

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, March 26, 2019

## **Directions Youth Services Calls On BC Citizens To Help Vancouver's Homeless Youth**

***The “[Add To Cart](#)” campaign and “[A Night In The Life](#)” event on April 4, 2019 aim to raise awareness and funds to directly help Vancouver’s most vulnerable youth.***

**VANCOUVER, BC, March 26, 2019** - Living on the street is a harsh reality for hundreds of youth in Vancouver. Most are fleeing physical or sexual violence, emotional abuse, or neglect. Many are rejected for their sexual orientation or gender identity. Many are dangerously impacted by a poisoned drug supply. Most require mental health supports. All of them have experienced trauma. All of them are in pain. Young people don't choose homelessness: unfortunately, it's sometimes better than the place they used to call home.

**[Directions Youth Services](#) (a division of [Family Services of Greater Vancouver](#)) is calling on British Columbians to help take action now by supporting Directions and the over 1300 homeless and at-risk youth it serves every year.**

*“When youth have experienced harm and trauma and little else, they often don't feel they are worthy of care and respect,” says Karin Kirkpatrick, CEO of Family Services of Greater Vancouver. “Our incredible staff at Directions Youth Services see the possibility in every young person. When we offer them a safe night's sleep, a healthy and warm meal, or a hot shower, youth may see possibility in themselves, and we can further connect them to things like mental health care, housing, and income supports. The smallest things can lead to big things in their lives.”*

Starting March 26, 2019, Directions' [Add To Cart campaign](#) (concept and videos by Elevator Strategy) is rolling out all over the Lower Mainland, in transit shelters and billboards generously donated by Pattison Outdoor. The transit shelter ads have embedded QR codes, which scan with a phone and connect to the Directions website. The campaign reminds people that even a small donation provides for the small things that can lead to big things in the lives of homeless youth.

*“Becoming aware of youth homelessness is not enough,” says Marnie Goldenberg, Director of Directions Youth Services. “So many of us are so busy shopping and scrolling, we aren't*

*addressing the real challenges we face in our community. Add To Cart is a chance for the people of BC to use their purchasing power to support our youth who are the most in need.”*

On April 4, 2019, individuals and teams from leading BC companies like Electronic Arts, Elevator Strategy, and Interfor will join Directions Youth Services staff and youth for [\*\*A Night In The Life\*\*](#), which includes a glimpse into the lived experience of youth homelessness through Vancouver’s only youth-led homelessness simulator, **Cardboard VanCity**; naloxone training; and a night spent sleeping on the downtown sidewalk, outside Directions Youth Services Centre and across from St. Paul’s Hospital.

As Peter Ter Weeme, EVP of Purpose and Brand Citizenship at Elevator Strategy and a supporter of Directions Youth Services, puts it, *“A compassionate society should value everyone but especially young people, who hold so much potential if we support them properly. Participating in A Night in the Life opened my eyes not only to the the challenging conditions for youth on the street, but to the circumstances that lead to it in the first place. It’s a life-changing experience that was so compelling, I’m doing it again this year.”*

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## **About Directions Youth Services**

Directions Youth Services (a division of Family Services of Greater Vancouver) is a collection of services supporting youth under the age of 25 who are homeless or precariously housed. Last year we served over 1300 youth.

Our Directions Youth Services Centre on Burrard Street in Vancouver is BC’s only 24/7/365, low-barrier drop-in centre—all youth experiencing homelessness are welcome, regardless of their condition. We address immediate needs by serving, hot meals every day; offering medical care, showers, laundry services, pet shelter, and other supports; and by providing a safe respite space from the street.

We work to change lives by building trauma-informed, client-centred relationships with youth; helping youth figure out and take their next steps; supporting youth to improve their housing, health, and education; offering youth the chance to learn job skills including teamwork, punctuality, and communication; and assisting youth in navigating and accessing government, medical, and other services.

Other Directions services include our Outreach Team, who work on the streets of Vancouver, connecting youth with basic needs essentials and services; a Youth Detox Centre that is voluntary and focused on harm reduction; two Youth Safe Houses, homes that provides immediate and safe spaces for youth to stay for up to a month; the Street Youth Job Action program, a social enterprise helping youth learn job skills and earn money; and 10K, a ten-apartment supportive housing program for youth transitioning out of Ministry care.

***Are you a youth who is under 25 and homeless/has unstable housing, or know someone who is? Call us for assistance 24 hours a day at 1 866 249 6884, visit our Youth Services Centre (open 24/7/365) at 1138 Burrard Street, or email [directions@fsgv.ca](mailto:directions@fsgv.ca).***

### **Directions Youth Services**

1138 Burrard Street

Vancouver, BC V6Z 1Y7

1 866 249 6884

[directions@fsgv.ca](mailto:directions@fsgv.ca)

[www.directionsyouthservices.ca](http://www.directionsyouthservices.ca)

Twitter: @Directions\_FSGV

Facebook: @DirectionsYouthServices

Instagram: @DirectionsYouthServices

#directionsyouthservices

### **Add To Cart**

<https://directionsyouthservices.ca/addtocart/>

**Add To Cart Video** <https://youtu.be/fFDqWyYCbto>

### **A Night In The Life**

[www.anightinthelife.ca](http://www.anightinthelife.ca)

#anightinthelife

**A Night In The Life Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OueHRI1EfE>

### **About Family Services of Greater Vancouver**

Founded in 1928, Family Services of Greater Vancouver (FSGV) is a registered charitable organization that supports thousands of families and individuals living in need, in crisis, or with trauma.

With nine locations in Vancouver, Richmond, Burnaby, New Westminster, and Surrey, our over 80 programs are focused on building stronger families; supporting youth in overcoming homelessness; ending violence against women, children and seniors; and developing more inclusive communities. Last year FSGV programs helped over 10,000 people build resiliency, develop skills and knowledge, and gain the confidence to make positive changes in their lives.

FSGV programs are funded by federal and provincial ministries, and the generous support of organizations, foundations, and individual donors.

The majority of FSGV's programs are located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples, including the X̱məθkʷəy̅əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and Sel̓ilwítulh (Tsleil Waututh) Nations.

## **Family Services of Greater Vancouver**

201 - 1638 East Broadway

Vancouver, BC V5N 1W1

[www.fsgv.ca](http://www.fsgv.ca)

Twitter: @VanFamServices

Facebook: @FamilyServicesGreaterVancouver

LinkedIn: Family Services of Greater Vancouver

Instagram: @VanFamServices

#FSGV

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**Directions Youth Services - Add To Cart Campaign Ad:**

<https://youtu.be/fFDqWyYCbto>

**A Night In The Life Video Ad:**

<https://youtu.be/rPx5SGrA0Os>

### **Media Kit**

- Interview avails
- Colour photos of youth
- Colour photos of Directions Youth Services drop-in centre
- Media release
- Directions Youth Services one-sheet
- Add To Cart campaign ads
- Op-ed testimonial from Directions Youth Haven staffer, Manda Gryba