitor the indoor temperature.
- At least 2 times a day, check in on those at risk for heat-related illness.

Dress for the heat

- Wear clothing that is loose-fitting, light-colored, and breathable.

Hydrate

- Drink plenty of water.
- Offer water often to those in your care.

Plan ahead Stay informed

- Check the weather forecast and latest heat alert information. Take a break during the hottest times of the day.

Onsite Emergency Response

COVID-19 Response

Meal Delivery Program started within 48 hrs of Pandemic, scaled to serve over 800 vulnerable seniors, veterans, residents with disabilities in 19 buildings across 6 housing providers, delivering over 300,000 meals generously funded by BC Housing

Extreme Weather Response

Immediate heat dome response with onsite chill zones
Cold weather provisions provided onsite for safety

Elevator Breakdowns food and medication coordination, relocation support, calls to first responders when needed

The Results



- Natural community of support amongst neighbours
- Early intervention and care coordination, less crisis reports
- Less eviction
- Overall less days in hospital with discharge support
- Less returns to hospital with aftercare coordination at home
- Less eviction due to decline, hoarding, financial scams, missed rent and more
- Less “early” admission to higher care facilities
- Higher quality of life and overall wellness
- Higher rates of care plan adherence and home support cooperation



Martin's Story



Martin, an 86 yr old, third generation veteran who served for 33 yrs found himself in a homeless shelter after his home was torn down. Due to dementia, he was not able to find housing for himself and had nowhere to go. We were able to bring him into the Veterans Manor, but shortly after moving in, Martin was facing loss of home support and potential eviction due to hoarding issues. Our staff and a team of volunteers stepped in to clean his unit, display his priceless memorabilia and ensure Martin had a safe and secure home to stay in with the care and dignity he deserves. Thank you for your service Martin CA



Her staff pinpointed four buildings where they saw the most need and, in April, SFU researchers conducted a survey that asked 239 residents about their physical and emotional well-being.

Among the SFU findings:

- 82% found it hard to make ends meet and half were worried they could lose their homes.
- Roughly half said that they didn't feel close to people, that they wouldn't have anyone to help them if they were sick in bed, and that nobody would find them within 24 hours if they fell down with an injury.
- two-thirds didn't have any services or activities to give them a sense of purpose or meaning in life.
- More than half felt downhearted and blue, and a slightly larger percentage said they struggled with their health.

VANCOUVER SUN



Project helps low-income B.C. seniors, a growing population with health, housing woes

New pilot project brings activities and support to isolated low-income seniors, to keep them at home longer and out of care homes and hospitals

Lori Culbert

Published Sep 09, 2022 • 8 minute read

[Join the conversation](#)

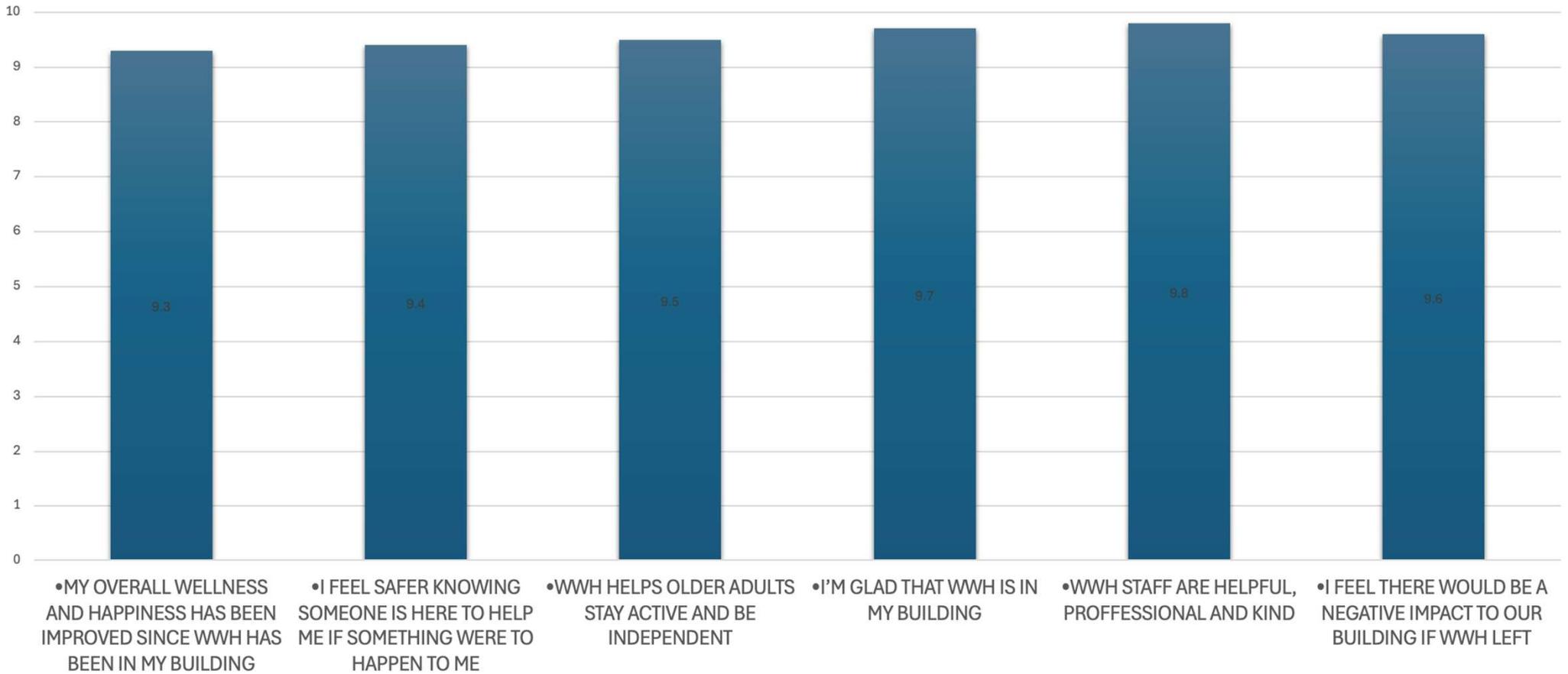


Lorraine Ahearne and Terry Kennedy at Granville House program run by Whole Way House which is a non-profit that supports seniors in the DTES and has recently partnered with B.C. Housing to expand and offer four additional low-income buildings with on-site programming and support services for seniors. PHOTO BY NICK PROCAYLO /PNG

“It gets me out of bed and it gives me something to do. I know somebody’s going be down here and I can talk to people,” said Lorraine Ahearn, 73. “I have a different outlook now on life. So, everything’s better. Everything.”

Ahearn has lived in this B.C. Housing building, on the north shore of False Creek, for 14 years, but says having daily companionship and organized events led her to make major changes in just a few months: She stopped, with the backing of her doctor, taking her antidepressant medicine. She started exercises to reduce the pain in her frozen shoulder. And she gets out of bed early in anticipation of the day, rather than languishing alone until noon.

Pilot Project Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2024/25



■ Pilot Project Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2024/25

Research & Recommendations



01

Recommended as a promising practice in the **Aging in the Right Place Study** as an innovative solution to supporting older adults who are experiencing homelessness

<https://www.sfu.ca/airp/research/ConferencePresentations/promising-practices-for-aging-in-the-right-place--airp--for-home.html>

02

Recognized as an effective model in our province for addressing the seniors housing crisis in **United Way Seniors Housing Crisis Report**

<https://uwbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/uwbc-seniors-housing-report-hi-res.pdf>

03

Recommended model in **City of Vancouver's Seniors Housing Strategy** (p28) to help seniors age in place

<https://www.sfu.ca/airp/research/ConferencePresentations/promising-practices-for-aging-in-the-right-place--airp--for-home.html>

04

Recognized by **BC Housing** as a scalable model and solution for seniors housing crisis –Pilot Project with case for support underway

05

Sector expert for supporting seniors, community building & staff wellness modules at **BCNPHA RENT & Housing Central Conferences** across BC since 2019



AVERAGE COST ESTIMATE



Hospitalization

\$1500/day



Assisted Living

\$450/day



Homelessness

\$245/day

Being proactive is 95% more cost effective and 100% more dignified, than being reactive and allows our seniors to age well in place as long as possible.



Whole Way House Support Services

\$4/day

As little as \$1000-\$1500 per senior per year!

*Average cost of homelessness in Vancouver is \$74,000 year according to the Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count



WHOLE WAY HOUSE
RECONNECT. REBUILD. RECENTER

THANK YOU

Contact Jenny Konkin, President
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More info www.wholewayhouse.ca

Stacy Barter

Executive Director,
Building Resilient Neighbourhoods
&
Director of Learning & Evaluation,
Hey Neighbour Collective





We help build resilient, connected communities by supporting neighbours, place-based organizations, businesses and local governments.



Resilient communities start with connected, prepared and caring neighbours.

PATHWAYS TO Neighbour to Neighbour RESILIENCE





Connect & Prepare







Why Connect & Prepare?



Connected Community, Being Neighbourly



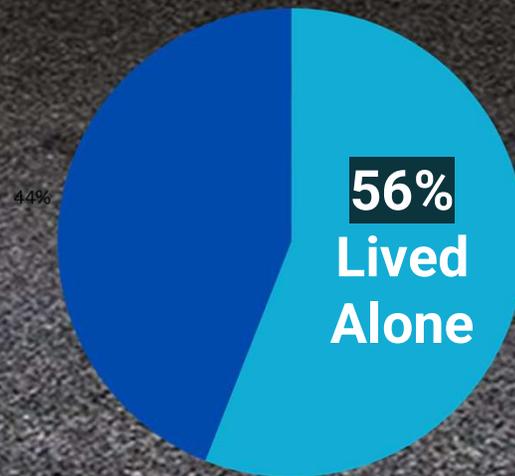
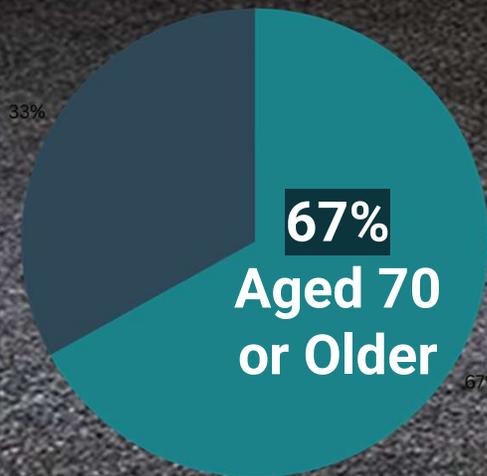
BC Heat Dome, 2021

619

Lives lost

98%

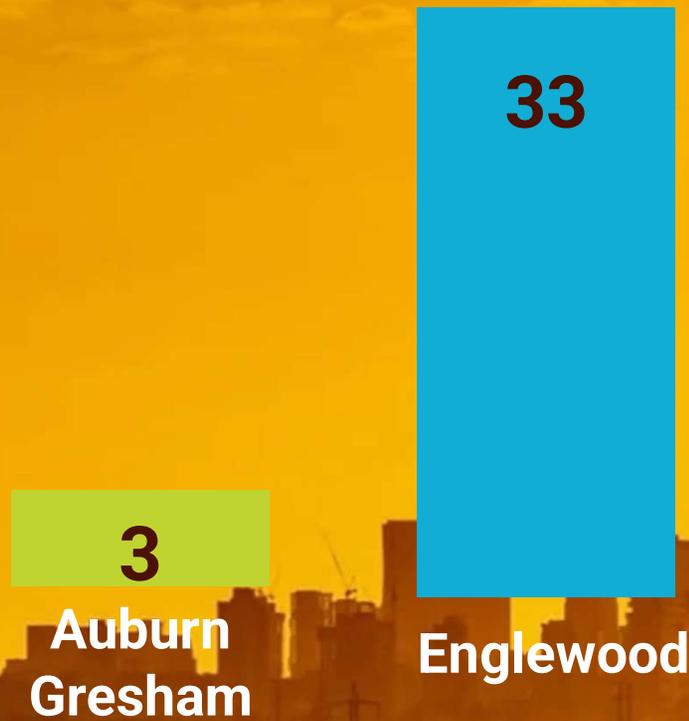
Deaths occurred at home



Canadian Climate Institute

Chicago Heat Wave, 1995

Deaths per 100,000



"During the heat wave, we were doing wellness checks, asking neighbors to knock on each other's doors...[our block clubs] usually know who's alone, who's aging, who's sick. It's what we always do when it's very hot or very cold here."

Betty Swanson,
Auburn Gresham resident

Eric Klinenberg, Sociologist NYU



Ann's neighbour distributes newspapers to others on her floor each morning. By mid-day she noticed Ann hadn't taken hers inside.

Her neighbour knocked on the door to find Ann had fallen and needed assistance.

Ann, The Orchard, Victoria BC



Health Emergencies



Nicola, Tegan and son, Bodie, Victoria BC

Personal Emergencies



Bodie's day-care announced it would be closed due to illness among staff. Tegan could not find a substitute to fill in for her at the high school.

Tegan's neighbour, Nicola, was just next door and could care for Bodie on short notice.



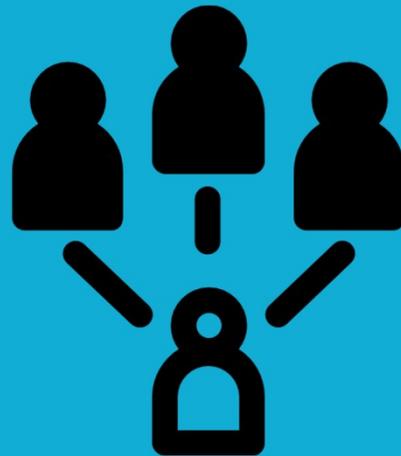
Survivors leave Tohoku a day after the March 11, 2011 earthquake and tsunami. // Warren Antiola/Flickr

**Social ties,
not just sandbags**

In Disaster Recovery, Social Networks Matter More Than Bottled Water and Batteries

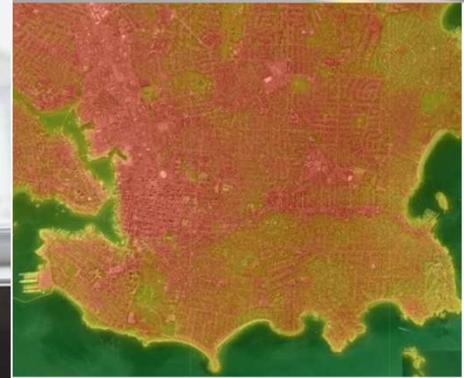
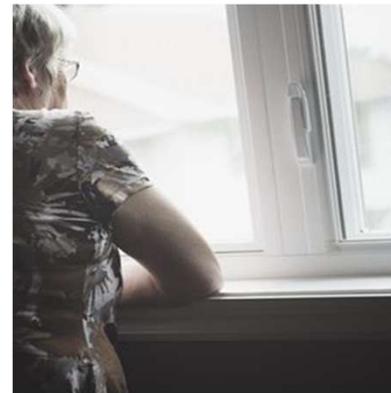
DANIEL P. ALDRICH FEB 14, 2017

WHO is in your kit, not just
WHAT is in your kit



Increasing Shocks and Stresses

How can we be better prepared AND strengthen our resilience?



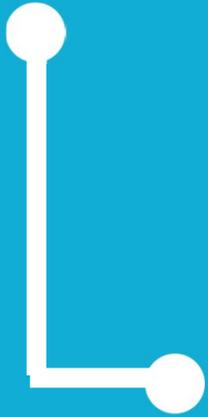
SHOCKS: Severe weather, power outages, building fires, pandemic outbreak

STRESSES: climate change, food/economic security, health, isolation

Social Infrastructure
builds
**Resilience
Muscles**



How it Works



Neighbour to Neighbour Capacity Building Approach

- **Build connections** with neighbours and develop **collaborative projects**.
- Learn about & develop strategies to **strengthen connections, build resilience and get prepared together**.
- **Take action together**.

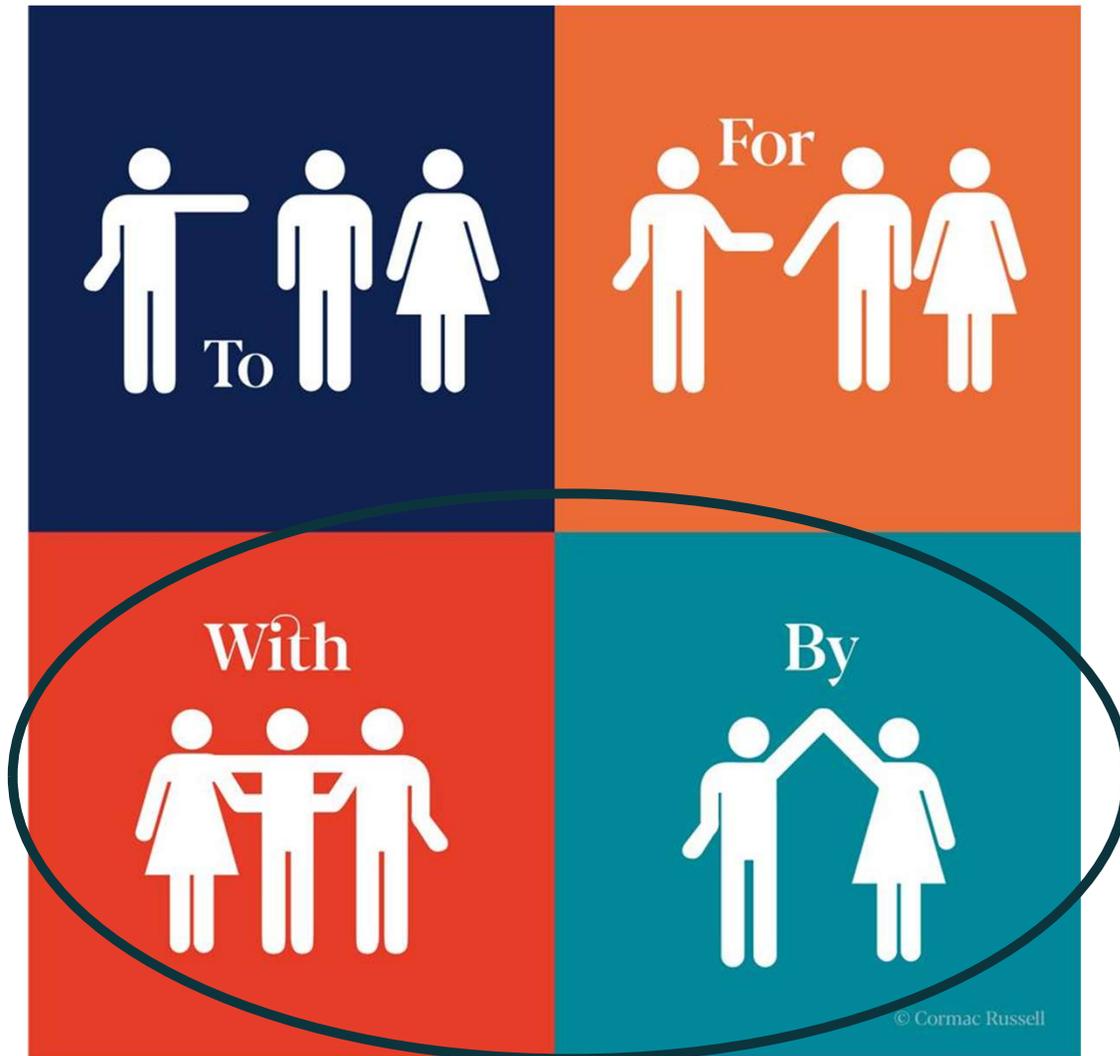




Connect & Prepare Projects

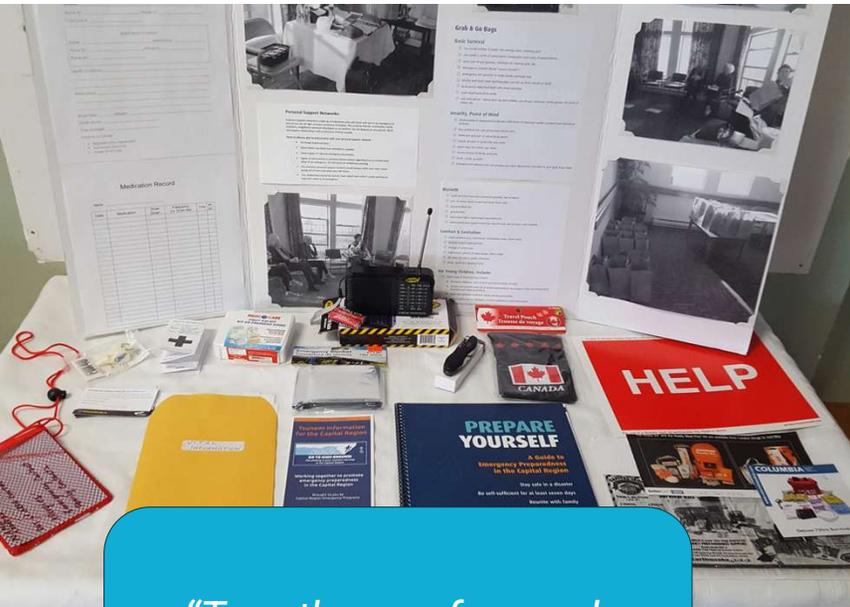
- Neighbour skill sharing
- Food security projects
- “Grab and Go Party”
- Shared emergency plans & kits
- Placemaking
- Buddy systems
- Communication networks
- Block or building parties/gatherings
- Mutual Support Systems





Strengths-based Community Development

Credit: Cormac Russel



“Together we focused on our abilities rather than our individual disabilities”



LeBlond Place

- Low-rise, seniors with disabilities
- Healthy Food distribution
- Shared emergency supplies & buddy system
- Accessed small grants for “Grab and Go” party

BC Housing Floor Connectors

Meet Carol!

Floor Connectors are neighbours who:

- **KNOW** who lives on their floor and what challenges/skills they might have in an emergency
- **SHARE** key information about emergency protocols, emergency contacts and meeting points
- **CONNECT** with neighbours to let them know about the program and encourage them to participate



Setting up N2N systems for Resilience!

Hi, neighbour!
Please help in the event of an emergency!

Name(s) Ana M.

How many people live here? 1
Number of people in unit

Pets? Yes No 1 small dog
What kind & how many pets?

Mobility Challenges? Yes No
Any details?

Language(s) spoken English Spanish
Primary language Secondary language

Floor Buddy? Yes No 307
Unit #

How can you help others on your floor? I know CPR

Hi, neighbour!
In the event of an emergency, please help!

Please use a checkmark for 'yes'.

Pets

What kind & how many pets?

Mobility or Accessibility needs

Any details?

Languages

First Language Other language(s) spoken

Other Information

(Eg. Medications, Skills, Number of people in unit)

WHAT to do in an emergency situation, **WHERE** to go, **WHO** to call & **HOW** to help

In Case of Emergency: Your Simple Guide

What to do

- Stay Calm**
Keep a clear head and stay calm to make better decisions.
- Identify Emergency**
Understand what kind of emergency is happening to know what to do next (fire, floor, heatwave, earthquake etc.)
- Gather Essentials**
Grab essential items like medications, important documents, and emergency supplies if evacuating.
- Listen for Updates & Stay Informed**
Stay tuned to local news or emergency communications for updates and instructions.
- Evacuate, Relocate or Stay Put**
Listen to local authorities and follow their instructions to either stay put, evacuate or relocate (eg. pooling centre) based on the emergency.
- Check on Your Neighbours**
Take a moment to make sure your neighbours are safe and aware of the situation.
- Follow Evacuation Routes**
If evacuating, follow designated evacuation routes and avoid shortcuts.
- Stay Away from Hazards**
Avoid downed power lines, flooded areas, or other hazards when evacuating.

Who to call

911
FIRE, POLICE, AMBULANCE

BC Housing 604-433-1711
Building Manager Office 604-228-1240
Emergency Building Maintenance 604-682-4852

City of Vancouver Public Safety Alerts

Where to go

Emergency Gathering Points at Jericho Park East Fire Lane
Fire Lane by Wallace Street
Steeves Manor

How to Help

- Check on your neighbours to ensure everyone is safe and aware of the situation.
- Offer help such as sharing food, water, shelter, or medical supplies if needed.
- If you are able, help others to evacuate (especially elderly and disabled neighbours).
- Stay connected and share emergency information and resources.
- Offer emotional support and reassurance to help neighbours remain calm.



"When we gave the go-bags away in the lobby that day, there was a lot of people who came out and were talking to me that normally won't say hi...It was bringing people a little closer together." (Floor Connector)

Emergency Supply "Grab & Go Bags" Distribution

Parking Lot Parties



Activating the Common Room



97%

contributed to neighbours **better understanding strengths, assets & vulnerabilities** in their buildings

96%

contributed to neighbours becoming **more connected** with each other

86%

contributed to neighbours **taking action** to be better prepared for an emergency

96%

contributed to neighbours **getting to know each other** better

86%

contributed to neighbours **taking action** to build long-term resilience

91%

contributed to neighbours **sharing knowledge, skills, or resources**

89%

contributed to neighbours **feeling more confident** that they will be able to prepare for emergencies in the future

Residents said:

*44 Post Workshop Survey respondents. Connect & Prepare Scaling Pilot 2022.

A photograph of a group of people in a meeting room. In the foreground, an elderly woman with white hair, wearing a yellow and blue plaid shirt, is seen from behind, looking towards a presentation. In the background, several other people are seated or standing, engaged in conversation. The room has large windows and glass doors.

Emergency Preparedness is a gateway



Offers

Train the Trainer Model



Learning Support

To Neighbour-to-Neighbour (N2N) Network Partners

★ **Place-based organizations**

★ **Local Governments & Health Authorities**

★ **Housing Operators**



- BRN Supports with...
- Curriculum & materials
 - Training & mentorship
 - Community of Practice
 - Collective Evaluation

2026 Partners Cohort



Thank you!

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www.heyneighbourcollective.ca





Housing That Connects Us Webinar #6: *The Benefits of Being an Enabling Host*

Speakers:



Dr. Catherine Donnelly
(She/Her)
Co-Principal Investigator
Oasis



Sherri Crane
(She/Her)
Manager of Housing
Services & Engagement
Brightside



Jaime Hewat
(They/Them)
Community Engagement
Coordinator
Brightside



Kathrin Brunner
(She/Her)
Operations Manager
NORC Innovation Centre



Rebeca Robles
(She/Her)
Community Services
Coordinator
New Chelsea Society

Join us for the next
webinar in this series, ***The
Benefits of Being an
Enabling Host***, on April
14th, from 11 am – 1 pm
PST.

