

PRINCE GEORGE

Report to the Community

Welcome to the second edition of our **Prince George: Report to the Community!** It has been a busy few months since our first issue, and we are pleased to offer news, updates, and stories from our community.

TOUCHING BASE:

In Conversation with Connective Leadership



Camila Sanchez

Regional Director of Northern BC

Greetings! We've almost made it through another long winter. I'm excited for what the warmer weather brings, and to have you here for this second edition of our Prince George Report to the Community newsletter.

There's a lot to cover since our last update, but I want to start by giving a well deserved shoutout to our hard working staff team here in Prince George. They are on the frontlines of some of our community's toughest challenges, and are tested daily in new and surprising ways. Yet day after day, they show up and give their all in support of those who are most vulnerable.

Though we've been working in Prince George for a number of years, we've been lucky to experience significant recent growth. Our staff team has increased by 440% in the last two years alone!

As a result, many on our Northern Leadership team are newer to the organization—myself included! It has been an honour to work and grow alongside them, and we look forward to engaging more with community and partners now that our newer programs have hit the ground running.

It's an exciting time for us as we prepare to open the Northern BC Therapeutic Community, launch a new program in Terrace, and await completion of expansions to our supportive housing programs on Ontario and Victoria Street.

In other ways, it continues to be a challenging time. The recent Coroner's Service report confirmed that Prince George had one of the five highest rates of overdose deaths last year. Amid this ongoing crisis it can be easy to lose sight of all the good happening, and so I'll close with this cause for celebration:

We recently had a tenant transition from our program to independent, market housing!

After moving in with us she went to treatment, and has been successful with her ongoing recovery. She is now attending college to upgrade her high-school courses, and plans to pursue post-secondary education.

None of this would have been possible without the influence of stable housing!

- Program Manager, 1550 Victoria Street Supportive Housing

Since April 1 2023

440%
INCREASE
in our Northern
staff team

360%
INCREASE
in our Northern
housing units



PROGRAM UPDATES

Transitional Housing

397 3rd Avenue

In our last newsletter, we were hard at work putting the final pieces in place for our new transitional housing program at 3rd & London.

This work came to a head at the start of this year, when we were thrilled to begin welcoming our first residents. Since then, we have been working diligently and deliberately, gradually increasing our total numbers to help ensure a smooth and cohesive entry into the program and community.

We're excited to fill our remaining units, but have been equally excited to watch our first group of residents settle into this new environment and transform it into a home. Residents have been enjoying the meals and engagement activities provided by the team, and our staff continue to connect them with support programs in the community so they can move toward longer term, independent housing.



“Providing a safe home for those who have been unhoused or precariously housed—offering meals, stability, and connections to community supports, their families, or bands—has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my role as Program Manager.”

– Alex, Program Manager

Supportive Housing

1550 Victoria Street

As we approach our one year anniversary of operation, the program has not only found its footing, but laid a solid foundation for long-term success. With this in place, we've been able to focus more energy on expanding the activities and services available to residents.

For example, we've implemented a Tenant Liaison Program. Through a resident nomination and voting process, one tenant from each of our three floors were elected as representatives. Once a week, they meet with management and help bridge the gap between staff and tenants, with the Liaisons sharing any resident ideas, feedback, concerns, or observations.

Recently, we were also pleased to bring in a local artist, who graciously volunteered her time and led residents through an afternoon painting workshop.



Participants enjoyed having the opportunity to flex their creative muscles, and their beautiful work has helped further enliven our shared space.

“I love coming up with new ways to support such a diverse group of people. With spring coming, we are looking forward to bringing more fun to the program—planting and tending the gardens, barbecuing, and using our outdoor space to play games and connect with one another.”

– Angie, Program Manager

160 Ontario Street

Recently, we were pleased to welcome Juanita to Connective—as Ontario Street Supportive Housing’s new Program Manager. Her knowledge and expertise have been a valuable addition to the team, and we’re thrilled to have her.

While we eagerly await the conclusion Ontario Street’s phase two expansion, which will add another 51 units of housing, our Outreach team has been hard at work building community connections for existing residents.

Efforts have included weekly swimming sessions at the local community pool, and a variety of Indigenous-focused events and healing circles hosted at 160 Ontario Street. While just one piece of our supportive puzzle, efforts like these are an important contributor to long term success for our residents—residents like Ryan.

Ryan’s Story

From the Streets to a New Beginning

For a long time, I was lost in a cycle of addiction, living on the streets with little hope for a better future. Every day was a struggle—just trying to survive, battling demons I couldn’t escape. I felt like no matter how hard I tried, I was stuck, weighed down by my past.

Then I found Connective.

Long-Term Care

Juniper House

When we sent last fall’s newsletter, Juniper House had welcomed its first 10 residents living with dementia. Since then, we have completed our move-in process, filling our four units for those with an acquired brain injury. This means that Juniper House is operating at full capacity!

Recent months have been filled with a range of activities including card games, exercise, and baking. A particular highlight for residents was welcoming trick-or-treaters on Halloween.

Staff and neighborhood kids brought joy as they went trick-or-treating inside Juniper House, spreading smiles as residents handed out candy.

“Recovery isn’t about being perfect. It’s about showing up and making progress, even if it’s small.”



While I’m still in the process of healing and struggling with my addiction, Connective has been a constant support system for me. It’s not just a place—it’s a community that understands, that accepts, and that helps me every day. The people here, the residents and the staff, have made all the difference in my life.

It’s not always easy, and it’s not always perfect, but the support I’ve received here has given me the courage to keep trying. The people at Connective believe in me, and that belief is a powerful thing.

“They don’t just give me resources and advice—they give me hope and strength when I need it most.”

They’ve shown me that recovery isn’t about being perfect; it’s about showing up and making progress, even if it’s small. I feel like I’m moving in the right direction. I’m not just surviving—I’m learning, growing, and working for a better future, one day at a time.



Substance Use Recovery

Northern BC Therapeutic Community

January into March has been extremely busy for the program team, as they prepared the site for residents to live, grow, and recover. This meant moving furniture, painting walls, and cleaning.

In March, we officially opened applications for potential residents, and we are eager to begin welcoming those seeking support. We also hosted an Open House, touring a number of partners and community organizations around the program. This was a valuable opportunity to strengthen relationships with many of the agencies that will play a vital role in supporting our residents on their long-term journey to recovery.

STREET HUMANITIES

In Partnership with the College of New Caledonia

Beginning in February, Connective was pleased to partner with the College of New Caledonia (CNC), on their Street Humanities Program.

This program offers a 10-week, tuition-free course for up to 16 students facing barriers to education. It provides a chance to learn new skills and apply existing ones in a structured, classroom setting.

Every Tuesday and Thursday, participating students receive a free dinner before being instructed by CNC professors, on topics such as resume-building, astronomy, ecology, and more.

Connective's participation in the program was coordinated by Aidan, Transition Counsellor and Connective's NBCTC Program.

"Although I have only been with Connective for a couple of months, I can assuredly say that I have never worked in an environment as involved, collaborative, and fun as this one. My team always has my back and is always able to support me in the way I need them to.

Along with my job as Transition Counsellor, I have also had the privilege of coordinating CNC's Street Humanities Program."

Aidan worked to recruit interested Connective residents and services users into the program.

"It was inspiring to host professionals and advocates at our open house. The positive feedback we received reaffirmed our mission, with many expressing their appreciation for the facility, the structured program, and the welcoming atmosphere."

– Nicole, Program Manager



College of
New Caledonia

"We were aiming for a minimum of 8 students in the class, and ended up with a full class of 16. We have students aged 19 to 60, and every student has gotten along very well. Many students have even met with academic advisors to enroll in additional classes, get their GEDs, or discuss other options."



"Never have I been prouder to be part of a program. Students are engaged, asking questions, and taking huge steps to progress their education, careers, and their futures."

Going forward, Aidan hopes to "continue providing individuals facing barriers with avenues to education and sustainable employment – whether this be through Street Humanities or the Therapeutic Community."