



# Transforming healthcare for young people in BC.

2022/2023 Foundry Impact Report

· F O U N D R Y ·

 STpaul's  
FOUNDATION

# With Gratitude

**Young people have more reasons to be hopeful about their future these days, and it's thanks to you.**

With 16 centres across BC and 19 more in development, Foundry is growing at an exciting pace. Because of you, young people can visit safe, free, and confidential spaces to access counselling, wellness, and employment support. Places where they are celebrated for who they are, and don't feel ashamed to ask for the support and early intervention they need and deserve.

Your generosity has made our growth possible, and Foundry is now being recognized as a model to invest in. The Government of BC made an unprecedented commitment this year for an additional 10 centres to open by 2026. One day soon, youth will have a choice of 35 centres in urban and rural communities across BC, plus support from our Foundry Virtual team and the Foundry BC app.

All of this is because of your commitment to empowering young people to achieve a balanced and fulfilling life. Your support is helping youth access life-changing services throughout BC, and transforming the culture of care.

**Thank you from all of us.**

Yours truly,



A white handwritten signature of Dr. Steve Mathias, written in a cursive style.

**Dr. Steve Mathias,**  
Co-Executive Director



A white handwritten signature of Dr. Karen Tee, written in a cursive style.

**Dr. Karen Tee**  
Co-Executive Director

# Your support is helping more young people access life-changing services throughout BC.

Over  
**35,000**  
of BC's youth have accessed Foundry's services since April 2018, including **17,567** youth in Fiscal Year 2022/23.



**16** Foundry centres open  
**9** centres in development  
**10** centres announcing soon



- Open**
  - Campbell River
  - Cariboo Chilcotin
  - Comox Valley
  - Kelowna
  - Langley
  - North Shore
  - Prince George
  - Vancouver-Granville
  - Abbotsford
  - Victoria
  - Penticton
  - Port Hardy
  - Ridge Meadows
  - Richmond
  - Sea to Sky
  - Terrace
- Coming Soon**
  - Burns Lake
  - East Kootenay
  - Fort St. John
  - Kamloops
  - Pxwell River
  - Sunshine Coast
  - Surrey
  - Tri-Cities
  - Vernon

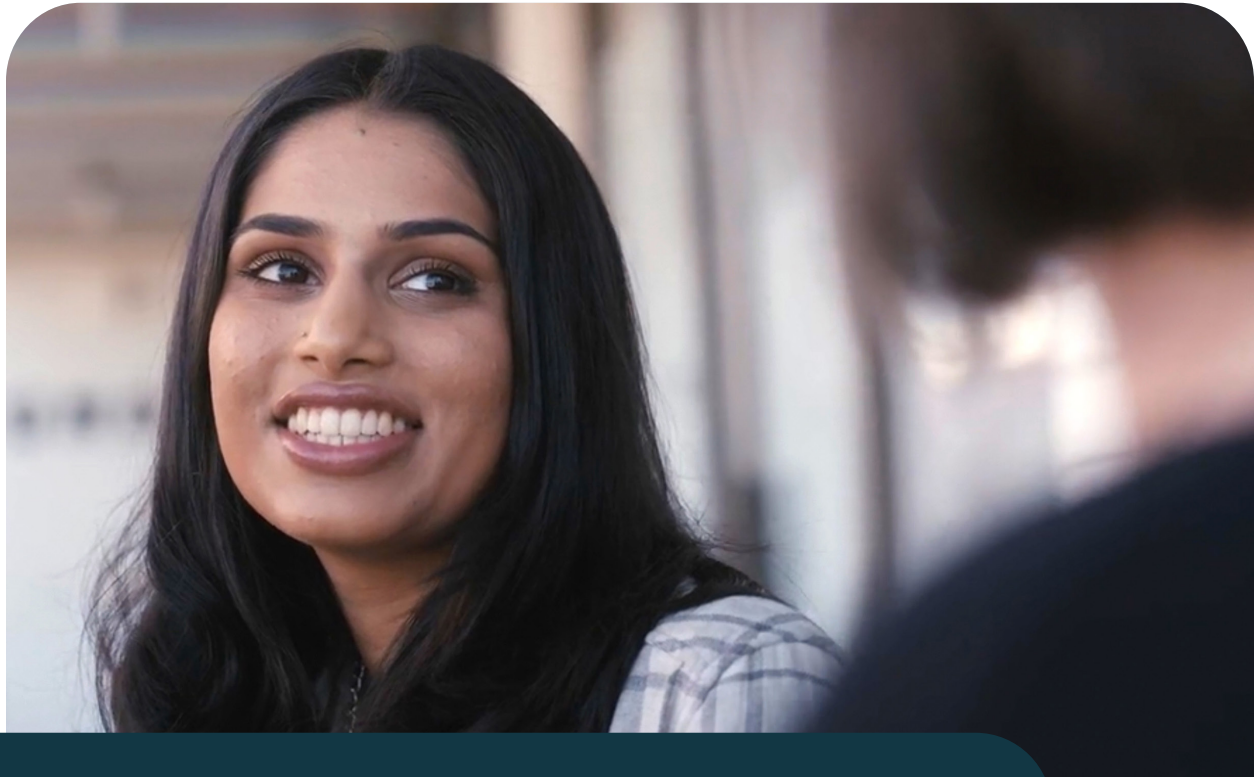


Over  
**15,000**  
virtual appointments since launching Foundry Virtual services and the Foundry BC App in April 2020 during the pandemic



# Your Support is Saving Lives.

Foundry is getting to the very root of the mental health crisis and creating low-barrier, free and safe spaces for youth where they can get help and be seen before it's too late.



**“If my 10 year-old self was sitting here right now I would really just give her a hug and I would tell her that you’re gonna be OK.”**

**Amira**, Youth from Foundry Surrey BC



**Watch Amira’s story here**

“I think historically, the mental health system has been backwards. It’s been reactionary instead of preventative, by trying to help people when they’re already addicted or already suicidal,” shares Amira. “This is where Foundry is disrupting the system, by getting to the very root of the mental health crisis and creating low-barrier, free and safe spaces for youth where they can get help and be seen before it’s too late. Foundry is saving lives.”

# Connections That Matter.

**Through Foundry's peer support program, young people receive critical mental health support from someone who has been there themselves.**

As a former client, Amanda knows first-hand how important it is to have someone reach out to you during a mental health crisis, and for them to understand what you're going through. "My youth peer supporter was instrumental in my mental health journey," she says. "I know how important it is to be able to connect with someone who's gone through something similar as me, without feeling judged."

Now a youth peer support worker herself at Foundry Vancouver-Granville, Amanda says, "I'm so grateful to see the expansion of youth peer support services across Foundry centers."

Peer support is based on the idea that those who have experienced adversity can draw from

their own lived experiences to provide support, mentorship and encouragement to others facing similar situations.

Foundry's youth peer support workers provide inclusive, safe and empathetic support to young people, and serve as a catalyst for young people to keep pursuing their journey of wellness and healing.

**Thanks to your support, we can invest more in youth peer support and inclusive employment opportunities to support young people in their health and wellness journey.**

**"It always takes time for me to trust people, but it didn't take as long when I met my peer supporter because she was open with me and she told me her whole story. I just really learned to trust her."**

**Youth receiving peer support**



We now have **70 Youth Peer Support Workers** in the network – more than double this time last year!

# A Chance to Restore, and Explore.

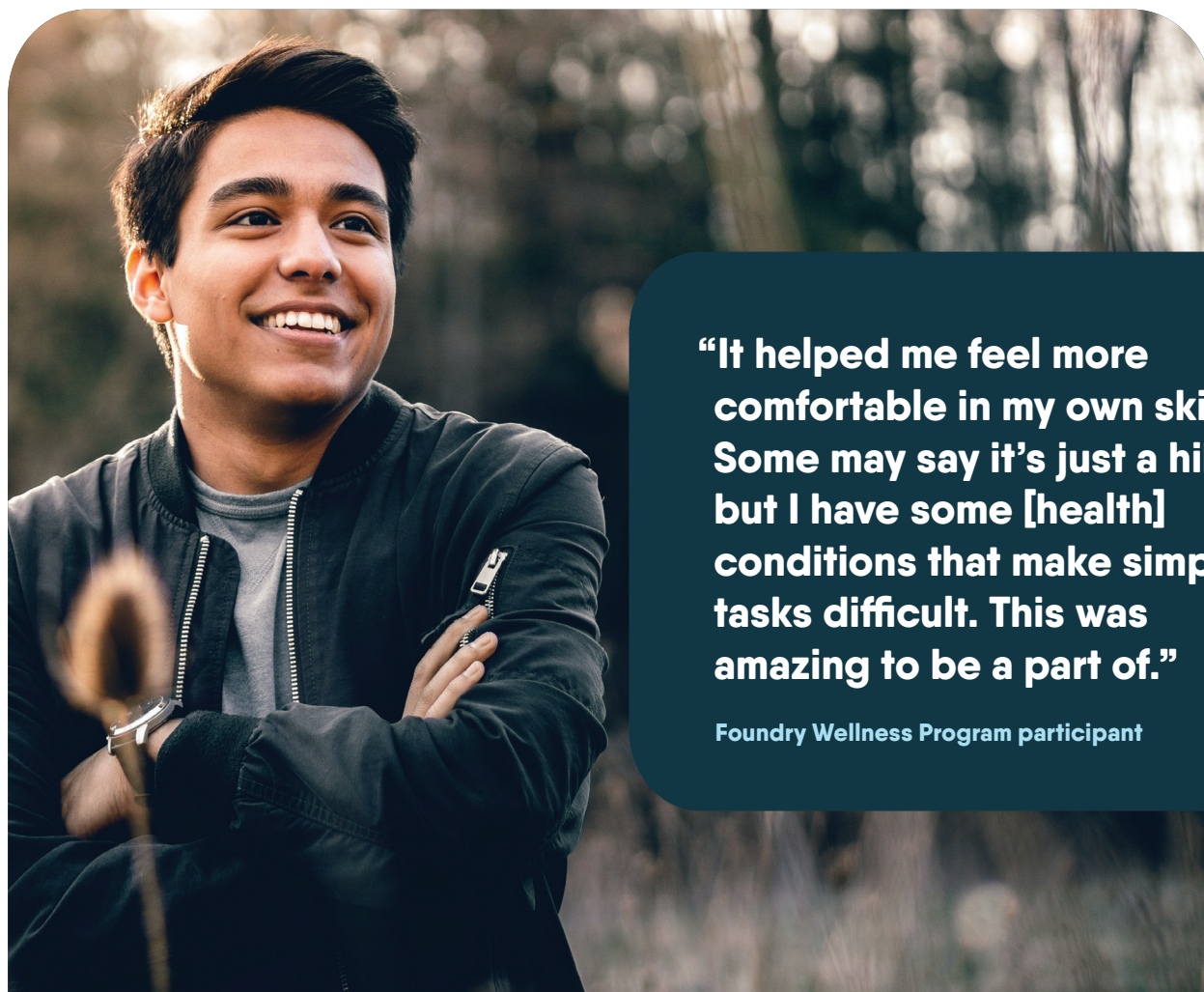
**Because of you, Foundry can provide young people with access to the outdoors and other holistic wellness activities, at a time when they need it more than ever.**

Each Foundry is unique and uses wellness activities to serve the needs of the local youth.

At Foundry Vancouver-Granville, for example, donor support makes weekly wellness activities possible, including an Art Group that includes collaging, illustration, painting, wood crafts, clay sculpting, jewelry making, mood boards, needlepoint, tie dying and embroidery. At Foundry Terrace, donations to the Wellness Program fund supports chess lessons and Open Mic nights, while Foundry Penticton host skateboarding lessons and Bob Ross painting

nights. There's Bannock Tuesday at Foundry Cariboo-Chilcotin, and Snowshoe Friday at Foundry Comox Valley.

The Wellness Program supports young people who experience multiple barriers: significant mental illness, trauma, homelessness, and substance use challenges. Wellness activities allow the team to support youth to develop essential skills and self-awareness, and build meaningful engagement, as part of their health care services.



**“It helped me feel more comfortable in my own skin. Some may say it’s just a hike but I have some [health] conditions that make simple tasks difficult. This was amazing to be a part of.”**

Foundry Wellness Program participant





# Helping Young People Achieve Their Goals.

**Your support is helping young people pursue meaningful education and employment opportunities.**

Founded a year ago, the Foundry Work & Education program is changing the game of youth employment by providing employment skills, mentoring, and social supports in one convenient location, both in-person or online.

Across BC, 1 in 10 youth are not in employment, education or training. Since the pandemic, these numbers have only risen. Many youth are caught in the dilemma of not having the experience required to work, but unable to gain work without experience. Any mental health and substance use issues create additional barriers.

Your support helped Foundry launch the Foundry Work & Education Program to increase employment-related skills and provide additional support for youth trying to enter the job market or pursue education or training.

The Foundry Work & Education program uses a team approach by coordinating and aligning young people's health, wellness and education or employment goals.

Because of your support, our research team has undertaken a significant data strategy to understand the employment, education, and training support needs of youth in BC. This data strategy also allows us to assess the Foundry Work & Education Program and its Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model, understand what helps youth and what needs improvements, and enhances the program in real-time. But most significantly, research into understanding ways to help youth break barriers to achieving employment or education will improve youth wellbeing.

Dr. Skye Barbic (Head Scientist at Foundry and Associate Professor at University of British

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Columbia), leads this research. What impressed her from the interviews with young people was how important participation was to them as part of leading a healthy life. “To young people today, health means more than physical wellness,” says Dr. Barbic, “It means participating, whether in school, in a job, or being present with friends and family.”

Through the Foundry model, the goals of the young person is at the forefront. “It takes time, and that can be easy for some, and not so easy for others,” explains Dr. Barbic. The ability to tailor the system to be developmentally appropriate is key, and that’s where Foundry excels by providing mental health support, coaching, and other support as well.

Working with local employers has been crucial to setting up placements that succeed. Foundry

maintains a relationship with employers when they’ve connected with someone through the program, which helps employers feel empowered that there’s someone to contact if anything happens or any concerns, rather than just letting someone go.

Employers love working with Foundry because they felt alone in the past when they have challenges with someone,” says Dr. Barbic. “Employers feel more socially responsible when there is help provided.”

All of this means that young people are being supported to pursue their work and education goals, and participate in ways that matter to them.

[Read more stories here.](#)



## In the last year through the Foundry Works research project:

**776**

youth engaged and supported in 2022-2023, with over 100 youth consenting to participate in the program’s research study.

**63%**

of the 123 youth who have completed the program have gained employment or returned to school, compared to a 15% success rate for Foundry youth in traditional employment programs.

Over  
**350**

new health, community, and employer partnerships developed across the province.





# Empowering the Youth Voice.

Foundry is demystifying mental health through social media.

What do actors Pedro Pascal, Noah Schnapp and Bill Hader have in common?

For young people who follow Foundry's Instagram account (@FoundryBC), these three actors serve as recognizable memes – a viral image or video derived from pop culture that is instantly recognizable – who advocate for Foundry's services through comedy and cultural relevance.

Pedro Pascal's meme supported Foundry in promoting their online Pathfinder tool, a 3-step tool that helps young people find free, personalized supports. This post resonated strongly with Foundry's audiences and resulted in 138 new followers and over 120 clicks to foundrybc.ca, indicating that humour can effectively reach young people by making mental health topics more approachable and less daunting.

Behind this engaging content is a team of 43 creative young people, also known as members of Foundry's Youth Advisory Committee (YAC), who support Foundry's content strategy by generating ideas – often, by striking a balance between creating informative content around serious mental health topics with a light, comedic tone that resonates well with audiences.

This is seen through consistently high engagement among their audiences, resulting in shares and saves to posts, as well as several allied health organizations repurposing or sharing Foundry's content.

As Foundry continues to demystify youth mental health, it is through your ongoing support that they are able to raise further awareness that youth do not need to be in crisis to get support.



## Turning Research into Action.

Foundry Research is a diverse group of researchers, trainees, staff, service providers, community members, youth and caregivers, sharing the goal of making positive change in the lives of young people and communities by centring their voices in research. This goal is supported through the co-creation and implementation of evidence, and through knowledge exchange with partners and collaborators.

### Positive change through collaborative research:

**12** Youth4Youth Advisory Committee members informed Foundry's Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP) research project, **3** of whom were also hired as Youth Research Assistants on the project.

**3** solutions to improve opioid treatment services co-created by youth with lived experience, parents/caregivers, and service providers from **4** Foundry communities (Prince George, Kelowna, Vancouver, Victoria) as part of the Improving Treatment Together (ITT) Project.

**7** Youth Advisors, ages 12 to 15, co-designed a Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) study, **4** of whom were also hired as Youth Research Assistants on the study.

[Click here to learn more.](#)





## 2022–2023 Foundry Research Highlights:

**16**

research projects,  
plus over **20**  
partnered  
research projects

**11**

supported  
graduate students,  
fellows and trainees

**20**

successful grants  
(3 Foundry-led,  
17 partnered)

**50+**

conference  
presentations

**20+**

academic  
publications



**Thank you for your generous support to Foundry.**  
**You are helping us to support youth in living a good life.**



**“I feel so grateful and so honored to be able to support youth in my community and youth in general. I know that it wouldn’t be possible without people caring and without people donating.”**

**Deanna** – Clinical Counselor, Foundry, Langley BC



**Watch the video here.**

**To stay connected and find out how you can continue to support youth in BC contact:**

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**[foundrybc.ca](http://foundrybc.ca)**