



A REASON TO HOPE. THE MEANS TO COPE.  
BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

SUPPORT

ADVOCACY

RESEARCH

EDUCATION

# Our Vision

To bring compassion and hope to those affected by schizophrenia and psychosis.

# Our Mission

To improve the quality of life for those affected by schizophrenia and psychosis through education, support, public policy and research.



**Message** from the



**Message** from the

## Our Core Values

### Family Centered

We provide education and caring support for families affected by serious mental illness. The family unit is our first responsibility and primary focus; the person with the illness is always included in the definition of family.

### Partnership and Respect

We do not work in isolation. We seek to build a broad range of dynamic partnerships through open and timely communications based on respect and appreciation for all those we serve and work with.

### Innovation and Improvement

We are committed to innovation through ongoing learning and improvement to meet the changing and diversified needs of families with mental illness in today's society.

### Accountability and Transparency

We measure our performance and follow a process of continuous improvement. We are wholly accountable for our actions to our supporters for our use of financial and human resources available to us.

### BC Schizophrenia Society Board of Directors

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## President

The BC Schizophrenia Society has long been recognized as a vital and dedicated organization. Excellent programs, community partnerships, and strong leadership have been the cornerstone of our Society since 1982—a legacy that continued in 2013-2014. Highlights of the year included an afternoon tea to honour our supporters on National Schizophrenia Awareness Day, our provincial Public Policy Committee inquiry into BC Coroner's Service recommendations, and increased involvement and partnership between family members and Health Authorities within hospitals and support groups.

During the year, as we celebrated our 32nd anniversary, volunteers and staff continued to focus on our four-point mandate, which includes education, support, advocacy, and research. The organization is sustained by a determined Board of Directors whose extraordinary efforts have helped us handle many challenges while remaining clearly dedicated to our mission.

Finally, my sincere and heartfelt thanks to all of our members, supporters, volunteers, partners and funders. Each and every one of you is essential to our mission of improving the quality of life for those affected by schizophrenia and psychosis.

Dave Halikowski  
President 2013 - 2014  
BC Schizophrenia Society

## Foundation Chair

The Directors of the BC Schizophrenia Society Foundation wish to extend our deepest thanks to everyone who contributed to the Foundation in the past year. The donations we received were used to support (1) research directly related to the understanding and treatment of schizophrenia and those living with the illness; and (2) the operations of the BC Schizophrenia Society (BCSS). We are especially pleased with our policy that all the research projects we support be conducted here in British Columbia.

We consider the work we did in the past year to be relatively modest and strive to do much more in the future. In addition to raising even more money for the Society, we would like to fund more researchers, purchase equipment for research, replenish funding for the UBC Chair in Schizophrenia Research (originally established by BCSS), and begin building a permanent endowment to ensure sustainable funding for the future.

This year we were randomly selected for audit by federal authorities. I am pleased to report that all was in order and we can again assure our donors that we adhere to the highest standards of professionalism and accountability.

Gerhart Pahl  
Chair 2013 - 2014  
BC Schizophrenia Society Foundation

# Our Programs

## Strengthening Families Together

A 10-week course for people who have a relative with a severe mental illness. Teaches about the illness and how to access resources. Successful national program that has over 55 trained facilitators throughout BC.

## Kids in Control

Provides education, information and support for children aged 7-13 who have a parent suffering from a mental illness.

## Teens in Control

A similar program for older youth aged 13-18.

## ReachOut Psychosis Tour

Exciting, interactive high school tour that harnesses the power of music and brain science to help schools and peers identify youth with emerging psychosis and get effective help fast. See short video intro at <http://www.reachoutpsychosis.com/>

## Reaching Out

Early Psychosis video/manual for high school teachers to help increase awareness among students, teachers and counsellors.

## Respite Program

Provides respite services for families coping with mental illness.

## Partnership Education

Informed panel members talk about the nature and prevalence of chronic and severe mental illness. This popular program is widely-used by schools, community and professional groups, including police and RCMP training.

## Partnership Puppet Program

Helps dispel myths about mental illness for Grade 4/5 students.

## Reaching Families Project

Assertive outreach to families and referrers using web-based tools. See [www.bcscs.org](http://www.bcscs.org) for 24/7 online support groups, multi-agency calendar of family-specific events in BC, plus e-resource newsletters for various populations.

These powerful programs are the heart of our organization. They bring hope and creative solutions to thousands of families coping with serious mental illness in British Columbia. Empowering individuals and families to overcome obstacles and alleviate needless suffering, BCSS brings together citizens, corporations, government, and community agencies to support and educate consumers and families province-wide.



## Program Highlights + Our Mandate



The Public Policy Committee has had a busy and productive year continuing a legacy of strong advocacy work in support of families living with mental illness. A key focus has been promoting the National Guidelines for Family Caregivers of Adults with Mental Illness issued by the Mental Health Commission of Canada in June 2013. The evidence-based, informed, and comprehensive approach outlined in the Guidelines highlights the need for family involvement in patient care, information sharing with professionals, and inclusion in treatment planning. The BC Schizophrenia Society fully supports these principles and the Public Policy Committee has endorsed the Guidelines with the Minister of Health, the health authorities, professional colleges, and schools of various health disciplines. The overall response has been positive, especially from medical, nursing and social work schools throughout BC, who have expressed their gratitude for receiving the information and their willingness and eagerness to incorporate the Guidelines in their teaching.

The Public Policy Committee also reviewed recommendations issued by the BC Coroner's Service to various agencies regarding their treatment of people with mental illnesses. Letters were sent to each of these agencies, including provincial ministries, police departments, and health authorities, to inquire how they have responded to the recommendations. A number of very informative responses were received and have resulted in fruitful discussions. The Public Policy Committee also devoted time to developing a guide document for families on obtaining and providing mental health information, which will be issued in the coming months. Much of this work will continue this year, along with exciting new projects as the Committee expands.

*Agencies contacted: 52*  
*Letters sent: 94*  
*Responses received: 31*  
*Coroner's Recommendations addressed: 67*



## May 24th - Purple Day!

To mark National Schizophrenia Awareness Day, BCSS asks people to show their support for the 40,000 British Columbians living with schizophrenia by wearing purple on May 24th. In response, we receive pictures from around the province from workplaces, schools and families who are inspired by our request. to "Show us Your Purple!"

National monuments such as BC Place, Niagara Falls, and the CN Tower are lit up purple in honour of the day. BC high schools, colleges and libraries help spread the word by providing information displays. Donor appreciation events around the province on May 24th 2013 included a luncheon at Victoria's Union Club and a formal tea held at the Vancouver Lawn and Tennis Club.





BC Schizophrenia Society is dedicated to educating the public about schizophrenia and other serious and persistent mental illnesses. We do this through our excellent programs and services, information tables, the ReachOut Psychosis Band, and Partnership Presentations.

## Partnership Presentations

Partnership presentations consist of a panel of three guest speakers – a person with a psychiatric diagnosis, a family member, and a mental health professional. The three guests work as a team, and each describes their unique experience with mental illness. This is a powerful educational tool that helps people in the community understand the nature and prevalence of chronic and severe mental illness. In 2013 we honoured our commitment to public education by continuing to provide hundreds of regular Partnership sessions throughout the province. Partnership education is an extremely effective way to get the message out about schizophrenia and psychosis – to students, people employed in mental health, those who work daily with the public, and others.

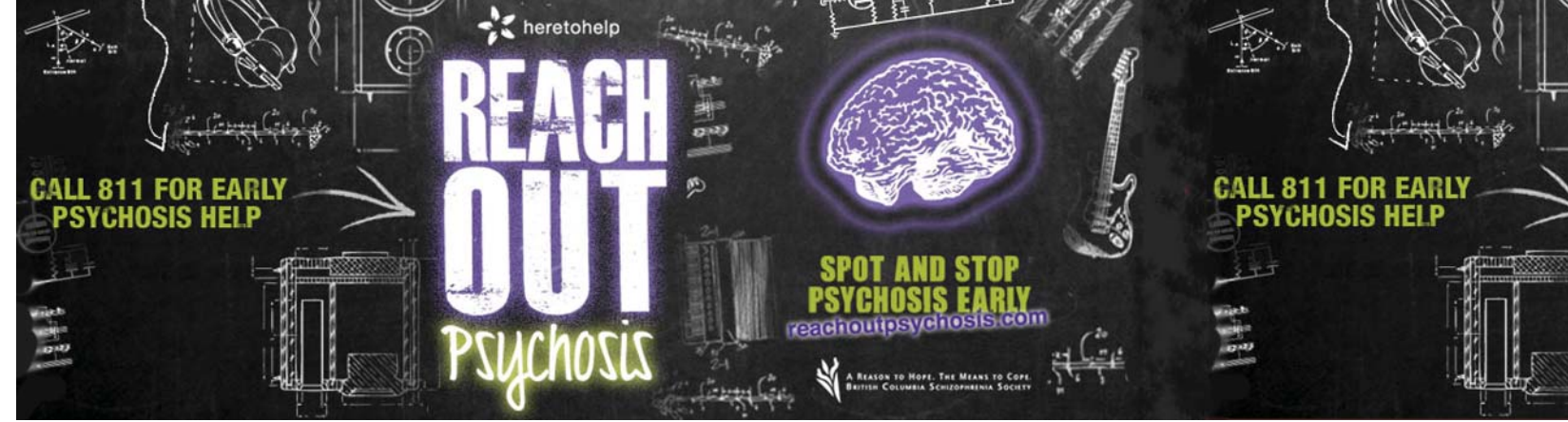
Thanks to our many “partners” who help us raise awareness by sharing their personal stories with doctors, nurses, social workers, police, RCMP, high school students, teachers and counsellors across British Columbia.

## Information Display

Information displays also play a big part in spreading awareness and education to BC communities. Tables and visual presentations are set up at multiple events, libraries, community centres, and schools. Hundreds of information displays and tables are presented by BCSS annually, providing information in the form of booklets, books, pamphlets, and other resources to people who are curious or in need of help.



*Partnership presentation participants: 1,365  
Public information event participants: 21,299*



## ReachOut Psychosis Tour

The ReachOut Psychosis Tour is a fun and innovative tour that uses music and poetry to help youth and teachers learn to spot and stop psychosis early. This talented group tours the province, free of charge, and educates youth aged 16-25 in a way that makes sense to them. The ReachOut performers are drawn from an impressive array of successful professional musicians and comedy performers. This year 80 presentations throughout the province reached 18,798 youth who attended. In addition to the school concert for youth, ReachOut provides resources and information for teachers and parents. Early medical treatment of psychosis is crucial to ensure that young people start on the path to recovery, and do not lose their early years to the illness.

For more information, visit <http://www.reachoutpsychosis.com/>



*ReachOut Tour program attendance: 17,283*



## Online Support & Resources

BCSS Online Support is an important resource for the many families and friends of people with mental illness.

Family and friends of people with mental illness appreciate a safe and supportive place on the internet where they can share information and learn from others in their community.

Support is offered for diverse populations. For more details go to [www.support.bcss.org](http://www.support.bcss.org)

In addition to 24/7 online support, free downloads of vital information and resources for families are also available through our website – fact sheets, pamphlets, booklets and videos plus information on vital activities happening in communities throughout British Columbia.



## Helping Young Family Members

The BCSS Kids In Control program offers education, information and support for children aged 7-18 who have a parent suffering from a mental illness.

Many young caregivers (children as young as 11 or 12) are the primary support person for an ill mother, father or sibling.

The BC Schizophrenia Society wishes to thank RBC Royal Bank for their ongoing support and generosity in helping us make this program available to young people and their families.



## Our Volunteers Rock!

Volunteers representing BCSS serve on important boards, committees, and councils throughout the province.

Our provincial office is staffed by volunteers on a daily basis, covering positions such as reception, mail distribution, filing, data entry and internet-related work for our programs.

We could not do our work without the many volunteers who contribute hours of their valuable time to help facilitate our excellent programs in BC.

Strengthening Families Together, the Partnership program, family support groups, information tables, letter writing, newspaper articles, interviews and much more—a great deal of our work is done by volunteers.

With guidance and leadership from the BCSS Board and the Foundation, we strive to reach families and their loved ones to support, educate and empower them to get the help they need and deserve.

Increasing numbers of young people have come forward this year to learn more in order to help and educate others.

It is very satisfying to see the enthusiasm and passion shown by all our volunteers, and to know that it is truly making a difference.

*Family Support 2013-14*  
Calls: 4,699  
Visits: 1,073  
Emails: 28,699

*Youth benefiting from Kids in Control program to date: 764*

*Volunteers for education and support: 45*  
*Volunteers for special events and information tables: 63*  
*Volunteers for Schizophrenia Awareness Day 2013: 12*  
*Volunteers at our provincial office: 20*  
*Volunteer Board of Directors: 17*



# Advancing Schizophrenia Research

In 1994, BC Schizophrenia Society members raised the \$1 million necessary to establish a Chair in Schizophrenia Research at UBC. The Chair was named in honour of philanthropist Jack Bell, whose generous donation provided half the necessary funding at the time. The position of Chair is currently held by well-known schizophrenia researcher, Dr. Bill Honer, who is also now Head of UBC Psychiatry.

The Society and its Foundation vigorously promote schizophrenia research, and encourage funders in their support for young scientists who want to study schizophrenia here in British Columbia. This is an important and much-needed contribution to the field. Together we have raised over \$2.2 million dollars for research projects to date - the value of which is doubled through matching grants from other sources to individual researchers.

We are proud to present the young researchers profiled here, and extremely grateful to all whose generous gifts of time and money allow us to continue this important work.



*Funds raised to establish UBC Schizophrenia Research chair in 1994:*  
**\$1,000,000**  
*Funds raised since 1995 for schizophrenia research:*  
**\$2,251,665**

## Dr. Alfredo Ramos-Miguel

Dr. Ramos-Miguel studies the impact of three brain proteins (known as SNARE proteins) on cognitive impairment in schizophrenia. These proteins can form tight, stable structures called SNARE complexes, which have been found to be related to cognitive decline. His team is working to identify drug compounds that can disrupt SNARE complexes, and potentially relieve the cognitive symptoms of schizophrenia.

This ongoing research has already identified some promising candidates in vitro among the 100,000 molecules that have been tested. However, a great effort is still needed to translate their potential effects into benefits for patients and their families.

## Katie M. Lavigne

Katie Lavigne's PHD research examines brain activity associated with changes in symptoms, cognition, and social functioning in schizophrenia patients undergoing either cognitive remediation therapy (CRT) or metacognitive training (MCT). This will be the first direct comparison of brain changes underlying these two popular cognitive therapies for schizophrenia, and could lead to more individualized treatment options by determining which features of schizophrenia are impacted most through CRT vs. MCT.

Future research combining CRT and MCT would serve as the first steps in the development of a comprehensive treatment program involving medications and cognitive training. Katie is currently recruiting and running treatment groups at one inpatient site (BC Psychosis Program, UBC Hospital). She is also recruiting and running treatment groups with Vancouver Coastal's Outpatient Mental Health teams, and will have completed assessments and treatment for her first group by fall 2014.

## Dr. Anita Cote

Dr. Anita Cote is at UBC researching cardiovascular impacts, including metabolic syndrome, arising from the use of anti-psychotic medications in children. The goal is to identify genetic markers of which children will develop risk factors for heart disease and stroke when treated with second-generation antipsychotics (SGA)—so that appropriate prevention strategies can be implemented.

During her research Dr. Cote identified an association between the Val158Met (rs4680) variant in the catechol-O-methyltransferase (COMT) gene and blood pressure in SGA-treated children. This work was recently published in the Pharmacogenomics Journal online, and is the first study to report the interaction of this gene and SGA use. Dr. Cote is now investigating changes in the functioning of the COMT gene in SGA-treated children.

*Number of young researchers supported since 1995: 78*

## Donations

### \$50,000+

Helen Jean Holyk (Estate)

### \$10,000-\$49,999

Bristol-Myers Squibb Canada Inc.  
Diana Hsu Memorial Endowment Fund  
RBC Foundation  
Tammy Ritchie  
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### \$5,000 - \$9,999

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Ronald and Gloria Kinley  
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John and Edith Kolt  
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Donna Lang  
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Glenda and Peter Minten  
James and Maureen Montgomery  
Edith Moore  
Barbara Morris  
Margaret Mullin  
Walter Murk



# Many can get the help they need ...

Joan Nazif  
Judith and Rick Neamtan  
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## In Honour of...

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Heather and Family  
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R.G. and Susan Matson  
The Matson Family  
Matt McLarty  
Colin Mitchell  
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## In Memory of...

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Frank Devide  
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Dawna Stone  
Craig Williamson



# Thank you

## Branches

BCSS Abbotsford  
 BCSS Bulkley Valley  
 BCSS Burnaby  
 BCSS Campbell River  
 BCSS Chilliwack  
 BCSS Coquitlam  
 BCSS Cowichan Valley  
 BCSS Cranbrook  
 BCSS Kelowna  
 BCSS Langley  
 BCSS Nanaimo  
 BCSS Nelson  
 BCSS Penticton  
 BCSS New Westminster  
 BCSS Powell River  
 BCSS Prince George  
 BCSS Salmon Arm  
 BCSS Sunshine Coast  
 BCSS Surrey/White Rock  
 BCSS Terrace  
 BCSS Richmond/Vancouver  
 BCSS Vernon  
 BCSS Victoria  
 BCSS Williams Lake

## Regional Coordinators

Richmond/Vancouver: Tammy Lohnes  
 Fraser North: Dave Dickinson  
 Fraser East: Francesca Arueyingho  
 Fraser South: Hardeep Thind  
 Powell River: Danita Senf  
 Kamloops: Gail Bagri  
 Williams Lake: Brenda Humphrey  
 Prince George: Kim Dixon  
 Burns Lake: Heather Megchelsen  
 Robson Valley: Irene Brady  
 Terrace & Region: Dolly Hall & Noreen Spence  
 Bulkley Valley: Toby Coupé  
 Haida Gwaii: Mary Kellie  
 Fort St. John: Julie Kornelsen  
 Dawson Creek: Clara Donnelly

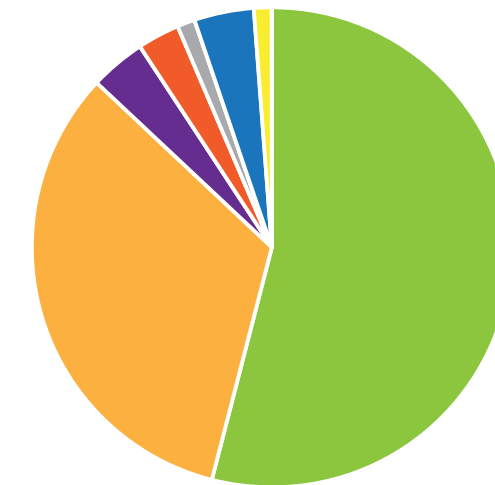
## Program Coordinators

Kids in Control Coordinators: Ki Speer, Kashmir Besla, Deanna Brandt, Brenda Laverty  
 BRIDGES Coordinator: Debbie Sesula  
 ReachOut Psychosis High School Tour, BCSS Online Family Support & Website Manager: Sophia Kelly  
 ReachOut Booking Coordinator: Vinita Chand

# Statement of General Fund Receipts & Disbursements

Year ending March 31, 2014

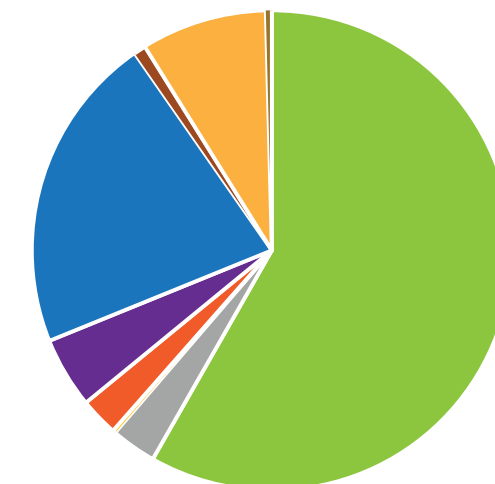
### Receipts



- Regional Programs
- Provincial Programs
- Fundraising
- Direct Access Grant - BC Gaming
- Miscellaneous Income
- Interest Earned
- Recovery of Fundraising Costs from BCSS Foundation
- Recovery of Operating Costs from BCSS Foundation

Total: \$1,665,451

### Disbursements



- Regional Programs
- Provincial Programs:
- Education - Direct Access Grant Expenses
- Education - Purple Day
- Education - Other
- Fundraising
- Family Support
- Policy Development
- Program Support
- Amortization

Total: \$1,544,642

Excess of Receipts over Disbursements for the Year \$120,809

**Full Financial Statements available upon request.**



SUPPORT  
SCHIZOPHRENIA  
AWARENESS DAY

WEAR PURPLE  
on May 24!



BC Schizophrenia Society  
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prov@bcss.org www.bcss.org