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OF GREATER VICTORIA

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Changing lives.

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Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada

For Immediate Release

Care Homes for Kids Along the Road to Recovery

Victoria March 17, 2006 - While the growing problem of Crystal Meth and substance abuse in Victoria teens is reported in the media, there is another story waiting to be told the story of the people who are making a difference in the lives of our teens.

There are individuals in Victoria who are getting involved on the front lines - opening their homes to help youth move away from high risk behaviours that can lead to addiction, exploitation, and/or involvement with the justice system.

Increased Crystal Meth use in Victoria has created an even greater need for support and assistance for these vulnerable youth and caring community members are responding.

Through Boys & Girls Club Services Youth Care Homes Programs, in partnership with Vancouver Island Health Authority and the Ministry of Children and Family Development, families' willing to open their homes become role models and provide the support and guidance to adolescents who need a second chance.

Care Homes, for youth ages 13 to 18, are offered through seven programs ranging from short-term acute detox, to longer-term residential support for youth. Care Families are contracted with a retainer and a per diem fee to provide shelter, support, food, transportation and recreational activities. They are given training in addictions issues and have access to a trained Support Worker with 24 hours emergency support. Currently there are 34 Care Homes contracted through the community but there is a desperate need to find additional homes.

"We have kids who are asking for help, knowing that without the stability of a home or the support of our program they won't be able to get off their current path. The individuals involved in the Care Homes are incredible - they get professional support and training but ultimately they are the ones that make a real difference in the lives of the youth. At the end of the day it is the Care Homes that give youth the courage to make changes in their lives." Says Ellie James, Youth Care Home Program Manager.

The high need for quality care homes is reflected in the continuous referrals from the community. These are young people wanting to make a change in their lives -- teens trying to manage their substance abuse, looking to regain their self-worth and value, and empower themselves to set healthy goals. Youth who want to find an alternative life to the one that they are living.

Boys & Girls Club Services is seeking adults who have the patience, the compassion and the desire to make a difference. As part of a team, Care Homes offer the stability and support that teens need in order to make changes. This is a journey that changes lives, for both the youth and those who share their lives. For more information about becoming a Care Home please contact Boys & Girls Club Services of Greater Victoria 384.9133.

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Media Contact

Ellie James

Manager, Care Home Programs

Boys & Girls Club Services of Greater Victoria

250.384.9133

ejames@bgcvc.org

or

Kate Mansell

Director of Development

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Victoria Foundation

250.384.9133 or 250.478.3872

kmansell@bgcvc.org

www.bgcvc.org

1240 Yates Street

Victoria, BC V8V 3N3

Ph:250.384.9133 / Fax:250.384.9136

www.bgcvc.org / admin@bgcvc.org

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