



**BUDES**  
*club*



# Knowledge Bundle

Communities Building Safe Spaces for  
Men's Wellness

# Acknowledgements

This knowledge bundle was created with extensive input from DUDES Club members, Elders, and service providers.

Thank you to all of our DUDES and the Elders at all sites

Vancouver Aboriginal Society, Positive Outlook Program, Positive Living North Central Interior Native Health Society, The Fire Pit, First Nations Health Authority, Moricetown Health Centre, Canadian Men's Health Foundation, Kilala Lelum, St. Paul's Foundation, and anonymous donors.

CONTACT US We look forward to hearing from you and hope this knowledge bundle will be useful in the creation of your DUDES Club. We love hearing from start-ups! Contact us any time at [info@dudesclub.ca](mailto:info@dudesclub.ca)



# About DCS and this Knowledge Bundle

## How the Knowledge Bundle was created?

DUDES Club members from around BC helped shape this bundle by sharing what it was like to start the club in their community. Frontline providers, health practitioners, and Elders also shared their perspectives about what it takes to start and maintain a successful DC.

## Why call it a Knowledge Bundle?

We want to acknowledge the sacred work being done in creating Men's Clubs around the province and across the country. Much as a medicine bundle supports healing and growth, our intent is to support those who wish to find pathways of health and well-being through establishing Men's Clubs in their communities.

## How does this Knowledge Bundle work?

Each club will be unique depending on local factors such as culture, programs and resources available, and relationships within the community. This bundle will help guide the creation of a men's gathering, whether it's on community territory or an urban setting.

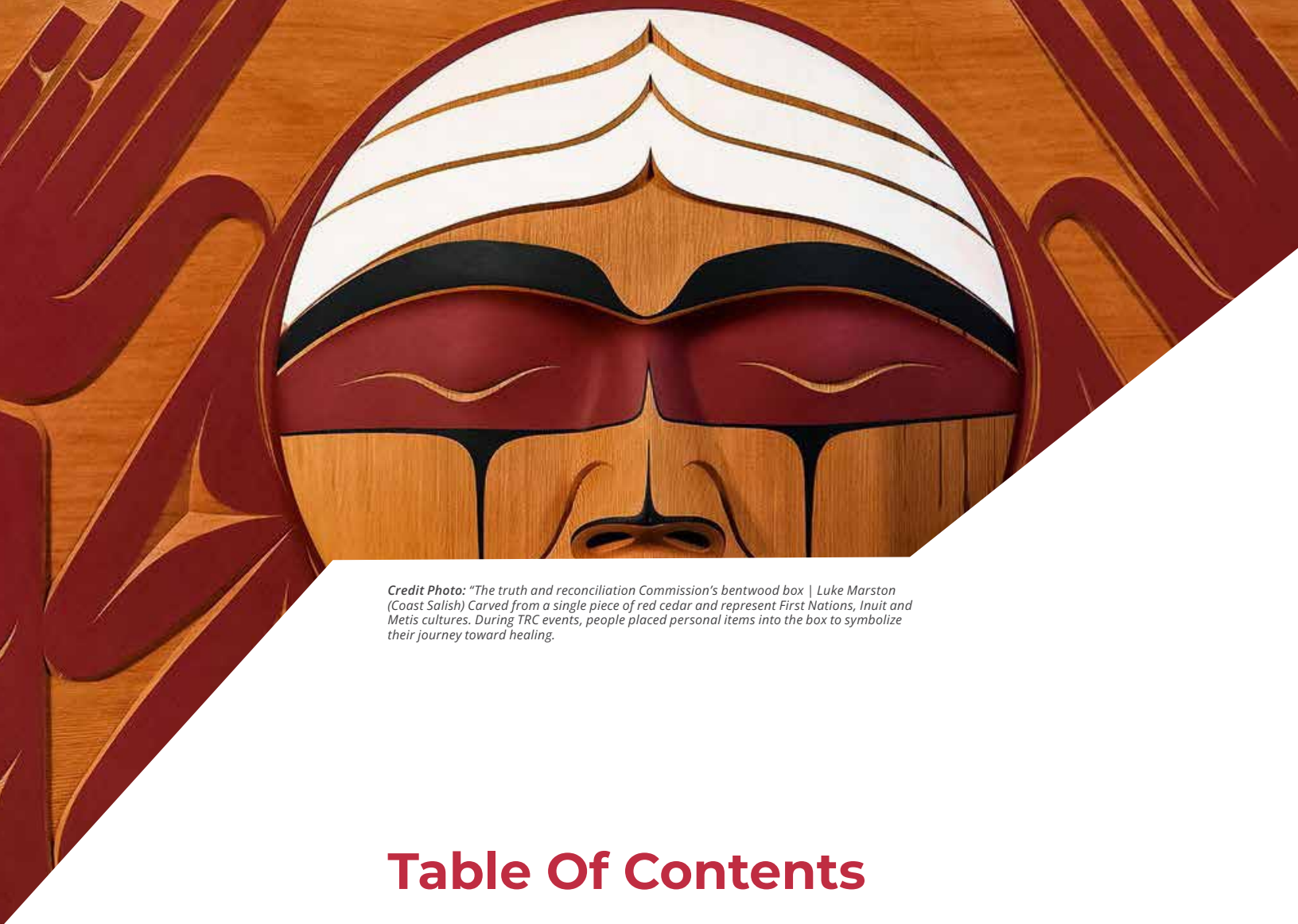
Each club is different depending on the culture, programs and resources available, and relationships within the community. The Knowledge Bundle also has information which includes: how to start a successful mens gathering; how to secure funding; and some useful tips to facilitate activities. Please refer to the table of contents which has page numbers for each section including a helpful checklist to set up a Men's Club.

The DUDES Club team hopes this bundle is useful in the creation of your mens gathering. If you have questions about the Knowledge Bundle, we are here to help, please do not hesitate to contact us at [info@dudesclub.ca](mailto:info@dudesclub.ca)

Online versions are available for download at: [www.dudesclub.ca](http://www.dudesclub.ca) or scan QR:







*Credit Photo: "The truth and reconciliation Commission's bentwood box | Luke Marston (Coast Salish) Carved from a single piece of red cedar and represent First Nations, Inuit and Metis cultures. During TRC events, people placed personal items into the box to symbolize their journey toward healing.*

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# Introduction



*"... been able to be around other men. Talking openly. Having fun. Going to pizza & movie. Exercising, doing fishing and hunting. Learning more about to teaching that we picked up on from elders, parents" - Dudes Club Member*

The DUDES Club was established in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside in 2010 on the unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the **xʷməθkwəy̓əm** (Musqueam), **Skwxwú7mesh** (Squamish), **Stó:lō** and **Səl̓íl̓wətaʔ** /Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.



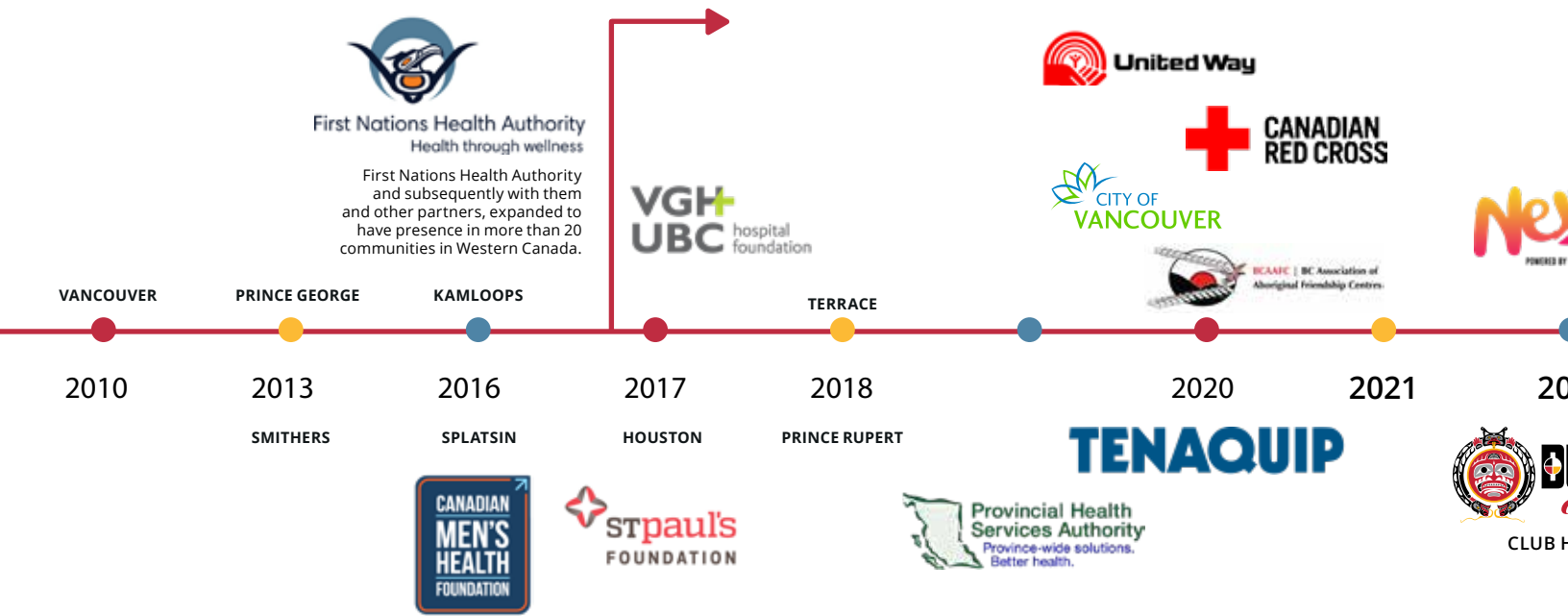
*"... [DUDES Club] makes me feel more open to others...we have done a lot of things, like take the men's group out on the ocean to catch habit, cod, crab... and take them out bowling. We also went out to harvest ooligens and hunting for moose. Whatever we, get we give it to our elders in the community... They're always happy to see what we are giving them... there is a total of 15-22 in our men's group" - Dudes Club Member*

DUDES Club is a proven model for Indigenous men's wellness promotion that builds solidarity and brotherhood – enabling to regain men to regain a sense of pride and purpose in their life.

A 2013-2016 evaluation of the DUDES Club found increased attendance contributed to increased benefits across mental, spiritual, physical, and emotional health. In a 2020 evaluation, participants shared that they found DUDES club to provide a safe environment to connect and share. Indigenous men also benefit from being a part of DUDES, including THROUGH... increased trust in people, experiencing social/peer support, and reconnecting to their respective culture and heritage. To date, there are more than 40 DUDES Clubs in BC. More than 20 are in process as we have conversations with men and Elders in communities, as well as with organizations that work for community wellness.

The DUDES Club is a place for men's wellness that builds solidarity and brotherhood, supporting men in regaining a sense of pride and purpose in their life. Men who regularly come to the DUDES Club reported feeling like the DUDES Club provides a safe place where they can connect and share their stories with other men. Indigenous men have also said that they feel less isolated and more trusting and connected to their heritage and culture through being a part of their DUDES club.

# Timeline



"... Health has changed towards a feel good/fulfilling characteristic in providing services for the men in our community. So many times we are halted for activities with a shortage of funds. This has created capacity in men's group and has given us the extra tools needed to implement

# Why Men's Health

## Why the DUDES Club?

It's no secret that men are resistant to go see a doctor. Indigenous men are at a greater risk for depression and suicide. Because of historical intergenerational trauma, Indigenous men face more barriers to health care and more often face incarceration, homelessness and mental health challenges. These barriers/challenges lead to higher death rates, depression, stress, and social determinants of health. For these reasons, an accessible and culturally focused program (like the DUDES Club) is extremely important for Indigenous men.

Within DUDES Clubs, the hierarchy of the western medical model is flattened. All DCS initiatives remain community-driven and highlight the importance of peer champions. The Healthcare providers who are involved within DUDES Clubs prioritize cultural competence and positive attitudes towards all cultures. Focusing on building safety, real connections, and support for all demographics of men who are navigating the healthcare system. The DUDES Club is a place where men can begin to drop some of their armor that is a result of intergenerational trauma related to loss of land, language, culture, family and identity.

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DUDES  
First Community  
Knowledge Exchange  
at Club House

2022 → 2023

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HOUSE







# A Pathway forward for Men's Health

## Mission Statement

To facilitate a participant-led community for men's wellness with local activity-based clubs that prioritize supportive relationships, engagement in healthcare, and indigenous worldviews.

## Vision

The DUDES Club's vision is of a renewed role for men supporting each other and their families in building wellness and strong communities.



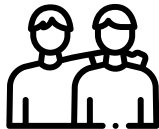
## Core Values



**Relationships:** We prioritize working together. Beginning with building stronger relationships with self, peers, family, community, Elders, and the Land.



**Sanctuary:** Our work depends on trust. This trust means remaining open and welcoming to others, by creating non-judgmental, inclusive, compassionate, respectful, and culturally safe spaces.



**Brotherhood:** We recognize that it is essential to reclaim, redefine, and decolonize our ideas of what it is to be a 'man'. This is a process that men must undertake to support each other. Healthy, authentic, humble, courageous masculinities are core to our work.



**Journey:** We recognize that to be effective and sustainable in the long term. We must be patient and sometimes slowdown (ourselves and our work). The concept of 'Seven Generations' also reminds us to think beyond our immediate needs. Healing is a process that happens over time and is not a quick fix.



**Two-eyed seeing:** To move forward in a good way - towards men's wellness. We balance the strengths of both the Indigenous and Western ways of knowing. Ensuring that all men within the different gatherings/clubs are welcomed in a space that promotes cultural safety. Where DUDES can reconnect to their heritage and family, through storytelling and sharing. "In a good way", whereby the work undertaken is a sacred endeavor, connected to ceremony, ancestral wisdom, and contributes to healing.

# How To Start A DUDES Club

1

Find a host organization to partner with, maybe somewhere men are already spending time, like a health services organization. Partnering with an organization can be helpful in getting funding and the work we do at DCS is easily understood as preventive work. An established health organization can also potentially provide space for gatherings, food, facilitators, elders, and other resources.

2

Look around for funding opportunities! There are lots of small grants and funding opportunities available through government, health authorities, grants from pharmaceutical companies, private donors, etc. Host organizations will likely be happy to assist with grant applications and writing short proposals. More than 32 on reserve communities have secured funding grants worth \$7500 from the First Nations Health Authority.

3

The DUDES can be shape their leadership, arts, and skills in many different ways. From Community Liaisons, to Cultural Knowledge Holders, to Entrepreneurship. DUDES have successfully built opportunities for themselves that provided new products, services, fundraisers, and volunteer support back to the community and beyond.

# Men's Club Setup Checklist

## Establishing Connection with DUDES (Peers, Local Groups, Community)

The work we do at DUDES Club Society is preventive work. This Checklist is intended to help you cover all the bases. These milestones are elements to consider when planning your own Men's gatherings as they help increase your chances of success. There is no requirement to do things in any particular order.

## Key Considerations

- ☐ **Location:** convenience, capacity
- ☐ **Consistency:** same meeting, place, day and time
- ☐ **Persistence:** attendance may be sporadic at first
- ☐ **Scheduling:** meetings spaced to avoid overload/saturation

## Resources & Supports

- ☐ Meeting space
- ☐ Cooking space
- ☐ Facilitator
- ☐ Elder
- ☐ Health and Wellness resources (guets, knowloadge holders etc.)

## Partners

- ☐ Funding
- ☐ Health and Wellness resources (guets, knowloadge holders etc.)

## Dudes Club Society

- ☐ Knowledge Bundle
- ☐ Information and resource sharing
- ☐ Training (Dudes Club 101, Trainer-the-Trainer)
- ☐ Initial administrative support as required
- ☐ Ongoing support as required
- ☐ Monthly Facilitator check-in
- ☐ Fly-in (in-person) and virtual (online) training and support
- ☐ Assistance meeting arising needs
- ☐ Ongoing program design and refinement
- ☐ Input through think tanks, talking circles, annual retreats, workshops and focus groups
- ☐ Networking and Mutual Support (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, infor@dudesclub.ca)



