

**FALL
2025 ISSUE**

**DOUBLE MATCH
CAMPAIGN**
PAGE 3

**SUPPORTING NEW YOUTH
AT CHV**
PAGE 4

**INTERVIEW WITH OUR
PEER SUPPORT WORKER**
PAGE 6

**YOUTH STORY:
RILEY**
PAGE 8

**CREATE A LEGACY
WITH CHV**
PAGE 10

Covenant House Vancouver News



“I have a unique perspective because I’ve been where a lot of the youth have been. I can help ask the right questions and get to the root of their actions and issues.”

KEYVAN
PEER SUPPORT WORKER,
COVENANT HOUSE VANCOUVER

READ THE FULL STORY ON PAGE 6 →





Covenant House Vancouver recognizes the ongoing impacts of colonization and is committed to advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in all the work we do. We acknowledge, with gratitude, that our work takes place on the ancestral and unceded traditional territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and sə́lilwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

Scotiabank®

The Steven Chambers
Foundation

FROM OCTOBER 20 – DECEMBER 31, YOUR GIFT WILL BE DOUBLED, UP TO \$100,000!

Thanks to the generosity of Scotiabank and The Steven Chambers Foundation, who are each contributing \$50,000, every dollar you give will be matched.

That means your gift will go twice as far in providing stability and support for youth in crisis.

Together, we can:

- **Prevent** homelessness before it starts.
- **Intervene** with compassionate care when youth are in crisis.
- **Restore** a youth's sense of self so they can move toward independence.

Your matched gift helps ensure that youth have not just a safe place to stay, but also the resources and community they need to thrive today and in the years ahead.



Scan the QR code
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covenanthousebc.online/fallnews



OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

WAYS WE SUPPORT NEW YOUTH AT CHV

Many of the youth who come to Covenant House Vancouver have faced trauma and hardships before stepping foot through our doors.

This can look like an abusive home, family rejection, escaping a war, a lack of stable housing, and complex mental health issues.

We offer many unique services to ensure that we care for the whole person — mind, body, and spirit. With your support, we are able to provide youth with the best possible care.

When it comes to youth who are new to our programs and services we:



DECORATE FOR HOLIDAYS

and events to celebrate the youth from all different backgrounds



TRAIN FRONTLINE STAFF

on issues that are relevant to the youth, like how to identify human trafficking or support Indigenous youth



PROVIDE SPACES

for youth to take care of themselves (i.e. music room, the spiritual care room, the art therapy room, the gym)



CREATE NEW PARTNERSHIPS

to provide relevant and necessary supports (i.e. healthcare, education)



PROVIDE YOUTH WITH PHONES

and private spaces for them to talk to people who support them, day or night



ADAPT LIFE SKILLS TRAINING

for youth, to meet them at their experience level



REDESIGN PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

to focus on community, wellness, connection, and culture



PROVIDE STUDY AREAS

and opportunities to learn, like excursions and tutoring

INTERVIEW WITH OUR PEER SUPPORT WORKER:



Keyvan recently joined the CHV team as a peer support worker after connecting to the organization through his artwork. He's responsible for the many amazing murals we have around the five-storey building on Seymour Street that give the space personality. We interviewed him to learn more about his experiences in the role.

WHAT IS A PEER SUPPORT WORKER?

A peer support worker bridges the gaps between youth and staff by either making those connections themselves or by supporting youth as they connect to staff. A lot of times, there's a barrier between youth workers and youth, as some don't want to engage. So, I help gather the information and let their youth workers know what the youth want to do.

I have a unique perspective because I've been where a lot of the youth have been. I can help ask the right questions and get to the root of their actions and issues.

HOW DO YOU SUPPORT YOUTH?

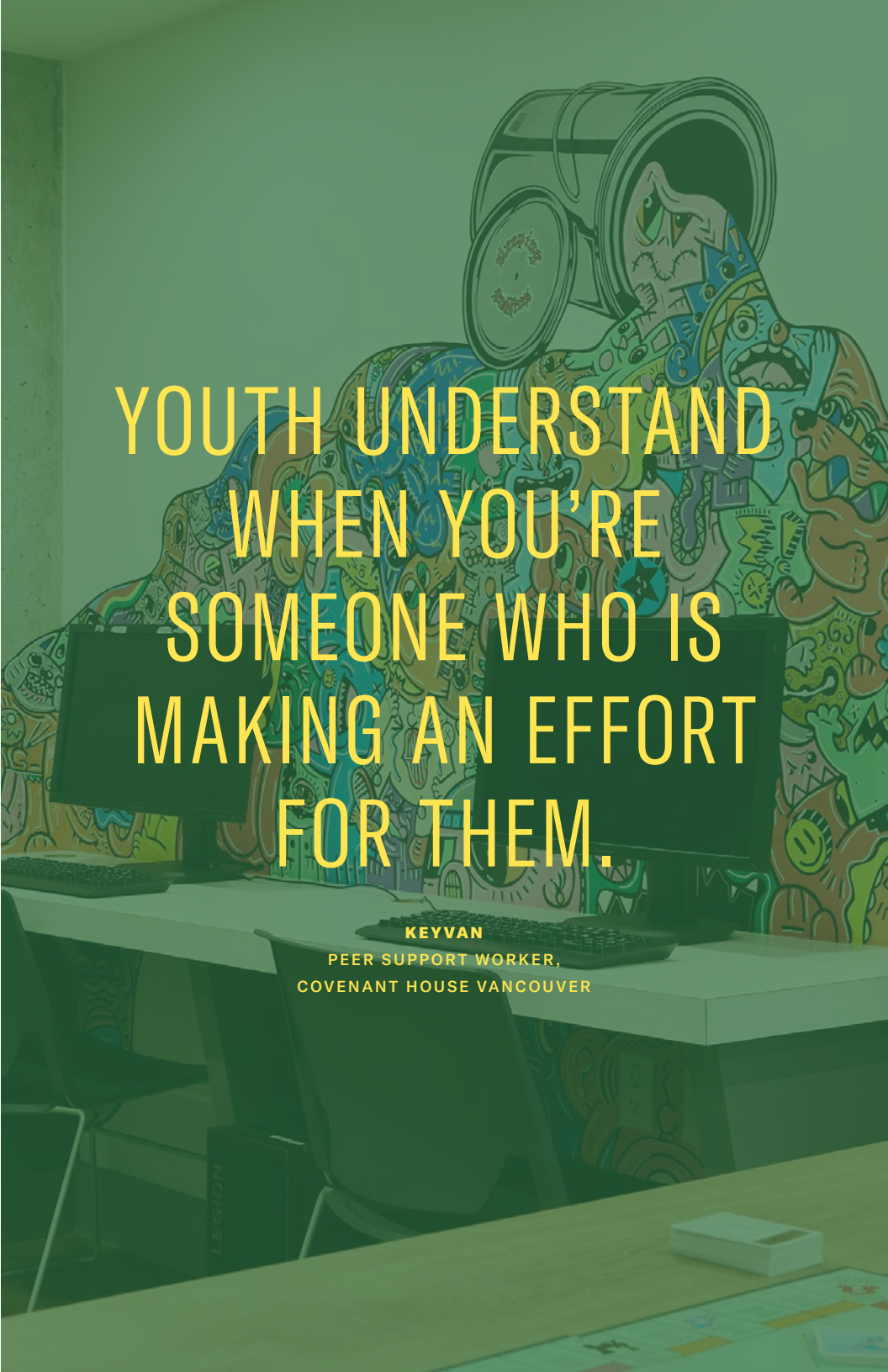
On an average day, I work with specific youth, and support them in the things that they are working on, such as trying to get a job, or obtain housing. I ask them questions and try to connect youth with other workers and services.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS THAT YOU'VE INTRODUCED TO CHV?

Every other Monday, I do a drop-in art group. Youth come in and make whatever they want. We have a full stock of art supplies. Low-barrier art is my favourite thing. It's not just about drawing, it's about listening to what youth are saying, through their work. I can tell what they're feeling in five seconds. Through art, you can easily understand someone's headspace.

ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

Youth understand when you're someone who is making an effort for them. They know they can't pay you, so they often want to support you by doing other things. They respond to your honesty and vulnerability in ways that surprise you.



YOUTH UNDERSTAND
WHEN YOU'RE
SOMEONE WHO IS
MAKING AN EFFORT
FOR THEM.

KEYVAN
PEER SUPPORT WORKER,
COVENANT HOUSE VANCOUVER



YOUTH STORY

RILEY'S STORY*

Riley came from an abusive home – their father consistently put them down which also created tension between their mother and father.

They were often deprived of basic needs, like food, because they wanted to pursue their dream of becoming an animator and their dad dismissed this. It severely affected their mental health and one night when a fight erupted between their parents, Riley packed their backpack and left.

Riley ran through streets and alleys looking for a quiet place for the night. Making their way to the city core, Riley became overwhelmed and exhausted. Finding an

alley, Riley dropped their bag and collapsed against a wall.

In the morning Riley awoke to two figures slowly approaching them. “Hi there. No need to be alarmed. We’re from Covenant House Vancouver. We’re walking around the community doing wellness checks. Are you okay? Are you hungry?”

Riley nodded and the Outreach team provided them with food and let Riley know



that at Covenant House Vancouver (CHV), they could rest, have a meal, shower, and do laundry at the Drop-In Centre or join the Crisis Program, a shelter for youth in crisis.

Riley followed the team back to CHV. The team did a short intake interview with Riley to figure out how to best help them, with no pressure to complete until Riley felt up to it. Riley enjoyed a hot lunch and connected with their youth worker, who provided them with clean clothes, toiletries, and a notebook.

After a few weeks, Riley developed a routine. They were introduced to their social worker, who was happy to help them develop goals and ways to achieve those goals. They learned that they could access counsellors, learn life skills, and participate in activities, both on and off-site.

Riley was interested in art therapy because of their love for animation. Through art therapy, Riley was able to socialize with other youth, create characters for their animation, and express themselves in a healthy environment.



Their social worker helped Riley create a plan to get into animation school and eventually live in the community. Their youth worker helped them to develop their resume, cover letter, and helped Riley apply for scholarships. Riley also obtained a part-time job in the evenings at the local grocery store which gave them enough stability to move into community housing.

While going for a walk, one day, Riley passed an adult sleeping in an alcove, on the sidewalk. It was a sobering moment where Riley wondered what would have happened if they hadn't connected with CHV. Would they have ever been able to follow their dream? They found solace in knowing that one day, they will be able to make a difference in someone's life.

**Note: This is a composite story that reflects the experiences of multiple youth while protecting individual privacy.*

LEAVE A LEGACY WITH COVENANT HOUSE VANCOUVER

Legacy donors understand that a gift in their will to Covenant House Vancouver will have a lasting impact on youth experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

Your support offers hope and an opportunity for youth to get the best possible care. By including Covenant House Vancouver in your will, your legacy becomes a positive force that provides critical, lasting support to youth in need.

Through our partnership with Willfora, you can create an online will, free of charge, simplifying the process of leaving a legacy gift that will empower youth.



SCAN THE QR CODE to leave your legacy today, to support youth in the future, or visit: covenanthousebc.online/willfora-chv.

WE'RE GRATEFUL TO OUR
INCREDIBLE DONORS WHO
MAKE OUR PROGRAMS
POSSIBLE. YOUR SUPPORT
HELPS SHELTER, ENGAGE,
AND UPLIFT YOUTH WHEN
THEY NEED IT MOST.
THANK YOU.



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