



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WHHI FUNDING HELPS KEEP YOUTH PROGRAMS OPERATING

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA— Important addiction treatment programs for youth who are homeless or who are at risk of the negative effects of life on the street are being further supported with over \$433,000 in funding to The Behavioural Health Foundation from the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg, through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI).

The support to The Behavioural Health Foundation will help it operate Kirkos House and the Selkirk Healing Centre. Funding is being provided under the Supporting Communities Partnerships Initiative (SCPI), the central component of the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative (NHI).

Today's announcement was made at the Behavioural Foundation's main residence at 35 avenue de la Digue in St. Norbert, by the Honourable Reg Alcock, President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing; by Doug Martindale, MLA for Burrows, on behalf of the Honourable Christine Melnick, Manitoba Minister of Family Services and Housing; and by Councillor Justin Swandel, St. Norbert Ward, on behalf of Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz.

"The programming offered here at the Behavioural Health Foundation will ensure that youth at risk have the supports they need to lead a healthy and independent lifestyle here in Manitoba," said Minister Alcock. "Including the amount being announced today, the Government of Canada will have invested close to \$1.2 million to assist the BHF develop five transitional homes, expand their kitchen, renovate their main residence and continue running these invaluable programs."

"This support, through the WHHI, will help youth in need and will assist them to establish greater self-sufficiency and independence," said Martindale. "These groups play an important role in supporting Manitoba children, families and individuals to achieve their fullest potential."

“The Behavioural Health Foundation provides a very important service for the homeless and at-risk youth of our community,” said Councillor Swandel. “Today’s funding announcement will help to sustain the Foundation’s programming, and in turn, will make a difference in the lives of our city’s youth. These types of facilities serve to make Winnipeg a better place for all citizens to live and prosper.”

Kirkos House opened in 1991 and meets the needs of 16 females ages 11 to 17. The Selkirk Healing Centre opened in 1995 and provides services for 20 males ages 11 to 17. Both facilities operate a 24 hour-a-day, seven day a week in-residence addictions program for youth. Youth enter the program to acquire and develop the necessary skills to return to a productive lifestyle.

These two youth facilities are part of an integrated process that allows youth to take advantage of the expertise of Behavioural Health Foundation staff in dealing with addictions, their therapeutic community education system, traditional teachings and healthy living programs. Programming includes:

- substance abuse awareness;
- anger management;
- assertiveness training;
- life skills seminars in conjunction with individual counselling, parenting meetings, clinical therapy sessions, education services; and
- many other services tailored to their specific needs.

“The Behavioural Health Foundation is pleased to be able to continue to provide quality services of a holistic nature, which includes youth programming as part of our therapeutic community,” said Jean Doucha, Executive Director of BHF. “Without this infusion of operational funding for our youth services we would not have been able to make it through this fiscal year.”

The Government of Canada launched the NHI in December 1999 to support communities’ efforts to alleviate homelessness. Between 1999 and 2006, \$1.15 billion will have been invested as part of the federal government’s commitment to addressing homelessness in Canada. To date in Winnipeg alone, 178 projects, representing an investment of close to \$30 million, have been either developed or approved to proceed. Funding for this project was provided for in the 2005 federal Budget.

The funding is coordinated through the WHHI, a partnership established by the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg to address homelessness, declining housing stock and the revitalization of Winnipeg’s older neighbourhoods. The WHHI just recently celebrated its 5th anniversary. Located at 361 Hargrave Street, the WHHI serves as a single-window office for community organizations to access information on government-funded housing and homelessness programs.

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