



## Connect Day 2021 Report

### Overview- Connect Day 2021

After a year's hiatus due to COVID-19, Connect Day was back on the North Shore again this year! Most municipalities in the Lower Mainland did not host formal Homelessness Action Weeks (HAW) and Connect Days this year due to COVID-19. Instead, most opted to distribute donations directly to organizations working in homelessness in lieu of an event. The North Shore Homelessness Task Force (NSHTF), realizing how much our community was missing in-person gatherings and events, decided to host an in-person Connect Day event as safely as possible. The goal was to provide services, information, a meal, and community support to our unhoused and at-risk community members who had been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

We extend our warmest thanks to the many volunteers, partners, supporters, and individuals who donated their time, money, services, food and products towards making Connect Day possible. We thank St. Andrew's United Church for graciously donating their space to hold the event. The combination of indoor and outdoor space, along with the masks and hand sanitizer they donated, allowed us to host the event as safely as possible during the pandemic. We would also like to thank North Shore Neighbourhood House for the use of their tent canopies and amazing volunteers. They were instrumental in facilitating the event. **Finally, we would like to thank Vancity, The City of North Vancouver, The Council of Community Homelessness Table, and SPARC BC for their generous financial contributions and donations towards the event. With their financial contributions, we were able to purchase grocery store gift cards to distribute. Any leftover gift cards will be distributed through the Strengthening Communities' grant outreach.**

We had many wonderful organizations at Connect Day this year. To begin,

- **St. Andrew's United Church** not only provided the space for the event, but they also provided medical and cloth masks and a take-away lunch with soup, sandwiches, fruit, bread, and desserts for all of the participants.
- **The Salvation Army** kept everyone outside warm with hot coffee and tea, fruit, and snacks. They also donated blankets to distribute. We were so grateful for their services in the cold rain!
- **VCH's** services were instrumental as they provided flu shots, covid vaccines, and other health supplies. They were able to administer 28 flu shots and 2 covid vaccines. A huge thank you to the public health care workers for their time and services.
- **Lookout** also provided Naloxone, shelter information services, and care packages with goodies
- Another exciting addition to this year's Connect Day was the presence of **Lookout's** new Mobile Outreach Unit. Lookout brought the mobile unit, part of the North Shore's new Strengthening Communities' Initiative, to introduce to guests and receive feedback on what services they would like to see on the unit. A very special launch for the initiative!
- **CMHA** provided candy and information on their outreach
- **North Shore Crisis Services Society** provided goodies and information about their services
- **Squamish Nation** provided goodies, COVID safety supplies including masks, and outreach information

- **Hollyburn Family Services** provided plentiful non perishable food and were accompanied by **Vancouver Humane Society**, who provided information on their services
- **North Shore Neighbourhood House** provided information services in addition to all of the help they contributed towards facilitating the event
- **Quest** shared information about their services and provided the opportunity to register with them
- **Foundry** had plentiful information about their services and lots of small goodies for folks
- **YWCA and WorkBC** distributed juice boxes, granola bars, and provided outreach information
- **NVRC** had skate and swim vouchers and information services
- **North Vancouver City Library** provided information about their services. Due to size restrictions they were unable to bring the mobile library, but hope to in future events!
- **Health Connections Clinic** had great health care information, Naloxone and other overdose supplies, and training information
- **SPARC BC** provided us with a plethora of goodies to distribute including, masks, hand sanitizer, phones with credit, socks, gift cards, toothbrushes and toothpaste, tissues, and menstruation products. Thank you so much!

We would like to thank all organizations in attendance for their time, contributions, and continued work on the North Shore. After a long year and a half of the pandemic, it was so inspiring to see all the organizations in one space again, and hear of all they have done in our community during these tough times. Thank you to all of our partners for the goodies, warm clothes, gift cards, health supplies, information, and outreach you brought to the event. Our community is indebted to you!

We had great feedback at the event from participants, for many of whom it was their first time attending Connect Day. Although there are many areas to expand in for next year, such as bringing back hair cuts and foot care, the feedback from participants was extremely positive. It was noted that a couple participants had travelled from Vancouver for the event.

Overall, the feedback from volunteers and service organizations was very positive, despite the rainy weather some of the organizations faced being stationed outside. Hopefully next year the event can be held entirely indoors again!