



STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



THE STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY

The Stigma-Free Society is a registered Canadian Charity with a mandate to eliminate stigma through awareness, education and support. The Society began in 2010 as the Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia, and changed its name to the Stigma-Free Society to expand its mandate and focus. The Society also helps people find their own empowerment by providing peer support groups for youth and adults. While the Society's programs provide education around all stigmas, there is a particular emphasis on mental health.



The Stigma-Free Society proudly has a grassroots history. The first project was ignited by Andrea Paquette, who created a Bipolar Babe t-shirt and website to share her personal mental health journey, so others did not have to suffer in silence like she once did. There have been numerous volunteers over the years who have made significant contributions to the Stigma-Free Society, which has developed into a reputable and impacting non-profit organization.

The Society's goal is to create **AWARENESS** of the various stigmas that exist in the world, develop an **UNDERSTANDING** of the challenges that numerous people face and encourage all people to foster **ACCEPTANCE** of themselves and others.



The Society helps individuals manage their personal mental health challenges by providing three peer support groups in Victoria, B.C. The Charity has always had a strong focus on youth, but programs are offered to all age groups. School and community presentation programs are given by staff on both Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland. The Children's Mental Health Program is a newer Society initiative that is dedicated to education around mental health and the prevention of bullying for grades 4-6, which is currently offered in Victoria, B.C. The Society is constantly expanding its reach with their program delivery as new developments take place annually.

The Society's website WWW.STIGMAFREEZONE.COM and social media engagement on Facebook and Twitter communicate interactive online conversations and thought-provoking content. The Stigma-Free Society ignited the exciting Stigma-Free Zone Movement in 2017 and continues to inspire countless individuals at schools, businesses, organizations and in the community to learn about the effects of stigma and develop acceptance for themselves and others.

THE STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY

Vision

To live in a world of understanding, respect and acceptance of ourselves and one another.

Mission

Eliminate stigma with a focus on mental illness through awareness, education and support.

Values

- * Education
- * Diversity
- * Respect
- * Dignity
- * Community
- * Empowerment
- * Transparency
- * Inclusion
- * Compassion

REPORT FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

It is my pleasure to report on behalf of the Stigma-Free Society Board of Directors that we have exceeded our goals for 2017. We have also maintained our impacting and long-term programs throughout Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland, as well as reaching Northern communities.

This year has been truly exciting for our Charity as we continue to collaborate with schools, businesses, organizations and political leaders. We have seen significant growth in the Stigma-Free Zone Movement, which encourages people to be educated about the negative effects of stigma with a focus on mental health.

In 2017, Spectrum Community School in Victoria became the first educational institution on Vancouver Island to begin working toward their Stigma-Free Zone designation. Both the Surrey and Richmond School Districts are promoting our program throughout all of their 250+ schools. Prominent politicians in the Province of British Columbia are onboard to designate their offices and ridings as Stigma-Free Zones. Classroom and Community Presentations continue to reach wider and more diverse groups. We are transforming lives with our timely key message of promoting Awareness, Understanding and Acceptance. Our Peer Support Groups in Victoria, BC, continue to positively impact the lives of others, dispelling isolation and fostering hope in their lives.

A genuine thank you to all who make our work possible—our donors, staff and volunteers, my fellow Board Members and former Victoria Board Members, Advisory Council and the Stigma-Free Task Force. It is because of your continued support that we are able to touch so many lives and inspire hope and understanding. Our vision is tremendous and our growth in 2017 truly reflects our dedication and commitment to making the world a more accepting place.

We will continue working to eliminate the stigmas that exist in our society and grow the Charity's Stigma-Free Zone Movement to even more amazing heights going forward into 2018.

Sincerely,
Dave Richardson



DAVE RICHARDSON, BOARD CHAIR
STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is with great pleasure that I share with you the highlights of the past year for the Stigma-Free Society. Since our inception as a Charity in 2010, I have been captivated by the tremendous dedication that I witness every single day from our Board of Directors, Stigma-Free Task Force, staff, volunteers, donors and community partners. In 2017, we have grown significantly as an organization and have made some very meaningful and impacting changes. Our Charity established a new Board of Directors in Vancouver, B.C. and I am very grateful for the former Victoria Board's dedication over the years. Their service has made it a seamless transfer of responsibilities to continue building the Society's programming on Vancouver Island and further expanding into the Lower Mainland. A sincere thank you to Mr. Dave Richardson, Board Chair and Stigma-Free Zone Co-Founder. It is truly because of Dave's partnership and vision that we are able to reach as many people as we do with our message of awareness and understanding. We have attracted new funders and community partnerships in 2017, who share our vision of eliminating stigma and contributing to a more accepting world.

We have been successfully designating schools, businesses, organizations and political leaders' offices as Stigma-Free Zones. We continue to educate the community about stigma with a focus on mental health, and we feel that we have made a significant difference this past year. To the entire Stigma-Free Society community, thank you so much for your support. It is because of you that we are able to cultivate Stigma-Free environments where people are accepting of themselves and others.

With Gratitude,
Andrea Paquette



ANDREA PAQUETTE, PRESIDENT
STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY

THE TREASURER'S REPORT

As the Treasurer of the Stigma-Free Society, I am proud to announce that the Charity continued its success in 2017 with another positive financial year. The Society ended the year with revenues of \$189,076 and expenses of \$186,072, fairly consistent with the prior year of 2016 and resulting in a surplus. The Society continues to demonstrate steady financial growth every year and I admire their 'boots on the ground' approach to program delivery, which makes the most out of program costs.

Over the year, the Society has continued to monitor its budget and spending to achieve its 2017 program and outreach goals. I truly look forward with excitement to the Society's growth both on Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland in the upcoming year, and its continued focus on efficiency and accountability of its operations.

Sincerely,
Alysha Rahim



ALYSHA RAHIM, TREASURER
STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY

THE PROGRAM REPORT

Currently, the Stigma-Free Society delivers seven programs based on adult and youth education on stigma and mental health, as well as peer support groups for those facing any mental health challenges.



STIGMA-FREE ZONE SCHOOL PRESENTATIONS PROGRAM is delivered on Vancouver Island along with the Lower Mainland. Youth grades 7-12 learn from a presenter with lived experience of mental illness via a classroom or assembly-style presentation. Students are educated about harmful stereotypes and develop an awareness of the stigmas that exist in society. They gain an understanding of the challenges people face through shared personal stories and are encouraged to foster acceptance of themselves and others. The presentation also includes a focus on mental wellness tools and the importance of reaching out for help. The Society presented to 5430 students in the school year 2016/2017 and has reached 18,488 with this impacting program since its inception in 2010.

STIGMA-FREE ZONE COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS PROGRAM serves a diverse audience and mirrors a similar approach to the classroom program by educating community members about mental health and stigma. The program is delivered at community events to teachers, businesses, non-profit organizations, post-secondary institutions, businesses, service clubs and the medical community on Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland. The Society increased its community reach significantly in 2017 by directly reaching 2620 community members. In addition, Society staff also reach countless people via presentations at community mental health fairs, conferences and via a significant number of media interviews.

THE PROGRAM REPORT



WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP began in 2012 and has become a close-knit network of mutual support. Participants arrange events, and social outings with each other while building thriving friendships. Since its inception, the program has reached over 225 women including the lives of 52 women in 2017.



TEENS2TWENTIES SUPPORT GROUP

is a unique program that provides peer support for those living with a mental illness aged 15-25 years. Offering safe spaces for young people to naturally create friendships, this program ensures that nobody suffers in isolation. This drop-in support group has reached over 219 youth since its inception in 2010, including 36 young people in 2017. This valuable program continues to work with youth on their employment and education goals, while connecting them to quality community resources. Facilitators initiate monthly activity nights, where youth socialize and have fun, while connecting with one another. Activities have included sunset hikes, film and art nights, as well as outings to events such as poetry slams. One-on-one meet-ups between youth and the lead facilitator are also made available for those who require extra support.

VICTORIA CO-ED SUPPORT GROUP,

launched in 2013 and is a much-needed service in the city that continues to grow. The group is for all genders 18+ years of age, and supports its members by providing space to exchange stories, connect and share tools for staying well while improving quality of life. The Victoria Co-ed Support Group was grown from our former West Shore Group and combined they have served 144 people including 39 members for the year 2017.



CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

is a newer initiative that continues to expand thanks to a highly successful pilot project in 2016. It has been developed in consultation with Sue MacTavish, Youth & Family Counselor, École George Jay Elementary. The purpose of the Program is to provide school children, grades 4-6, with resiliency through the awareness of their mental health, the importance of a healthy lifestyle and learning the value in reaching out for help. This program has reached 765 children to date including 460 children in the Greater Victoria Area in 2017.



STIGMA-FREE SPEAKERS TRAINING WORKSHOP

The Stigma-Free Society sponsored by Coast Mental Health, successfully conducts the Stigma-Free Speakers Training Workshop in Vancouver, B.C. and will continue to work with Coast Mental Health peer support workers on an annual basis. Participants learn about technical and creative presentation skills in a one-day session and engage in broader discussions around societal and self-stigma. Learnings encourage reflection and personal growth. Thank you to Coast Mental Health and all of their peer support workers who have taken part in the workshop to make it a grand success.

STIGMA-FREE ZONE MOVEMENT



The Stigma-Free Zone Movement is a community-based participatory program that aims to promote mental health and reduce stigma of all kinds. The program takes a systemic approach and addresses the root causes that prevent stigmatized individuals, especially people living with mental illness, from being accepted in society. By engaging with schools, businesses, community organizations, and different levels of government, the program focuses on changing people's stigmatizing attitudes and creating safe spaces in communities where people live, learn, work and play.

The program offers three types of designations: Schools, Businesses/Organizations and Geographical Areas. Participating organizations will engage in a year-long process, or a lengthier amount of time as necessary, to work toward their Stigma-Free Zone designation.

A Stigma-Free Zone manual is under development to provide guidance on the specific activities needed to gain designation. Society staff offer stigma-reduction presentations, encourage people to take the **STIGMA-FREE PLEDGE**, circulate the **STIGMA-FREE TEST**, and distribute promotional and educational materials to encourage organization-wide engagement. The program will also advise on additional actions such as identifying Stigma-Free Champions, conducting needs assessments, drafting an action plan and creating an evaluation framework.

Currently in British Columbia, the Society has a number of secondary schools, school districts, political leaders' offices, and community organizations that have committed to gaining the Stigma-Free Zone designation. We look forward to continuing to make a significant impact in the future to create safe spaces that promote awareness, understanding and acceptance of ourselves and others.

STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS



DAVE RICHARDSON, CHAIR
BOARD DIRECTOR

Dave Richardson is the President and CEO of Octaform Systems Inc. and Co-Founder of the Stigma-Free Zone Movement. Mr. Richardson is a Director of Richardson International Limited. He is a Director Emeritus of Ducks Unlimited Canada following 20 years on the board and remains dedicated to several other charities and philanthropic activities. He was a founding member and Director of The Asia Pacific Foundation and a leader on various government trade missions to Asia. In addition, he was a Director of the Canada China Trade Council and Chairman of the Agriculture Committee. Mr. Richardson has served on a number of public and private boards throughout his career and continues to hold several other directorship positions.



ALYSHA RAHIM, TREASURER
BOARD DIRECTOR

Alysha is passionate about being a Board member and Treasurer of the Stigma-Free Society. She is a CPA, CA and has worked in assurance public practice over the last nine years. She's excited to help the Society continue to grow financially to meet its goals. The Society continues to demonstrate steady financial growth and Alysha is impressed by the organization's effective 'boots on the ground' approach to program delivery, which makes the most out of program costs. She is looking forward to participating on the Board and contributing to the Society's mission and values.



ANISHA NAVARATNAM, SECRETARY
BOARD DIRECTOR

Anisha developed a keen interest in mental health education in her high school years after her friend talked openly about her struggles with depression and bipolar disorder. After going through her own mental health difficulties and witnessing the impact it had on those around her, Anisha realized the gap in how these issues were rarely, if ever, discussed in the classroom setting. She began working with education professionals around the Lower Mainland to develop a curriculum on these issues and hopes to see it integrated as a part of the official B.C. curriculum one day in the near future. Anisha Navaratnam also joined the Stigma-Free Task Force in January of 2017 and she is pleased to be the Board Secretary. She is currently attending the University of British Columbia and pursuing a degree in geological engineering.



CAROL HENRIQUEZ
BOARD DIRECTOR

Carol Henriquez is the Co-Founder of Vancouver's Arts Umbrella, a thriving visual and performing arts centre for children, ages 2 to 19, which operates as a non-profit organization and registered charity. Its outreach programs go free of charge to over 17,000 students at schools where children could not afford access to the programs. Carol is a motivator, leader and innovator. She has developed programs in conjunction with other arts organizations and Arts Umbrella itself has become a model for other institutions around North America. Upon graduating with a BA from the University of Manitoba, Carol was employed as a children's social worker and taught art classes in disadvantaged areas of Winnipeg. She then received diplomas in Fine Arts at both Langara College and the Vancouver School of Art (now Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design) and worked as a practicing ceramic sculptor. Carol received Canada's highest distinction for lifetime achievement – the Order of Canada – among other numerous accolades and awards that speak to her impact in the community.

STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS



DR. CHRIS RICHARDSON
BOARD DIRECTOR

Dr. Chris Richardson is currently an Associate Professor in the School of Population and Public Health at the University of British Columbia. His program of research is focused on examining the relationships between aspects of biopsychosocial development in adolescence. He is also a Scientist with the Centre for Health Evaluation and Outcomes Sciences at St. Paul's Hospital and research lead for the Inner City Youth Program. In addition to his academic experience, Dr. Richardson has spent several years as a frontline worker in a variety of group home settings for homeless men and has served as a member of the board of directors for From Grief to Action – a non-profit group providing support and advocacy for families dealing with a loved one's addiction.



CRAIG JANGULA
BOARD DIRECTOR

Craig Jangula has a talent for understanding and helping to manage complex public policy issues. He brings more than a decade of experience in government and politics. Craig's passion for research, community outreach, and development are combined with expertise in political campaigns and government decision-making. He has spent many years working in the offices of a number of MLAs, such as with the Minister of State for the Olympics and Act Now BC, Minister of Citizen Services and Minister of Children and Family Development. This experience has given him invaluable insight into the inner workings of the provincial government. Craig is passionate about making a difference in the lives of others and he is excited to lend his insight to the Stigma-Free Society.



ANDREA PAQUETTE, PRESIDENT
EX-OFFICIO BOARD DIRECTOR

Andrea is the President and Ex-Officio Board Director of the Stigma-Free Society. Andrea offers a hybrid role for the organization for she is passionate about being on the front lines for program delivery and provides leadership in the operations of the Society. Andrea holds extensive experience in the provincial government in policy, communications and research in the areas of education, mental health, and social development. Andrea has also been chosen as a national spokesperson for the Canadian Alliance for Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) sponsored by Bell Let's Talk. She is a 2017 Women of Distinction Nominee, Provincial 2015 Courage To Come Back award winner given by Coast Mental Health, received the 2015 Top 20 Under 40 Award from Vancouver Island's Business and Community Awards, 2013 Mel Cooper Citizen of the Year Award in Victoria, B.C., and the 2013 Award for Mentorship from the National Council for Behavioral Health, Washington, D.C.

ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR THE STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY

DR. WEI SONG *President Elect, Canadian Psychiatric Association*

DANIEL TO *Principal, Education Services, Surrey School District*

ROBIN HOLDEN *Charity Advisor, Source Group*

SHELDON KITZUL *Social Worker and Life Coach*

CINDY PLAYER *Former Director, Equity and Human Rights, University of Victoria*

PHILIP BISSET-COVANEIRO *Financial Advisor, Investors Group*

STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY TEAM

ROBYN THOMAS

Community Development Manager - Vancouver Island

Robyn Thomas is honored to be Vancouver Island's Community Development Manager for the Stigma-Free Society. Driven to shatter the stigma that exists in society, Robyn has spoken to thousands of people on Vancouver Island about stigma and mental health. Robyn is also the Lead Facilitator for the Society's Teens2Twenties Support Group, presenter for schools and community, and she continues to lead the Children's Mental Health Program in elementary schools. Her lived experience of mental illness has ignited a passion to tell her own remarkable journey of hope and resiliency. Most importantly, Robyn encourages us all to be more compassionate with one another and ourselves. Robyn was nominated Miss Vancouver Island 2017-18 with a platform of eliminating shame associated with mental illness and spoke about overcoming psychosis in the media. She also holds a degree in Professional Communications from Royal Roads University.



JANET BISSET

Program Coordinator & Executive Assistant



Janet Bisset is currently the Program Coordinator and Executive Assistant at the Stigma-Free Society. Ms. Bisset began travelling at a young age, lived and raised a family in Europe, Eastern USA, Macau South China and returned to Canada in 1986. Over the years, she balanced mothering duties, education, a career in private enterprise and public health care administration. She is skilled in communications, organization, planning and foresight. Janet is passionate about working with the Stigma-Free Society for she feels the organization does amazing work. She is helping to 'Stomp out Stigma' with a unique understanding of various cultures due to her early and extensive travel. Janet is particularly excited to be working and supporting Andrea Paquette who leads the delivery of the Stigma-Free Zone Movement.

CAMERON WEBSTER

Teens2Twenties Support Group Co-Facilitator

Cameron Webster is the Co-Facilitator of the Teens2Twenties Support Group. He is also a public speaker for the British Columbia Schizophrenia Society in Victoria, B.C. Cam has suffered from psychosis in the past and is diagnosed with schizophrenia. His experience with mental illness has been life changing. It has helped him realize that he has a passion for psychology and wants to help others, who like himself, have struggled with mental illness. Through attending many C.B.T. (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) groups, he often facilitated conversations and assisted with the program. Cam has become informed and knowledgeable. He has completed WRAP© (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) training and he is currently working part-time in addition to attending College to study psychology.



STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY TEAM

ANDREA BENNINGTON

Victoria Co-ed Support Group Lead Facilitator



Andrea is a firm believer that communication, education and knowledge of available resources are crucial in allowing stigma around mental illness to be tackled and eliminated. She holds a B.A. in English from the University of Lethbridge. She also holds a Master's certificate in Journalism from Humber College, Toronto, O.N., and possesses over 15 years of lived experience with diagnosed bipolar disorder. She is committed to the idea that first and foremost we are all human beings and should be both treated with, and embody, compassion and strength. Andrea also works as a Partnership Presenter with the British Columbia Schizophrenia Society (BCSS) in Victoria, presenting in high school classrooms and post-secondary institutions. She has also completed the world renowned WRAP© (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) training seminar and looks forward to continuing to work in the field of mental health.

JACQUIE GONZALES

Women's Adult Support Group Facilitator

Jacque has many passions and has a varied employment and educational background. She is most proud of her past position working with persons with disabilities, and particularly, with a 19-year old young man who was just coming into care. She nurtured him and to both of their success, Jacque brought his communications skills to a level where he was comfortable being a part of the community. Jacque has lived experience with bipolar disorder and initially had trouble coping, but found help and support in the Women's Adult Support Group. She felt that the atmosphere and the participants helped her realize that it was okay to have bipolar disorder and she no longer feels stigmatized. Jacque has completed the Suicide Education and Prevention training with the Society and is proud to be the Women's Group Lead-Facilitator.



JAIME TRAYNOR

Facilitator, Women's Adult Support Group & Victoria Co-ed Support Group



As a strong believer in the role that community and connection play in contributing to mental wellness, Jaime is honoured to have the opportunity to co-facilitate the Women's Adult Support Group and Victoria Co-ed Support Group, and to help create a compassionate, non-judgmental space where participants are able to share their experiences and support one another. Jaime has worked and volunteered in a variety of government and non-profit settings, both in Canada and abroad, and she is continually inspired by the resiliency of the individuals and families she interacts with. Jaime is committed to working, both personally and professionally, to foster education and understanding around mental illness.

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY

SPECTRUM COMMUNITY SCHOOL'S STIGMA-FREE ZONE DESIGNATION

Spectrum Community School has become Victoria's very first school to work towards their Stigma-Free Zone designation. The Society's Vancouver Island presenter, Robyn Thomas, spoke to over 300 students in an assembly-style presentation on mental health, stigma and how we can all work together to tackle stigma to be more accepting. The Spectrum Philanthropy Club students put in extra effort to work with the Society and created a Stigma-Free Banner to mark the beginning of the collaboration. Students have already planned special stigma-reducing events for each month of the year from awareness of different religions to physical disabilities. Staff members have volunteered to challenge other schools in the area to gain their Stigma-Free Zone designations.



Spectrum Community School's Principal signing
a pledge to be Stigma-Free

STIGMA-FREE ZONE DESIGNATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH POLITICAL LEADERS



Andrea Paquette, President of the Stigma-Free Society and MLA Linda Reid,
brand the office of Richmond South Centre with Stigma-Free Zone decals

The Society is thrilled to have the interest and support of numerous MLAs and political leaders on both Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland. By designating their offices and eventually their geographical areas as a Stigma-Free Zone, leaders such as MLA Linda Reid demonstrate their commitment to the values of a Stigma-Free culture and community. The Society has also held presentations with MLA Jane Thornthwaite- North Vancouver-Seymour, and MLA Sam Sullivan - Vancouver-False Creek. The Stigma-Free Society is looking forward to working with more political leaders at the municipal, provincial and federal levels.

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY

THE PACIFIC AUTISM FAMILY NETWORK IS THE FIRST CHARITY IN CANADA TO WORK TOWARD THEIR STIGMA-FREE ZONE DESIGNATION

The Pacific Autism Family Network (PAFN) has become the first Charity in Canada to work toward designating their main Hub in Richmond as a Stigma-Free Zone. The GoodLife Fitness Family Autism Hub is adopting the Stigma-Free Zone criteria and conducting ongoing activities throughout the next year related to the goals of the movement.

The Society is thrilled to be working with the PAFN Hub as they inspire people to commit to the awareness and understanding of various stigmas while maintaining safe spaces where people are accepting of themselves and others.



Andrea Paquette, President, Stigma-Free Society and Lucas Gates, Ambassador, PAFN

SOCIETY PROGRAMMING IN NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA



Robert Pictou, CFTK Host and Andrea Paquette, President, Stigma-Free Society

In 2017, Andrea Paquette, President of the Stigma-Free Society, traveled to Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Terrace and Kitimat and presented to hundreds of people at schools and community organizations. In the Northwest, it is challenging to find support for mental health, but the Stigma-Free Society believes it is important to bring awareness to both rural communities and urban centres. Andrea has been featured on CFTK's "Open Connection", a well-known television segment in Terrace, B.C. and featured in a number of media outlets. Thank you to TELUS for their kind donation and bringing the Society's impacting presentation programs to Northern British Columbia.

STIGMA-FREE TASK FORCE

The Stigma-Free Task Force provides an advisory role for the Stigma-Free Zone Movement by providing guidance on the development of the Stigma-Free Zone criteria, among related work for the designation of schools, organizations, businesses and geographical areas.

STIGMA-FREE TASK FORCE CO-LEADS



ANDREA PAQUETTE



DAVE RICHARDSON

STIGMA-FREE TASK FORCE MEMBERS



ROBYN THOMAS



CAROL TODD



CHRIS RICHARDSON



ANISHA NAVARATNAM

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY

The Stigma-Free Society continues to grow the Stigma-Free Zone Movement, while maintaining their impactful programming consisting of peer support groups and educational programs for students and community members.

With the success of the Stigma-Free Zone Movement, the Society is thrilled to continue collaborating with schools, businesses, organizations and political leaders to designate Stigma-Free Zones. More communities and workplaces understand the importance of addressing harmful stereotypes and stigmatizing behavior, many desire avenues to promote healthy cultures, and put awareness into tangible action. The Society continues to work with municipal, provincial and federal governments on Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland to create meaningful systemic change to help eliminate stigma.



The Stigma-Free Zone Movement is an organic and ever-evolving process, and as more collaborators come onboard, the Society will grow strategies to be in alignment with the organization's vision, whilst addressing the needs of all partners involved. The Stigma-Free Society is very excited for the evolution of the Stigma-Free Zone Movement and how it will adapt to the diverse needs of various communities.

As the reach of the Stigma-Free Society grows, there will be a continued focus on educational and peer support programs that provide youth and adults with a sense of hope in their lives. The Society continues to build relationships in the community by making new connections with the goal of offering support to those who need it most.



*"No matter what our challenges, we can all live extraordinary lives."
~Andrea Paquette, President, Stigma-Free Society*

FEATURED STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

STIGMA-FREE ZONE SCHOOL PRESENTATIONS

Presenters – Andrea Paquette & Robyn Thomas

This was a great presentation, thank you for sharing your story. It has helped me better understand that all these illnesses can be happening to just about anyone. I enjoyed talking about the symptoms of these illnesses and how to find help for ourselves, or how to talk to others. Presentations like this can help end the stigma!!

This presentation made my day better. It's not often that I relate with others like myself who have dealt with anxiety and depression. Robbin who did the presentation is extremely inspiring and I praise her for going through such hard times in the past and still being here today to share her story.

5 Stars!!! ★★★★★

I think the great thing about this presentation was how real it was. For me personally I thought it was very impactful that you told us you had a mental disorder half way through and it showed that any one can have it and it doesn't mean you are any different than any one else. The way you told the story also showed that people with mental illnesses aren't weak, they still fight and in fact they have to fight harder than most people and some times they might even have to fight with their own brain.

LETTER OF SUPPORT – STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY



White Rock-South Surrey
Division of Family Practice
A GPSC initiative

July 25, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

Andrea Paquette, aka Bipolar Babe delivered a Stigma-Free Zone presentation at the *Balancing Our Minds* Event in Surrey on April 26, 2017. I am writing to recommend the Stigma-Free Zone presentations to all schools who may be looking to zone their school with the Stigma-Free Society's criteria.

Hundreds of Surrey area students and school staff in attendance were riveted and engaged with the initiative of zoning their school and having the Society's presentations for all of their students. Andrea offers a great balance between educational information while instilling a meaningful personal story in her presentations. The Charity's approach for all of their presenters for mental health and stigma education is both unique and unlike anything students have encountered in the classroom or community.

Discussion of the issue of mental illness, overall stigma, and ways to stay mentally well is extremely vital for the wellbeing and health of students. Stigma is a vital issue to tackle and Andrea explains it so well, in plain terms that the youth can grasp. Andrea also talks about additional societal stigmas such as racism, ageism, gender identity, developmental and physical disabilities and ways that people are affected by stigma, where to find resources and support and zoning a school can be the first step in stomping out stigma.

We will most definitely invite the Stigma-Free Society back to our events for more Stigma-Free Zone presentations to the students. I am willing to refer Andrea to other schools and support her in this endeavour as she and her team are so passionate about the delivery of the program and reaching as many young people as possible.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kay Abelson
Program Coordinator

OUR GENEROUS FUNDERS

STIGMA-FREE LEGACY CIRCLE - \$25,000 AND UP



STIGMA-FREE CHAMPIONS - UP TO \$25,000



Provincial Employees Community Services Fund

STIGMA-FREE CHANGE MAKERS - UP TO \$15,000



STIGMA-FREE ADVOCATES - UP TO \$5,000



Van Tel/Safeway
Credit Union Legacy Fund



CHRIS SPENCER FOUNDATION

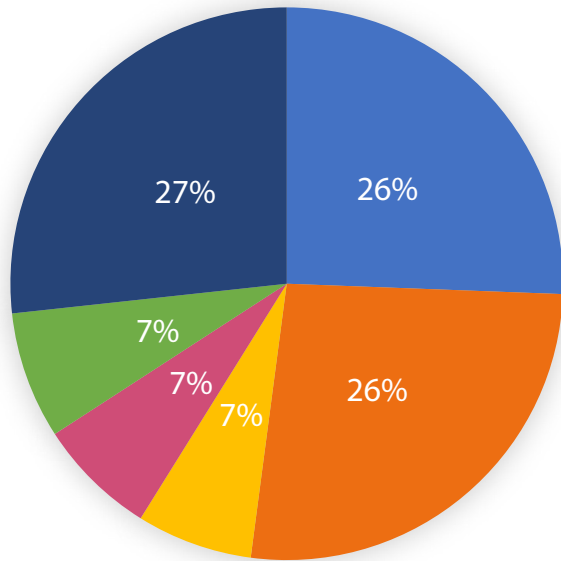


Edith Lando
Charitable Foundation

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS - 2016/2017

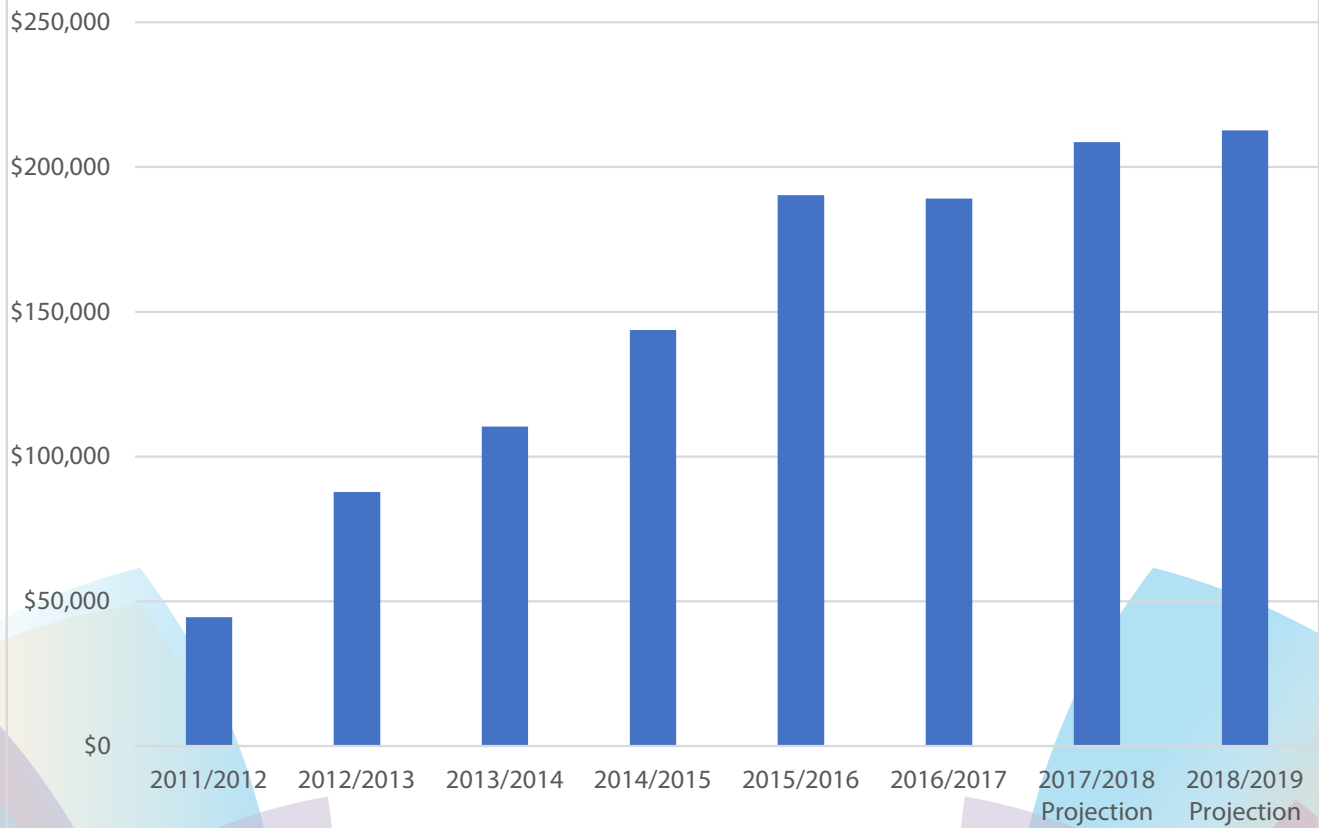
STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY EXPENDITURES

Fiscal Year: 2016-2017



- Stigma-Free Zone Movement (Vancouver Island)
- Stigma-Free Zone Movement (Metro Vancouver)
- Teens2Twenties Support Group
- Adult Women's Support Group
- Victoria Co-Ed Support Group
- Operating Expenditure

STIGMA-FREE SOCIETY PAST AND FORECASTED REVENUES





Financial Statements

(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

Stigma-Free Society (formerly, Bipolar Disorder
Society of British Columbia)

March 31, 2017

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Notice to Reader

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On the basis of information provided by the organization, we have compiled the statement of financial position of Stigma-Free Society (formerly, Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia) as at March 31, 2017 and the statements of operations and changes in net assets for the year then ended.

We have not performed an audit or a review engagement in respect of these financial statements and, accordingly, we express no assurance thereon.

Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes.

Victoria, Canada
September 27, 2017

Grant Thornton LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants

Stigma-Free Society
(formerly, Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia)
Statements of Operations and Changes in Net Assets

(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

Year ended March 31

2017

2016

Revenue		
Donations and grants	\$ 176,166	\$ 173,332
Community support	12,898	16,887
Interest	12	22
	<u>189,076</u>	<u>190,241</u>
Expenses		
Program expenses (Schedule 1)	143,963	153,876
Operating expenses (Schedule 2)	42,109	35,310
	<u>186,072</u>	<u>189,186</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ <u>3,004</u>	\$ <u>1,055</u>
Net assets (deficiency), beginning of year	\$ 846	\$ (209)
Excess of revenue over expenses	<u>3,004</u>	<u>1,055</u>
Net assets, end of year	\$ <u>3,850</u>	\$ <u>846</u>

Stigma-Free Society
(formerly, Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia)
Statement of Financial Position

(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

March 31

2017

2016

Assets

Current

Cash

Prepaid expenses

\$ 46,896 \$ 30,116

1,156 -

\$ 48,052 \$ 30,116

Liabilities

Current

Payables and accruals

Deferred revenue (Note 3)

\$ 11,877 \$ 11,270

32,325 18,000

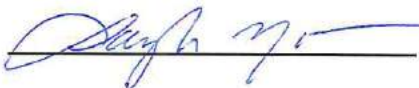
44,202 29,270

Net Assets

3,850 846

\$ 48,052 \$ 30,116

On behalf of the Board

 Member

 Member

Stigma-Free Society
(formerly, Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia)
Notes to the Financial Statements

(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)
March 31, 2017

1. Purpose of the Society

The Society aims to increase awareness, understanding and acceptance among the general population including youth in schools, businesses/organizations and the public in geographical areas about stigma with a focus on mental health.

The Society is incorporated under the Society Act of British Columbia. As a Canadian Registered Charity, the Society is exempt from income tax and may issue receipts for charitable donations.

2. Significant accounting policy

Donations-in-kind

The Society records donated materials, services and facilities in those cases where:

- the Society controls the way they are used;
- there is a measurable basis for arriving at fair value; and
- the services are essential services, which would normally be purchased and paid for if not donated.

The Society would not be able to carry out its activities without the services of the many volunteers who donate a considerable number of hours. Because of the difficulty of compiling these hours, contributed services are not recognized in the financial statements.

3. Deferred revenue

Included in deferred revenue is funding received in the amounts of \$32,325 (2016: \$18,000) from the British Columbia Gaming Commission and Coast Mental Health towards programs for the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

Stigma-Free Society
(formerly, Bipolar Disorder Society of British Columbia)
Schedules to the Financial Statements

(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

Year ended March 31

2017

2016

Schedule of program expenses

Schedule 1

Delivery	\$ 114,799	\$ 117,750
Design and development	5,265	226
Handouts and educational material	384	94
Office expense	3,114	3,297
Presenter development and training	1,795	11,612
Program insurance	2,250	1,061
Promotion	7,677	7,821
Refreshments	2,086	219
Room rental	4,298	4,262
Technology and website	<u>2,295</u>	<u>7,534</u>
	<u>\$ 143,963</u>	<u>\$ 153,876</u>

Schedule of operating expenses

Schedule 2

Accounting and legal	\$ 5,078	\$ 5,598
Contract personnel	35,946	28,795
Interest and bank charges	140	360
Office	<u>945</u>	<u>557</u>
	<u>\$ 42,109</u>	<u>\$ 35,310</u>



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Charity Registration Number: 827676867RR0001