



**2022-23**

# **ANNUAL HOUSING REPORT**

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With gratitude, we acknowledge the ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) and W̱SÁNEĆ Nations (Tsartlip, Tseycum, Tsawout & Pauquachin) on whose homelands we are based.



# FOREWARD

Greetings. Thank you for reviewing our Annual Housing Report.

For those who may not know, the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness Society (ACEH) did not initially set out to provide housing, but rather, to gather baseline data and develop pilot programs with the unhoused Indigenous Street Family to share with the three Tribal Groups on Vancouver Island and Métis Nation BC. Our first pilot was instigated as a result of the Mayor's Priority One Task Force, which led to my first attempt at creating a Culturally Supportive Housing environment for 20 of the cities highest risk and most vulnerable Indigenous peoples. The Priority One program operated for over three years and led us on the path where we are today. What we witnessed is that through Elder support, cultural support, non-judgment, and opportunities to get on the land in an environment of love, individuals could remain housed after years of difficulty being unhoused.

Subsequently, as it became clear that housing is only a first step, I took the evidence-based findings to a 2.5 day meeting that included Elders and Knowledge Keepers from across the Island to begin talking about harm reduction. With direction from the Elders and Knowledge Keepers I began to modify the original approach to include pathways to healing and recovery,

developing the *Dual Model of Housing Care*. This model aspires to Housing First Principles and has dual aspects: Culturally Supportive Housing and Decolonized Harm Reduction with strong connection to land-based healing. This is the critical need — support systems that are holistic, addressing the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual wellness of our Family Members. The people we serve are not only dealing with the struggles that come with being on the street but many also with extreme trauma, mental health challenges, physical ailments, and a sense of disconnection and loss with the common denominator in over 90% of stories being substance use dependency and chronic alcoholism.

From this place, we have created an approach that responds to these challenges, in a way that weaves in cultural supports. As one example, we are now in year three of a research project funded by the Canadian Institute of Health Research in partnership with the University of Victoria in which we have designed and implemented an Indigenous Alcohol Harm Reduction Residence Program. The end result of the final evaluation stage will be a culturally specific model to share, rich in evidence-based findings, from the perspectives of front-line staff and the Family Members in the program.

Additionally, we have partnered with the Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research, with funding from Health Canada, to implement a Cannabis Substitution Program. All programming without cultural support deeply embedded into the structure, connection to the power of the land, and calling on Creator — including housing, would not have the same impact and results. This is where we see transformation happen. My take away to date still remains that we must provide housing first and ensure each person has a sense of welcoming, non-judgment, and safety. Then turning the focus to transmitting life skills and cultural knowledge to help each person create a sense of place, and connection to their community and family. This then helps to provide a sense of purpose, and with a sense of purpose and place, a rising sense of hope.

This has been an amazing journey for me to observe the model and organization grow. When this all began in 2016 I was the lone staff member with a part-time assistant, and today we are over 85 staff to support opening Kwum Kwum Lelum. We now too are piloting to support newly parenting mothers with experiences of homelessness and substance use to keep families together and help break cycles of Indigenous children being placed into the foster care system. The outcomes will be reported next year.

All of this could not be possible today without our Board of Directors, Elders, House Managers, front-line staff, administration, and the Family Members who share their lives with us.

Lastly, I'm very pleased to share, and thankful to our Board of Directors who gave me seven months last year to focus my attention on housing development which resulted in the completion and adoption of our 5-Year Housing Strategy. I am also forever grateful to the ɫəkwəŋəŋ (Songhees and Esquimalt) and WSÁNEĆ Nations (Tsartlip, Tseycum, Tsawout & Pauquachin), for your care and support of the work that we do.

With Much Respect,



**Fran Hunt-Jinnouchi**  
Executive Director





# ANNUAL HOUSING REPORT

## INTRODUCTION

It's been 3 years since the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness Society (ACEH) began welcoming home the Indigenous Street Family to BC's first Culturally Supportive Housing sites. With each passing year it has become clearer that the *Dual Model of Housing Care* approach, which provides Culturally Supportive Housing alongside decolonized harm reduction programs rooted in land-based healing, is supporting pathways to healing and recovery from homelessness and substance use. Knowing its promise, the ACEH remains committed to continually delivering, strengthening, and expanding this model with leadership across Coast Salish, Nuuchahnulth, and Kwakwaka'wakw territories and in partnership with Métis Nation Victoria; toward full achievement of its mission to "lovingly provide culturally supportive, affordable housing and services that end Aboriginal homelessness on Vancouver Island."

2022 was memorable and full of milestones, as we prepared to open Kwum Kwum Lelum (House of Courage) with 43-units, and transition all Family Members from the Culturally Supportive House, along with the Indigenous Alcohol Harm Reduction Residence Program.



## ANNOUNCEMENT

In 2022 the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness Society was awarded the Housing Provider of the Year Award - *Innovation* from the BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA).



Art by Doug Lafortune

### DUAL MODEL OF HOUSING CARE

The ACEH's approach, the *Dual Model of Housing Care*, was developed as an Indigenous-led solution to addressing homelessness and substance use over a 6+ year period of building relationships and gathering knowledge with the Indigenous Street Family.

The first component of the *Dual Model of Housing Care* is Culturally Supportive Housing, which provides Family Members (residents) with connection to Elder support, medicine keepers, cultural mentors, native medicine gardens, traditional foods, and cultural programming (i.e., healing circles).

What makes Culturally Supportive Housing distinct, is the presence of culture in the forms of food, programming, and family. The second component of the *Dual Model of Housing Care* is decolonized harm reduction, focused on strengthening Indigenous self-identity, (re)connecting to family and land-based healing as pathways to healing and recovery. Programs developed, at the direction of the Indigenous Street Family, include: an Indigenous Alcohol Harm Reduction Residence program, Culturally Supportive Recovery program, and land-based healing. Together the dual parts of the model prepare Family Members for transitions toward long-term housing stability.

### CULTURALLY SUPPORTIVE HOUSING CONTINUUM

#### Unhoused

- Outreach & Housing Applications
- Wellness Supports: Indigenous Clinical Counselling, Cultural Mentorship, Nursing
- Transitions from Incarceration
- Wraparound Care with Rent Supplements for Private Market

#### DECOLONIZED HARM REDUCTION

- Land-Based Healing
- Indigenous Alcohol Harm Reduction Residence Program
- Culturally Supportive Recovery
- Family Reunification

#### Housed

- Eviction Prevention & Emergency Support
- Wraparound Care with Rent Supplements for Private Market
- Subsidized Housing Transitions and Navigation Support

#### Culturally Supportive Housing

- Culturally Supportive House
- Speqəŋéutxw House (House of Flowers)
- Kwum Kwum Lelum (House of Courage)

# ANNOUNCEMENT

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Throughout 2022, the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness Society dedicated considerable time to planning for the opening of a new 43-unit, Culturally Supportive House in Victoria West. Working in close relationship with BC Housing, the shared vision was to incorporate culture into the very foundations of the program, through intentional design choices such as filling the gardens with native, rather than ornamental plants. Structural components that could be modified were also designed with a cultural lens, taking into consideration elements such as having ample storage for preserving traditional foods harvested and gathered at land-based healing events.

Receiving funding for this site provided a special and long awaited opportunity to transition Family Members from the Culturally Supportive House where they lived communally, to a home where everyone will have their own unit. The Indigenous Alcohol Harm Reduction Program, previously based out of the Culturally Supportive House, would be transported and expanded into this new program to support additional Family Members. The ACEH also, with support from Island Health, began planning for an on-site Culturally Supportive Recovery program - the first Indigenous-led, residence-based program in the city.



Artist: Doug LaFortune  
& Family Members

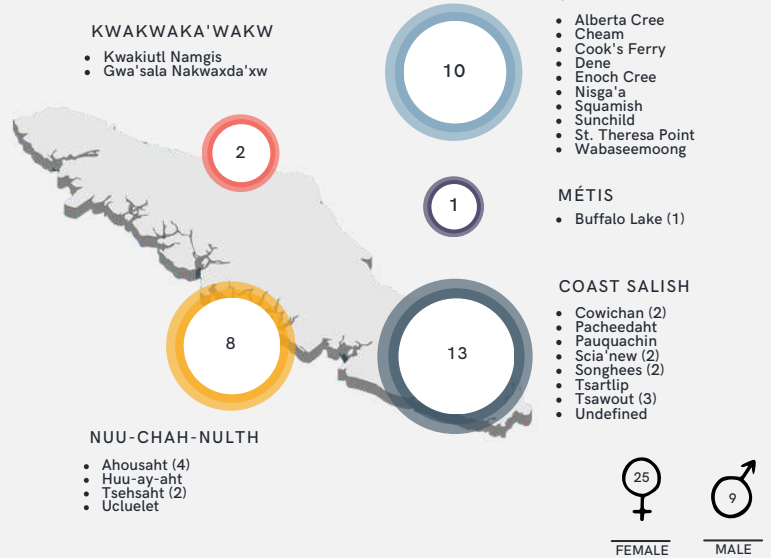
## NAMING

The naming of the house, Kwum Kwum Lelum (House of Courage), occurred on October 18, 2021 during a gathering of local Elders who reflected on, and considered, the character of ACEH Family Members embarking on their journey toward healing and recovery. Elders chose this name to recognize their courage, resiliency, and bravery. Bradley Yuxwelupton Dick, who was present at the gathering of Elders, has been commissioned with developing the artwork for the new building, to reflect local lands, relatives, traditions, and cultures.

# CULTURALLY SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

## SNAPSHOT

### DEMOGRAPHIC



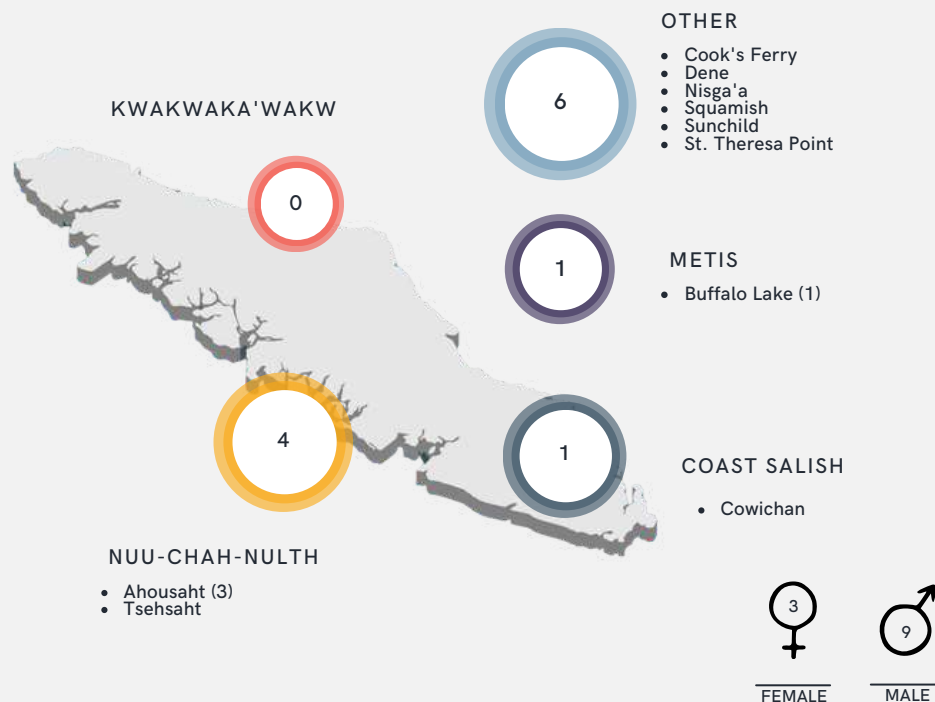
Culturally Supportive Housing 2022-23	Program Description	# of Beds
Culturally Supportive House	Culturally Supportive House (CSH) opened in March 2020 with an on-site Indigenous Alcohol Harm Reduction Residence program to support members of the Indigenous Street Family in downtown Victoria. 2022-23 marked the last year of operation for CSH as a transition to Kwum Kwum Lelum was underway.	14
Speqəŋéutxw House	Speqəŋéutxw (SPAKEN) House opened in August 2020 and offers Culturally Supportive Housing and services to 22 Indigenous women experiencing homelessness, with priority given to those fleeing violence.	21 *22 Family Members

# CULTURALLY SUPPORTIVE HOUSE

(Emergency Shelter)

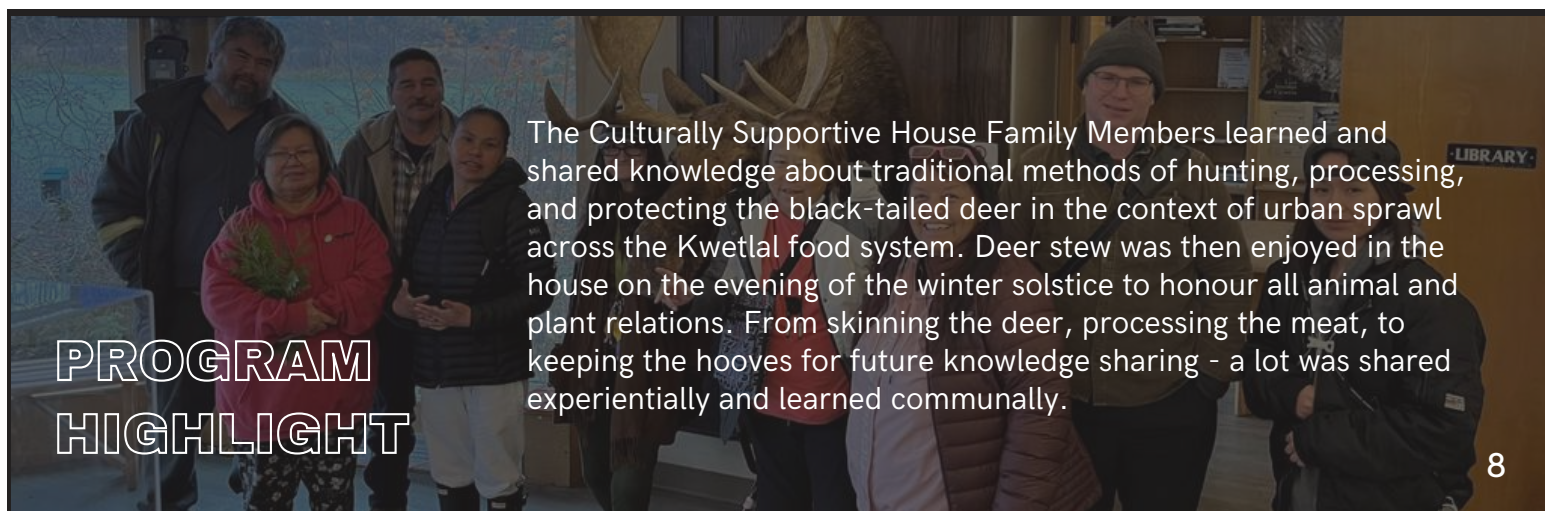


## DEMOGRAPHIC



## OVERVIEW

In 2022, 4 Family Members at the Culturally Supportive House were supported through the completion of a local detox program, with 2 attending stabilization. Family Members staying at CSH have fewer harms associated with alcohol use and fewer hospitalizations comparatively prior to their admission into Culturally Supportive House, based on ongoing participation in the Indigenous Alcohol Harm Reduction Residence Program.



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The Culturally Supportive House Family Members learned and shared knowledge about traditional methods of hunting, processing, and protecting the black-tailed deer in the context of urban sprawl across the Kwetlal food system. Deer stew was then enjoyed in the house on the evening of the winter solstice to honour all animal and plant relations. From skinning the deer, processing the meat, to keeping the hooves for future knowledge sharing - a lot was shared experientially and learned communally.



# SPEQƏŋÉUTXW HOUSE

"House of Flowers"

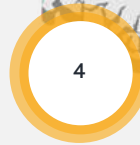


## DEMOGRAPHIC

### KWAKWAKA'WAKW

- Kwakiutl Namgis
- Gwa'sala Nakwaxda'xw

2



### NUU-CHAH-NULTH

- Ahousaht
- Huu-ay-aht
- Tseshaht
- Ucluelet

4

### OTHER

- Alberta Cree
- Cheam
- Enoch Cree
- Wabaseemoong

12

### COAST SALISH

- Cowichan
- Pacheedaht
- Pauquachin
- Scia'new (2)
- Songhees (2)
- Tsartlip
- Tsawout (3)
- Undefined

22

FEMALE

## OVERVIEW

Speqəŋéutxw House, or the House of Flowers, is a modular two-storey home with 21 self-contained units, each with a private washroom and mini kitchen. It opened in August 2020 as the first Culturally Supportive Housing site dedicated to Indigenous women with experiences of gender-based violence. In the yard, a native plant garden can be found, where Family Members produce medicines, berry plants, and vegetables that are harvested seasonally.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Led by Della Sylvester Rice, the ladies and Elder at Speqəŋéutxw House came together for a day of traditional medicine making. Salves for the whole house were made from medicine plants grown in the garden. Plants to help with arthritis, eczema, broken skin and dry skin were used alongside laughter and intention!

# NATIVE PLANT GARDENS

Signature to all ACEH Culturally Supportive Houses are the gardens where seasonal foods, plants, and traditional medicines are grown by Family Members with support from the Land-Based Healing Manager. Through stewardship of the gardens, produce is contributed to the meal program and medicines are harvested for cultural programming. Some familiar plants we grow in the garden include: camas, fireweed, nettle, sage, tobacco, salmonberry, nootka rose, and MANY more!

*"When I think about my life, I don't think I've ever done anything good. After today, I feel like this is the first good thing I've ever done with my life. I want to own a farm one day on my homelands."  
- ACEH Family Member*



Land-Based Healing Manager  
Nikki Wilkinson  
Métis



# FINDING STRENGTH IN EACH OTHER

I am Coast Salish. Land-based Healing is grounding breaking from the bottom of my feet, up to my heart and into my soul. It changes my perspective in life and the energy that I carry. It helps me set a new path and be one with myself. It helps me to reawaken how to be grateful, again. I believe culture is healing. I don't feel negative thoughts or feelings [about being Indigenous] at all. And I just have to believe in myself in order to go along with the spiritual healing, which I believe in. The ocean is healing and it's saying, "You can do it..."

- Renee, Family Member



My experience with the nurses at CSH has been awesome. Things get done and in an orderly fashion, much faster than if I did appointments or treatment on my own. The Elder helped me spiritually and her practices and understanding of culture helped me move towards my healing path.

- Carolyn, Family Member



# FINDING STRENGTH IN EACH OTHER

I am Ahousaht and Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay). I see my role here as providing a steady diet, and giving Family Member the nutrition they need to keep them healthy. Working here has really connected me to my own identity. I wasn't connected before. Culture has helped me, and I see it helping others. I can relate a lot to what's happening in the house. Personally, I am in recovery myself, so I see stages of the journey, and what culture can do. I want to be a good model for the Family Members because we are all Family Members here.

- Mathias, Cook



I am a wellness animal with a big family. My name means "cat" in Nuu-chah-nulth. I try my best to help bring comfort and provide unconditional love for the Family Members and staff at the house. I am loved right back!

- Peesh, Cat

# FINDING STRENGTH IN EACH OTHER

I am Métis. I've been more welcome here than any place I've ever been. The Peer Support Program has been really helpful. I participated in Phase I, and I am really enjoying Phase II. The Mental Health First Aid has been the most impactful for me when I see other people. It helped me understand other people's trauma. It changed my way of thinking. I understand people better than I did before. I see that people that use drugs are traumatized and need help. I also learned important new work skills. Culture ties this whole program together. It is everything. Without it nothing works.

- Mr. Frank, Family Member



I am Huu-ay-aht. I come from Pacheena Bay. Land-based healing makes me think about home. I feel like I am at the end of a trail where I've never been before. Being surrounded by culture and my community helps me through my grieving.

-Marlene, Family Member

# UPCOMING DEVELOPMENTS

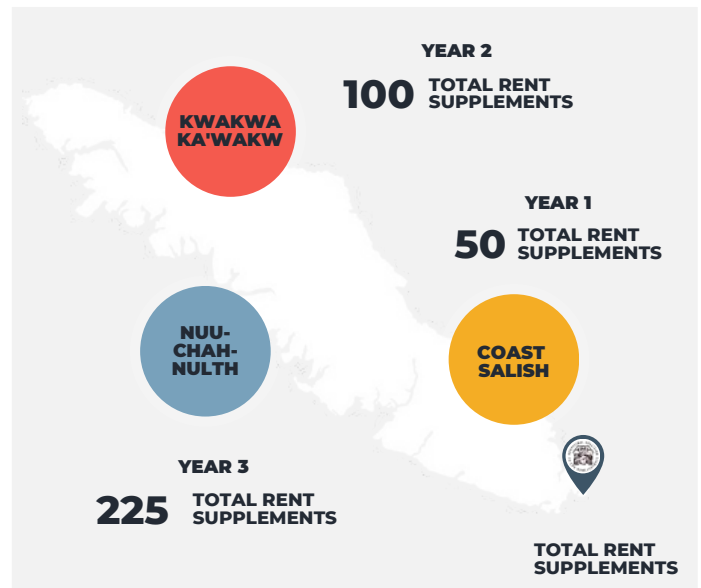
## CULTURALLY ALIGNED INTEGRATED SUPPORT (CAIS) PROGRAM

The ACEH is excited to share it has been selected as BC's pilot site for the Culturally Aligned Integrated Support (CAIS) program — an Indigenous-led initiative offering wraparound health, social, and housing supports. Rent supplements available as part of this program are dedicated to support transitions into the private market and preventing homelessness. This program is part of the provincial Supported Rent Supplement Program and Budget 2022 actions on homelessness. As part of CAIS, approximately 50 rent supplements with wraparound care will be provided in year one to eligible Indigenous peoples living off-reserve in Victoria.

CAIS is a special opportunity for the ACEH to continue supporting Family Members along the housing continuum, to become an active participant in breaking down stigma in the private market, and taking a step toward its mission to end homelessness across Vancouver Island.

The seven areas of support part of this pilot program are:

- Housing
- Cultural
- Restorative Justice
- Food Security
- Wellness and Substance Use
- Social, Emotional, and Community
- Personal Care and Living



## WRAPAROUND CARE TEAM

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural Mentor</li> <li>• Housing Navigators</li> <li>• Manager</li> <li>• Program Specialist</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural Mentor</li> <li>• Nurse Practitioner</li> <li>• Clinical Counsellor</li> <li>• Intensive Case Manager</li> <li>• Resident Care Aide</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Integrated Specialist</li> </ul>



Additional funds for 50 move in kits was provided by Social Planning & Research Council of British Columbia in 2023


# INDEPENDENT LIVING TRANSITIONS

Since 2021, the ACEH's Housing Transitions Manager has been dedicated to supporting Family Members as they prepare for, and settle into independent subsidized housing, from living rough and Culturally Supportive Housing.

As part of supporting Family Members in their housing transitions, land-based healing and family events are organized regularly, providing ongoing connection to culture and community. The Housing Transitions Manager also supports Family Members familiarize themselves with local resources, attend appointments, meet basic needs (i.e., food security), and helps address any arising concerns related eviction risk.



Housing Transition Manager  
Shannon Campbell  
Lax Kw'alaams

<p><b>14</b> Family Members</p>	<p><b>HOUSED FOR 2+ YEARS</b></p>
<p><b>8</b> Family Members</p>	<p><b>REMAIN ACTIVELY SUPPORTED</b></p>
	<p>The next transition taking place is scheduled for September 1st, 2023, which will support a Family Member moving from Speqəŋéutxw House into subsidized housing in the Westshore!</p>

The Housing Transitions Manager continues to support Family Members across ACEH programs who express interest in living independently, to help them prepare for, and secure affordable independent housing.

# 5 YEAR HOUSING STRATEGY

In 2018 the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness Society broadened its mandate, from providing cultural support to the Indigenous Street Family to “lovingly providing affordable and culturally supportive housing to end Aboriginal homelessness across Vancouver Island.” Since this time the ACEH has established BC’s first Culturally Supportive Housing with support from BC Housing, which operate according to the *Dual Model of Housing Care*.

With Culturally Supportive Housing now developed and evaluated, the ACEH looks toward expanding this model with leadership across the Coast Salish, Nuu-chah-nulth, and Kwakwaka'wakw Tribal Regions, and in partnership with Métis Nation Victoria.

Directions and plans for 2023-2028 are outlined in the ACEH's recently published 5-Year Housing Strategy, to guide development over the years ahead. The four key directions have been developed in accordance with voices of the Indigenous Street Family and the ACEH's vision, that “Our Way is to care for all of our people. We are all one. Some of our people living away from home are suffering, isolated, and homeless. We stand together to end homelessness.”

To view the ACEH's full 5-Year Housing Strategy please visit our website at [www.acehsociety.com](http://www.acehsociety.com).

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

YOUTH PREVENTION

FAMILY (RE)UNIFICATION

ISLAND-WIDE EXPANSION

HOUSING & SERVICE TRANSITIONS





*Elder Kathleen Horne  
Tsawout and Pacheedaht  
First Nations*



# ***We stand together to end Indigenous homelessness.***



*Special thanks to community  
partners for their part in supporting  
Indigenous housing & healing.*



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