

**AT A GLANCE:
ANNUAL
REPORT
2021**



PATHWAYS FAMILIES
HELPING
FAMILIES
Serious Mental Illness Society

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WHO WE ARE

From left to right: Lisa Stringle, Cheryl Zipper, Janice Lilley and Shirley Chan at Pathways SMIS' 2018 Circle of Strength.



We are a volunteer-driven family support organization that provides education, support and advocacy to families and anyone who cares for a loved one with a serious mental illness (SMI) in British Columbia.

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Our Vision

is to be a vibrant, innovative center of support, education, awareness, and advocacy for families and others affected by SMI.

We have been working on the front lines for over four decades.

Our core programs and services are based on a peer support model. As such, all the programs and services we offer are delivered by trained Family Peer Support Volunteers with lived experience of caring for a family member, partner, friend, or relative with an SMI.



The many services I have accessed through Pathways has restored a sense of competency to me as a parent and has diminished the sense of isolation that is so detrimental to families with loved ones that struggle with addictions and mental illness.



A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Pathways SMIS' 2021 Annual Report, At A Glance, shines a spotlight on the ways in which we have helped families who care for a loved one with an SMI overcome the extraordinary obstacles they face.

Despite the continued strain the global pandemic continues to put on many areas of our lives, with your support in 2021, we helped more families caring for a loved one with a serious mental illness than ever before. The ongoing pandemic caused a decline in those areas requiring face-to-face encounters such as our First Hand Stories and our primary annual fund raiser Circle of Strength. For our other programs, by moving to an online platform, we were able to expand our reach to more people throughout BC and other parts of Canada.

With the benefit of government funding and an increase in grants, Pathways was able to increase the number of staff. This has meant that we've been able to put on a greater number of educational programs, including more in-depth skills building workshops. We've also been able to support a greater number of families through our peer-support programming.

Our core mission is to alleviate the suffering caused by SMIs. Year after year we're able to accomplish this mission and strengthen our community thanks to your support. You support our community through generously donating hours of your time to help other families affected by SMIs. You support our community through your generous contributions, you tell others about our work and you make our community more powerful than we could ever be without you. With you by our side, in 2022 we will make even greater strides for those caring for a loved one with an SMI.

We hope you enjoy reading about all the ways we were able to support families in 2021. We couldn't be more grateful to supporters like you.

Don Pavlovich

PRESIDENT, PATHWAYS SMIS

ACHIEVING OUR MISSION

Our Mission

is to alleviate the suffering caused by SMIs, including anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, concurrent disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and schizophrenia.

We achieve this mission and help hundreds of families a year through the following peer-led programming:

Family-to-Family Course



One-on-One Peer Support



Workshops



Weekly Support Groups



Public Lectures and School Presentations



Advocacy





OUR IMPACT IN 2021

Making a real impact

Since moving our programs online in 2020, more families than ever across British Columbia are able to get the help they need. The demand for our services continued to increase into 2021, with waitlists for our educational programs and support groups at capacity.

In response, we hosted more public lectures and developed new skills-building workshops, as well as hired two new members of staff. We saw registration and attendee rates treble compared to 2020 as a result.

This constant dedication of our volunteers, staff, and board has resulted in a substantial impact on the lives of families affected by SMIs. Here is a snapshot of our impact over the last year:

Reached

58

students in School Presentations.

Empowered

121

families with the information to support their loved one with an SMI.

Gathered and sent

20

letters from our families regarding Section 28 of the BC Mental Health Act.

Delivered lectures to

404

families on cutting edge research and information.

Received a

43%

increase in memberships to Pathways SMIS

Provided

442

one-on-one support calls to families in crisis.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Learning about the causes, symptoms, prognosis and treatments of different kinds of SMIs, and building skills around communication, boundary setting and problem-solving is critical to helping families better care for their ill loved ones and themselves. Higher levels of mental illness literacy in the wider community can help prevent the escalation of mental health problems. It can also ensure the safety of an ill loved one when unexpected crisis happens.

Family-to-Family education course

In 2021, **25% more** people registered their interest in our most popular educational program, the Family-to-Family course. This eight-week course is led by **trained volunteers** who have lived experience caring for a loved one with an SMI.

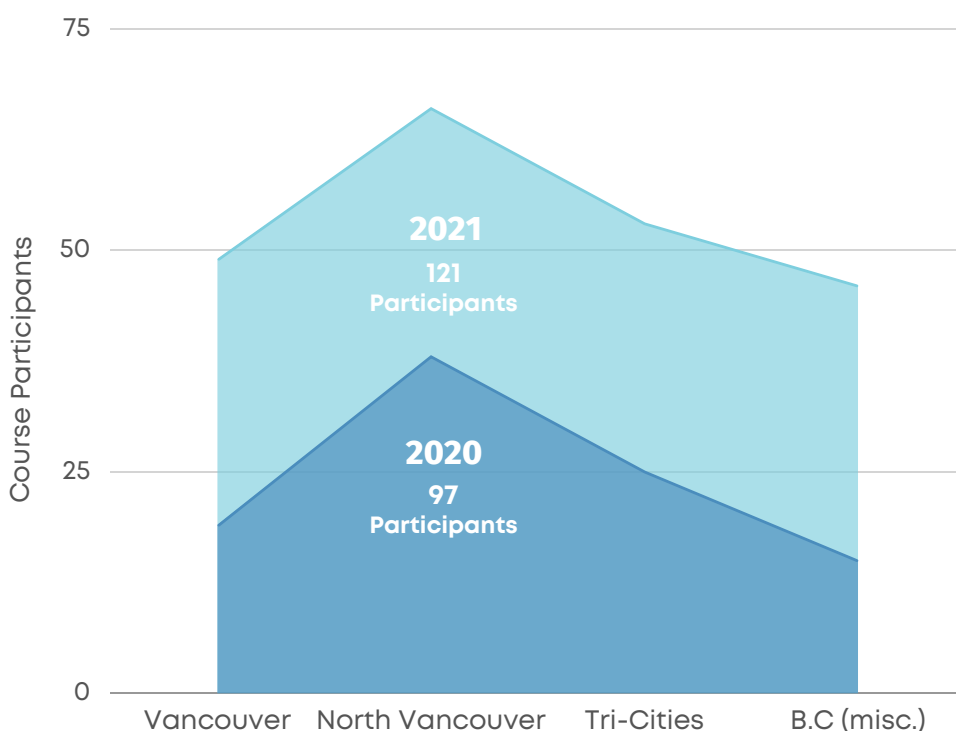
It covers topics including understanding mental illnesses, treatments, and therapies, handling a crisis, communication, and problem-solving skills, and managing negative feelings and self-care.

25%

increase in registration rates compared to 2020. by 25% and the graduation rate increased by 8% compared to 2020.

8%

increase in graduation rate compared to 2020.



“

I've learned a lot from this course, not only because of the thoughtful course materials, but also [the facilitators'] great compassion, energy, and diligence. My sister and I are now filled with hope because of them. Thank you.

Family-to-Family Course Attendee

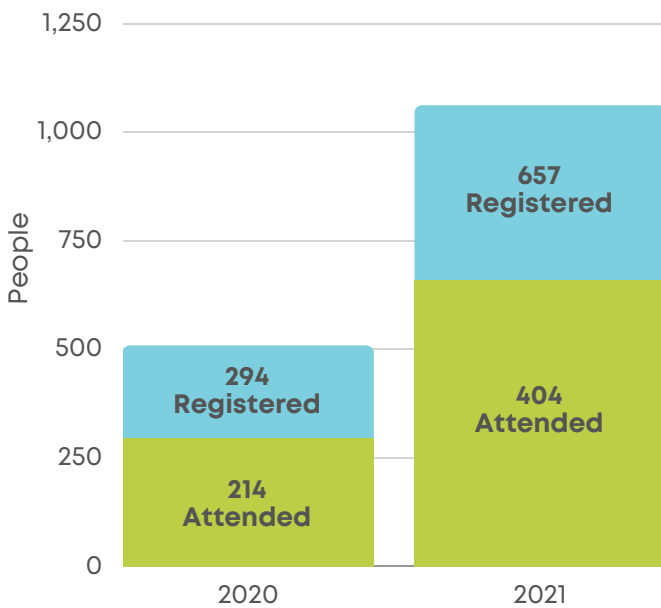
”

Public lecture series

This year, we held **more** public lectures than ever before. We invited speakers who have **lived experiences** of SMI, people who work in the BC mental health system, and academics researching SMIs. Anyone who is interested in SMI is invited to attend our public lectures.

Click [here](#) to see the full list of our public lectures in 2021.

Public Lectures 2020/21



School presentations: first hand stories

Due to COVID-19 and out of concern for the safety of our volunteers and attendees, School Presentations were postponed for most of 2021.

Consisting of a two-person panel – a person with a psychiatric diagnosis and a family member – each presenter describes their personal, first-hand experience of SMI.

Storytelling shares the experience of SMI in a moving and direct way and includes a question and answer section.



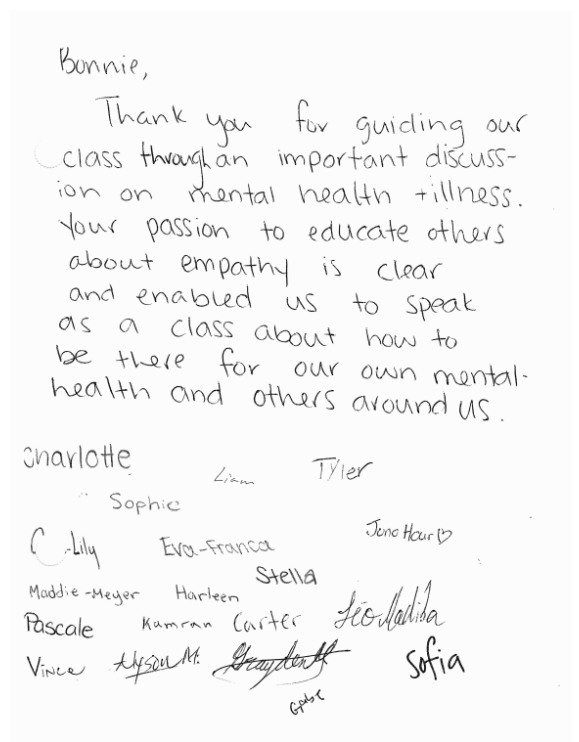
I appreciated sharing my experience with the public through Pathways because it was well-organized, well-attended and full of thoughtful questions that were facilitated equally between the panelists. I hope that everyone got a little more hope—myself included.

Panelist at November 4th Panel Discussion



89%

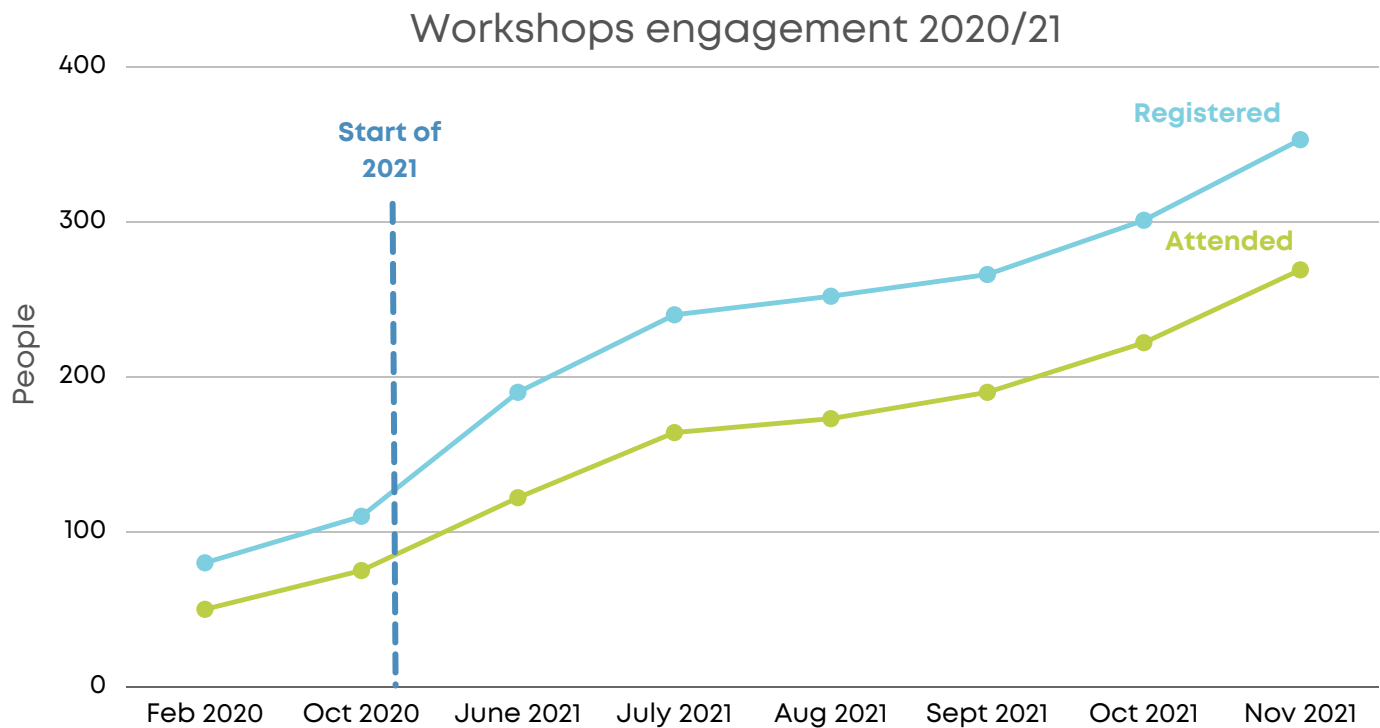
increase in attendees compared to 2020.



Workshops

In 2021 Pathways SMIS developed a number of new intensive, interactive skills building workshops alongside existing workshops. This was in response to the request of our community for more in-depth skills building sessions and were designed to build off the topics covered in the Family-to-Family course. All of our workshops are an opportunity to learn and develop specialized skills and/or knowledge to help families better care for their ill loved one.

Both the numbers of those who registered and attended workshops in 2021 almost trebled compared to 2020, where we held fewer workshops.



“

I feel more confident as I learn more about how to understand my loved one.

Communication skills building workshop attendee

”

200%

increase in attendees compared to 2020.

PEER SUPPORT SERVICES



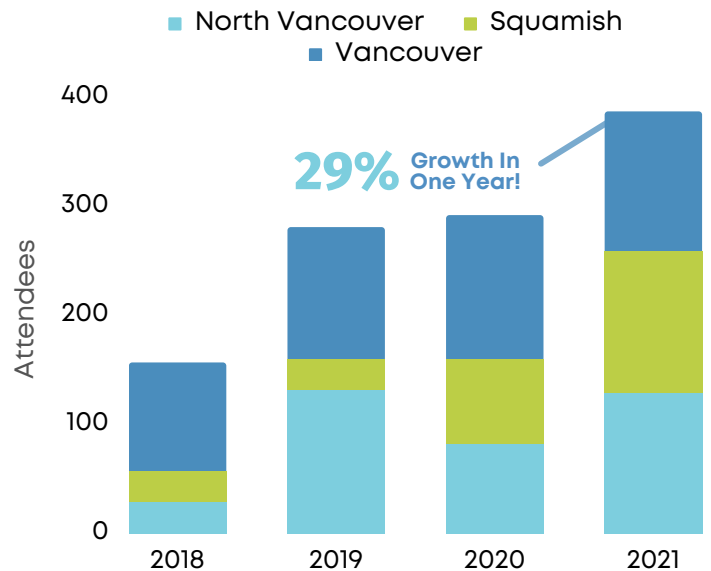
Speaking to others who have a shared experience can be the gateway for families to get the support their family needs. Our peer support is non-judgemental and deeply caring. It is also a highly valuable source of unique expertise. Our trauma-informed, trained Family Peer Support Volunteers support families on a one-on-one basis and in our weekly support groups.

Weekly support groups

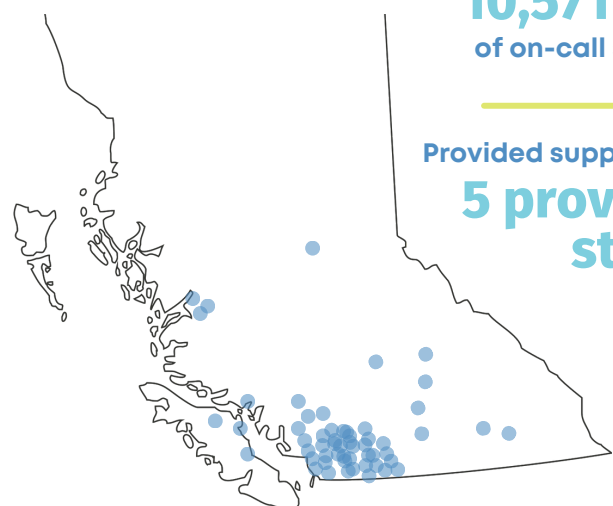


No one understands you better than the people who are in the same shoes as you are. Pathways' support groups give me what others can't even when they try because they don't have the experience of caring for a loved one with a serious mental illness.

Weekly support group attendee



One-on-one support



10,571 minutes
of on-call support in 2021.

Provided support to individuals in
5 provinces and states.



I am forever grateful to the support I found through Pathways. I was seriously struggling with grief and confusion and guilt and filled with fear that I was losing my son.

Recipient of one-on-one support



Who are we supporting on a one-on-one basis?

Looking at the data of our one-on-one support calls, we found out that the largest number of our callers are supporting a loved one who has bipolar disorder. We also discovered that over half of all our support calls are from **parents** of a loved one with an SMI.

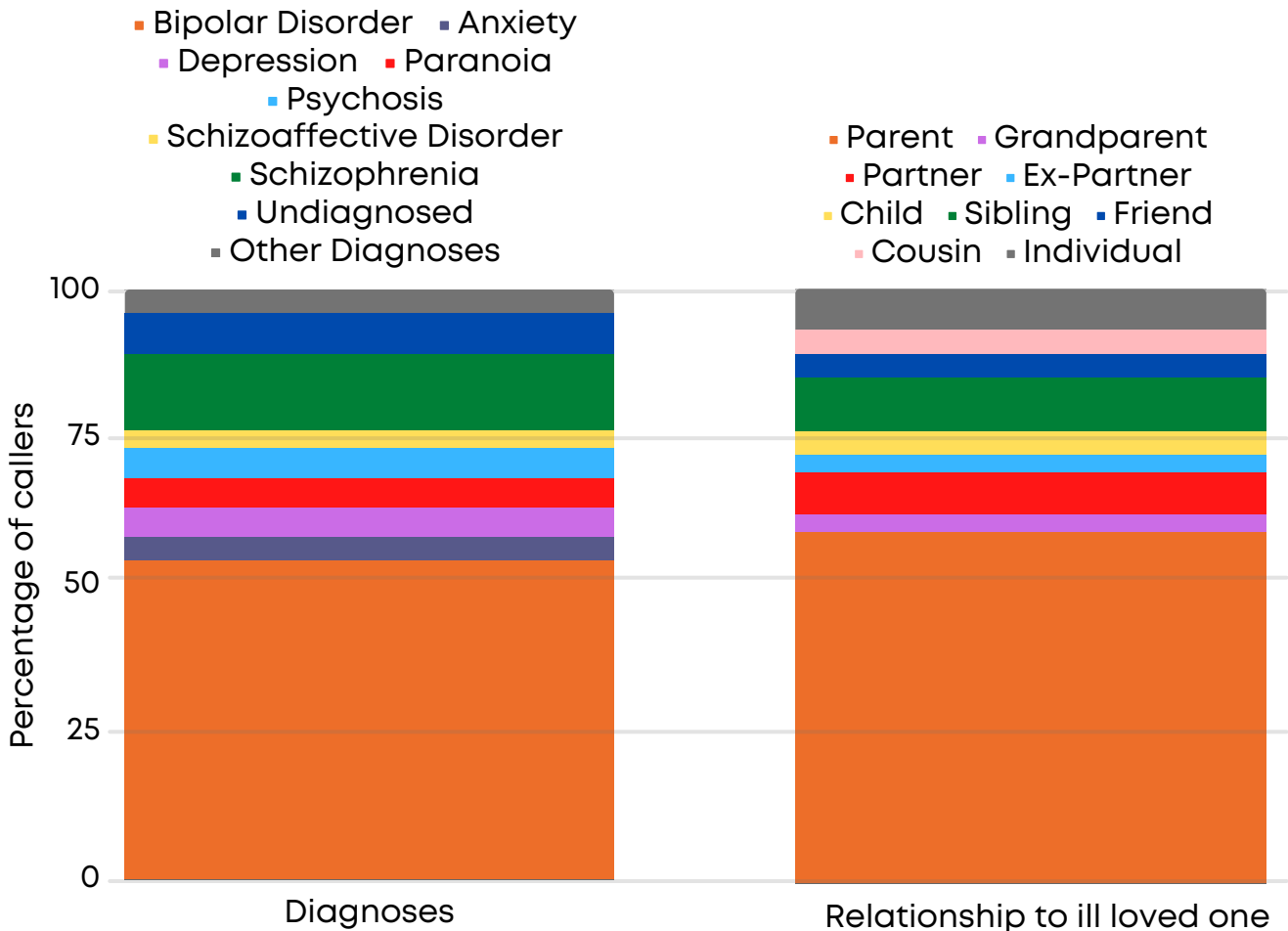


The Family Peer Support Volunteer assigned to me was very practical in helping me discern between symptoms and relationship and totally understood my frustration and confusion and grief, yet didn't leave me to drown in that.

Recipient of one-on-one support



Serious Mental Illness: Diagnoses and Symptoms as Reported by Callers



ADVOCACY



It takes a community to help families get their ill loved ones the support they need. Working alongside family members, we use a combination of direct government advocacy, letter-writing, and public education campaigns to advocate for the right to timely and adequate treatment for those living with an SMI as well as the involvement of families in that care.

Through both our educational programming and our peer support services, we also empower families with the tools and knowledge they need to better advocate for themselves or on behalf of their ill loved one.

This year Pathways SMIS has:

- Hosted the **Hon. Sheila Malcolmson**, Minister of Health and Addictions at our March Annual General Meeting.
- Sent more than **20 letters** to the Hon. Sheila Malcolmson, from you, our families, related to how the BC Mental Health Act helped you and your loved one's experiences.
- Had a **response** from the Hon. Sheila Malcolmson thanking you for the insight you have provided about what works well in the BC Mental Health Act.
- Sent the **federal leaders** of Canada's main political parties a letter regarding the importance of the **right to treatment** for those with an SMI in the context of the federal election held in September of this year.
- Organized **focus groups** where our families provided feedback on a new initiative on the North Shore: Peer Assisted Care Team (PACT) led by CMHA.
- Met with a number of **political representatives** to ensure the voices of families of a loved one with an SMI are heard.
- Been mentioned in the **Legislative Assembly** of British Columbia by MLA Karin Kirkpatrick.



THANK YOU

We are grateful to our incredible volunteers, donors, and organizations for the outpouring of support we have received from them during another challenging year.

We could not do what we do without you. ❤️

Volunteers

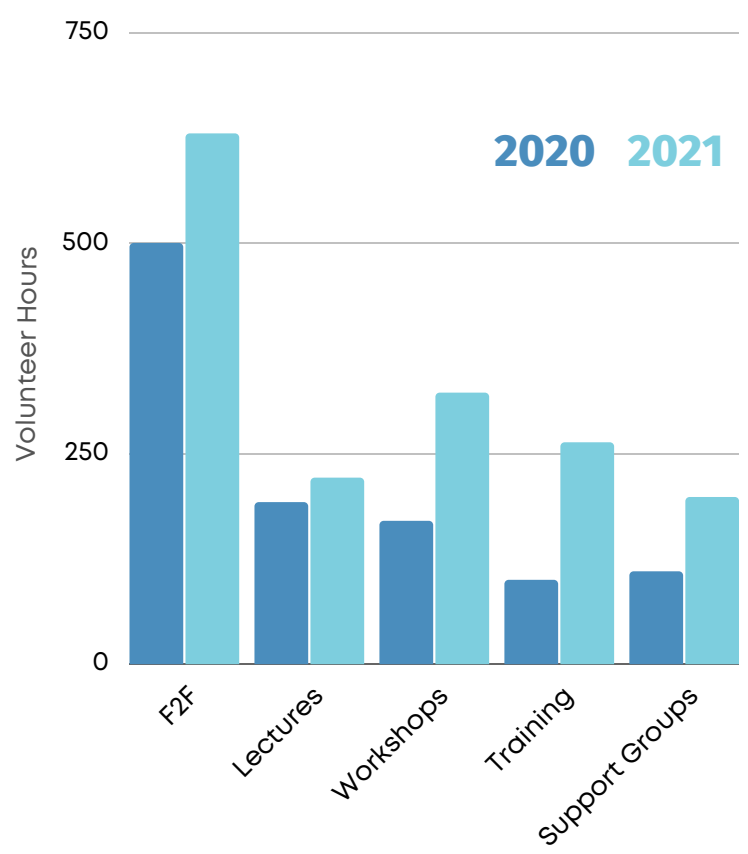
All of our programming happens thanks to our incredible families who dedicate their time and energy to giving back to other families who care for a loved one with an SMI.

An increase in Pathways SMIS services and programming this year has meant that the number of volunteer hours have almost doubled compared to 2020.

We'd like to say a huge thank you to all of you who have given the gifts of empathy, compassion and hope this year through your hard work and dedication to alleviating the suffering that SMIs can bring to families.

Donors

As we continue to navigate funding challenges that have been compounded by COVID-19, we rely on the generosity of the community in order to provide services free of charge to families in need. We greatly appreciate all donations, no matter the size, and value the difference your support makes to our community.



\$93,562

was generously donated by individual donors to Pathways SMIS in 2021.

Community fundraising

We thank all of those who went to great lengths to raise funds in the community on behalf of Pathways SMIS. We are very grateful for the generous donation from Mount Olivert Luthern Church. In addition, we are extremely thankful for supporters that raised funds from the Jazz Night, Sentinel Secondary School, and Shirley Chan's 100 Youth Who Care talk. Sadly, but out of concern for the health of our community, we were still unable to hold in-person fundraising events in 2021. This includes Pathways largest annual public fundraiser, Circle of Strength.

In-kind donations

We'd like to make a special mention to Accenture, from whom we were very fortunate to have secured an in-kind grant. This grant involved the donation of highly specialized Accenture staff hours to set up a new comprehensive Client Relationship Management Tool (CRM) database. This database will improve organizational and data management and enable us to better communicate with all stakeholders. This will enhance both productivity and efficiency at the same time. As a result of this in-kind grant, we've had no set-up costs – saving time, money, and human resources, which is unheard of when embarking on such a project.

Grants

We are very grateful for the generous grants that we received in 2021 from the following organizations:

Government grants

District North Vancouver Municipal Grant
District West Vancouver Municipal Grant
City of North Vancouver Municipal Grant
Resort Municipality of Whistler Grant
City of Coquitlam Municipal Grant
New Horizons (Federal Grant)
Vancouver Community Network (Government of Canada)
Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (Government Grant)
Canadian Emergency Rent Subsidy (Government Grant)

Community grants

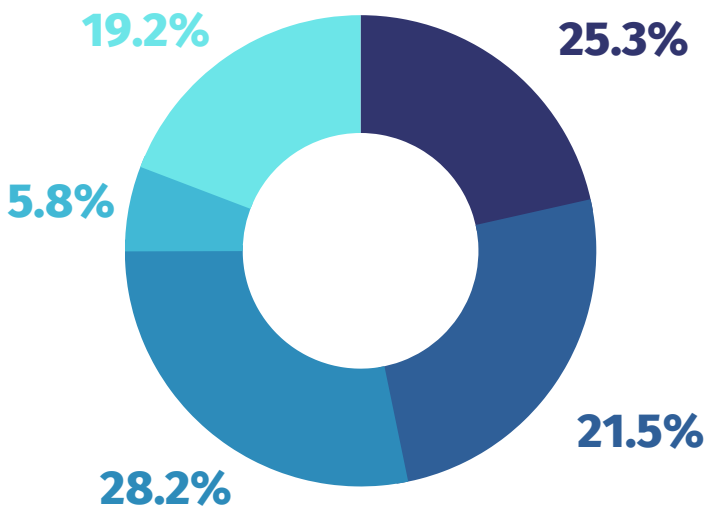
West Vancouver Community Foundation
North Vancouver Community Foundation
Community Foundation of Whistler
Soroptimist International of North & West Vancouver
Sunshine Coast Community Foundation
Kiwanis Club of West Vancouver
Lynn Valley Lions
BC Gaming Grant
Telus Friendly Future Foundation
Rina M. Bidin Foundation

FINANCIALS

Year end: December 31, 2021

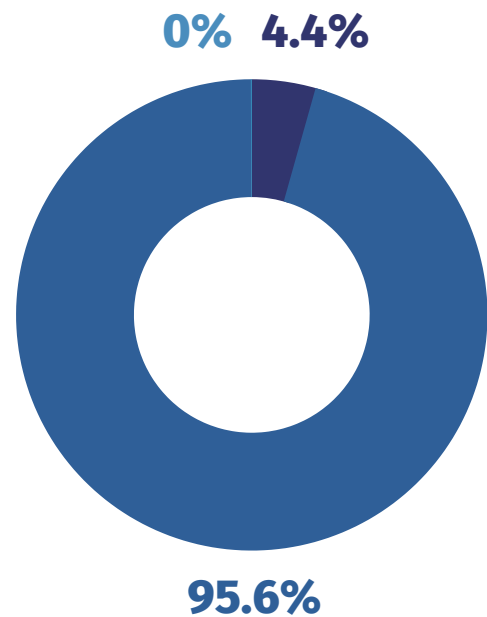
Revenue 2021

- Non-receipted donations
- Receipted donations
- Government funding
- BC Gaming & municipal grants
- All other revenue



Expenses 2021

- Fundraising
- Charitable programs
- Management & administration



Revenue	2020	2021
Non-receipted donations	\$22,585	\$21,803
Receipted donations	\$29,395	\$71,759
Government funding	\$67,597	\$105,375
BC Gaming & municipal grants	\$66,023	\$94,446
All other revenue	\$62,581	\$80,284
Total (\$)	\$248,181	\$373,687

Expenses	2020	2021
Fundraising	\$170	\$214
Management & admin	\$15,615	\$13,728
Charitable programs	\$204,442	\$300,560
Total (\$)	\$220,227	\$314,502

BUILDING COMMUNITY IN TRIBUTE TO MY MUM

Heidi's first experience living with a loved one with a serious mental illness began in early childhood. Suffering from long-term depression, Heidi's mother used alcohol to self-medicate, as did her mother's father, aunt, brother, and sister.

As the eldest daughter of the eldest daughter, Heidi felt the pull and taunt of "escaping" with alcohol. There were no trusted adults to learn healthy coping skills. "Depression just became a way of being. When patterns of codependency are so normalised, how does one recognise these things without the education?"

It wasn't until Heidi's own daughter suffered a mental health crisis that Heidi took it upon herself to get both her and her husband to deepen their understanding of different types of serious mental illness.

Taking part in Pathways SMIS' Family-to-Family psychoeducation course, she was introduced to a blame-free perspective of serious mental illness as well as a community of individuals with similar experiences.

Heidi learned she wasn't alone and that her situation was like that of many others on the course. These personal connections helped her to overcome the deep shame that she had felt.



Connecting with this community at Pathways SMIS, sharing her story and hearing stories of tremendous resilience has served Heidi as "an invitation to heal through learning and learn through healing together as a community".

Developing mental illness literacy and communication skills has not only deepened her family's connection but also "inspired me and nudged me to grow and bring my skills to support others in creating peace of mind through radical acceptance and extreme self-care".

Heidi became a Family-to-Family teacher in 2019 and has since been involved in teaching the course as well as working on creating skills-building workshops in 2021 as a way of giving back.

"Building a community around it has made all the difference for me." Heidi's mother did manage to stop drinking in her early seventies; a phenomenal achievement since she was the first person in her family to stop drinking.

Sadly, Heidi's mother, Ginny, only survived a few years following her sobriety because of the toll loneliness and alcohol took on her. "I give in tribute to my mum. She didn't have this kind of community. I really think that if she had had people that she could be real with, she would have had more hope and self-compassion."

➔ **To give in tribute:** <https://pathwayssmi.org/donate/donate-now/>

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Would you like to use your knowledge and experience of caring for a loved one with a serious mental illness to help others who are going through something similar?

Do you want to give your gifts of hope and compassion to others in a similar position to you?

Are you passionate about using your power to effect systems change?

Volunteering with Pathways is a way to put your skills, knowledge and passion into action and become a part of our community of care.

Join us on the front lines with parents, siblings, partners, adult children, friends and grandparents who care for a loved one with an SMI as we build the Pathways SMIS community!



@PathwaysSMIS

Volunteer with us

Visit our website to learn about current volunteer opportunities and sign up:

<https://pathwayssmi.org/volunteer-with-us/>

Stay connected



Membership

For a small annual fee, you can join the Pathways SMIS Family. Visit our website to learn more:

pathwayssmi.org/membership



Be informed

Subscribe to our newsletter to hear about events, opportunities, and our families' work all in one place:

pathwayssmi.org/subscribe



Donate

Help us alleviate the suffering caused by SMIs:

pathwayssmi.org/donate



Fundraising Ideas

Send us your ideas for third-party fundraising:

pathwayssmi.org/third-party-fundraising/



Have any questions?

Email us at info@pathwayssmi.org or Call us at **604-926-0856**.

