



Contact:

Michele Penz, Calico
Communications for BCMHAS
Communications
778-888-2249

MEDIA RELEASE

Aug. 12, 2008

For Immediate Release

Free one-stop service will help parents navigate mental health, substance use disorder resources

Mental health, substance use disorders affect almost 150,000 BC kids

BC families with children and youth with mental health or substance use disorders have a new option for getting the help they need thanks to the Kelty Resource Centre -- a free, one-stop virtual resource centre that will link them to appropriate information and services tailored to their individual needs.

“I am pleased to officially announce the availability of this innovative new service. The Kelty Resource Centre is designed to help families at all stages of addressing mental health and addiction issues, whether they are just beginning to seek help or are already involved in services,” said Children and Family Development Minister Tom Christensen.

Family members simply contact the centre by phone, or email, or they can visit it in the Mental Health Building at BC Children’s Hospital. Centre staff will ask questions, help identify the family member’s needs, and outline possible options such as providing direction to community intake resources through the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), and other services, useful websites, brochures, books, videos and other information.

According to a 2002 research study conducted by Simon Fraser University for MCFD, approximately 15 per cent or 140,000 BC children and youth are affected by mental health disorders which cause both significant symptoms and impairment. Anxiety, conduct, attention and depressive disorders are the most common.

Substance use disorders affect approximately 0.8 per cent or 7,500 BC children and youth. Substance use disorders in children and youth are associated with many detrimental consequences including risky sexual behavior, increased risk for suicide, accidental deaths, and diseases such as HIV and hepatitis.

“The benefits of this health promotion initiative will include opportunities for prevention, early detection and intervention of mental health and addiction issues, increased understanding of the signs and symptoms, and greater awareness of the availability of help and where to find it,” said Peter Coleridge, VP education and population health, BC Mental Health & Addiction Services (BCMHAS), an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority.

The Kelty Resource Centre may be accessed in the following ways:

Phone: 604.875.2084 or 1-800-665-1822

Email: kelytcentre@bcmhs.bc.ca

Web: www.bcmhas.ca/KeltyResourceCentre

Hours of operation are currently: Tuesday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Wednesday 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.; Thursday 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The Kelty Resource Centre may also be visited in person at:
Mental Health Building (Please use Entrance 2, intersection is Heather and 30th)

BC Children's Hospital
Room P3-302, 3rd Floor – 4500 Oak Street
Vancouver, BC V6H 2N1

The Kelty Resource Centre is funded with the generous support of the Kelty Patrick Dennehy Foundation in partnership with BC Mental Health & Addiction Services (BCMHAS) and BC Children's Hospital Foundation.

“The Kelty Patrick Dennehy Foundation aims to help remove the stigma and ignorance associated with mental disease through education, treatment and research,” said Ginny Dennehy.

The Kelty Patrick Dennehy Foundation was established in 2001 by Whistler residents Kerry and Ginny Dennehy after their 17-year-old son, Kelty, took his own life after battling depression. The mission of the foundation is to raise awareness of the magnitude of depression and the effect it has on young people and our society, and to remove the stigma associated with depression by taking a leadership role in education, effective treatments, and the research effort.

Potential future services available through the Kelty Resource Centre now under review for possible delivery include:

- Community-based child/youth mental health and addiction screening days
- Evidence-based, child- and youth-friendly information translated into different languages
- Development of inventory of treatment services available in BC for mental health and addiction issues.

The Kelty Resource Centre is part of an integrated provincial strategy to improve health literacy in mental health and addictions in BC. The strategy was developed by BCMHAS in consultation with regional health authorities, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Children and Family Development, BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information, and other non-governmental organizations.

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Programs at BC Children's Hospital are managed and administered by BC Mental Health & Addiction Services, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority.

-30-

Media contact:

Michele Penz, Calico Communications for BCMHAS Communications, 778-888-2249