

Foundry North Shore

Family Services of the North Shore connects community

For those unfamiliar with the not-for-profit, accredited **Family Services of the North Shore (FSNS)**, consider it one of the hidden gems that has been helping families, couples, individuals, youth and children cope and heal from a broad range of issues including depression, anxiety, divorce, abuse, violence, eating disorders and other issues for over 60 years. Its vision is “A connected community where people care for one another.”

“We span the entire lifecycle of an individual - from before they are born to the end of life essentially,” says Julia Staub-French, FSNS Executive Director.

FSNS annually serves 8,300 individuals and families on the North Shore through a broad range of social services from a diverse array of cultural and economic backgrounds. The organization is particularly known for its pioneering work in eating disorders prevention through its Jessie’s Legacy program.

And now Family Services of the North Shore is partnering with Foundry North Shore where it will bring its expertise to the team environment by focusing on therapeutic interventions for families, which includes help for issues such as:

- Separation
- Divorce
- Child-parent conflict
- Violence in Relationships/
Children witnessing violence
- Sibling relationships
- Family communication

“While we will continue to offer a full range of counselling services for youth at our main office on 1111 Lonsdale Ave., we will use our Family Therapy expertise to support youth and their families with a FSNS counsellor at Foundry,” says Mike Smith, FSNS Program Manager and Clinical



Mike Smith, Emily Watson and Shelley Hine from Family Services of the North Shore.

Supervisor, Community Counselling Programs. “For example, if the child has mental health issues, we’ll work together to stabilize the family dynamic, which is outside the mental health symptoms, and show the family how to support their child while they go through a divorce.”

“The child’s mental health will improve if you strengthen the family unit – you don’t want to treat a youth in isolation,” says Julia. “We support youth in the context of family.”

FSNS works with two-parent families (same and opposite sex parents), blended families, single parents, grandparents, foster parents, and extended family members. Sometimes one member of a family has been identified as the one with the “problem”, but usually that person is simply the one who sounds the alarm that something is not okay within the family.

“Our counsellors can help a family figure out what is really going on, how to get a new perspective, build on strengths, and

reconnect with each other,” says Julia.

In a family counselling process, the counsellor will assess the family dynamics and then determine who needs to be involved in each session and where those sessions might be held.

“We believe youth and families should be seen in a location that best fits their needs,” says Julia. “We might meet a family at Foundry but if the wrap-around approach is best for a family, we can see them at Foundry, in our FSNS offices on Lonsdale or at their home through our outreach program. It’s important that youth and families have a choice of where they want to be seen. There is a uniqueness to how we serve the community. We are very proud to be a part of a North Shore community that takes care of its most vulnerable and it is a privilege to partner with so many excellent programs at Foundry North Shore.”

For a full menu FSNS programs, go to www.familyservices.bc.ca.

Peer Navigators help demystify health and social services

When Foundry North Shore opens its doors this summer, youth and parents won't have to feel alone trying to find the help they need. They will be able to rely on someone who's been in their shoes who will be able to connect with them in ways that are more personal.

They will have a peer navigator.

Youth and parent peer navigators are individuals with "lived experience" who have knowledge of mental illness/substance use and are familiar with the mental health system.

Trained and employed by the **Canadian Mental Health Association (BC Division)**, the peer navigator's role at Foundry North Shore is to:

- Establish a dignifying and purposeful relationship with clients
- Work beside the clients as they self-identify their needs.
- Assist clients to access community integration activities and services
- Support clients to advocate for themselves
- Assist clients in obtaining information and potential referrals relative to maintaining services and support in areas related to mental health services

Foundry will have two Youth Peer Navigators – Yvana Avram, who was featured in the first newsletter, and Mallory Kinar. A parent peer navigator will also be hired.



"It's never too early or too late to get help."

**Mallory Kinar,
Youth Peer Navigator**

which provide participants with the knowledge and skills to cope with daily challenges.

Mallory's motto in life is: "Nobody should ever have to suffer alone."

"I've had many friends and family members who've experienced mental health concerns," Mallory says, "and I've noticed there are a lot of gaps in services for older youth so I'm so glad to see a place like Foundry include people up to age 24."

"Helping youth feel supported as they deal with mental health issues is an important part of the work we do at CMHA," said Sandra Severs, Executive Director of the North and West Vancouver Branch. "Having our peer support workers at Foundry will help us connect better with youth and the new parent navigator will help us support families as they navigate the mental health system."

From her teen years and into adulthood, Mallory Kinar has worked closely with at-risk youth as well as with adults with concurrent disorders. She currently works as a residential health care worker in a group home and is also a facilitator for the CMHA's Living Life to the Full workshops,

From her experience, Mallory says too many youth who turn 19 often don't know how to navigate the adult system, and when faced with barriers will simply give up seeking help.

"It's important to catch people when they are younger and can be better supported for a smoother transition into adulthood," she says. "And this is what Foundry will be able to do – eliminate the gaps in service by multiple service providers working together and identifying what's going on with a young person. Support is better when there is wrap-around care."

"It's never too early or too late to get help," she says.

Foundry North Shore—Service Menu

Who will be onsite:

VCH, Ministry of Children and Family Development, YWCA (Work BC), Canadian Mental Health Association, Hollyburn Family Services, Capilano Community Services, North Shore Neighbourhood House, Parkgate Community Services Society, Family Services of the North Shore.

What services will be provided:

- Youth medical clinic (primary



care/public health)

- Mental health counselling
- Substance use counselling
- Walk-in counselling
- Family counselling
- Groups for parents and youth
- Prevention services

- Psychiatry
- Hospital liaison
- iYOS (Urgent Response/Intensive Case Management)
- Peer support
- Parent navigator
- Eating Disorder Services
- Vocational services
- Housing support services
- Occupational Therapy