



kidsafe

ANNUAL REPORT  
2022 - 2023

# A MESSAGE FROM KIDSAFE'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JENNIFER PETERSEN

Dear KidSafe Supporters,

I proudly joined the KidSafe team in fall 2023, amidst preparations for winter break and our momentous 30th Anniversary. Despite my brief tenure to date, I have quickly witnessed firsthand the dedication and compassion that defines our organization. The profound impact that KidSafe has on its community was evident within days of my arrival.

Winter at KidSafe, though the shortest break, is exceptionally busy. While the holidays bring joy to many, not everyone shares the same sentiment. During the holidays, countless families experience heightened anxiety and isolation due to social pressures, financial stress, and systemic barriers. The increasing cost of living in an already expensive city like Vancouver exacerbates these challenges. KidSafe plays a crucial role during this time, providing a safe, warm, cost-free environment for Vancouver children when schools are closed.

When KidSafe kids walk through our doors, they not only have access to basic necessities, but the opportunity to let down their guards and just be kids.

This would not be possible without dedicated staff, who go the extra mile during the holidays to create a memorable experience for every child. This includes thoughtfully assigning 300+ personalized presents tailored to the individual interests of the kids.

It also would not be possible without our incredible giving community, our "KidSafe elves". Meeting many of you at our Annual Wrapping Party, and learning about your reasons

for supporting KidSafe, was a privilege. Your invaluable contributions make each program special for the 300+ children in attendance.

I also would like to acknowledge Krystyna Niziolek and Dania Barakat, who both served as Interim Executive Director before my arrival. Krystyna, KidSafe's longest-serving board member, stepped out of retirement to serve as Interim CEO for over a year. Krystyna has showcased over a decade of invaluable dedication and leadership to KidSafe. In collaboration with the KidSafe team, Dania consistently pivots and works tirelessly to safeguard the well-being of KidSafe participants.

In my years in the non-profit sector, I've rarely witnessed a community as committed as KidSafe's staff and supporters. As we proudly mark 30 years, I look forward to celebrating this remarkable milestone with you all.

Thank you for being an integral part of the KidSafe family.

Warm regards,  
Jennifer Petersen





# A MESSAGE FROM KIDSAFE'S BOARD CHAIR

## SARAH ROTH

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As the Chair of KidSafe's Board, it brings me immense pride to present the highlights of KidSafe's journey during the 2022 to 2023 fiscal year.

In the past year, our emphasis on strengthening community partnerships has allowed us to elevate our programs, offering both essential and memorable experiences for KidSafe kids. From Calhoun's Catering providing nutritious, locally made meals to Our Community Bikes repairing bikes for the Summer Bike Club, Bike Hub offering road safety training, and Right to Play expanding our Indigenous-led programming, these are among the many generous community partners we've had the privilege of working with.

Furthermore, last spring, we successfully launched a new basketball program in partnership with RainCity Basketball, a Vancouver-based youth basketball club, at xpey' Elementary School. Basketball holds particular appeal for KidSafe kids, as its accessibility, requiring only a ball, eliminates barriers associated with equipment. The camp was a great success, and we look forward to offering it again in the future.

Field trips continue to be a highlight for the kids in our programs. After a brief pause due to the pandemic, we continued providing impactful, place-based field trips last summer. Whether it's learning to skate at our skating parties, gaining inspiration for STEM careers at Science World, or enjoying unforgettable days at Big Splash, these

experiences create lasting memories the kids proudly share with their peers upon returning to school.

On an organizational front, we initiated the search for our new Executive Director last year, and welcomed new members to our Board during the 2023 Annual General Meeting. We are pleased to introduce Jennifer Petersen as KidSafe's new Executive Director, along with our new Board members. Their diverse perspectives and extensive experience will play a vital role in supporting KidSafe's continued growth and expanding impact within the community.

As we reflect on the past year, I extend my deepest gratitude to our dedicated staff (both on-site and in-office), volunteers, and supporters who have made 30 years of KidSafe possible. Your unwavering commitment is the driving force behind our success, and I am excited for our journey that lies ahead as we continue to support children and families across Vancouver.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Roth



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# 30 YEARS OF THE KIDSAFE PROJECT SOCIETY



Nov  
1993

The **KidSafe Project** is founded as an advisory committee of the Vancouver Sun Children's Fund.

Dec  
1993

Two elementary schools, **Queen Alexandra and Nightingale**, are kept open during the winter break and become the first two KidSafe sites.

March  
1994

The First formal meeting of the KidSafe Advisory Committee is held. **Grandview Ɂuuqinak'uuh Elementary** becomes the third KidSafe site.

June  
1994

**Mount Pleasant Elementary** is the fourth school added to the KidSafe program. **KidSafe opens for summer.**

Sep  
1994

The Vancouver Sun incorporates The KidSafe Project Society as a **nonprofit organization.**

Sep  
1994

The Vancouver Sun turns over The KidSafe Project Society to a **community-run board.**

March  
1996

Vancouver Mayor Phillip Owen proclaims Spring Break 1996 "**The KidSafe Project Week**" and the first Pancake Breakfast is held.

June  
1996

KidSafe hires **food workers** to prepare nutritious meals at each site.

1997

KidSafe's first **Executive Director** is hired.

June  
1997

Summer sites now serve **breakfast, lunch and snacks.**

April  
1999

**Cooking Fun for Families** program begins at KidSafe sites (spearheaded by Betty McGee).

July  
2002

The **Young Leaders** program begins and serves older KidSafe kids during summer break.

Dec  
2003

KidSafe hosts its first **Winter Break Skating Party** at Trout Lake Community Center.

July  
2004

**Ɂpey' Elementary School** (formerly Macdonald Elementary) becomes the fifth KidSafe site.

Dec  
2004

**Afterschool programs** (now known as KidSafe Connect) are launched to serve students during the school year.

April  
2005

KidSafe hosts its first **Bike Rodeo** (now known as Bike Club).

June  
2006

KidSafe hosts its first **Sports Day.**

Aug  
2006

KidSafe hosts its first **Golf for KidSafe** tournament.

Sep  
2007

The **Girlz Club** is started at KidSafe to help young girls navigate their emotions.

Sep  
2011

KidSafe launches an after-school literacy program. **112 KidSafe's kids' art and poetry is displayed in 12 bus shelters across Vancouver.**

Sep  
2013

KidSafe introduces **daily transportation** options, such as van services and "walking school buses," to get kids to program.

2014

KidSafe supports 30 grade 8 KidSafe "alumni" through **KidLink** to make a successful transition to high school.

June  
2016

KidSafe launches its programs at a sixth site, **Thunderbird Ɂx'ax'aʔas Elementary.**

June  
2017

KidSafe launches its programs at a seventh site, **Cook Elementary.**

Dec  
2018

As part of its food security program, KidSafe hosts **community dinners** and works with community partners to offer **take-home groceries.**

Jan  
2019

Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP) Training, Universal Design for Learning, and Place-Based Learning become KidSafe's **three core philosophies.**

March  
2020

The World Health Organization declares COVID-19 a pandemic. **KidSafe is recognized as an essential service** and remains open, expanding to 17 sites across Vancouver.

June  
2022

KidSafe updates its mission statement: **"Providing a safe, nurturing environment for children who need it most."**

June  
2022

KidSafe updates its vision statement: **"A city where all children feel safe, heard and have a place to thrive."**

March  
2023

KidSafe begins first partnership with a neighbourhood house: **Kiwassa Neighbourhood House.**

Aug  
2023

KidSafe hosts its annual Golf for KidSafe tournament and raises over **\$310,000**, a new record.

Nov  
2023

KidSafe restarts **GIRLFORCE**, inspired by The Girlz Club.

Dec  
2023

KidSafe celebrates its 30 year anniversary!

✨ a glimpse ahead to 2023-2024 ✨



# "A DAY IN THE LIFE AT KIDSAFE" HIGHLIGHT REEL



In summer 2023, KidSafe worked with videographer **Kinney Tang** to produce a "Day in the Life at KidSafe" video, which premiered at our Annual Golf for KidSafe tournament. This video, featuring KidSafe kids, caregivers, and staff, highlighted the activities and impact of our longest break-time program, summer! **Here are some highlights:**



**"My favourite thing to do at KidSafe is eat."**

- KidSafe Kid, 11



**"Studies show that just one caring adult in a child's life can change the course of their trajectory. We really feel that our staff are contributing to that."**

- Dania Barakat, Director of Programs, KidSafe



**"The best thing about working here is hearing the kids laugh. The fact that I can have the power to make a kid laugh and know that they've forgotten what they're dealing with outside of the camp [KidSafe] is magical."**

- Cayden, KidSafe Seasonal Staff

# OUR PROGRAMS

## WINTER AT KIDSAFE

During winter break, KidSafe provides a safe and warm environment for children to enjoy all the magic the holiday season has to offer. Thanks to the generous support of the Bosa Family Foundation, each child receives a stocking filled with essentials and a personalized gift, which, for many, is the only gift they will receive all year. Throughout our brief yet bustling holiday program, KidSafe kids built gingerbread houses, conducted science experiments, and crafted holiday ornaments—all courtesy of the Kerrisdale Oakridge Marpole Community Policing Centre. They also participated in a holiday-themed Happy Plates Snackivities (through our nutrition education program), had a festive gathering with KidSafe staff, went ice-skating (with up to 40% of them trying it for the first time), and had a great time sledding and playing in the snow!



*"KidSafe carried us through this winter. Knowing that you were there helped us get through some hard times. Thank you for everything you've done for our family and our community. You've changed our lives." - KidSafe Parent, Winter 2022*

## SPRING AT KIDSAFE

We successfully piloted our 2023 spring break-time program at Kiwassa Neighbourhood House, a community center well-known and easily accessible to the children we serve. Spring at KidSafe is STEAM-themed (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math), designed to engage children in subjects they might face barriers in accessing. The kids engaged in various workshops and experiments, exploring new crafts and movements. They then had the opportunity to showcase these newfound talents in a grand talent show at the end of the break.



Additionally, the kids became eco-champions through park and beach cleanups in partnership with Sea Smart. This collaboration aligns with KidSafe's place-based learning approach, fostering a connection to the local environment and instilling a sense of responsibility for their futures. They also experienced the positive mental health benefits of DANCEPL3Y, a dance program, and enthusiastically took part in our newly introduced basketball camp in collaboration with RainCity Vancouver Basketball.

**95%** of children surveyed could name their favourite activity at KidSafe

- Spring 2023



# OUR PROGRAMS

## SUMMER AT KIDSAFE

Summer at KidSafe, our longest program, experiences the highest demand. This summer, KidSafe kids embarked on over 35 enriching place-based field trips, including visits to the Britannia Mine Museum (supported by Wheaton Precious Metals), golf lessons at the University Golf Club (with UGC Junior Golf Society), water adventures at Big Splash (thanks to Harvey and Jody Dales), and educational trips to the UBC Botanical Garden to explore native west coast trees and plants.

One of our highlights this summer was Sports Day, where all KidSafe sites gathered at Grandview ʔuuqinak'uuh Elementary in July and rotated through various stations, including sponge toss, face painting, giant bowling, chalk art, bubbles, and water games. Many of these activities were thoughtfully organized and led by our Young Leaders\* from each site. Thank you to all of our volunteers who joined us and helped make this a Sportacular day for the kids!

\*The Young Leaders program supports older KidSafe kids (grades 6 and 7) as they navigate the transition to high school, by keeping them connected to their peers and community while also equipping them with essential life skills.



300

children received stockings and presents over the holidays

- Winter 2022

90%

staff retention rate, which guarantees consistency and fosters trust for KidSafe kids

- Winter, Spring and Summer 2022 - 2023

800

children provided access to a safe space during school breaks

- Winter, Spring and Summer 2022 - 2023

100% of children surveyed said they feel part of a community at KidSafe

- Summer 2023



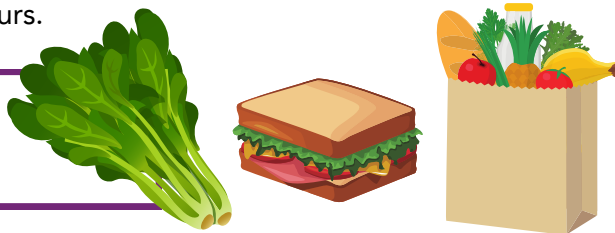
# OUR PROGRAMS

## KIDSAFE CONNECT

Our after-school program, KidSafe Connect (KSC), operated Monday to Friday at three of our seven regular KidSafe sites. KSC is dedicated to keeping children connected, engaged, and safe beyond regular school hours.



## FOOD SECURITY



One of the core components of KidSafe's programming is food security. Food insecurity involves a lack of consistent access to affordable and nutritious food. According to StatsCan, **food insecurity affects nearly 20% of households in British Columbia (2023)**. This percentage is even higher for single female-led families, particularly those from racialized backgrounds. A multitude of factors, such as poverty and other socio-economic barriers, contribute to this issue, which has been exacerbated by the global rise in inflation.

In the KidSafe community, where over 60% of children come from single female-led families, the need for urgent action on food security is evident. Beyond mere sustenance, ensuring food security directly impacts a child's physical and cognitive development. A well-nourished diet supports a robust immune system, preventing health issues, while also playing a crucial role in fostering emotional well-being and providing children the energy to play, learn, and thrive.

By providing access to food security, KidSafe actively contributes to breaking the cycle of poverty. Well-nourished children are more likely to grow into healthy, productive adults, disrupting the link between childhood poverty and adverse long-term outcomes. Here are several examples of how KidSafe fulfills its commitment to providing food security for the hundreds of children who attend our programs:

- **Daily Meals and Snacks:** Breakfast, lunch, and unlimited snacks are provided every day during our break-time programs.
- **Year-round Snack Support:** KidSafe kids receive unlimited snacks throughout the year, promoting sustained nourishment and decreasing food-related anxieties.
- **Take-home Groceries:** KidSafe families receive take-home groceries whenever possible, thanks to the support of our community partners.
- **On-site Culinary Support:** Dedicated on-site Kitchen Assistants focus on preparing a range of nourishing meals for the children.
- **Diverse Meal Options:** KidSafe offers an array of meal choices, including vegetarian and vegan options, to accommodate diverse dietary needs. There's something for everyone at KidSafe!
- **Nutrition Education:** Through our weekly "Happy Plates" workshops, children gain access to nutrition education featuring fun, accessible, and affordable recipes.



Like this one

**97%** could name a favourite meal that they had at KidSafe

- Winter 2022



"KidSafe doesn't go away. It is part of my community and it helps you when you need help."

— KidSafe Kid, xpey' Elementary School, Summer 2023



# FUNDRAISING

## WINTER CAMPAIGN

KidSafe's 2022 winter campaign and 2023 Golf for KidSafe tournament broke **two of our fundraising records.**



Thanks to our incredible community of donors, KidSafe's 2022 Winter Campaign raised over **\$400,000**, setting a fundraising record for KidSafe. This remarkable success was made possible through generous matching contributions from Eldorado Gold, Nathanson, Schachter & Thompson LLP, and Bocci, who collectively matched all donations up to \$56,000. Additionally, KidSafe had the privilege of participating in the Crofton House School's Annual Winter Bazaar, their first since 2019. We are incredibly grateful to have been the recipient of the proceeds generated at this event.

## WRAPPING PARTY



KidSafe's Annual Wrapping Party took place on December 9, 2022, bringing together our most dedicated supporters for an intimate evening with hot chocolate, treats, games, networking opportunities, and lots of holiday cheer. Attendees transformed into KidSafe Elves to wrap presents and fill stockings for the 300+ children enrolled in our winter program. Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed on a snowy winter's night. You helped make the season truly special for KidSafe kids!

## SPONSOR-A-SITE



Last winter, KidSafe's programs at four sites were made possible by the generous support of Lithium Americas, Bank of America, Methanex, and Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang + LLP. Their contributions provided 160 children access to our crucial break-time programs, ensuring food security, trauma-informed supervision, emotional and physical safety, and warmth over the holidays.

Through our Fund-A-Site program, organizations have the opportunity to turn their sites into winter wonderlands and partake in our Annual Wrapping Party, granting up to 40 children access to all the magic the holiday season has to offer.



# GOLF FOR KIDSAFE

On August 18, 2023, we hosted our annual Golf for KidSafe tournament at the University Golf Club in Vancouver, presented by Vancouver Mobile Dressing Rooms. Following a day of golf, participants gathered for an engaging evening function emceed by Jason Pires from Global News. To mark the soft launch of our 30-year anniversary, we premiered our "Day in the Life at KidSafe" video, which was followed by a Live Auction and Fund-A-Need.

This year, six organizations pledged to cover program costs at six of our seven sites this winter - a new record for us! And that wasn't the only record broken; the tournament raised over **\$310,000**, setting a new Golf for KidSafe record. This incredible achievement was possible thanks to our attendees, sponsors, and dedicated volunteers.

We would also like to acknowledge the **Pink Shirt Guys**, who once again secured the first-place prize at the tournament for another consecutive year. Congratulations, Pink Shirt Guys!



# PANCAKE BREAKFAST

During our spring break-time program, six teams - Whitelaw Twining, The Cultch, Thrive Recruitment, RIDE Cycle Club, Dayhu Group of Companies, and ETRO Construction - competed in a pancake cook-off, judged by the KidSafe kids, in support of our critical programming.

Whitelaw Twining, the "Pancake Builders" emerged as the 2023 winners, creating an construction site made entirely of pancakes. The Cultch received the "Flippin' Fabulous" award for their fish-tastic costumes.

A big thank you goes out to everyone who made this event possible, including Glamour Riz for generously donating her time and photography skills, Denny's for providing pancakes to KidSafe kids and families, Starbucks for keeping us caffeinated, and Safeway for their significant contribution to our food security program.



## KIDSAFE'S EARLY YEARS: FILLING CRITICAL GAPS IN CARE SINCE '93

*Through the Eyes of Betty McGee, KidSafe's First Staff Member*



**Betty McGee at KidSafe in 1993**

In the early nineties, Vancouver grappled with a distressing reality: school breaks became—and continue to be—a major source of stress for countless children in the city. As schools shut down, essential services disappeared, leaving many kids without supervision, reliable meals, and safety. The story of Johnathan (name changed) in December 1993 highlighted this stark reality, when he was discovered alone in an East Vancouver apartment after enduring days of neglect and abuse.

This distressing incident spurred action within the East Vancouver community. Dave Short, School Principal at Queen Alexandra School, and Ian Haysom, the Editor of the Vancouver Sun, came together with the idea of keeping the school open during the coming winter break. As a result, community leaders established The KidSafe Project Society, an advisory committee of the Vancouver Sun Children's Fund. This initiative aimed to create a safe, cost-free drop-in center where vulnerable children could seek refuge during school breaks.

Betty McGee, one of KidSafe's early staff members, remembers those formative years. At the time, Betty, working as a part-time Parks and Recreation employee, was recommended by both her supervisor at Trout Lake and Dave Short to oversee the first site. "KidSafe was really thrown together because it was winter break. It was quite the ordeal! We ended up in a portable in the back of the school," she explains.

With a \$25,000 grant from the Vancouver Sun Children's Fund, and support from the Vancouver School Board, Queen Alexandra and Nightingale Elementary opened their doors during winter break, marking the inception of the first KidSafe sites.



## KIDSAFE'S EARLY YEARS: FILLING CRITICAL GAPS IN CARE SINCE '93

"During that time, Queen Alexandra faced 'mind-boggling' challenges," Betty recounts, "Children living in poverty bring with them a plethora of issues, and we saw it all. The school breakfast and lunch programs provided during school sessions were extremely important. We were able to provide this and more: winter clothing, boots, gloves, coats, etc were all donated and gleefully received by the children. Staff worked to ensure that the squabbles and arguments were resolved, and the energy was refocused onto healthier activities. Food, fun, and social skill development were the order of the day."

Following the success of that first program, demand surged. Betty notes, "It wasn't only the children and their families that wanted KidSafe to continue, it was the kids' teachers. The children returned to classrooms well fed, and with the structure the school provided in terms of time in place. They were able to go right back into teaching after the break rather than trauma recovery mode."

By 1994, KidSafe expanded to four sites in East Vancouver, operating through winter, spring, and summer breaks, with the KidSafe Project Advisory Board at the helm.

As time progressed, KidSafe evolved into more than a refuge—it became a lifeline offering food security, supervision, and enriching activities such as swimming, skating, and community field trips.

The impact extended beyond the kids; it supported entire families, allowing caregivers to work and sustain households, while fostering a sense of community and belonging. Betty always tried to involve caregivers in the program by inviting them in to use the phone, have a coffee, or simply to chat. In 1999, she and her team initiated Cooking Fun for Families, where caregivers prepared meals supervised by a food safety staff member. "It was heartwarming, and the parents gained such a sense of belonging," Betty fondly recalls. "I think there were bonds formed in that kitchen that lasted many years after KidSafe. We saw a community of moms come together, just like you see in mom groups today."

Betty's commitment transcended her work hours. She extended care beyond the program, ensuring families knew they could rely on her anytime. Even after her time with KidSafe, Betty continued supporting children in her community and maintains connections with many of them today.

Her unwavering dedication echoes through KidSafe's current seasonal staff team, who uphold the mission to provide safe, nurturing spaces for children in need. Since 1993, KidSafe's staff, in collaboration with dedicated donors and community partners, have been instrumental in advancing this mission. Today, with seven sites across Vancouver, KidSafe serves over 800 referred children annually, a testament to the enduring commitment initiated over 30 years ago.

**Betty McGee with the KidSafe office team in 2023**







**94%**

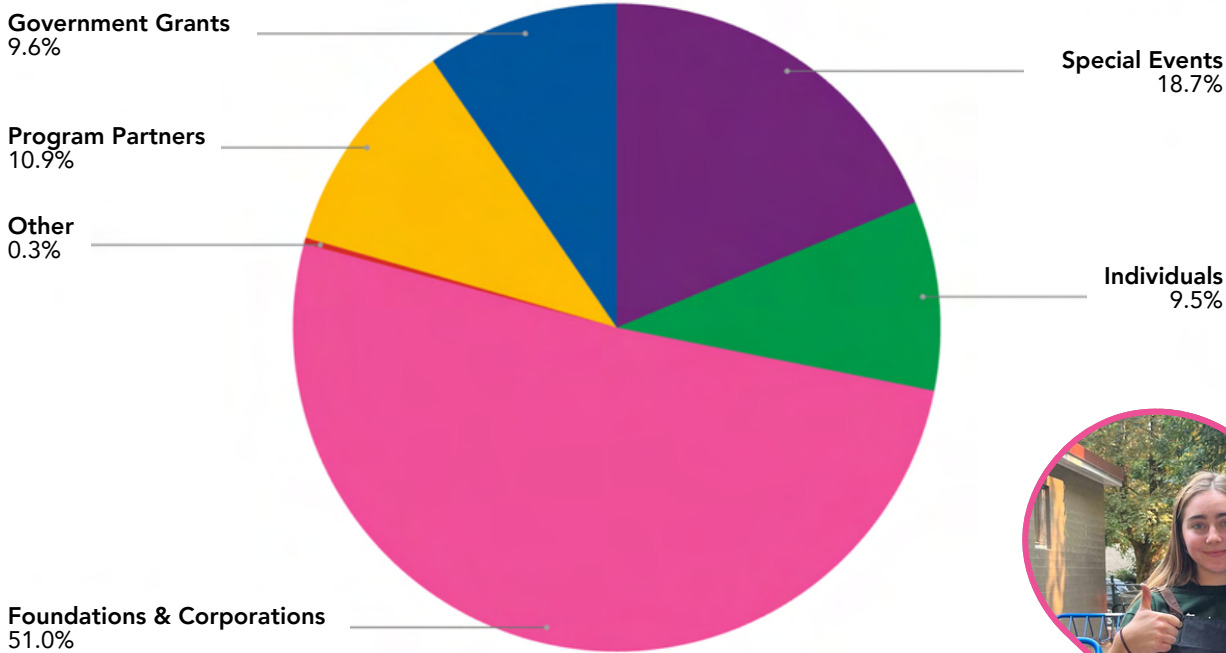
said that KidSafe staff make them feel safe and that they belong

- Winter 2022



# FINANCIALS

At KidSafe, we rely on the generosity of our community to run our critical after-school and break-time programs. Our donors and community partners ensure our doors stay open when schools shut down.



# DONORS

## MONTHLY DONORS



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Thank you Clubhouse, for your commitment and compassion to KidSafe.  
 Join the KidSafe Clubhouse today at [kidsafe.ca/kidsafe-clubhouse](https://kidsafe.ca/kidsafe-clubhouse).

## SUPER HEROS

**\$100,000+**

Anonymous Foundation

## HEROES

**\$50,000 - \$99,000**

Bank of America  
Breakfast Club of Canada  
The Canadian Red Cross Society  
Canucks for Kids Fund  
City of Vancouver  
Department of Employment and Social Development Canada  
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PwC  
Seedlings Foundation  
Willow Grove Foundation

## CHAMPION

**\$25,000 - \$49,999**

Acuitas Therapeutics  
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Canada Post Community Foundation  
Cause We Care Foundation  
The Fletcher Family  
The Grayross Foundation, held at Vancouver Foundation  
Haywood Securities Inc.  
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Right to Play  
Vancouver Mobile Dressing Rooms  
Vancouver Sun Children's Fund Society  
Wheaton Precious Metals Corp.  
Karen Yu



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**\$10,000 - \$14,999**

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Dr. Bik May Wai & Dr. Chung Nin Lam Endowment Fund, via MakeWay Foundation

*\*We also acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia*

## CHAMPION

**\$10,000 - \$14,999**

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**\$2500 - \$4999**

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SONA  
James Stewart  
West Coast Liquor  
West Point Grey Academy Staff and Students

**\$1000 - \$2499**

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ACG British Columbia  
BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction  
Employees of Borden Ladner Gervais LLP  
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Dan & Ursula Bowditch  
George Cavey  
Bettina & Jeff Charpentier  
Sean Christopher



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Drain Master  
Sean Fahy  
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John Fuerst & Pat Gill  
GEMA Law Corporation  
Harmelina Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation  
Havana Vancouver  
Helping Hands of WorkSafe BC  
Intihar Family Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation  
Jolanta Proczek PREC\*  
Matt Kennedy  
John Kirk  
Kenneth Kratschmar  
Lawson Lundell LLP  
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Raymond James Canada Foundation  
Elaine Ross  
Sarah Roth & Brian Kladko  
Todd Sankey  
Bernhard Schwab  
Ron Scott  
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Sibbald Family Charity Fund, held at Nicola Wealth Private Giving Foundation  
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Wilson Family Private Giving Fund, held at Nicola Wealth  
Wilson M. Beck Insurance Services Inc.  
Windward Foundation  
WPJ McCarthy and Company Ltd.  
Barbara Zimmerman



## BUDDY

### \$500 - \$999

The 78th Fraser Highlanders Association of Vancouver  
Eshrak Ahmed  
Trent Anderson  
Kate Anthony  
K Bennett MD Inc  
Jacqueline Bradshaw  
Connie Buna  
Classic LifeCare  
Creative B'stro Inc  
Bill Crowley  
Cheryl Douglas  
Freshtap Pour System Inc.  
Freyvogel-Preiswerck Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation  
Eugenia Piedad Garcia  
Sabrina Gill  
Rebecca Gosse  
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