



The Recovery Café Vancouver

Program Impacts and Updates - September 2023



THANK YOU

A heartfelt thank you to Streetohome Foundation and 625 Powell Street Foundation for their partnership in helping us launch the Recovery Café and bring this program to Canada for the first time. Thank you to our incredible community of donors, volunteers, and supporters who allow us to continue growing our impact and support our members in their recovery journeys.

We are pleased to share with you this report, outlining some of the successes we have seen over the last year.



Program Impacts - September 2022 to August 2023:

Total members: 122

Total circles held each week: 8

Total attendance at Recovery Circles: 944

Total program attendance: 1,188

Total member entries (all programs and activities): 2,307

The Recovery Café provides:

- Facilitator-led Recovery Circles aimed at creating community and connection and providing a space for participants to discuss and draw conclusions about recovery options
- Free meals, coffee, and other beverages, prepared in collaboration with members
- Access to phones and computers
- Connection with resource specialists to help members navigate available services and supports
- Connection with other members through social and recreational activities to build community
- Workshops, training, and activities focused on the individual goals of members



Member Highlights

" [The café is] clean, welcoming and incredibly generous. I appreciate the mandatory nature of the meetings as it compels me to break out of my patterns."

- Recovery Café Member

At the Kettle, we are committed to centering the voices of our members in the programs that we implement. Members are involved in all aspects of the Recovery Café from daily operations to running programs. Additionally, we engage our members through surveys in order to anonymously collect feedback and measure the impact of programs.

In a survey conducted in August 2023, Recovery Café members shared the following:

- **79%** reported taking better care of themselves
- **75%** reported experiencing mental health stabilization
- **79%** reported having a better outlook on life and motivation to do things

We aim to support members with holistic programming to empower them beyond the walls of the program. Members have access to a variety of wraparound services offered through the Kettle, as well as a range of resources through the café. Some highlights from this past year include:

- **2 members** were directly assisted with getting permanent housing through BC Housing
- **2 members** were directly assisted with gaining employment through the Kettle's SEED program
- **5 members** have successfully transitioned out of the Recovery Café programming after obtaining market employment



A Community of Healing and Transformation

In collaboration with Streethome Foundation and 625 Powell Street Foundation, The Recovery Café soft launched at a temporary location and this past fall, finally moved to its permanent home at 620 Clark Drive. Acting as a complement to existing supports and services, the café is the first of its kind in Canada and aims to build community and connection; supporting members along their entire continuum of recovery, whatever that may look like for them. Unlike other community recovery programs, the Recovery Café model does not have a religious affiliation and does not prescribe predetermined recovery treatments.

This model is evidence-informed and in 2020 a survey conducted with 300 Recovery Café members in Seattle, Everett, and Spokane found the following:

- **96.53%** reported that the Recovery Café had increased their desire to be in recovery
- **88%** reported that the Recovery Café helped them to prevent alcohol relapse
- **90.69%** reported that the Recovery Café helped them to prevent drug relapse
- **81.86%** reported that the Recovery Café helped them to stabilize their mental health
- **82.43%** reported their health had improved “a lot” or “somewhat” since joining
- **69.65%** reported that their housing situation had improved “a lot” or “a little” since joining

From art and music therapy to photography classes and barista training, the Café not only provides recovery supports, but also seeks to provide members with the resources they need to meet their individually identified goals.

Reflecting On the Last Year

Since officially opening our permanent location in September 2022, we have seen a steady increase in membership with a surge in the Winter and Spring. We brought on a second full-time staff member which has contributed to further growth and development of café programming. In May 2023, we reached our goal of reaching 100 members - an exciting milestone that we are continuing to build on with 122 active members to date.

"They say pain shared is pain lessened...I can begin anew each day, change is possible." - Katherine, Recovery Café Member

This membership growth has allowed us to create a strong and stable community of recovery, with members playing a pivotal role in assisting with the operations of the café. As new members join, we task and train them to participate more in the day-to-day running of the café; including barista training, food and beverage service as well as running programs and Recovery Circles. We have seen first-hand the positive connections and relationships that have formed between members who were previously isolated and struggling with limited support and social connections. Members themselves have engaged in outreach on behalf of the café and we now welcome more new members by word-of-mouth referrals than ever before.

With such a strong foundation built, we are confident that the strength and resilience of our Recovery Café will enable continued, sustainable growth.





Healing Through Art - Program Spotlight

In addition to recovery supports such as access to resources and daily recovery circles, the Café is a community hub that hosts various other programs and activities available to members.

Since moving to 620 Clark Drive, the Kettle Choir has been using the space as a rehearsal area - providing an easily accessible location for choir members. The choir is comprised of Kettle clients, staff, and tenants, many of whom have lived experience with being unhoused and/or living with mental health challenges. Weekly choir sessions offer members:

- A safe space for members to express themselves musically
- A place to create lasting friendships
- An opportunity to connect to Kettle support services, including those offered through the Recovery Café

We've also been lucky to have a variety of therapeutic programs such as, art therapy and music therapy, be hosted out of the Café . This past year we've had the pleasure of hosting one music therapy practicum student and one art therapy practicum student running programs on a weekly basis.

Art therapy provides an active way to engage deeply with the present moment, our thoughts, perceptions, and feelings, in time and space. It also helps individuals:

- Relieve stress
- Build up self-esteem
- Communicate with others through art
- Overcome personal fears

Learnings From Year One

As a new program, we've experienced a few challenges. We are still learning and evolving in an effort to continue our growth while maintaining engagement with our existing membership.

Programming: Programming has been challenging to establish as we balance the need for fresh programs and activities. Our weekly member feedback meetings help identify areas of interest but we know from experience that it takes time to build up a program. Our team is still working to find the balance of phasing out programming with lower attendance while giving time for interest to build when launching new programming.

Data and Reporting: The integrity of our data and reporting is important as we build our membership and raise funds. It has been a challenge to achieve participation in our member surveys. We conduct these surveys with our membership every three months and have focused on this aspect of data collection over the summer in an effort to improve our completion rate.

Retention: Long-term retention of our members and consistency in the attendance of Recovery Circles has been our biggest challenge. Our team has made a dedicated effort to focus on addressing this challenge by emphasizing the importance of intention and commitment with our members, starting at our new member introduction sessions. In recent months, we've seen retention increase from an average of 30% to 50%.







Looking Ahead To the Next Year

We are incredibly proud of the impacts we have enabled since we opened the Recovery Café at our pop-up location. The growth we have seen over the last year and the dedication of our members makes us confident in the continued success of this program. We've identified several goals for the next year that will allow us to increase the breadth and depth of the Recovery Café:

- Increase membership to 200 with 60% retention
- Increase weekly circles to 12 per week with at least one per day run by members
- Increase capacity for members' employment goals by providing certification for at least 25 members for: FoodSafe, Naloxone training, WHMIS, and First Aid
- Host the Eastside Culture Crawl with member volunteers
- Expand on member-run programs, including the start of a podcast about recovery
- Continue weekly art and music therapy programs
- Grow the choir to 20 members

"At the Recovery Café, everyone is in recovery from something. This program fills a crucial gap in the support provided to people recovering from substance use, mental illness and homelessness."
Nancy Keough, Executive Director – The Kettle Society



The Kettle Society
Strength through mental health