

#### **ABOUT US**

Easter Seals BC/Yukon is a is a service of the BC Lions Society for Children with Disabilities and a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals with disabilities. For 78 years, we have provided specialised services, programs, and facilities that promote self-esteem, independence, and a sense of community.

We strive to inspire communities across British Columbia and the Yukon to support and enable access for individuals with disabilities. Easter Seals aims to create a more inclusive and accessible society where people of all abilities can thrive. By offering life-changing opportunities and support, we help break down barriers and empower individuals with disabilities to reach their full potential.

### **MISSION**

To inspire communities across British Columbia and the Yukon to support, and enable access for, individuals with disabilities.

#### VISION

To enable abilities in our communities.

#### WHAT WE DO

- ► Easter Seals House
- ▶ Overnight Summer Camps
- ► Adult Summer Camps
- ► Family Camps
- ► Virtual Programs & Camps

### ► Other Programs & Services

#### 2023-2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# Message from the CEO and Chair Wanda Eddy

This year at Easter Seals BC/Yukon has been full of moments that remind us of the impact that each individual can have on their community. We are overjoyed to hear from campers who return to their home communities with newly-instilled confidence and a summer full of treasured memories. Equally as inspiring are passionate fundraisers who raised thousands of dollars to support individuals with disabilities. In every story, we see strength and resilience in a tightly-knit community, united in their support for one another.

We have made remarkable progress at all levels of the organization. The Easter Seals House is operating at capacity, serving as many members of the community as possible. Even while undergoing renovations on the second and third floors, the House continues to be a place of warmth and relief for those travelling to Vancouver for necessary medical treatment or respite.

At Easter Seals, we are at the forefront of championing innovative programs and ideas that help elevate the disability community. We are truly proud of the team we have assembled, with skilled, compassionate and experienced people who work closely with the disability community to ensure we provide services in an inclusive, equitable way.

Our family camps and virtual camps, the two most recent additions to our camps programs, are both growing exponentially. As you will see in the following pages, your support allows us to continue offering programs and services to fill in gaps in the existing environment.

Looking forward, our capital campaign to rebuild Camp Shawnigan surges ahead. We are pleased to share that we have secured a significant grant and plans are underway to take the first steps forward in the redevelopment project—some which will be completed as soon

as next summer. With many other upgrades to come, we can't wait to welcome campers to a soon-to-be reimagined campsite.

We want to share our heartfelt appreciation for all our supporters and the Board of Directors. Without you, the work we do would not be possible. From generous donations to hours spent volunteering and providing guidance for our programs and services, your contributions are invaluable. Thanks to you, more people with disabilities were able to access our programs and services, leading to lasting benefits for them, their families and their communities.

With sincere gratitude,

Lisa Beck President & CEO

BC Lions Society for Children with Disabilities and Easter Seals BC/Yukon Wanda Eddy Chair

BC Lions Society for Children with Disabilities and Easter Seals BC/Yukon





# A new beginning for Camp Shawnigan

It's been a busy year for our team as work continues on the Camp Shawnigan rebuild, and we're happy to report that we have made significant progress towards creating North America's first year-round, purpose-built facility for children, youth and adults with disabilities. To date, we have secured over \$10 million of our \$25 million goal, while developing significant partnerships in the community, including those with other NPOs, media, business and government.

One of those partnerships is with the Victoria Open Golf Society and the PGA Tour Americas. These partnerships allow us to showcase the project and Easter Seals in a way we have not done since the days of our 24 Hour Relay for the Kids, and have helped us raise almost half a million to support the project. We are extremely grateful to our new partners and are already looking forward to next year's success.

Speaking of new partners, we are also pleased to announce that we have secured Campbell Construction as our general contractor for the Camp Shawnigan rebuild project. With close to 60 years of experience, Campbell is an industry leader with a solid reputation for their skills as a construction manager. It is important to us that we support the local economy. Campbell has a stellar track record and

we're confident that they will complete this project to the highest standards, on time and on budget.

With financing and partnerships coming together, we are that much closer to starting phase one of construction, which we hope will take place in the late spring or early summer of 2025. This first phase will encompass building an expanded and accessible parking lot, a state-of-the-art floating dock, and the first of 10 fully accessible two-bedroom cabins.

Of course, none of this is possible without the generosity of you, our donors. We want to express our sincere gratitude for your generosity and commitment to this project and to the work of Easter Seals BC/Yukon.

As we look ahead to the coming year, our team, our families and our partners are excited to move this project forward. We sincerely hope that you share in the excitement by getting involved in this innovative and visionary project. The new Camp Shawnigan will deliver exceptional and life-changing experiences for children, youth and adults with disabilities, as well as their families and we want you to be a part of this.

For more details on the project and how you can get involved visit campshawnigan.ca







# Overnight camps

### A week of transformative change

Every Easter Seals camp is designed to be inclusive, with a focus on connecting with nature, building independence, engaging with new experiences and developing social abilities. It is proven that people benefit emotionally and physically when they are outside, having fun and surrounded by support—both from staff members and other campers.

Children and adults attending our week-long camp live with a range of disabilities, including autism, Down syndrome, developmental delay, cerebral palsy, anxiety disorder and epilepsy. Each camper finds a place where safety—specific to their needs—and enjoyment are front and center. Our staff build on the experience with nurturing care that promotes development of life skills, self-confidence and independence.

Children like 12-year-old Angus, who lives with autism, attended Camp Shawnigan find it to be a transformative experience. Even though Angus had some initial hesitation after discovering our camps, he enrolled in our "New

Camper Weekend", a learning experience for both him and his parents. After that day, he was committed.

Throughout the week-long camp, staff ensured Angus felt supported. Whether it was helping him manage his unease during meals or providing quiet breaks when needed, the leaders were there for him. Their care made a world of difference for Angus, who is homeschooled and an only child. By the end of the camp, he had developed new confidence and independence.

His parents saw a remarkable change as well, noticing how much more mature and ready he was to take on new challenges.

Angus returned this year for two weeks, including an Autism-specific camp in partnership with the Canucks Autism Network (CAN). His transformation is just one example of the profound impact your support has on children and families. Because of your generosity, kids like Angus gain skills that shape their futures.

707
otal number o

Total number of overnight campers

2,828

Total number of nights stayed at overnight camp

\$3,600

Cost for Easter Seals per participant for a week of overnight camp



# Family camps

### Growing and learning together

At Easter Seals BC/Yukon, we believe that treasured memories are made when families can connect, play, and grow together. In 2021, we piloted our first family camps to provide a special opportunity for the entire family to enjoy fun summer activities while building lifelong connections.

Coming out of the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, traditional overnight camps were put on hold due to provincial health guidelines. As an alternative, we launched family camps across our three sites, offering people with disabilities and their families a chance to experience camp together, in a safe and supportive environment.

The first season, we welcomed 118 people from 40 families for a three day experience. By the following summer, with the return of overnight camps, we were unsure if families would still be interested in coming together as a unit. We ran just three family camps, and to our surprise, 27 families joined us—with over 65 more on the waitlist! We quickly realised that family camps weren't just an alternative; they were a top choice for many.

The program continues to grow in popularity and we welcomed 86 families and 255 people to our family camp this past summer! To meet our growing demand for family camps, we are making big changes in the year to come, expanding the programs at Camp Squamish and Camp Shawnigan.

Families love the special bond formed at camp. Parents and caregivers connect in meaningful ways, sharing stories, advice and laughter. Our family camps include a unique blend of ages, with children as young as one or two years old often attending with older siblings having recently received a diagnosis. Experienced families eagerly share resources and lend a compassionate ear to those just starting on their journey, helping grow a network of understanding and camaraderie.

Our family camps provide not just a space for recreation, but a space for connection and support—something truly invaluable to our campers and their families.





### Easter Seals House

### A place of comfort and compassion

Since 1955, Easter Seals House has been a lifeline for families traveling to Vancouver for necessary medical care. The current lodge on Oak Street, consisting of 49 purpose-built suites, offer comfort, affordability and a community of support when it's needed most.

One family shares the unforgettable impact of their time spent in the House. "I've been coming to Easter Seals House for well over a decade, since I was a kid and had to visit BC Children's Hospital for scoliosis treatment. Now I come back every few years for appointments... this place has become a home away from home for me and certainly eased the financial burdens and other worries when having to travel for over five hours to receive medical care."

This year, we tackled several renovation projects to ensure our guests are comfortable. On the second floor, we are refreshing the space with updated paint, new flooring and upgraded amenities to create a more welcoming environment. The second-floor lounge and

kitchen area also received a much-needed facelift, with improved cabinetry and a fresh coat of paint, making it a more inviting space for families to relax and connect.

The transformation continues on the third floor. Thanks to funding provided by the Tsawwassen Boundary Bay Lions, we completed a full renovation of Room 309, creating a refreshed space for guests during their stay. In addition, generous donations from our community enabled essential upgrades to five other rooms on the third floor, enhancing the overall experience for our residents.

These upgrades are more than just improvements to our facilities—
they reflect our commitment to providing a space that meets the needs
of the families who stay with us. Keeping these rooms modern and
welcoming is only possible because of your generosity. Together, we're
creating a space where families can find the support and peace of mind
they deserve during life's challenging moments.











# Programs & Client Services in 2024

### Bridging the gap

Programs and services available for people with disabilities are beneficial for their development, but the breadth of programs offered are lacking. Our innovative approach to creating specialised programs helps bridge the gap between the current support services available and what people with disabilities need.

We believe all individuals have talents and abilities that contribute to society in meaningful ways. While many services are available, we identified a gap in resources for youth who require support to help them transition to an independent and fulfilling life. This includes a need for more educational materials, financial support and social environments that encourage their development.

Your donations make the creation, execution and success of these programs possible, offering people with disabilities access to resources that help them gain confidence, skills and community connections.



Our Ready.Set.Volunteer Program empowers young adults aged 17–29 to explore volunteering, fostering personal growth through hands-on experiences with community organizations. This year, the program welcomed 22 participants in Vancouver and Surrey, guiding them toward meaningful volunteer roles and deeper self-awareness.



Our Compass program, offered both online and in-person, equips young adults with the skills needed for independent living, education and employment. This year, 18 participants successfully completed Compass I and II, gaining the tools and knowledge to navigate their transition to adulthood with greater confidence and clarity.



Through EasterSeals@Home, our virtual programs extend the joy and connection of camp year-round to individuals ages 6–49. This year, 60 young adults engaged in online classes, camps, and social events, creating a supportive community right from their homes.



# Signature events

#### AROUND THE WORLD

The inaugural Around the World dinner was a resounding success, raising nearly \$150,000 in support of Easter Seals BC/Yukon. The glamourous event offered a unique opportunity to connect with likeminded individuals who share a passion for exquisite dining, fine wine, and most importantly, supporting programs and services for individuals with disabilities.

Over 200 guests enjoyed an indulgent dinner experience with Chef David Hawksworth, featuring a champagne reception, wine tasting and sumptuous four-course meal. We are eagerly counting down to our next event on April 10, 2025.

### DROP ZONE

Since 2005, thousands of people across Canada have become superheroes for a day in support of children and adults with disabilities through the annual Easter Seals Drop Zone. Drop Zone is an adrenaline-pumping fundraising adventure that encourages individuals to get out of their comfort zone and face their fears by rappelling from the top of a towering high-rise building—all in support of persons living with disabilities.

This year, through the support of 172 rappelers, we raised a record-breaking \$346,000 at four Drop Zone locations. This unique event brought together supporters, community leaders and local organizations to raise crucial funds. We will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of Drop Zone in 2025, with four dates for rappelers to participate next September.

## In the community

#### 43RD ANNUAL PADDLE FOR THE KIDS

On March 23, members of the Victoria
Canoe and Kayak Club embarked on a 75km
journey to raise funds and awareness for
people with disabilities who attend Easter
Seals summer camps at Shawnigan Lake.
Through generous pledges, members of the
club and their fans raised \$18,500, bringing
their total to an astounding \$428,000!

# THE VERNON LIONS CLUB ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Vernon Lions Club has once again shown their incredible generosity and dedication to Easter Seals Camp Winfield through their annual golf tournament. This year, they raised an outstanding \$19,852, which will go directly towards providing life-changing camp experiences for children and adults with disabilities. Camp Winfield is a place where campers gain independence, connect with friends and embrace new challenges, and contributions like these help make those experiences possible.

### KING JARED'S BOTTLE DRIVE

Jared, amicably known as King Jared for his love of wearing a paper crown around camp, has attended an Easter Seals summer camp for the last 13 years. Noticing that the summer months were getting hotter, he wanted to make sure that the camp could continue being comfortable for future campers. Jared organized a bottle drive fundraiser and raised over \$5,000 to purchase ten portable air conditioning units that were used this summer! Our campers thank Jared for his dedication and compassion.

### SNOWARAMA

Snowarama is a much-anticipated snowmobiling fundraising event taking place in communities across the province in support of children and youth with disabilities. Since 1978, the BC Snowmobile Federation and its member clubs have passionately supported Easter Seals as their chosen charity. Events have been held in over 35 communities, including poker rides, bingo, riding clinics, and more. This year they raised a remarkable \$17,000.























## The lifelong impact of the Lions

### Celebrating a legacy of enduring commitment

As we celebrate nearly eight decades of unwavering support from our dedicated partners at Lions Clubs across the province, we reflect on our treasured history. The Lions Clubs came together to formally establish the BC Lions Society for Children with Disabilities, motivated by a need in their communities for programs and services

for children with disabilities. Their early fundraising efforts came through the sale of Easter Seals, or "stamps", which became commonplace in homes throughout province.

Over the decades, Lions Clubs have been not just integral partners, but also strong advocates and passionate donors in support of our mission. Through their efforts raising millions towards the cause and contributing countless volunteer hours, they have left an indelible impression on individuals with disabilities, their families and their communities. This year alone,

Lions Clubs across B.C. have raised over \$239,000 in support of Easter Seals House, our summer camps and other programs and services.

Lions Clubs have demonstrated their passion by going above and beyond through the work of Camp Improvement Committees around the province. Bringing valuable expertise and a commitment for

supporting the campgrounds—longstanding pillars of their communities—their contributions have been essential in making sure campers arrive each year to a clean, safe and welcoming environment.

Lions Clubs in British Columbia embody the essence of our mission and their commitment empowers us to create even more meaningful change in the lives of those living with disabilities. We extend our deepest gratitude to all Lions Club members for their unwavering dedication and support.

### At Easter Seals BC/Yukon, we are grateful for the ongoing support of our donors and community partners, at every level.

It is only because of your commitment and generosity that we can make a real impact in the lives of people living with disabilities. Together, we're breaking down barriers and creating a more inclusive, accessible, and equitable society. On behalf of those we serve, thank you for putting your trust in us.

This list was current at time of printing. For those we missed, we apologize and thank you for your generosity.

### Individual

### Hero

Michele Cupit Lindsav Hall Lion Chervl Kwok Wendy & Russ Leong Valerie & Todd Prodanuk Robert Sharman

### Champion

Marco Campitelli Lisa Beck Greg Dyck Krista George Terry Grant Janet Carson & Dennis Scally Chad Tenney

Friend Marla Mae Abusmas Lana Achtymichuk Grant & Clare Alexande and Friends Linda Allison Ian Anderson Warren Armstrono Ramin Asgari Gerald Austgarder Don Azcona Ken & Lauren Babineau Michael Baddele Arden Baker

Bill Big Canoe Rvan Brown Isaac Bull Barbara Burt-Davis Shauna Bymoen Robert & Sarah Camacho Anna & Max Carbone Corinna Carev Robert & Doris Carrothers Vickie Carter Blake Ceraldi Kirk Chantraine Ariel Chaster Lion Michael Cheng Dalvn Clarke Samuel Corcoran Curtis Cousins Jennifer Dalmir Tim Dean Randy Decksheimer

Eryn Denroche

Wayne Downs

Tammy Drapak

Lion Wanda Eddy

Cherith Elizabeth

Brandon Evans

James Evans

Nina Ewald

Arvind Sinah Dhillon

Adam & Abigail Duben

Barbara & Barb Duncan

Russell & Bonny Eison

Robert & Marianne Eng

Tristin Bavlis

Norma Bent

**Bronwyn Bertles** 

Gary Faykes Julie Findlay Doreen Finnegan Dermot Flynn Ann & Joao Fonseca Ewan French Darvl Frewing Aggie Fung and Friends Keyla Gamboa Colin Gavford Brayden Gill

Bruce & Betty Forward Nicole & Jessie Fung Julie & Grady Gillespie Helen Goodwin Joan Grant Lois Gray Michael & Catherine Green Kendall Gross Tvler Hall Svlvia & Matt Hallmark Brent & Heidi Hamilton Paul Haysom John & Leslev Hentschel Anna Hilberry David Hill Betty & Kerry Ho

John & Ruth Howell

Christie Huana

Melissa Huston

Brandy Isagawa

Irena Jazwinski

Bruce & Denice Janning

Jennifer & Paul Jones

Andrea Innes

Robert Kalef Debbie Kangas Mir Khan Laura Kirkham Jesscia Kruger Jason Kuramoto Ian Lacoursiere Cass Lao Stephanie Lazaro Cyrus Lee Caitlin Lidster Kaelynn Lindahl Charlene Lindsay Gary Lunn Greta Luteijn Laura Malo Andrew Marchant Tamara Maria Mary & Tim Marks James Maroney Levi Maximick

Sue McLeod

Brenda Mendieta

and Friends

Lorena Milkert

Simon Mills

David Morgan

Paul Morgan

Jessica Mucha

Lana & Natasha Mihell

Dallas & Elaine Miller

Brian & Dolores Morin

John & Carol Mould

Kin Chung Li & Gable Lui Adriana & Neill McColl Stephen McDermott

Andrea Mulder Dianne Soberlak Jennifer Nagra **David Stocks** Michael Nakai Thomas & Ida Tait John Newton Gord Thompson Paul & Natalie Newton Kathy Thompson Randy & Leanne Nobbs Adam Thompson Shelly O'Hara Dr. Alan & Linda Thomson Kavla Ottosen and Friends Emmy Pachenski Michaela Parent Karin & Marco Pasqua Donna Pay Stephen Pearce Joanna Penich Haleigh Penner Isaiah Persad David & Janice Podmore Todd Preston Rosemary & Gary Prodanuk Julia Qin Kerri Roberts Nancy Roderique Lane Rebecca Sand Brian Scanlan Kiegan Scharnberg Scott Schillemore

Mark Scott

Inderbir Singh

Cynthia Smith

Nick Smith

Pat & Chris Tipple Don & Dorothy Titus Nate Toevs Ian Tostenson Kevin Trowell Tara Vanden Pol Philip VanLaar Scott & Shannon Veitch Nadia Walnicki Hilary Watson David Webb Kathy Whitcher Carol Williams Brendan Willis Julia Winters Paula Woodroof Sam Wright Lioness Lily Yee Stew Young Christoph Serrand Lynne Zulian David & Lori Sicotte Supporter Brandy Addison Sharon & James Skouge Michael Slawnych Joy Alexander Shirley & Carl Anderson Carol Humphrys & Frank & Marilyn Anfield James & Barbara Annable Dan & Terri Smith Derek Arnott

Jewel Goodwin & Robert Buxton Steve Baer Adriaan Barnum Chris & Hunter Barrington-Foote Kim Capson Richard Bell Marisol Carlo Doug & Karen Bell Pamela Carroll Robert & Lynda Belter Caroline Casev Carolyn & Warren Bepple Su Castle Shelley Besse Ronald Chan Mark Bishop Jean Chandle Aaron Chen Lucille & Kenneth Bissor Ross & Jennifer Blair Vivian Chung William & Martha Bohn Jeff Clark Rob & Elisabeth Borthwick Debbie & Mike Cole Al Botteselle April Connolly Joseph & Kim Bovd Hazel Braithwaite Karen & Jim Brault Jamie Coulter Robert Brent Cowley Iris & W. Brendle-Moczuk Marianne & Dennis Bristow Barb Craig Morris & Linda Brown Violet Brown Gary & Charlene Brown Michael Crelli Doug Brownridge Mary & Larry Crema Vaughan & Mary Bruneau Gary & Val Cross Dawn & Franklin Bryson Dina Ruccione Judd Buchanan Don Davies Joseph & Carol Buczkowski Leslie Buis Rita Deane Phyllis & Alan Bunker Patrick Burch Joan & David Burke

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Elisabeth & Norbert Buxbaum

Tammy Desor

Maggie Dettieh

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Curtis Dinan

Scott Boidman &

Franceska Grantzidis

Sheila Kern

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Terri Orser

Robert & Rob Oyler

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James Seery

Tej Shah

Terry & Michelle Segert

Razia & Noorali Shivji

Kjell & Birgit Wallberg Ian Ward Debbie Wark James & Anita Warner Dolena & James Watson David & Priscilla Weir David Whetter Kristen Wheway Mike Wignall Nyal & Thea Wilcox Sally Willse Patricia Witzke Neil & Jacqueline Worboys Roberta Wover Jin Wu Donald & Deborah Wytinck Job Yarkie Janet Yee Yuan Zhang Yihona Zhon Emilio Zorrilla de la Garza Monthly Maria Elena Aguelo Elaine J. Aharon You-Joung Ahn Tracey Akerstream Bex Yusuf Allybex James Almost Carollyn Andrews James Annable Margaret E. Baker Cathie Baskett Lisa Beck & Greg Dyck Pamela Bell Shannon Bernays

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Michelle Boileau

Amy Boparai

Beatrice Franke Inge M.A. Franke Elizabeth Froembling Judith Gibbs Birgit Giesser Jewel Goodwin & Steve Baer Scout Gray Brenda Green

Terrance Green

Susan Greenizan

Sandra Greenwood

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Yellow Inc.

Lions Clubs Abbotsford Lions Club Alberni Valley Lions Club Ashcroft & District Lions Club Barriere Lions Club Baynes Sound Lions Club Beaver Valley Lions Club Cedar Lions Club Central Saanich Lions Club Chase Lions Club Chilliwack Stellers Jay Lions Club Comox Valley Monarch Lions Club Cranbrook Lions Club Creston Lions Club Duncan Lions Club Enderby & District Lions Club Esquimalt Lions Club Fairmont & District Lions Club Gabriola Island Lions Club Kamloops Aberdeen Lions Club Kamloops Paddlewheelers Lions Club Kelowna Central Lions Club Kelowna Okanagan Mission Lions Club Kettle River Lions Club Kootenay Lake Lions Club Ladvsmith Lions Club Lake Country Winfield Lions Club

Langley Lions Club

Logan Lake Lions Club

Lions Household

Lumby Lions Club

Malahat Lions Club

Nanaimo Lions Club

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North Kamloops Lions Club

North Shuswap Lions Club

North Surrey Lions Club

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Pembertion Lions Club

Penticton Lions Club

Pitt Meadows Lions Club

Oliver Lions Club

Mount Seymour Lions Club

Mount Seymour Lions Housing Society

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Foundations

CKNW Kids' Fund

Adera Foundation Society

Centra Cares Foundation

Colonel Harland Sanders

Evolve Funds Group Inc.

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lain Harris Family Foundation

Joe Wo Joint Spousal Trust

Central Okanagan Foundation

Charitable Organization Inc.

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Charities Aid Foundation Canada/CyberGrants

Community Foundation of the North Okanagan

#### Russell-Mosoff Family Fund Self Design Learning Foundation Household Shaughn & Sharon Clements Easter Seals Camps Fund TELUS Friendly Future Foundation The Barry Lapointe Foundation Williams Lake Lions Club Traine Charitable Foundation Vancouver Foundation Victoria Foundation's Community Partners Community Grants Program We Care Foundation

### Government

Government of Canada, Canada Summer Jobs Province of British Columbia, Gaming

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### **Head Office**

3981 Oak Street Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6H 4H5

Phone: 604-873-1865
Toll-Free: 1-800-818-4483
Email: info@eastersealsbcy.ca

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