



BRAIN INJURY ALLIANCE

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Brain Injury; A Personal Challenge,
A Community Response

INTERIM REPORT FOR THE PERIOD JULY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2022

Brain injury organizations across British Columbia are grateful that the provincial government has increased the grant to the Alliance for 2023-2026. This increase will result in increased grants and three years of stability for brain injury organizations.



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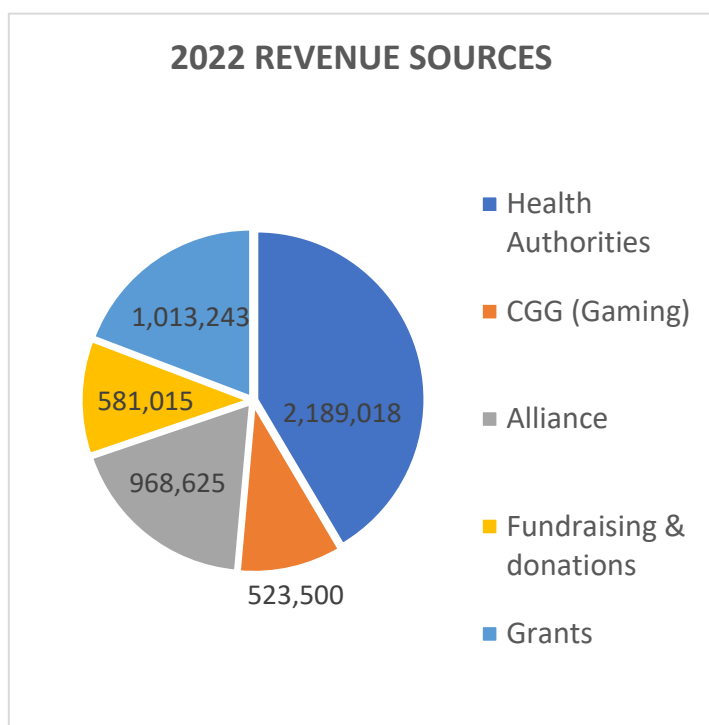
THE ALLIANCE: FUNDING FOR BRAIN INJURY ORGANIZATIONS

The Brain Injury Alliance is a province-wide organization in British Columbia composed of individuals and organizations working together to improve the quality of life for persons living with a brain injury, their families, and their communities. The Alliance supports charitable brain injury organizations to provide a range of services for anyone who has an acquired brain injury.

Benefits of Funding for Brain Injury Organizations

Brain injury organizations receive funding from their respective health authorities. However restrictions on how brain injury organizations use these funds vary by health authority. This funding is variously restricted to the provision of services to people whose injuries are recent, or to people who are under the age of 65, or to people whose injuries were not sustained in a motor vehicle crash or a workplace incident.

Some health authorities will fund only one type of one-to-one service. Others will not approve use of their funding for services that are not directly health related such as employment, corrections, counseling, or injury prevention.



The clients we served through Alliance funding aren't eligible for ABI services though the Health Authority mostly because of age (over 65) but have a (medically) confirmed brain injury/stroke. A handful of clients with high support needs received life skills support varying from once to several times a week, depending on their situation.

South Okanagan Brain Injury Society (SOSBIS)



Grant funding from community gaming as well as other sources, are also important staples to the budgets of brain injury organizations. Restrictions on spending exist with all these funding sources. Many grants are project based, provide funding for a single year or are oversubscribed with applications, often submitted by large organizations with professional grant writers. Small brain injury organizations, especially those in small communities, are unable to be competitive in this type of market.

One of the benefits of Alliance funding is that it is flexible. It can be used to fund a small portion of a program's expenses, or up to 100% of the funds required to operate the program. Alliance funding can be used for new programs or well-established programs that serve people of any age, whose lives have been changed by a brain injury resulting from any cause. Funds can be used to support family caregivers, educate employers, intervene with justice system issues, or to do the day-to-day-to-day work of assisting people with brain injury to resume their lives and contribute to their families and communities.

Alliance funding helps to tie the services available in the community together and allows access for all individuals with acquired brain injuries.

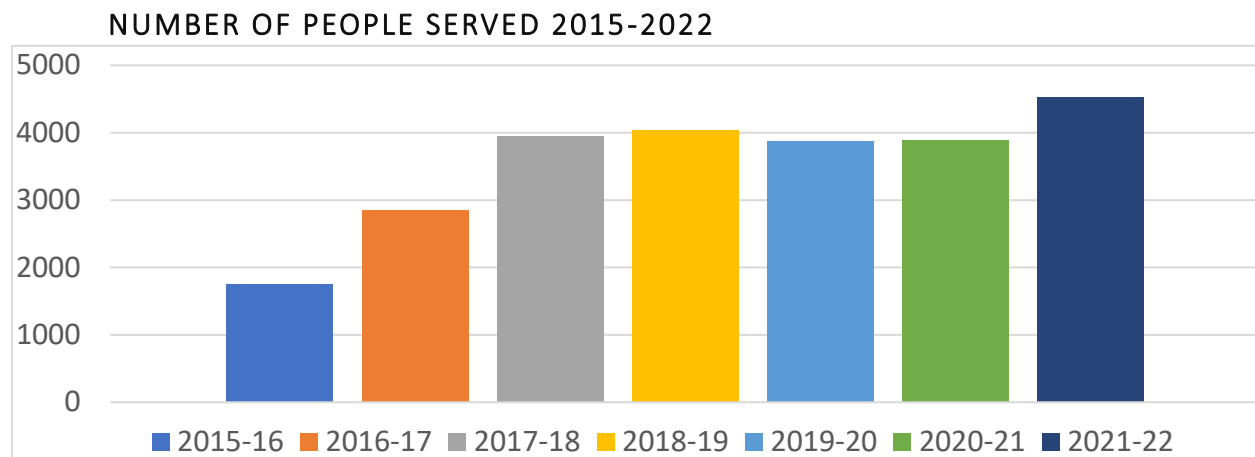
One of the clients we assist has a brain injury, is legally blind and struggles with depression. Our support staff help her with medical appointments, problem solving, organizing and reports back to the SOSBIS case manager who coordinates her care and support needs with the care team.

Without funding from the Alliance this client would not be eligible for our services and would very likely not be able to live independently.

South Okanagan Brain Injury Society (SOSBIS)

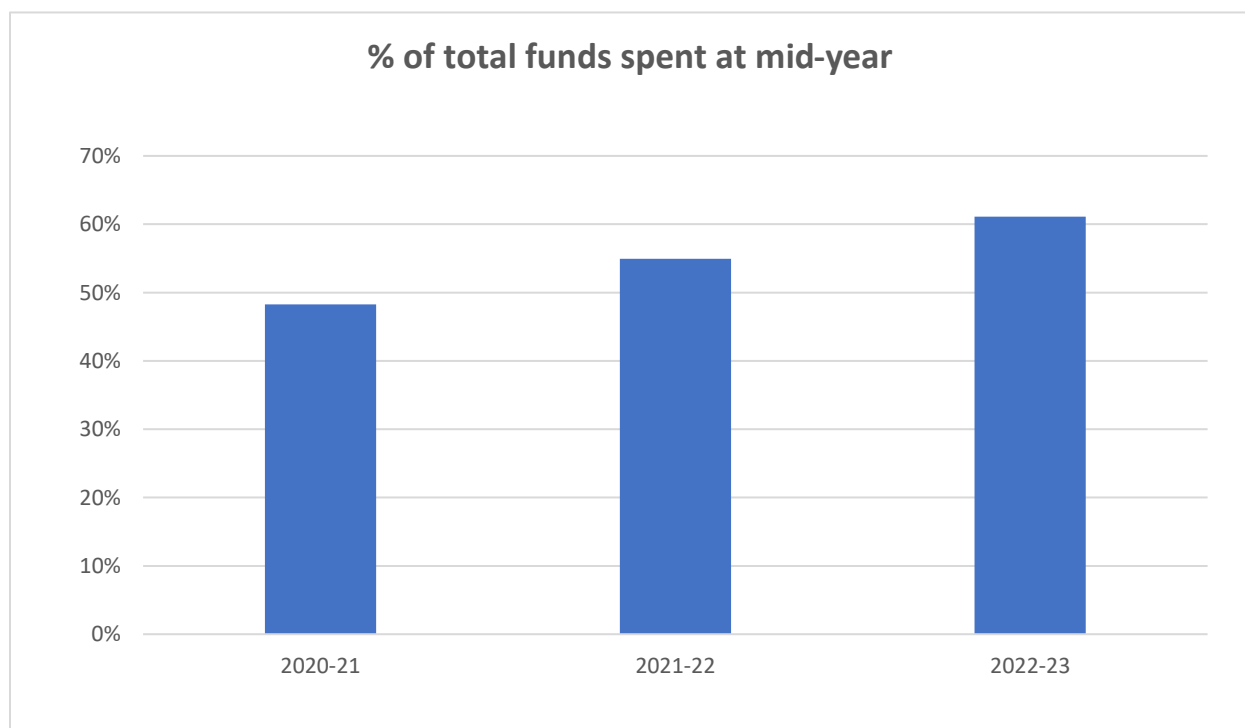
Increasing Need for the Services of Brain Injury Organizations

The most recent full year data available is for the 2021-2022 year. Brain injury organization reports for 2022-2023 will be reported in the Alliance Annual Report in October 2023. Interim reports show that organizations will exceed previous counts of clients served.



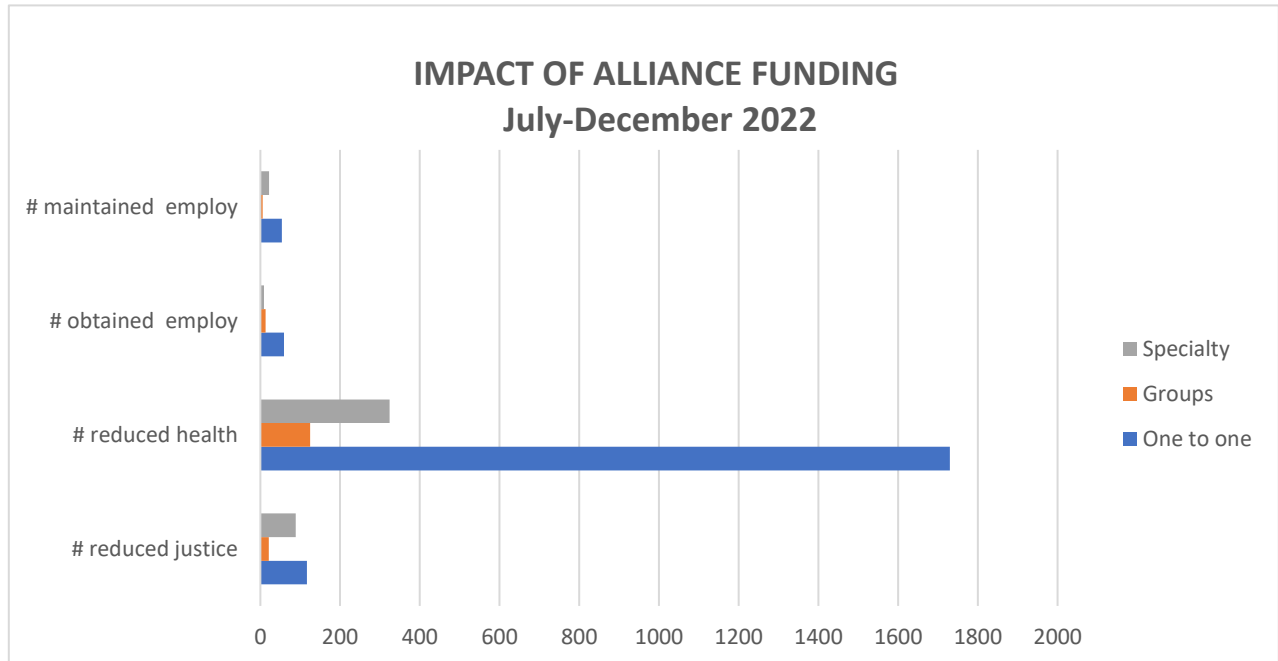
Serving more clients results in an increase in cost. Reports on programs and financial expenditures are submitted by brain injury organizations twice annually.

Interim reports in 2020-21 showed that brain injury organizations had expended 48% of their annual allocation. This increased to 55% in 2021-22. At the mid-way point in 2022-2023 member agencies had expended 63% of the grants provided by the Alliance.





Supporting brain injury organizations benefits taxpayers, the public health care system, the justice system, employers, family members as well as people living with brain injury.



Services in Remote Communities

Brain Injury Organizations serve some of the more remote parts of the province where services are often lacking

Regular trips to connect with clients in remote locations are made. Texada Island and surrounding areas are those of most concern. We tend to several clients and their care givers in these areas, delivering food from the food bank to clients we have either identified as in need or they have expressed need for these supports.

Powell River Brain Injury Society (PRBIS)

With NBIA staff living and working throughout the northern half of BC we have been able to provide face to face Case Management services in Terrace, Kitimat, Hazelton, Smithers, Houston, Burns Lake, Vanderhoof, Ft St John, Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Pouce Coupe, Taylor, Ft St James and Quesnel. Clients living in other communities have been served via phone or zoom.

Northern Brain Injury Association (NBIA)



Alliance Funding to Brain Injury Organizations

Funding to charitable brain injury organizations provides:

- ❖ Direct services to people living with brain injury.
- ❖ Service to support family members and associates of persons with a brain injury.
- ❖ Education programs to increase knowledge & awareness of brain injury among generic services providers, educators, students, employers, and the community as a whole.
- ❖ Injury prevention programs and community event services.

Clients are coming with more complex needs. We are working together to support and encourage around taking baby steps.

Campbell River Head Injury Support Society (CRHIS)

Who do brain injury organizations serve?

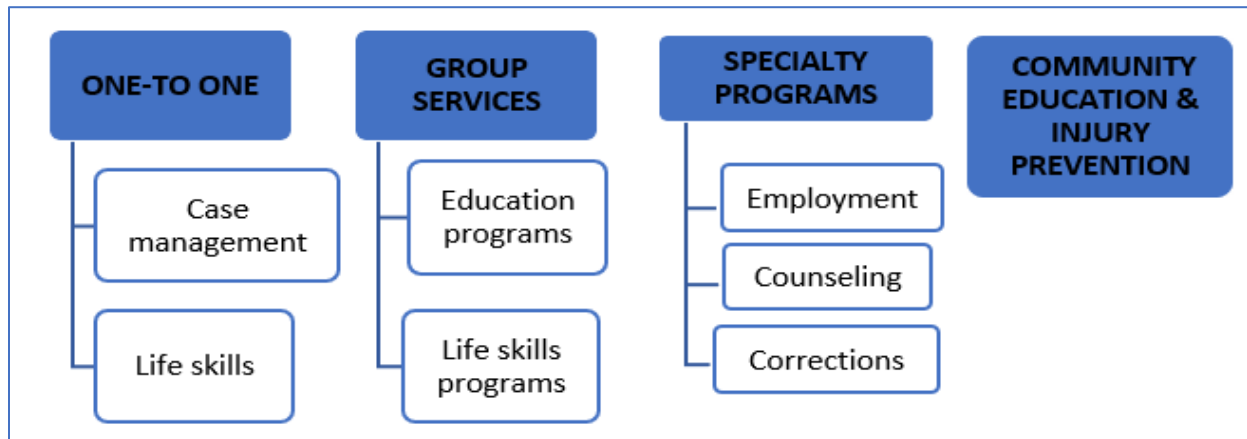
- ❖ Brain injury organizations serve any individual with a brain injury, regardless of time since injury or cause of injury.
- ❖ This includes people living with multiple issues.
- ❖ More than 92% of people with brain injury & a concurrent mental health &/or addictions issue, homelessness and/or frequent interactions with the justice system are accepted for services offered by brain injury organizations.
- ❖ Brain injury organizations also serve family members and the community as a whole.

FVBIA was able to present the Brain Injury educational program within the Fraser Valley Regional Correctional Center via zoom for seven education modules from July 1 to September 20, 2022. This program runs for 8 weeks with a Zoom session once a week for 2 hours each.

Fraser Valley Brain Injury Association (FVBIA)

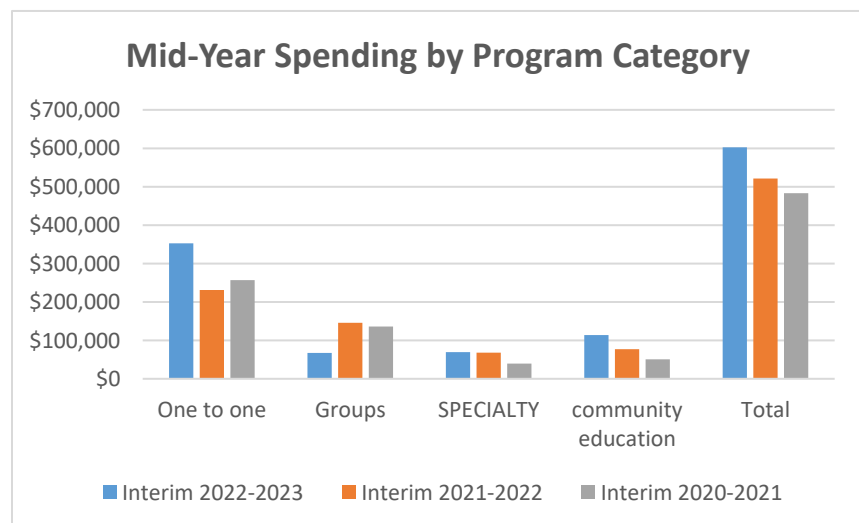


Types of Services Provided



Mid-Year Spending by Program Category

According to the graph on the right, the Alliance's funding flexibility served brain injury organizations well during the Covid pandemic (brown and orange columns), allowing for an increase in services for groups of people and a reduction in community education and injury prevention services.



In the latter half of 2022 (in blue on the chart), with COVID restrictions easing, people with brain injuries were finally able to address many of the additional stresses of the previous 2 years and getting some of their necessary tasks completed by working one to one with their brain injury society case manager or life skills worker. Brain injury organizations were able to be flexible in order to accommodate the changing needs of the people they serve.

With COVID much resolved NBIA case managers have had the ability to travel to remote communities and meet clients face to face on a more regular basis. This has created more expenses for this program regarding travel costs.

Northern Brain Injury Association (NBIA)



With funding from the Alliance we have been working with 2 Registered Clinical Counsellors in our community that have provided counselling services to 27 individuals during this interim report period. The value to brain injury survivors is priceless, as many continue to struggle with the results of a brain injury and the added stresses brought on by the pandemic.

Comox Valley Head Injury Society (CVHIS)

Trained NBIS volunteers provide 1:1 community support both in-person and virtually. Examples include support to patients with ABI in the NGRH Rehab and Out-patient clinic, as well as virtually via a weekly Coffee Group and 1:1 virtual and in-person community peer support.

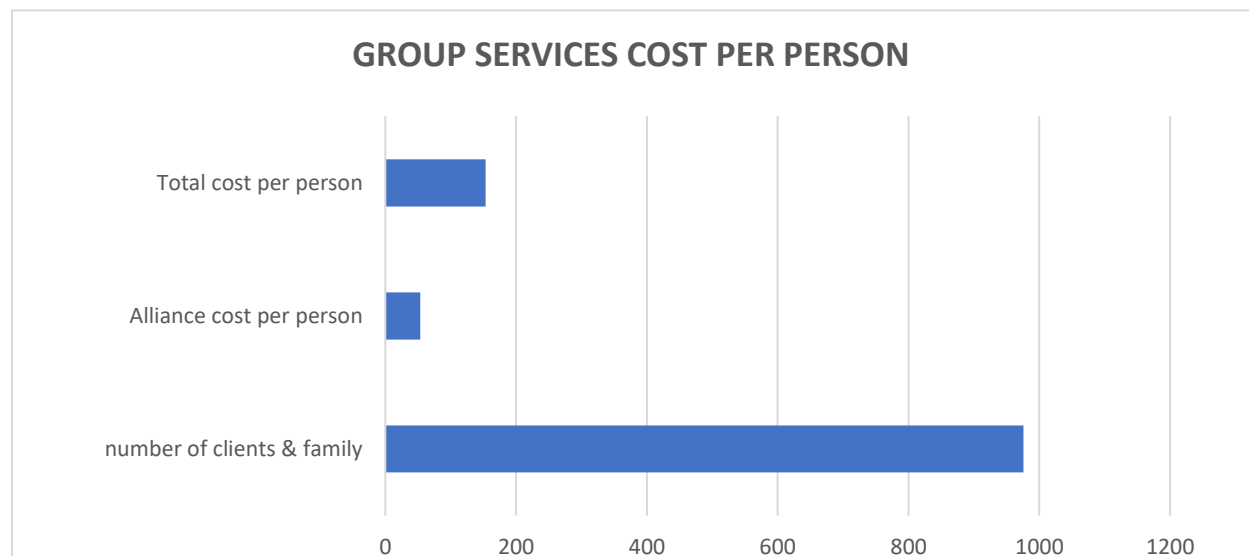
Nanaimo Brain Injury Society (NBIS)

Major highlight (of our case management tasks) are CPP applications, cell phone and computer assistance for seniors, and bridging IHA denied clients to detox services. Much of modern life requires computer literacy which older clients often lack, so our team assist them.

Kamloops Brain Injury Association (KBIA)

Group Services

Group services provide the benefit of peer support and learning with significant cost savings.





Group service programs provided 99 sessions of educational programming to our members that totaled over 200 staff hours. It also provided 52 sessions of supportive programming, such as Women's Group, Karate, Art and Open Social that totaled over 80 hours. Additionally, we put on 5 'everyone welcome' social events which ranged from BBQ's, potlucks to our annual Christmas party!

Prince George Brain Injured Group (PGBIG)

Brain Injury Education and Prevention Programs

Community-based Brain Injury Education and Injury Prevention programs have always been an important service provided by brain injury organizations.

In the first half of the 2022-2023 granting year, brain injury organizations served 13,209 children, adults and seniors, 40% more than the previous year.

93% of students that completed the feedback form found the presentation useful and it increased their knowledge about brain injuries and the way they view ABI. 21% of student participants provided emails to participate in either a SHINE leadership program, share personal stories for SHINE or take part in a concussion support group at their school.

Victoria Brain Injury Society (VBIS)



Brain Injury Alliance Member Organizations

[BrainTrust Canada](#)

[Campbell Valley Head Injury Society](#)

[Comox Valley Head Injury Society](#)

[Fraser Valley Brain Injury Association](#)

[Kamloops Brain Injury Association](#)

[Kootenay Brain Injury Association](#)

[South Okanagan Similkameen Brain Injury Society](#)

[Nanaimo Brain Injury Society](#)

[Northern Brain Injury Association](#)

[Powell River Brain Injury Society](#)

[Prince George Brain Injured Group](#)

[Victoria Brain Injury Society](#)



Stories From Interim Reports 2022-2023

Braintrust

In 2019 Linda suffered a brain aneurysm and stroke as a result, throwing her life for a loop as she was forced to end her fulfilling career as a registered massage therapist (RMT). She describes this adjustment as traumatizing, as she had lost her passion and felt as she was missing a big piece of her identity.

With little confidence and a future of unknowns at the time, Linda joined BrainTrust with hopes of finding new pieces of her identity, and today is proud to say she found that and more. Shortly after beginning group programs with the organization, she began to rebuild her confidence as she was finally in a place where she did not feel like an outsider.

She describes the importance of finally seeing brain injury and knowing that her peers understood pieces of what she was going through which ultimately helped to make sense of this new life she was given.

Through the support of group programs, clinical counselling, and one-to-one sessions with a facilitator she has successfully regained control of her financial hardships, found solutions to food insecurities, moved cities with ease, and most importantly made meaningful connections!

Without this level of support from BrainTrust and community partners, Linda would have been at risk of losing her primary source of income and as well safe housing.

Linda states that BrainTrust has allowed her to no longer see her injury as a restriction and encouraged her to step outside of the box to continue her journey to self-acceptance and rebuild pieces of her identity that she had lost.



Campbell River Brain Injury Society

Our society has become a well diverse supportive, strengthening for mind and body entity for our members. Brain Injury Alliance has made a strong positive impact in achieving this goal. We have been able to improve on our existing programs as well expand to take individuals off our waitlist. Without Alliance support this would have been harder to achieve.



Comox Valley Head Injury Society

Michelle's story started when she was in a vehicle accident 10 years ago. In 2013, Michelle was driving down a Victoria street when she collided with a lady driving the wrong way down a one way street and ended up in a head on collision.

After the accident Michelle was treated for physical injuries but during physio it became apparent that she had sustained a brain injury.

She was referred to a concussion clinic where she continued treatment but was not receiving emotional support. Michelle was soon depressed and became suicidal so she was admitted





to the psychiatric ward in the Victoria Hospital for treatment for a couple of months for emotional support and adjustment to the right medications.

It was at this time that Michelle started painting and realized her love of art and music. With no family support in Victoria, her parents moved her back to the Comox Valley and into their home where they could offer support.

It was at that time that Michelle was referred to the Comox Valley Head Injury Society and shares her first memories. 'It was awesome! Survivors group made me realize that I wasn't alone in my symptoms, I felt I could contribute and help others, and it encouraged me to keep attending. I felt less suicidal and wanted to try more activities.' Through CVHIS Michelle has attended BIA supported art therapy, music therapy, private counselling and most recently, has become a volunteer in our Employment Program.

'Art therapy helped me so much with emotional and therapeutic support. I have learnt crafts, drumming, ukulele, leadership skills and there's more I'm hoping to do! Music classes are my favorite day of my week, we were just discussing that when we can all come together and focus on music instead of any negative feelings, it can change our emotions. Music at CVHIS gives everyone a voice and always makes me feel good for a few days after. I hope music and the other programs continue for a long time!'

[Fraser Valley Brain Injury Association](#)

Brain Injury to Jewelry Class Instructor by Tim Morgan

My story Began in 2004 when I was age 16 in my first year of high school. I had an overdose of psilocybin mushrooms "or also know as magic mushrooms" I took about 8 grams over 2 weeks span when most do 1 gram and my life became chaos. I was admitted into psychiatric care at Chilliwack General Hospital shortly after.

I was haunted by my imagination of demons and other strange conspiracy theories and was thrown into a world of medications, hospital visits, and doctors. In 2007, I moved into what was called First Avenue Kayatta House, where I had first met Esther Tremblay who also works with Fraser Valley Brain Injury Association. With the help of Esther and other staff at First Avenue, I was able to graduate high school. In 2009, I was able to move out into my own place to live and at age 25 in 2012, I quit using all narcotics (illegal drugs).





On March 20th, 2012, I Joined Fraser Valley Brain injury Association at the Chilliwack Branch, and Esther Tremblay, FVBIA Case Manager, has been a big support to me throughout. I cannot thank the staff at Fraser Valley Brain injury enough for helping me learn about my brain injury conditions. I can cope with life much better now, and I am on 1/3 of my medications I used to be on with the doctor's support.

Now I am able to give back and share one of my favourite hobbies with the local (brain injury) group here in Chilliwack, which is making jewelry. I began making jewelry in grade 9 when I made my first handmade aluminum band and casted my first silver ring. I later took a college university upgrading silver smithing course in 2008. It is a new learning experience and journey that I am on as I teach jewelry making with wire.

I still make some mistakes in life, some tougher than others, but I manage my problems and mistakes in a much healthier manner and am 10 years free of illegal drugs.

[Kamloops Brain Injury Association](#)

Glenn has worked hard his entire life, especially after an exploding tire on a work site gave him a brain injury. He kept going, winning awards for his work as a heavy duty mechanic, even with the injury, as he excelled at hands on work. He had stable employment and was a model citizen for years.

But then things changed. He left stable housing and employment in AB to come to Kamloops to help out with a family crisis. He found that getting stable employment and housing here turned out to be a monumental task.

He bounced around a couple of jobs, including on a site that was unsafe. He was approaching retirement age and he found himself very frustrated by paperwork, a problem linked to his brain injury. He tried disputing the unsafe environment and getting his pension. Applying for government support was a bit too much and his housing became precarious, so the frustration boiled over.

He was put in touch with the Kamloops Brain Injury Association and together they were able to work through some challenges. His application for the Canada Pension Plan was eventually approved, giving him a stable income. Linking up with the local free legal clinic, he was able to press his claim for damages on the unsafe work site. His housing isn't exactly what he wants, but it is secure, and he feels that a bit of extra help got him back in charge of his life.



Northern Brain Injury Association

"K self-referred after having a fall while hiking and striking the back of her head. She experienced issues with balance, vision, fatigue, headaches, and neck pain. NBIA collaborated with the community occupational therapist, physiotherapist, client's physician, as well as the client's employer.

K was an active participant in her rebuilding after her concussion and successfully completed a gradual return to work plan. She is currently back working full time in the role she had prior to her concussion."

Prince George Brain Injured Group

I have been a member of BIG since December 2018. I became brain injured as the result of being attacked by a male street person who was trying to steal my purse. The RCMP referred me too BIG to access support.

Prior to becoming disabled, I worked as a social worker and counsellor for 33 years. The assault I experienced brought an end to my career.

Accessing individual and group at BIG has been a life saver for me. By taking classes there, I've learned so much about brain injury and how it affects a person's functioning both cognitively and physically. My case manager has been so helpful in terms of filling out forms for me and providing a comfortable safe environment for me to say what I need to say.

When BIG began offering art classes, I took advantage of this opportunity right away. I've painted a ceramic flower pot and planted marigold seeds in it. I've also made a cement stepping stone adorned with many pretty colours of glass.

Because of my injury, I have severe PTSD. Having art classes and art kits has been so therapeutic for me. I can focus on the project I'm working on and forget for a short period of time where my life is at. As a former counsellor, I have a clear understanding of the healing that art brings to people who are suffering. I previously did not regard myself as an artistic type of person, however I love the pieces I've created. These art projects have lifted my spirits and put a smile on my face. This is huge!

I truly appreciate the funding that BIG has received to provide its members with access to the art programming. It's given me a sense of accomplishment and raised my self-esteem. I hope that this funding will continue because art HEALS and nurtures hurt souls. DN



Powell River Brain Injury Society

Jeanette Francis has been a client with us since PRBIS very first days as a functional non profit serving those with acquired brain injury and their loved ones.

In early 2009 Jeanette visited her optometrist for an eye exam, she was experiencing a great deal of difficulty concentrating and retaining information while completing her post secondary education.

Initially Jeanette thought her eyes were failing her and perhaps she might need eye glasses. This was the beginning of a scary journey, emergency surgery, rehabilitation and healing. The determination Jeanette had since the very first days is admirable. Jeanette refused to succumb to the limitations this tumor has set on her life, her dreams and aspirations. In October of 2009 Jeanette underwent surgery for brain tumor, the surgery was a whopping nine hours long, followed by several days in hospital to recover.

Jeanette's life was altered and her life felt as if it was unraveling faster then she could keep up. She struggled emotionally, and physically for the first while, eventually finding solace in PRBIS. Jeanette shares hope with others through her own experiences, she expresses gratitude for the services offered at the centre, and for the comfort of knowing she has a judgment free space to connect with others living with some of the same challenges she faces as a brain injury survivor.

In addition to Jeanette's continued attendance as a client, we also have her on as part time staff. She does a remarkable job at connecting with other clients from a perspective some of our staff do not have. This position helped to re enter Jeanette into the work force, giving her new hope for the future and helping her to find purpose. Having a positive outcome is waht we want for all of our clients, and we are here to support them on this journey.

South Okanagan Similkemee Brain Injury Society

Despite living with numerous challenges, Wilma Kuypers stands strong. Born with a genetic condition, Wilma has lived with 80% hearing loss since age 5 and suffered a stroke in September 2019. Yet in the last 7 months since her husband reached out for support due to Wilma's sedentary lifestyle and social isolation, we've seen tremendous progress in her physical capacity and community connections.

During an initial visit Wilma revealed one of her great accomplishments: beautiful, custom-made baptism and bridal gowns. Learning to sew and crochet from a young age, Wilma established herself as a talented seamstress at a bridal boutique.



We were delighted to watch her artistic passion thrive in a social setting when she began joining our Brain Makers arts and crafts group last summer. This positive experience further encouraged Wilma to join a group of female fibre artists with the Penticton Arts Council.

Especially notable is one of Wilma's impressive cross-stitch pieces (that took a year to make) currently on display at the Penticton Art Gallery's 50th Anniversary Exhibition: Object Power. Whether at home, in a group or a gallery, the artistic spark lives in Wilma and she shines in each of her projects.

Wilma's goal to build her physical strength and stamina led her to join our Back on Track walking group where she regularly covers a kilometer a week.

At first apprehensive and reserved, Wilma is now a familiar face at our group programs and feels comfortable growing social connections that she didn't have before.

