



# The Center for Outreach and Community Care



## Annual Report 2013-2014

Prepared by:

**Child and Youth Care**

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***Business of Reported Year***

***Executive Summary***

The Centre for Outreach and Community Care (Outreach Center), established in June 2013 by the Child and Youth Care (CYC), department at Vancouver Island University, has had a successful inaugural year. Focusing on the intended goals; the highlights and achievements of the 2013-2014 academic year include:

- The development and production of a wall sized map identifying the services for children, youth and families in the Nanaimo Harewood community.
- The introduction of the Outreach Center to the VIU community and invited community members through an open house.
- The development and facilitation of focus groups with the Harewood Community social services agencies, youth, Aboriginal/First Nations groups, multicultural services, etc. with the purpose of establishing the community need and service gaps that might be inform the work run out of the Outreach Center
- The development of relationships with those working in the Harewood community.
- The successful development of two practica project, with three students related to the Outreach center; one focusing on the needs assessment and development of the actual center and the other focusing on a social justice focused practica.
- Initial links to access possible ongoing donor money to fun some of the work being planned for the center

The above process was facilitated primarily by CYC practicum students who worked in conjunction with faculty to utilize their communication and community engagement skills. The focus groups provided the needed data to inform the development of practica projects for the 2014/2015 academic year and resulted in the recommendations contained in this report.

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***i. History of the Outreach Center***

The Centre for Community Outreach and Care is based in the Faculty of Health and Human Services at Vancouver Island University. Since the university is situated in the Harewood community, the Centre is in a prime position to serve the local residents through quality assessment and programming. Harewood is a unique community whose largest population sector is youth aged 15-24 with an area that has a large percentage of low income individuals resulting in poverty and social issues and a need for services.

The mission statement for the Center for Outreach and Community Care is to provide meaningful learning opportunities for students who are committed to working with children, youth and families in their communities. The impetus for the center came from a strong desire of faculty to create enriched practical learning experiences for students which would be advantageous to the community and reduce the demand while simultaneously providing child, youth and family focused programs to the Nanaimo Harewood community. The Centre for Community Outreach and Care was approved by faculty council in June 2013; supporting the centre's vision to promote excellence in child and youth care practice, education and research, by achieving the following goals:

- To provide applied practical learning experiences for Child and Youth Care students.
- To Increase student inter- professional learning opportunities.
- To enhance social programming in the Harewood community.
- Using evidence-based strategies and strong local community partnerships, promote best practice from a social justice lens.
- To facilitate, conduct and disseminate research to support children, youth, families and communities

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***ii. Activity plan, membership and administrative structure***

The Centre for Community Outreach and Care is supported by the Child and Youth Care Advisory Committee whose membership comprises of CYC leaders in the Child and Youth Care field of practice. In addition, all Child and youth Care faculty are involved and committed to the success of the Outreach Center.

For the start up year, the Center operation was overseen by the CYC faculty as a whole and is a standing agenda item for the faculty meeting. One faculty member was responsible for coordinating the start up functions of the center; development of the map, Open House, etc.. The future administrative structure will be determined once a faculty review is completed and areas for growth are determined.

The following outlines the general activity plan that was set out in June 2013 and constituted the focus for the academic year.

**September/October 2013**

- Identification of 3 third year CYC students able to complete their practica with the Outreach Center
- Identification of services supporting children, youth and families in the Harewood Community
- Development of a wall sized map to identify the existing services in the Harewood Community and their location
- Review of existing community documents (i.e. reports, research projects, etc. that have been completed previously in relation to needs in the Harewood Community.
- Open House to develop relationships with community partners and celebrate the initiative
- Creation of a Centre for Outreach and Community Care brochure

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**November 2013**

- Establishment of community focus groups from the Harewood Community representing families, youth, service providers, and stakeholders. (i.e. school district, Ministry for Child and Family Development)
- Development of the focus group questions, power point presentation for the focus groups and the determination of formal processes that need to be completed (i.e. Ethics approval through VIU)
- Development and completion of the social justice practica

**January-**

- preparation for focus group
  - consent forms
  - invites to focus group participants,
  - following up with participants to secure their attendance,
  - recruitment of of CYC practicum students to support the focus group sessions.
- Continued development on the social justice practica

**February - April**

- the facilitation and completion of identified focus groups.
- transcription of the audio recorded sessions.
- Analysis of the data to determine what the needs in the Harewood Community.
- Final Report and recommendation to faculty

**May**

- faculty discussions to determine the further direction of the Outreach Centre

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**iii. Objectives and achievements for the 2013-2014 year**

**Objectives** for the Outreach Centre included:

- To increase awareness of the existing services in the Harewood Community
- To ensure that any recommended projects are not duplicating
- Building relationships between the Harewood Community and VIU Outreach Centre
- Increasing student awareness around social issues in the community.

The main focus for the year was to have community consultation focus groups, to discuss and obtain feedback with regards to the following questions:

1. What do the participants see as the gaps in services to children, youth and families in the Harewood Community?
2. How do they think the centre could offer services to meet these needs?
3. What do they feel is the greatest unmet need in the Harewood Community today?
4. In what way would they like to see the Outreach Centre being able to address those identified areas?
5. What do they foresee as challenges for the Outreach Centre in providing the service for the unmet needs?
6. What do they feel are the barriers that exist that may hinder community members from accessing services at the Centre?

**Achievements**

**Here and There Project**

In the fall of 2013 the Child and Youth Care program at Vancouver Island University launched the Here and There Social Justice Initiative as a way to heighten awareness of and engage students in social justice work both locally and globally. The project focuses on community development and advocacy with a social justice perspective.

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- Students in both directed studies and practicum placements took a leadership role in developing and engaging the larger CYC student population in social justice work.
- Practica student initiated a student driven social justice club that worked in partnership with Kids International Development Society (K.I.D.S.) to raise funds for lights and bikes for children in Cambodia.
- Child and Youth Care students worked in partnership with the John Barsby Secondary School Social Justice Club to support local initiatives such as Halloween for Hunger, Soup for Nepal, Christmas Hampers, Jeans for Teens and more.

**Direct Outreach Center Development Results**

1. Creation of a large wall sized map of existing services for children, youth and families in the Harewood Community
2. Establishment and running of focus groups
3. Collation of data; transcription of audio tapes of focus groups
4. Analysis determined the needs in the Harewood community as being varied and ongoing. In each group, it was agreed that service providers are continually engaged in crisis management and preventative supports and programming are secondary to the more immediate concerns within the community. The positive outcomes of preventative programs were discussed and all participants (excluding the youth group) agreed that offering preventative services could be one avenue to potentially address the Outreach Centre.

In order of importance, the following were recommended as potential areas for the Centre to begin programming:

1. “One Stop Shop” for families to connect socially, connect with services or agencies in a low pressure manner and receive aid as needed (medical, emotional, cultural, etc.)
2. Supports for mental health with no wait list
3. Outreach in the community, building trust between the Centre and residents
4. Program which would target 12-16 year olds during 4-8pm and on weekends



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5. Support groups focussing on Self harm (for youth and families)
6. Respite for young families (drop in day care services were specifically recommended)

**iv. Contributions made to the experiences of students and the community**

As this was a research and development year for the Outreach Centre the number of CYC student engagement was limited. It provided a 300 hour practicum experience for three 3<sup>rd</sup> year Child and Youth Care students and approximately 15 hours for one other CYC 3<sup>rd</sup> year practicum student (they were the note taker for all of the focus groups). The experience for the student was very rich as it enabled them to develop research skills, learn the many systems that influence the operations of the Outreach Centre, practice communication skills, prepare a report, research ethics processes, work with a variety of faculty and community members, and examine social issues.

**v. Revenue and Expenditures**

Minimal expenses were incurred over the first year. Costs included the following and were covered through the CYC department's non-base funds.

Open House Event	\$200.00
Focus Group Cost	\$200.00
Map Development and Printing:	\$250.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$650.00</b>

**vi. Projected Plan for 2014/2015 Academic Year**

- Invite interest from 4<sup>th</sup> year students to complete their practica through the Outreach Center. Approx 6-8 students.
- Develop the criteria for selection and choose a maximum of four students for the first operational year related to an Harewood community project; and one student to work in the Here and There project

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- With the students, develop over the first semester the chosen community based projects which addresses the needs identified and recommendations made.
- Evaluate the projects and present findings to Advisory committee.
- Continue to develop relationships within the community to raise awareness and invite feedback to the work of the Outreach Center.
- Continue to pursue outside funding sources for identified projects and possibly ongoing operations of the Center.