



VANCOUVER URBAN ABORIGINAL CRN: RELATIONSHIPS KEY TO ACHIEVING MORE

*Aboriginal relationships are an important element of our provincial identity. Individuals and agencies are creating new ways to collaborate to affect how we view abuse, and what we do about it. BC CRN sat down with **Christine Spinder**, Regional Mentor – Fraser Valley West, to talk about what she's learned working with the Vancouver Urban Aboriginal CRN.*

Tell us a little bit about the Vancouver Urban Aboriginal (VanUA) CRN.

It started with representatives from a small group of Urban Aboriginal agencies who saw the need for a coordinating body for skill development and protocols based in Aboriginal culture.

Ruth Alfred of the [Pacific Association of First Nation Women](#) hosted the CRN. **Jackson Dionne** from the [Native Courtworkers and Counselling Association of BC](#) connected their cultural infrastructure work in the Downtown Eastside with the CRN's power sharing and collaboration approach. Finally, **Dawna Silver**, a counselor at the [Aboriginal Branch of the Responsible and Problem Gambling Program BC](#) connected her agency's tools.

VanUA recently completed an extraordinary project. What is it?

We have just completed *Restoring Right Relationship*, a 120+ page toolkit that teaches reconciliation-based skills to front-line workers to interrupt interpersonal conflict and systemic violence patterns in community, in family, and cross-culturally. All of the approaches and activities in this toolkit are recognized models in therapeutic counselling, and take their base in Indigenous culture.

The project was funded by [Crime Prevention BC – Civil Forfeiture](#). We are now looking to secure long-term funding to hold the training workshops and cultural engagement activities and circles. The partnering agencies are keen to begin training their staff.

What advice would you offer another CRN interested in working on a project with an Aboriginal community?

Recognize that nobody wants to be "fixed". "We need to get to know them and they need to get to know us. It's about real people, and we're real people like them," advised an Elder. I am regularly shocked by the kinds of discrimination they face every day.

Be clear on your motivations. Do you want to be right? To be a rescuer? Is unresolved trauma, or anger driving you? What are your patterns? Be prepared to show the same vulnerability you're asking Aboriginal people to expose. Go deep. This work is a journey of discovery and authenticity, and joy

Adapt and to commit long-term. Great relationships are created by shared experiences over time. We spent three years building resilient relationships by collaborating on everything: education and training, evaluation, planning, event production, ceremony, with outcomes at every step. We succeeded because listened to the wisdom of the community. Build these relationships and you'll create outcomes far beyond your first goals.

For more information about VanUA and their toolkit, contact Christine at christine.spinder@bccrns.ca.



[Christine Spinder](#). (Photo source: LinkedIn.)

SURVEY SAYS ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT LEADS TO BETTER IMPACT: CALL TO ACTION

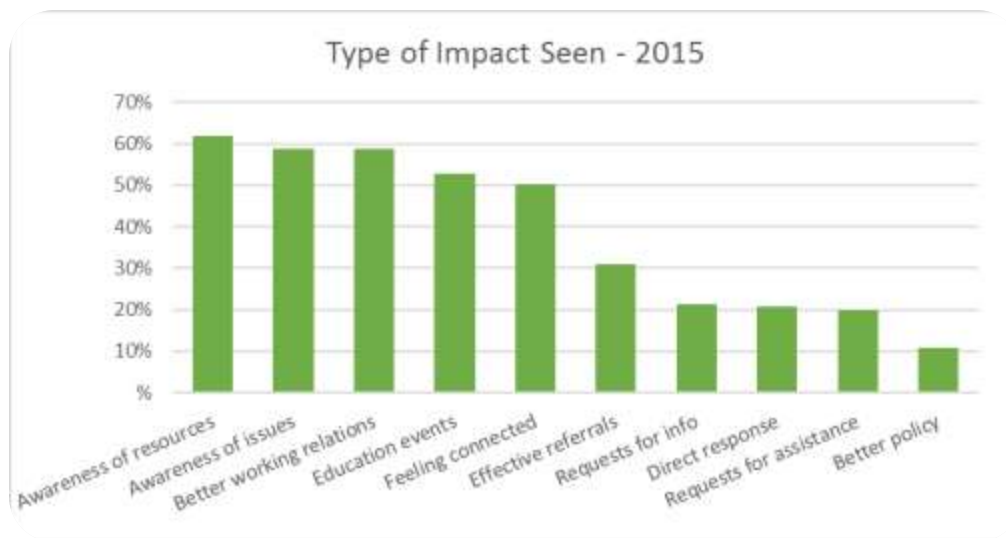
By April Struthers, Regional Mentor – North Island and Sunshine Coast, and Ben Kadel, EmotusOperandi.

Since 2012, CRN members and Mentors have been surveyed to learn more about how CRNs are working, and to measure the impact they are making in their community. Building networks and influence is a long process, but we are already seeing meaningful impact.

Early Results are Extremely Encouraging

Nearly all indicators started and moved in positive directions over the four years of the study period.

A high percentage of respondents reported seeing or hearing positive impacts on the community as a result of the work of the CRNs. Over 70 percent reported seeing positive impact in 2015. In addition, the descriptions of the kinds of impact seen demonstrated a deepening and broadening of impact from that internal to networks to direct impacts in the community.



Evidence of strong and growing professional networks can be seen as a sign of the growing infrastructure of the social network-based approach to abuse prevention and response.

We are also developing a better understanding of the factors that help CRNs perform at their best, and intend to share those lessons across the network.

There are strong correlations between levels of involvement, stages of development and working styles of CRNs. CRNs with positive working styles have higher levels of engagement and impact.

Future Direction

This year, we want to find out why some CRNs are better able to stabilize and grow than others. Our collective success depends on you.

We Need Your Participation

We need as many CRN members as possible to respond to a survey scheduled for release in October.

Report on how you think the work is going, and remind everyone in your network to fill out the online questionnaire when they receive it. CRN coordinators: ensure your mentor has a complete and updated list of members to include in the survey sample.

Questions? Contact **April Struthers** (april.struthers@bccrns.ca) or **Ben Kadel** (ben@emotusoperandi.com).

NEW BC CRN RESOURCES AVAILABLE - REMINDER

These resources consolidate content from multiple sources into a few foundational documents to help orient individuals new to BC CRN, and are the authoritative resource for CRN development for existing or returning members.

- [BC CRN Overview](#) and companion [slides](#).
- [CRN Guide and Toolkit](#), plus companion [slides](#).
- Spread the Word on Adult Abuse and Neglect – [Messaging and Activity Guide](#).



PROVINCIAL LEARNING EVENTS



October 18: First responders intervene in situations of abuse at home or in nursing homes. Although they identify situations of abuse, there is no standard approach to assess vulnerable seniors who are at risk.

The [Integrated Police Response for Abused Seniors \(IPRAS\)](#), was a three year action research project from 2013-2016 led by the SPVM of Montreal, Canada's second largest municipal police force, and the Research Chair on Mistreatment of Older Adults of the University of Sherbrooke. The outcome of the project was a document of practice guidelines for implementing the IPRAS model.



November 15: [Roads to Safety – Legal Information for Older Women in BC](#), by West Coast Leaf. *Roads to Safety* is a collaboration project between West Coast Leaf and the [Canadian Centre for Elder Law](#) that produced a plain language handbook addressing legal challenges that impact older women survivors of violence.

Teleconferences take place the third Tuesday of the month from 10:30 am to 12 pm.

These events are toll free and everyone is welcome. [Access recordings and materials for previous events](#).

Email info@bccrns.ca to receive notifications of upcoming Provincial Learning Events.

NEW RESOURCES TO DISCOVER

- [Age of Love: It's Never Too Late to Date](#) | Documentary (2016) | [View the trailer](#). | [View more information](#).
- BC Elders Voice Newsletter | [September 2016](#).
- [BC Residential Care Quick Facts Directory](#) | Office of the Seniors Advocate | Province of BC.
- [Breaking Isolation Engaging and Empowering Immigrant Seniors in Metro Vancouver](#) | BCCEAS | Workshop.
- Canadian Bankers Association | [View new website](#).
- [Get Cyber Safe: Seniors Online](#) | Government of Canada.
- [Not In My Family – Working with Family Caregivers to Reduce Elder Abuse](#) | BCCEAS | Workshop available upon request.
- [The Power of Attorney Project](#) | Caregiving Matters, Conversations that Matter.
- [WEAAD 2016](#) | BC CRN | Video.

HEADLINES FROM MEDIA

- [BC seniors build a new way to age in place](#) | CBC Radio | August 28, 2016.
- [Experts: It's the elder's children who are doing most of the abusing](#) | Global News | August 31, 2016.
- [SENIORS HEALTH: Worth it to stay social, secure and smiling](#) | Peace Arch News | August 31, 2016.

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

- **October 1** | National Seniors' Day.*
- **November 1-7** | Crime Prevention Week.*

*See the [Spread the Word Guide](#) on how to get your message on adult abuse, neglect, and self-neglect out to the community during these campaigns.



Professional Development Opportunities

- **October 22-26** | [45th Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting](#) | Canadian Association of Gerontology | Montreal, Quebec.
- **November** (various dates) | [Personal Planning Month Presentations](#) | Nidus Personal Planning Resource Centre and Registry | Vancouver.

If you know of professional development events taking place anywhere in the world that readers should be aware of, [forward your content to us for the next edition](#).

E Connector is published eight times a year, and contains CRN news stories, and the most current resources we could find on the topic of adult abuse and neglect from across the country.

To contribute content, please email heather.archer@bccrns.ca.

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