



DCS

DUDES CLUB SOCIETY

annual REPORT

— 2024 - 2025 —





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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

My name is Grant Barton, a proud member of the Nisga'a nation and the Executive Director of DUDES Club Society (DCS). Over the past two years, my journey with DCS has been one of deep learning and connection.

My first year was about fully immersing myself into the brotherhood - listening, observing, and feeling the heartbeat of this movement. I witnessed firsthand how the DUDES Club model transforms lives: through laughter, teachings, and the shared strength of men supporting one another in ways that are both cultural and deeply human.

This past year has been about taking what I witnessed and giving it form, putting language to what I saw and experienced. What DUDES Club does goes far beyond creating safe spaces for men to gather. It builds pathways: from low-barrier engagement gatherings where men find belonging, to leadership opportunities that help them rise, to workshops and dialogues that influence policy and systemic change.

As I continue to step back and look at the full landscape of DUDES Club Society, I see something powerful - a movement that proves our model works. It is rooted in culture, grown through connection, and sustained by the collective commitment of men walking in a good way.

Looking ahead, my focus is on strengthening the roots of this work while continuing to grow its reach. The DUDES Club model is not just about wellness - it's about reclamation. It's about men returning to their teachings, taking responsibility, and leading from a place of culture and compassion. I am honoured to walk alongside so many dedicated brothers, partners, and allies who continue to believe in this movement and the healing it carries.

Together, we are proving that Indigenous men's wellness is not just possible - it's powerful







WHO WE ARE

From a single men's group in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside to over 55 men's groups and men's wellness activities in almost 100 communities across British Columbia, DUDES Club Society (DCS) continues to demonstrate how Indigenous-led, peer-based wellness models can transform lives and systems. What began as a simple idea-creating a space where men could gather, share a meal, and connect-has grown into a movement of healing and leadership that reaches communities across British Columbia and beyond.

DUDES Club Society (DCS) is an Indigenous-led non-profit organization that serves as a central hub for men's wellness. We work alongside communities, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, service providers, and health authorities to build culturally grounded spaces where men can gather, heal, and lead. Acting as a bridge between grassroots men's groups, community health systems, justice systems, and all levels of government, we co-create safe, inclusive, and supportive spaces where healing, wellness, and brotherhood thrive. We don't support men from above-we walk beside them, meeting each person where they are and helping them reconnect to culture, purpose, and community.

OUR MISSION VALUE AND VISION

Our Mission

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.

Our Vision

A renewed role for men* supporting each other and their families in building wellness and strong communities.

Our Core Community:

DUDES Clubs welcome all individuals who self-identify as men, promoting a gender-inclusive and culturally grounded environment.

Operating within communities with significant Indigenous populations across both urban and rural areas, DUDES Club Society (DCS) acknowledges the lasting impacts of colonialism, including displacement from traditional lands, the erosion of culture and language, and the disruption of healthy male roles in society—factors that contribute to systemic inequities, marginalization, and intergenerational trauma. DCS also recognizes the effects of patriarchy, a system that enforces inequitable gender roles and often marginalizes women, trans and non-binary individuals, and certain groups of men.

By acknowledging these interconnected realities, DCS creates supportive, inclusive spaces that foster healing, growth, and community empowerment for all men, while actively advancing equity, accountability, and collective wellness for everyone.

Our Values



Relationships



Safety



Brotherhood



Journey



Leave Your Armour
at the Door



Two-eyed
seeing



slow and in
a good way



By and for
the men



Health by
Stealth

BROTHERHOOD OF WELLNESS



OUR TEAM



Grant Barton

Executive Director



Robert Chippeway

Champion of Vancouver DCS



Jason Fitzpatrick

Vancouver Coordinator



Rome Mahdavi

Administrative Coordinator



Moe Mohammad

Youth In Residence



Doug Jensen

Knowledge Holder



Dan Castillo

Database Manager



Susan Vlasich

Bookkeeper



Kyle Sam

Community Relations
Coordinator



Frank Cohn

Co-Director



Leona Lu

Operations Manager



Jermaine Tallio

NexUp Lead



Cruz Rodriguez

Sr. Web & Graphic Designer



Jayson Prefontaine

Food Coordinator



Francis Baptiste

Social Media Coordinator

OUR BOARD



Dr. Paul Gross

Treasurer, Medical Director
and Co-founder



Henry Morgan

Board Member



Dr. Lyana Patrick

Board Chair



Duane Jackson

Board Member

FROM ROOTS TO BRANCHES: OUR YEAR OF GROWTH

Across 2025, DUDES Club Society has deepened our commitment to advancing Indigenous men's wellness, an area that continues to be underfunded, underserved, and undervalued across Canada. We continue to see that when Indigenous men are given the space, resources, and cultural grounding to heal, their strength reconnects families, revitalizes communities, and restores balance to systems that have long overlooked their needs.

Our work grew stronger through what we call the DUDES Club Tier System, a model inspired by the teachings of the tree, representing growth from our roots to our branches. Each tier reflects a stage of connection, learning, and leadership for men in community.

Guiding this growth is the principle of Two-Eyed Seeing -a teaching from Mi'kmaq Elders that invites us to see the world through both Indigenous and Western lenses. One eye honours traditional knowledge, ceremony, and relationships to land and spirit; the other recognizes the tools, data, and structures of contemporary systems. Together, they help us walk forward in balance.

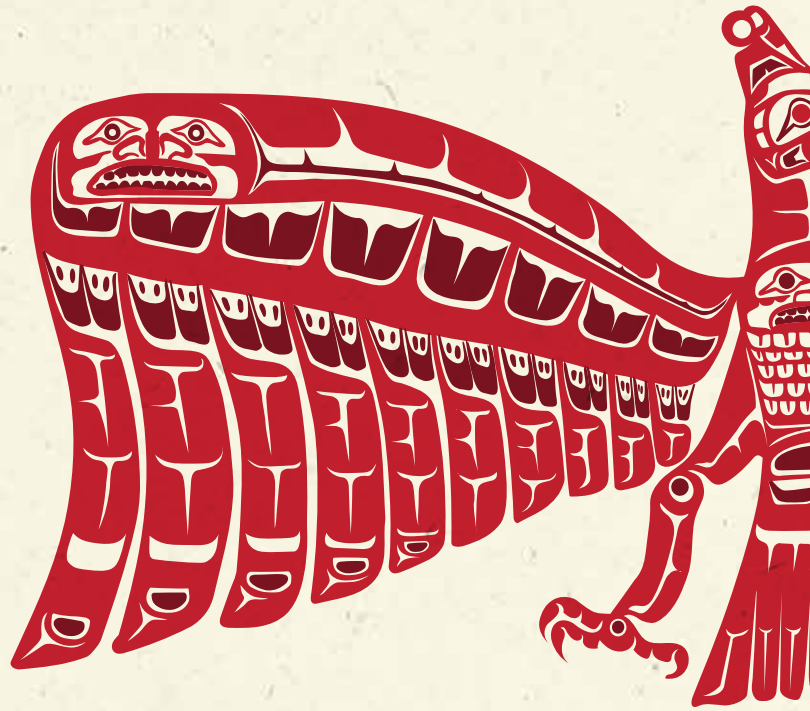
Through this lens, 2025 became a Year of Reclamation in Action, rooted in culture, strengthened through leadership, and branching outward into advocacy and systems change. Each layer of our work built upon the other: healing the roots, strengthening the trunk of leadership, and expanding the branches of influence and understanding.




THE BRANCHES: (TIER 3) WORKSHOPS POLICY, AND SYSTEMS CHANGE

From that strength grow the branches—our workshops, advocacy, and systems-level work that reach outward into broader circles. These branches include our Paddling Backwards into the Future workshop series, our Grief Bundles workshop, and our policy-level advocacy, including hosting a landmark regional visit along with a national symposium with Her Excellency Mary Simon, Canada's first Indigenous Governor General. This year, we also hosted several roundtables bringing together Indigenous leaders, health authorities, and justice institutions to discuss the systemic barriers affecting men's wellness.

These conversations are the beginning of something larger - branches reaching outward, helping shift systems toward compassion, equity, and understanding. As we reflect on this year, we remain guided by the knowledge that Indigenous men's wellness is community wellness. From roots to trunk to branches, our work continues to grow through relationships, culture, and shared purpose—creating pathways for Indigenous men to reclaim health, identity, and belonging.





THE TRUNK: (TIER 2) INDIGENOUS VOICES OF COMMUNITY (IVOC)

From the roots rises the trunk—a strong core that supports leadership and collective strength. Through Indigenous Voices of Community (IVOC), our peer-led leadership initiative, men develop the skills, confidence, and structure to carry their communities forward. This year, IVOC expanded to include new mentorship circles, regional peer gatherings, and leadership training bundles that integrate traditional teachings with community facilitation skills. The trunk represents that shared backbone of DUDES Club-leaders standing together, carrying the weight of community with steadiness and care.

THE ROOTS: (TIER 1) FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Our foundation begins in the roots, where men come together to learn, share, and reconnect to culture, identity, and brotherhood. Through community gatherings, and local circles, we continue to create spaces where men feel safe and grounded in who they are. These roots represent healing at the individual and community level—spaces where laughter, songs, and stories carry medicine, and where relationships and trust take hold.

Across 2025, these root spaces reached over 54 men's groups, with ongoing visits, mentorship, and cultural activities that nourish connection and resilience.



COMMUNITY WITHIN THE CLUBHOUSE - OUR YEAR OF GROWTH

At the heart of DUDES Club Society's growth is our Clubhouse at 1318 Frances Street—a living space where our roots, trunk, and branches come together. The Clubhouse has evolved into more than an office or gathering place; it has become a cultural and community centre where healing, ceremony, and services happen side by side.

Throughout 2025, the Clubhouse continued to grow as a shared sanctuary, providing space for community members, partners, and organizations to connect and give back. Within its walls, West Coast to East Coast cultures meet - Nisga'a, Cree, Tsimshian, and other Nations sharing teachings, songs, and ceremonies that strengthen identity and belonging.



**By and for
the men**



The Clubhouse also serves as a hub of community service, where local organizations and service providers come together to prepare meals for the Downtown Eastside, host wellness circles, and coordinate outreach efforts that bring care directly to those most in need.

It has become a ceremonial space as well, regularly hosting Yuwipi and Sundance ceremonies, drumming circles, and dance practices such as the Echo Mountain Drum Group, Nisga'a Ts'amiks Dance Group, and Lax Kxeen Traditional Dance Group, all of which are spaces rich in men contributing to their own and to community wellness. These gatherings ground the space in cultural continuity and provide opportunities for intergenerational healing.

By sharing the Clubhouse openly and in-kind with our community, we are nurturing a home for connection and collaboration—a place where Indigenous men, families, and allies can gather, learn, and rebuild trust. The growth of this space reflects our belief that wellness is not an individual journey, but a collective one. The Clubhouse stands as a physical embodiment of that vision: a place where our people come to feed the spirit, the body, and the community.

RECLAMATION IN ACTION

From Roots to Branches Our Work in Motion

Through our Tier System-Rooted in Healing, Growing in Leadership, and Branching into Community Impact - men are rediscovering their roles as protectors, caregivers, and leaders. The work we do is more than programming; it's reclamation in motion. From the heartbeat of the Clubhouse to the growing neXup network, from peer-led leadership through IVOC to our expanding provincial reach supporting men's wellness in almost 100 communities, this is how Indigenous men across British Columbia are reclaiming their power, voice, and place within family and community.



1. CLUBHOUSE

THE HEART OF CONNECTION

Our Vancouver Clubhouse continues to be the beating heart of DUDES Club Society, the soil of the roots. It's a place where men gather to share laughter, food, and healing in a safe, welcoming environment.



GATHERING OF BROTHERS

Every Monday, a group of men come together to enjoy a shared meal, play bingo, and engage in meaningful conversation and connection. An Elder or Knowledge Holder is present at each meeting to open and close the gathering with cultural teachings, offering wisdom and leading smudging ceremonies that help cleanse and ground the participants.

These gatherings have steadily grown in popularity, with 15 to 20 men attending regularly. This year's highlight was their field trip to the Museum of Anthropology.





BY FATHERS FOR THE FATHERS

Held biweekly on Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m. The Uncles, Fathers & Caregivers Gatherings was launched in October by DUDES Club Society to provide a safe and welcoming space for men who hold caring roles in their families and communities. These gatherings offer an opportunity to share a meal, exchange stories, and explore the teachings and responsibilities of fatherhood and caregiving. Guided by cultural values and peer support, the group helps men strengthen their connections-to their children, to each other, and to the community as a whole.

MEDICINE OF BROTHERS

The Medicine of Brothers Gatherings held consistently every Friday from 1-4pm grew organically from our Monday men's group - born from a shared hunger for growth, culture, and healing. These gatherings were created to offer deeper opportunities for connection and cultural engagement among men walking their healing journeys. Guided by a Knowledge Keeper, each session provides culturally grounded activities that nurture identity, belonging, and purpose. Through traditional teachings, art, and ceremony, men reconnect with their roots and rediscover the strength that comes from culture, brotherhood, and community.





NEXUP

REIMAGINING PATHWAYS TO MASCULINITY

2. **NEXUP** - REIMAGINING PATHWAYS TO MASCULINITY

Through neXup, DUDES Club Society is building safer communities by addressing the root causes of gang involvement and violence. Rather than focusing on punishment, our approach focuses on positive promotion, and prevention - creating spaces where young men and youth can heal, learn, and lead together. This is reclamation in action: transforming pain into purpose through culture, mentorship, and belonging.



SUNDAY FUNDAY

(12–5 PM) Every Sunday, the Clubhouse opens its doors for Sunday Funday - a weekly drop-in featuring games, sports, music, food, and open conversation. On average, 25+ youth participate each week, enjoying a safe and welcoming space to connect, create, and unwind.

Participants also have access to the barbershop, music studio, and peer mentorship, making Sunday Funday a hub for belonging, creativity, and community connection.





The Closet

Tuesdays, 3-5 PM. Created for Two-Spirit and queer youth, it's a place to create community and express our creativity, joy, and identity. Through art, music, and connection, The Closet transforms self-expression into empowerment - proving that when we make room for authenticity, we make room for healing and pride.

neX LOUNGE

Music Studio / neXLounge (Wednesdays, 3-6 PM): The neXLounge opens every Wednesday for youth to dive into music production using professional-grade equipment. This creative hub encourages collaboration, storytelling, and self-expression through sound. By blending mentorship with hands-on learning, the space fosters creativity, teamwork, and confidence - giving youth the tools to find their rhythm and voice





Barbershop Training (Sundays):

Led by Moe, neXup's youngest team member trained by Juniors Barbershop, this weekly program teaches hands-on barbering skills while building confidence and discipline. Through mentorship and technical training, youth gain exposure to career pathways in trades and entrepreneurship - proving that wellness also means creating opportunities for growth and self-sufficiency.



SPECIAL EVENTS & INITIATIVES

Youth Worker's Forum

- Supported by BSCP funding from the City of Vancouver.
- Connects 10–13 youth-serving organizations through networking, meals, and workshops.
- Promotes collaboration, skill-sharing, and collective approaches to youth safety.

Pathways Leadership Program

- 6-week intensive training for 10 youth on leadership, financial literacy, cultural connection, and personal growth.
- All graduates became neXup Champions supporting ongoing programming.

Basketball Tournament

- First annual event hosted at RayCam Courts (Aug 13).
- Youth aged 13–19 engaged in a full day of sport, food, and community.
- Supported by FNHA Regional Coordinator and community volunteers.

Haunted House

- Engaged dozens of community members; raised \$120 through donations.

FNHA 2025 Youth Conference:

- neXup attended the 2025 FNHA Youth Conference for the first time.
- Built relationships with rural, remote, and urban youth across B.C.

Impact

- Builds safety through belonging, mentorship, and cultural connection.
- Reconnects youth with identity, community, and opportunity.
- Encourages leadership rooted in empathy, accountability, and Indigenous values.
- Creates pathways out of isolation and toward empowerment, ensuring the next generation grows up surrounded by strength, not violence.







3. OUR GRANDFATHER

THE VANCOUVER

DUDES CLUB

The Vancouver DUDES Club is where it all began - the grandfather circle that gave life to a movement. Rooted in the heart of the Downtown Eastside, this Club continues to be a gathering place where men come together in culture, brotherhood, and healing. Week after week, the Vancouver DUDES Club remains a living example of what happens when Indigenous men have space to reconnect, reflect, and rise.



A Circle that Keeps Beating:

Mondays, the men's circles bring focus to accountability, recovery, and self-reflection. These smaller, more intimate circles offer a space to speak truth and unpack the deeper layers of healing - the shadows, the grief, and the growth.

Tuesdays have evolved into Think Tank sessions - a place for planning, visioning, and co-creating. Here, members discuss upcoming events, partnerships, and community needs. The Think Tanks ensure that DUDES Club remains responsive, grounded, and guided by the voices of the men themselves.

Every Thursday, the Clubhouse fills with laughter, drumming, and shared stories as men gather to eat, heal, and support one another. These weekly Gatherings are more than meetings - they are medicine. Elders guide the space, peers share teachings, and each man is reminded that he belongs to something larger than himself.



Health by Stealth



Building Together - Partnerships in Action

The Vancouver DUDES Club continues to model collaboration through powerful partnerships:

Loon Lake Leadership Gathering: Our long-standing collaboration with Loon Lake has evolved into a leadership summit where men come together to strengthen their voices, engage in ceremony, and learn from one another through the Indigenous Voices of Community (IVOC) framework.

Men's Health Fair: In partnership with local health authorities and community organizations, this annual event brings together service providers and cultural practitioners to promote holistic wellness - body, mind, and spirit. It's a celebration of men's health and a reminder that seeking help is a sign of strength.



Brotherhood



Innovation from the Ground Up

This year also saw the launch of the Dude Squad Pilot, based out of Oppenheimer Park - a frontline initiative connecting peers with community members in real time. The Squad offers outreach, support, and cultural connection in one of Vancouver's most complex and storied neighborhoods.

A Legacy that Leads

The Vancouver DUDES Club continues to be the root system for all other circles across the province. It's the living example of reclamation in action - where Indigenous men rebuild identity, reconnect with culture, and rediscover purpose together. From the Clubhouse to Oppenheimer Park, from healing circles to leadership gatherings, the Grandfather Club remains the heart of a movement that continues to grow strong, branch by branch.

4. FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGES (TIER 1)

Community Visits

Foundational Knowledge Exchanges (the Roots) are how DUDES Club Society shares the teachings, tools, and practices developed through the Vancouver DUDES Club with communities seeking new ways to support Indigenous men's wellness. Through community visits, DCS brings culturally rooted knowledge, peer-support models, and practical approaches directly to Nations and or communities that wish to strengthen or begin their own men's gatherings. These exchanges are guided by listening, respect, and relationship-building, ensuring that what is shared is adapted to each community's values, realities, and protocols. By meeting people where they are, Knowledge Exchanges help spark local pathways for men to reconnect, support one another, and build spaces that foster belonging, healing, and cultural strength.



Some examples are:

- Prophet river, Community Visit, 50+ people
- Prince Rupert Basketball, All Antion Tournament, 15 people
- Saik'uz, Solidarity Meeting, Community Visit, 15 men
- Skidegate Knowledge Exchange, 100 + Men
- Whitehorse, Men's Camp, 20 men
- Tsay Keh Dene, Community Visit, 15 men
- Moose Hide Campaign / Knowledge Exchange VDC May Snuneymux, 30 men
- Nanaimo Kwu'mut Lelum, Knowledge Exchange, 60 men
- Moose Hide Sik-E-Dakh, Knowledge Exchange, 30 men
- Terrace {K5T } Kitselas, Knowledge Exchange, 60 men
- Hartley Bay, Knowledge Exchange, 20 men
- Kwumut Lelum, Knowledge Exchange, 30 men
- Kitimat 2nd Annual Men's Conference, 40 men
- Nakazdli, Wellness Table, 30 + men

5. INDIGENOUS VOICES OF COMMUNITY (IVOC) (TIER 2)

Building Leadership from Lived Experience

The Indigenous Voices of Community (IVOC) initiative is DUDES Club Society's peer-led leadership and training initiative - built by Indigenous men, for Indigenous men. Grounded in the teachings of Two-Eyed Seeing, IVOC brings together Indigenous and Western approaches to leadership, wellness, and community development.

This initiative transforms lived experience into leadership potential. Many of the men who begin as participants in their local DUDES Clubs go on to become facilitators, mentors, and community advocates. They gain the skills to hold space, guide circles, and lead cultural and wellness programming that strengthens communities across the province.

Key outcomes include:

- Regional peer-leadership training modules delivered to multiple communities across B.C.
- Integration of Western facilitation skills with Indigenous teachings and values.
- Development of the DUDES Squad, a core team of trained peer leaders who respond to community needs through outreach, cultural programming, and crisis support.
- Nation-to-Nation support networks strengthened through IVOC gatherings, connecting men from different territories to share knowledge, teachings, and leadership approaches.
- Growth of the IVOC alumni network, creating a sustainable pipeline of Indigenous male leadership across British Columbia.

Through IVOC, men are reclaiming their voices and walking forward as leaders - grounded in culture, accountable to community, and committed to building relationships Nation to Nation. Together, the DUDES Squad and IVOC network represent the next generation of Indigenous leadership - where healing, responsibility, and action meet.





6. LOWER MAINLAND AREA SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS MEN

DUDES Club Society continues to support Indigenous men across the Lower Mainland through regular gatherings, outreach, and cultural activities. These circles create safe spaces for connection, healing, and leadership, guided by Elders, Knowledge Holders, and peers.



Burnaby DUDES Club - Every Monday, 6-8 PM

The Burnaby DUDES Club has become a vibrant and consistent space for Indigenous men to gather, connect, and heal. Guided by an Elder and supported by a local Champion, about 20 men meet weekly to share stories, laughter, and cultural teachings. Beyond their regular gatherings, the group has expanded outreach across the Burnaby area, helping Indigenous men access connections, build relationships, and find belonging through culture, community, and brotherhood.

Musqueam Men's Gatherings - Every Wednesday Evening

The Musqueam Men's Gathering has grown into a meaningful space grounded in culture, teachings, and community connection. Guided by a Knowledge Keeper from IVOC and supported by DUDES Club Society, these Wednesday night gatherings have been instrumental in helping men come together to share stories, songs, and ceremony. The IVOC mentor played a key role in supporting the group's start-up, helping to build a foundation rooted in trust, cultural identity, and brotherhood. Each week, men gather to learn from one another, strengthen their spirit, and carry forward the teachings of their ancestors in a good way.

Tsleil-Waututh Nation Men's Gatherings - Every Tuesday Evening

The Tsleil-Waututh Nation Men's Gathering has become a consistent and meaningful circle over the past year. DCS members and IVOC peer leaders join weekly Tuesday night sessions to offer mentorship, DCS teachings, and leadership support during the group's early development. These gatherings provide a safe space for men to connect, share stories, and strengthen their relationships through culture and brotherhood-reflecting the Nation's commitment to ongoing healing and collective wellness through culture, community, and brotherhood.

Gathering Place Men's Circle - Monthly on Wednesdays

Held once a month in the heart of Vancouver's Granville District, the Gathering Place Men's Circle brings together over 30 men to share connection, culture, and conversation. Supported by IVOC and led by a local Champion who is actively helping develop the Leadership Bundle, these gatherings create a safe and welcoming space for men from all walks of life to come together in brotherhood. Each session blends peer support with cultural teachings, encouraging men to strengthen their leadership, identity, and community ties through shared learning and mutual respect.

DUDES Club Baseball

From early spring through October, DUDES Club Baseball met every Wednesday at Oppenheimer Park, creating a space where men could come together for physical wellness, teamwork, and brotherhood. What began as a casual weekly practice quickly became a powerful tool for outreach, offering connection and belonging to some of the community's most vulnerable men.

Led by a dedicated Champion and coach, the team did an incredible job of engaging men who might not otherwise access health or wellness support. Through sport, mentorship, and laughter, players built trust, pride, and confidence - proving once again that healing doesn't just happen in circles or ceremonies, but also on the field, one pitch at a time.



7. PROVINCIAL REACH

GREASE TRAIL REAWAKENING

DUDES Club Society now supports 55 men's groups and men's wellness activities in almost 100 communities across British Columbia, from the North Coast to the Fraser Valley.

Each circle is rooted in its Nation's teachings yet connected through shared purpose.

- Active groups across Northern, Interior, Island, and Coastal regions
- Expansion of Knowledge Exchanges into new communities
- Regional gatherings and peer-training summits
- Partnerships with health authorities

This growing network represents men reclaiming their place in community, creating a ripple effect of healing across the province.

All Native Basketball Tournament

Nation to Nation gathering

Feb, 2025

During the All Native Basketball Tournament, DCS and the Prince Rupert DUDES Club hosted a Nation-to-Nation Knowledge Exchange, bringing together men from many Nations to share a meal, teachings, and stories. The gathering celebrated culture, connection, and brotherhood—showing that the spirit of the game extends far beyond the court.





Gaagaagay Men's Wellness Conference

March 6 - 11, 2025

The Gaagaagay Men's Group hosted 120 men representing over 30 different nations in and around Skidegate to support one another in their wellness and healing journeys. Speakers and facilitators shared workshops around managing grief, decolonizing their healing journeys, anger management, and practical advice on hosting a men's group. Men got to participate in counselling sessions, fire crystal healing, massage, acupressure, poker, and cultural healing.





Whitehorse Conference and Men's Gathering

April 6-11, 2025

The DCS team was invited by the Council of Yukon First Nations to attend the "Stoking the Home Fire: A Family Preservation Gathering" in partnership with the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. DCS supported a men's wellness panel at the conference, and joined the men's group on a day out on the land to connect, heal, and gather. In addition, we were able to sit and have discussion with Cindy Blackstock on the topic of the child welfare system and the struggles Indigenous men face when entrenched in the system.





Snuneymuxw DUDES Club

May 15, 2025

Alongside the Snuneymuxw DUDES Club, DCS hosted a Men's Wellness Knowledge Exchange, bringing together over 30 men for a day of cultural sharing, talking circles, and ceremony. The gathering focused on connection, healing, and leadership through culture, guided by local Knowledge Keepers and DCS facilitators. Men came together to strengthen relationships, share teachings, and explore pathways to wellness-walking in unity and reflecting on the importance of culture as medicine.





Qapthut Suw'wuy'qe Gathering for Indigenous Men

May 22-23, 2025

In late May, DCS was invited by Kw'umut Lelum Child and Family Services to join their annual Gathering for Indigenous Men, hosting workshops focused on Building Solidarity and Brotherhood. The two-day event brought together over 40 men to share teachings, strengthen connections, and explore new ways of supporting men's wellness in community. Through open dialogue, ceremony, and cultural exchange, participants celebrated their spirit, strength, and resilience—walking away feeling renewed, connected, and inspired to carry this work forward.





Kitselas Mens Gathering

July 17-20, 2025

In mid-July, DCS partnered with the Kitselas First Nation to bring together Indigenous men in the region. Over 50 men came together, representing 27 different nations that joined together to exchange knowledge, share food, and re-awaken the Grease Trail. Men learned how to make Devil's Club Salve, cleaned and smoked salmon, and processed moose, which were all traded and exchanged between communities ranging from Whitehorse, Yukon, to Vancouver, BC. The Vancouver DUDES Club was gifted 107 cans of freshly caught and processed salmon, and the Kitselas DUDES Club was gifted moose meat, which everyone came together to clean and preserve. This gathering supported Indigenous men from across the West Coast to re-engage and re-awaken the Grease Trail, a historically and culturally significant network of land trails used to exchange food, resources, and medicines among Nations across Northern and Interior BC.





Hartley Bay Mens Gathering

Sept, 2025

In September, DCS joined the Hartley Bay Men's Gathering, a four-day event rooted in land-based healing and cultural connection. Over 20 men came together to share teachings, participate in talking circles, and engage in traditional activities that strengthened spirit and community. The gathering included time out on the water, fishing, and touring the old village-offering men a chance to reconnect with ancestral lands and stories. Through cultural exchange and shared experience, the gathering nurtured healing, brotherhood, and a renewed sense of identity and belonging.



8. NATIONAL REACH

CHATHAM KENT

The Chatham Kent DUDES Club, our easternmost circle, continues to create a safe and welcoming space where men gather to share meals, stories, and teachings. Guided by a dedicated Champion and local Knowledge Holder, the club offers weekly gatherings focused on men's wellness - physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. Through activities such as traditional rattle-making, cultural teachings, and guest presentations from local First Nations and health organizations, members have been reconnecting with their roots and rebuilding pride in who they are as Indigenous men.

This past year, the club also played a visible role in community awareness by participating in Moose Hide Campaign and Orange Shirt Day events, standing in solidarity to end violence and honour survivors of residential schools. Looking ahead, the Chatham Kent DUDES Club is deepening its partnership with the Canadian AIDS Society to strengthen outreach, health education, and peer support. Together, they are building a model of men's wellness grounded in culture, accountability, and brotherhood - showing that healing happens when men walk together in a good way.



9. ENDING VIOLENCE IN COMMUNITY (TIER 3)

In 2025, DUDES Club Society introduced a new workshop titled Paddling Backwards into the Future: A Two-Eyed Journey on Ending Violence in Community. This workshop invites men to look deeply within themselves - to understand that the roots of violence do not begin with others, but within.

Through the lens of Two-Eyed Seeing, participants explore how colonialism disrupted balance, fractured identity, and planted the seeds of violence that continue to harm our families and communities today. The journey “backwards” symbolizes returning to traditional teachings, language, and cultural practices - so that we can move “forward” with renewed understanding and accountability.

This workshop focuses on ending violence toward ourselves as the first act of change. When men reconnect with their spirit, culture, and responsibility, they begin to heal the wounds that fuel harm. From that place of healing, they can walk in a good way - ending violence against women, children, and one another.

“Paddling Backwards into the Future” reminds us that the path to peace begins with self-reflection, humility, and courage - one man, one paddle, one circle at a time.





Snuneymuxw DUDES Club

May 15, 2025

DCS delivered the Paddling Backwards into the Future workshop to over 30 men, each taking a personal pledge to end violence within themselves. Through guided reflection and cultural teachings, participants explored the understanding that the violence they carry was never theirs to hold. Together, they committed to walking a path of compassion-healing the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual wounds that stem from colonial trauma-and to leading change by beginning that healing within.

Gitxsan / Wet'suwet'en Men's Gatherings

July 7, 8, 9, 2025

In partnership with the Gitxsan and Wet'suwet'en communities, DUDES Club Society hosted the Paddling Backwards into the Future workshop, bringing together over 70 men to explore healing, accountability, and balance.

Grounded in culture and guided by Knowledge Keepers, the gathering focused on ending violence within ourselves and reconnecting to identity and responsibility. This collaboration continues to strengthen Nation-to-Nation relationships and promote men's wellness through culture, brotherhood, and shared healing.









Moose Hide Campaign

May 14, 2025

In May, members from DUDES Club Society, the Vancouver DUDES Club, and IVOC peer leaders joined the Snuneymuxw DUDES Club in Victoria to participate in the Moose Hide Campaign, a national movement to end violence against women and children. Over 30 men marched together in solidarity, carrying messages of accountability, healing, and change. The group also took part in workshops focused on breaking cycles of violence and fostering healthy relationships grounded in culture, respect, and compassion. It was a powerful reminder that ending violence begins with men taking responsibility and walking together in a good way.

Ending Violence in Community March

July 9, 2025

In May, unforeseen circumstances in the Gitksan / Wet'suwet'en territories led to the postponement of a planned men's gathering originally aligned with the Moose Hide Campaign. In July, the event was re-envisioned and brought to life as the first Ending Violence in Community March, uniting over 100 men and community members in a powerful show of solidarity and healing. DCS was honoured to stand alongside local Nations, walking together to raise awareness, take accountability, and affirm a shared commitment to ending violence within ourselves, our families, and our communities.





10. GRIEF BUNDLE GATHERINGS (TIER 3)

In response to the ongoing toxic drug and opioid crisis and the heartbreaking number of losses within our communities, DUDES Club Society developed the Grief Bundle—a Two-Eyed Seeing and harm reduction approach to understanding and reshaping how we live with death and grief in our lives.

This initiative was born from the recognition that grief is not only emotional—it's cultural, spiritual, and collective. Through the Grief Bundle Gatherings, men come together to honour those we've lost while supporting one another in healthy, culturally grounded ways. Guided by Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and peers, each gathering blends Indigenous ceremony and teachings with Western harm reduction and mental wellness practices, creating a space where all forms of healing are valid.

The Grief Bundle helps men carry loss without being consumed by it. It invites conversations about substance use, trauma, and systemic barriers, while affirming that every person's journey through grief is sacred. In these circles, men learn to transform pain into purpose—recognizing that mourning can be a form of medicine, and that harm reduction includes caring for the spirit as much as the body. Through this work, we continue to remind one another that healing does not mean forgetting; it means remembering together, in culture, compassion, and community.



GaaGagaay (Canoe Pathways) Wellness Conference

March 7, 2025

At this conference held in Skidegate, DCS led the Grief Bundle Workshop, bringing together 120 men from over 30 Nations to reflect, share, and heal. Through a Two-Eyed Seeing and harm reduction approach, men explored grief, loss, and cultural ways of healing, guided by Elders and peers. The workshop reminded participants that healing begins when we carry grief together—with compassion, ceremony, and community.



Safety



Qapthut Suw'wuy'qe Gathering for Indigenous Men

May 22-23, 2025

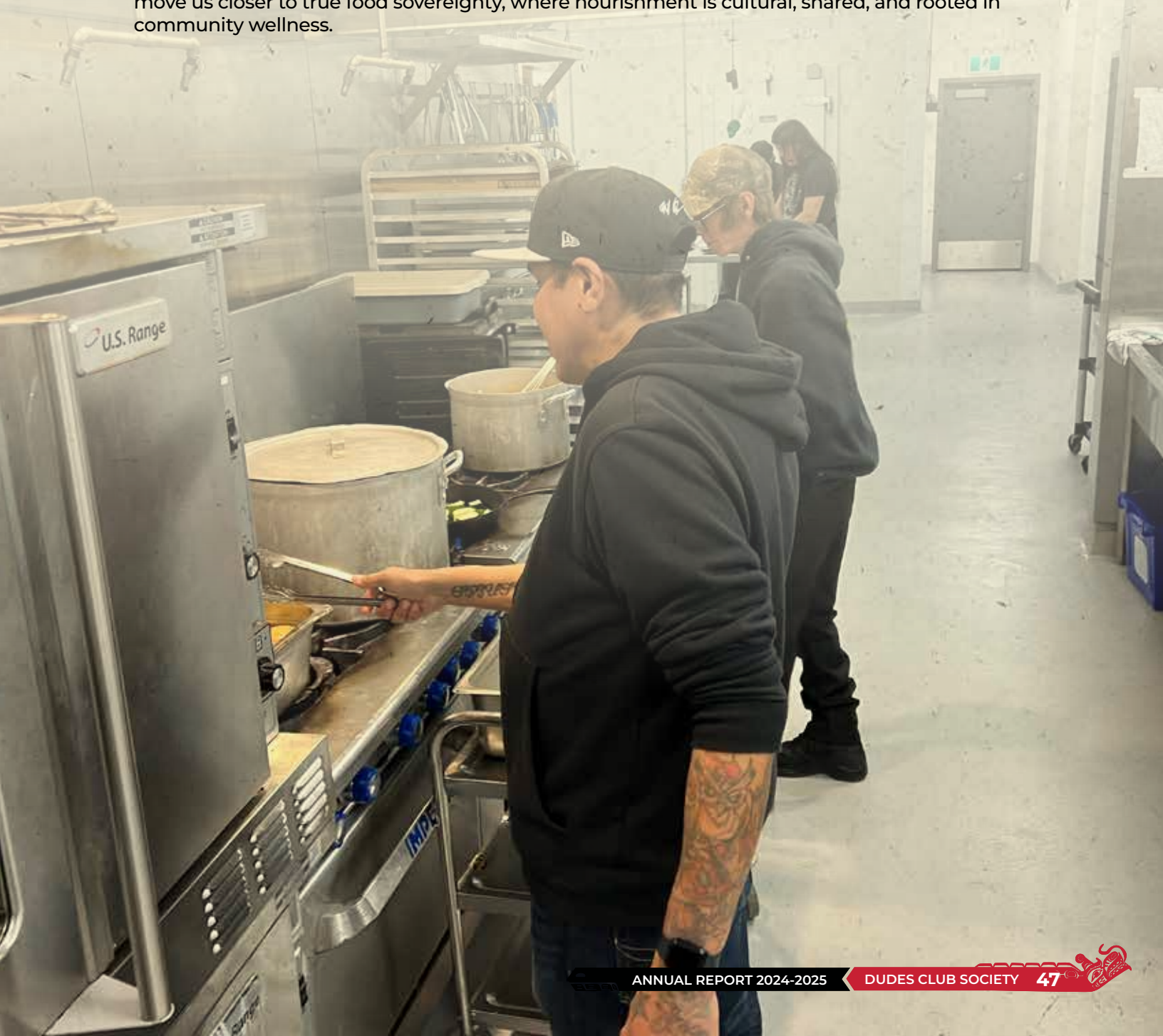
In late May, DCS was invited by Kw'umut Lelum Child and Family Services to join their annual gathering for Indigenous men to present two workshops: "Building Solidarity and Brotherhood", and "Grief Bundle Workshops". These two workshops were intended to build capacity within men in the community to learn how to host a men's gathering, and to build healthier mechanisms for understanding and dealing with grief. Men came together to celebrate their spirits, strength, and resiliency, from both community-oriented and individual perspectives. There were over 40 participants across the two-day gathering, and everyone walked away feeling spiritually nourished and fulfilled.



11. **FOOD** SOVEREIGNTY

In 2025, DUDES Club Society strengthened its commitment to food security and sovereignty through the DUDES Pantry - a community-driven initiative providing free access to healthy food for men and their families. With regular donations from the Vancouver Food Bank and Food Stash, the pantry ensures that men can access food at no cost while building a sense of dignity and care within the community.

Our Food Coordinator plays a vital role in supporting gatherings across the network, including the Burnaby DUDES Club, Vancouver DUDES Club, DUDES Baseball Gathering, Medicine of Brothers Gathering, and the Gathering of Brothers. Beyond addressing immediate food needs, this work is paving the way for Reawakening The Grease Trail Project - connecting urban DUDES Clubs to traditional foods and teachings. Together, these efforts move us closer to true food sovereignty, where nourishment is cultural, shared, and rooted in community wellness.



12. **WELLNESS** IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS

In 2025, DUDES Club Society deepened its outreach within the criminal justice system, providing culturally grounded wellness programming in both provincial correctional centres and federal institutions across British Columbia. Through these visits, our team connected with more than 100 incarcerated men, many of whom are seeking culture, healing, and a sense of belonging while navigating systemic barriers.

This work has been strengthened through ongoing collaboration with Gladue Courts and the support of our Indigenous Voices of Community (IVOC) peer leaders, who help facilitate monthly sessions that focus on healing, accountability, and cultural reconnection. By building relationships with over 25 institutional administrators, DUDES Club continues to create pathways for Indigenous-led programming and reintegration support. Together, we're proving that wellness and accountability can coexist - even within the walls of institutions - when healing is guided by culture, respect, and community.



2024 - 2025 HIGHLIGHTS



1. Loon Lake - First Annual Leadership Summit

May 22-23, 2025

In late May, DCS was invited by Kw'umut Lelum Child and Family Services to join their annual gathering for Indigenous men to present two workshops: "Building Solidarity and Brotherhood", and "Grief Bundle Workshops". These two workshops were intended to build capacity within men in the community to learn how to host a men's gathering, and to build healthier mechanisms for understanding and dealing with grief. Men came together to celebrate their spirits, strength, and resiliency, from both community-oriented and individual perspectives. There were over 40 participants across the two-day gathering, and everyone walked away feeling spiritually nourished and fulfilled.





2. Governor General Visit Regional

On February 6, 2025, DUDES Club Society was honoured to host a roundtable discussion as part of the Governor General's Mental Health Learning and Listening Tour. The session took place in our very own DUDES Clubhouse, bringing together peers, leaders, and Knowledge Keepers to share perspectives on mental health and wellness within the context of peer led initiatives.

We were deeply honoured to welcome Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Canada's first Indigenous Governor General. Her presence and commitment to listening created space for an open, transparent, and meaningful conversation about the challenges Indigenous men face - and the community-led solutions that are creating real change such as Indigenous Voices of Community (IVOC), DCS peer-led leadership initiative.

neXup Involvement

As part of the visit, Governor General Mary Simon expressed a special interest in meeting with our neXup youth team - offering a rare opportunity for young Indigenous men to engage directly with a national leader and gain insight into the workings of government at the highest level.

Youth team leads Jermaine, Matt, and Talon proudly welcomed Her Excellency into their music studio, sharing their songs, creative process, and the healing work they've carried forward over the past year. The exchange highlighted the power of youth voice, creativity, and cultural expression as tools for wellness and leadership.





3. Annual Men's Wellness Fair

In collaboration with Kilala Lelum and multiple community organizations, we successfully hosted our 12th Wellness Fair. The Wellness Fair is designed to bring the services to the people; setting faces to organizations, allowing low-barrier connection, breaking down hesitation in accessing services, and fostering new relationships with potential members through natural outreach. We bring together multiple health care providers, Indigenous organizations, and outreach workers to the streets of the Downtown Eastside. Since the first Wellness Fair in 2013, we have only seen positive outcomes, upward trajectory, and continued community involvement. Relationships are built and maintained here.







4. Eagle Ceremony

April 4, 2025

DCS partnered with The Junction, a program under Vancouver Coastal Health, to host a sacred Eagle Ceremony facilitated by Knowledge Keeper, Dave-Erik. The eagle holds deep spiritual significance in our culture, representing strength, healing, and connection to the Creator.

Together, participants witnessed and took part in the respectful harvesting of the eagle, ensuring that every part was honoured and used with purpose. From this ceremony, the eagle was transformed into an eagle feather fan, now carried by the DCS Knowledge Holder for use in ceremony and smudging - a living reminder of the sacred responsibilities that guide our work.



5. Mural: An Invitation to Leave your Armour at the Door

This year, with the generous support of the City of Vancouver and the 625 Powell Street Foundation, DCS worked with the talented Nisga'a artist, Jay Morven (Heek'alim Siwilaaks), to repaint our exterior wall with a mural representing the journey DCS and the men we work with.

The mural shows the DUDES Club Society logo and its evolution from the original artwork created by Fred Anderson Jr., to the current iteration, which is still in use by the various DUDES Clubs, including the Vancouver DC. There are four men paddling together in a canoe, each wearing regalia from different coastal nations to represent the multicultural and multi-ethnic composition of DUDES Club members.

The paddling represents the journey of Indigenous men to reclaim their culture, wellness, health, and community, all of which have been disrupted by the institutions of colonization and contact.

The DCS team and community came together to paint the mural with Jay, and held a feast after its completion to celebrate both artwork and artist. The feast brought together our wider community and celebrated the resilience of Indigenous men and DUDES. The Nisga'a Tsamiks Dance Group were in attendance, and helped to wake the mural with their dance and music.





6. Gathering of First Nations Services Providers

Held quarterly, the Gathering of First Nations Service Providers brings together more than 30 organizations serving Indigenous populations across Vancouver. These gatherings create a vital space for collaboration, relationship-building, and collective problem-solving among agencies working on the front lines of community wellness.

Each session provides an opportunity to share updates, identify service gaps, and strengthen cross-sector partnerships that better support Indigenous individuals and families. Elders and Knowledge Holders are often present to ground the gatherings in culture and respect, reminding everyone of the shared purpose-to walk together in unity and understanding.

Through open dialogue and shared learning, these gatherings continue to bridge systems, break down silos, and build a stronger, more connected network of care for Indigenous communities in Vancouver.

GATHERING OF FIRST NATION SERVICE PROVIDER

7. Youth Worker's Forum

With the support of BSCP funding from the City of Vancouver, neXup has successfully hosted 3 semi-annual Youth Worker Forum sessions. Since the first session, we have already seen tangible positive outcomes and strong attendance, with an average of 2 representatives from 130-13 unique organizations.

The space is intended to foster open communication and skill-building, with a focus on building relationships and working together to achieve meaningful youth engagement. Built to connect local community leaders, frontline workers, and organizations that support youth demographics. Gatherings include a meal, workshop, and a chance to personally connect and exchange information with others.



YOUTH WORKERS — FORUM —

POWERED BY **neXUP**





8. National Symposium on Mental Health (Quebec)

Following the Governor General's visit to the DUDES Clubhouse in early 2025, DUDES Club Society was invited to participate in the final leg of the Governor General's National Symposium on Mental Health, held in Québec City. This gathering brought together national leaders, advocates, and organizations working to improve mental health and wellness across Canada.

Representing Indigenous men's wellness, DUDES Club shared lived experiences and community-based approaches rooted in culture, brotherhood, and healing. Our message emphasized the need for peer-led, culturally grounded spaces where Indigenous men can access care and rebuild trust with systems that have often failed them. The symposium highlighted DUDES Club's growing role as a national voice for Indigenous men's wellness and as a bridge between community experience and system-level change.





9. Team Capacity Building

Shared Fire: Aligning our Circles

Through guided dialogue, cultural teachings, and interactive activities, participants explored how to align personal intentions with organizational goals, deepen collaboration across programs, and honour the distinct gifts each team member brings to the work. The outcome of Shared Fire was an aligned, re-energized team with a clearer sense of direction, improved communication, and a renewed commitment to advancing wellness through culture, compassion, and collaboration.

Introduction to Patriarchy, Feminism, and Understanding Gender Constructs

Inspired by Bells Hooks: A Will to Change, with inclusion of the documentary Feminist in Cellblock Y, staff explored their personal biases, experiences, and understanding how gender, patriarchy, and social constructs can influence our daily interactions and priorities in wellness. Key takeaways include naming Patriarchy as a system of oppression affecting all, a better understanding of Feminist theory, and our investment in working against gender based violence.



Two-eyed
seeing





6 Powell
2 Street
5 Foundation



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness



Indigenous Services
Canada



Relationships



PARTNERSHIPS

625 Powell Street Foundation

The 625 Powell Street Foundation's support has been pivotal in bolstering the DCS team's capacity to better serve the communities we work with in a centered, grounded way. Our ClubHouse at 1318 Frances Street now hosts weekly gatherings for men and youth, community events, and ceremonies. Furthermore, they continue to support our work by connecting our team to partners, funders, and funding opportunities.

City of Vancouver

The City of Vancouver has been a long-time partner and supporter of DCS and neXup work located in Vancouver through funding from its Social Policy programming. IHW supported our Elders Support Fund, which increased the participation of Elders and Knowledge-Keepers in all aspects of our Downtown EastSide Club's current activities, outreach programming and gatherings. BSCP funding supported our youth violence prevention work; enhancing positive youth development services and programs, connecting youth to caring adults, and lessening the impacts of serious violence and crime on children and youth. We would like to thank the City of Vancouver for supporting our work.

First Nations Health Authorities Northern Region FNHA-NR

We are now in the eighth year of our collaboration with FNHA's Northern Region. Together, we support 40 communities in northern BC in holding men's gatherings and addressing the challenges of men's wellness. FNHA provides microgrants of \$7500 to communities, and it is primarily DCS who supports the communities in accessing these funds. FNHA supports DCS to travel to communities and provide direct support, joins us in our online support options, and helps us to distribute swag and other resources to communities.

Law foundation

DCS is working with the Law Foundation of BC to increase our reach and support for men, male youth, and other male-identifying individuals who are involved in the judiciary system. This partnership enables us to do policy-level advocacy and relationship building, providing us with strong wrap-around resources to engage with a population that is sorely underserved and overrepresented in the justice system. This year, we are beginning to work directly with provincial correctional facilities to provide support directly to marginalized and vulnerable incarcerated men.

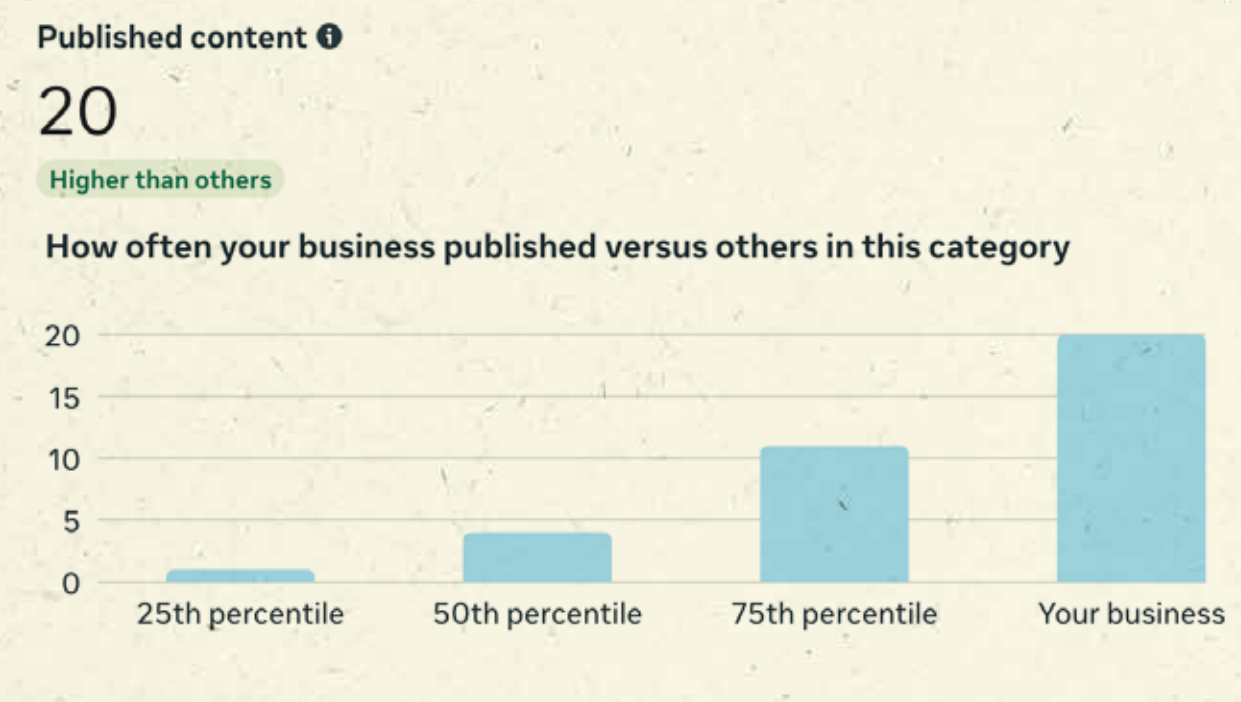
Indigenous Services Canada

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) supports DCS in working with men and youth groups in urban communities, with a specific focus on creating, establishing, and maintaining safe spaces and reducing community-based violence. Through this partnership, DCS is able to work with our communities and groups to establish best practices in addressing gender-based and other forms of violence, ensuring we are keeping everyone safe, holding each individual accountable, and yet also maintaining an environment of welcoming and acceptance.

SOCIAL MEDIA

2025 was an eventful year for the DUDES Club Society and our social media presence reflected that. In 2025 there were fewer, more carefully curated posts than the previous year. Our focus was on the various community events DCS hosts throughout the year, with the goal of vividly portraying our activity within communities.

Benchmarking via Meta analytics shows that within the non-profit sector we post more frequently than most of our peers. We also have shown to have higher than average Content Interactions and Follows monthly than other businesses in our sector.



On Instagram we saw a respectable 38.8k views and gained 334 new followers throughout the year.



Meanwhile on Facebook, we saw 89k views and 223 new followers throughout the year.



Regional



54

ACTIVE
MEN'S
GROUPS
VISITS



10

MEN'S
GROUPS
VISITS

15 COMMUNITY
VISITS



Community events & GATHERINGS

11



YUWIPi &
Sundance
ceremonies



24

46
ECHO
MOUNTAIN
DRUM GROUP



45

NISGA'ATS'AMIKS
Dance
GROUP



ALL NATIONS
OUTREACH



ALL
NATIONS

4



LAX KHEEN
TRADITIONAL
Dance
GROUP

nexUP

Sunday Funday

161

GATHERINGS



TO DATE SINCE OCTOBER 2022 DROP-IN

INSTITUTIONAL VISITS



6
FEDERAL
INSTITUTIONS



5



PROVINCIAL
CORRECTIONAL
CENTERS

Engaged

100



INSTITUTIONALIZED men

Statistics at a Glance

Vancouver GATHERINGS

107



GATHERING OF
BROTHERS
TO DATE SINCE OCTOBER 2023

52

MEDICINE OF
BROTHERS
TO DATE SINCE NOVEMBER 2024



22
BIWEEKLY
GATHERINGS



UNCLES
& FATHERS
GROUP

TO DATE SINCE JANUARY 2025

nexLOUNGE

78

GATHERINGS



TO DATE SINCE MAY 2024

THE CLOSET



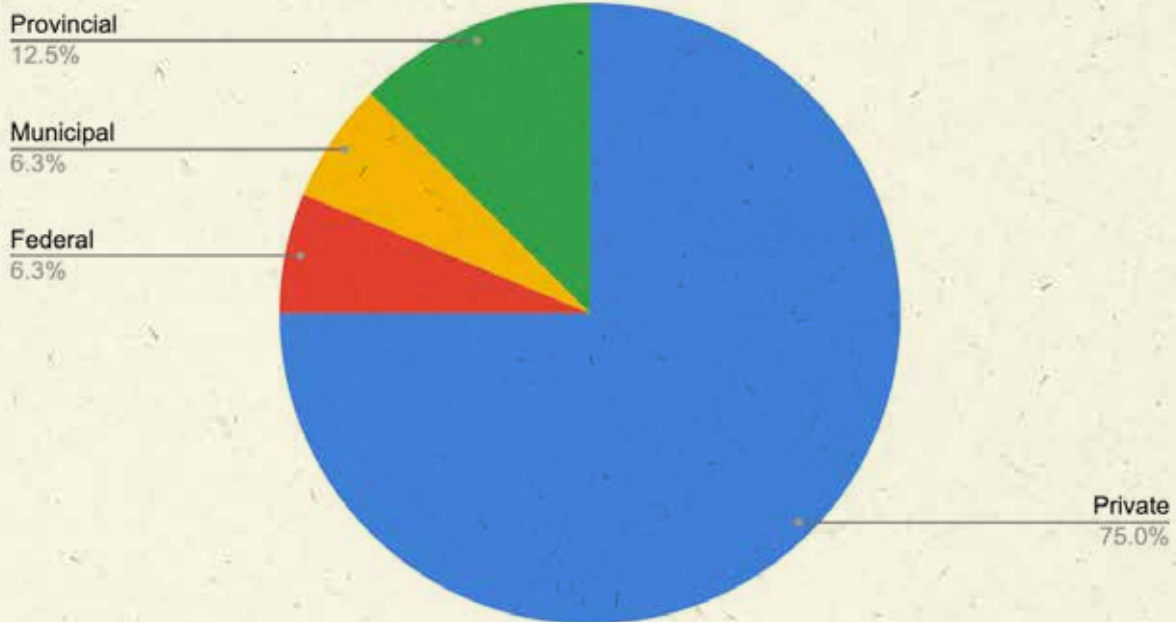
73

GATHERINGS

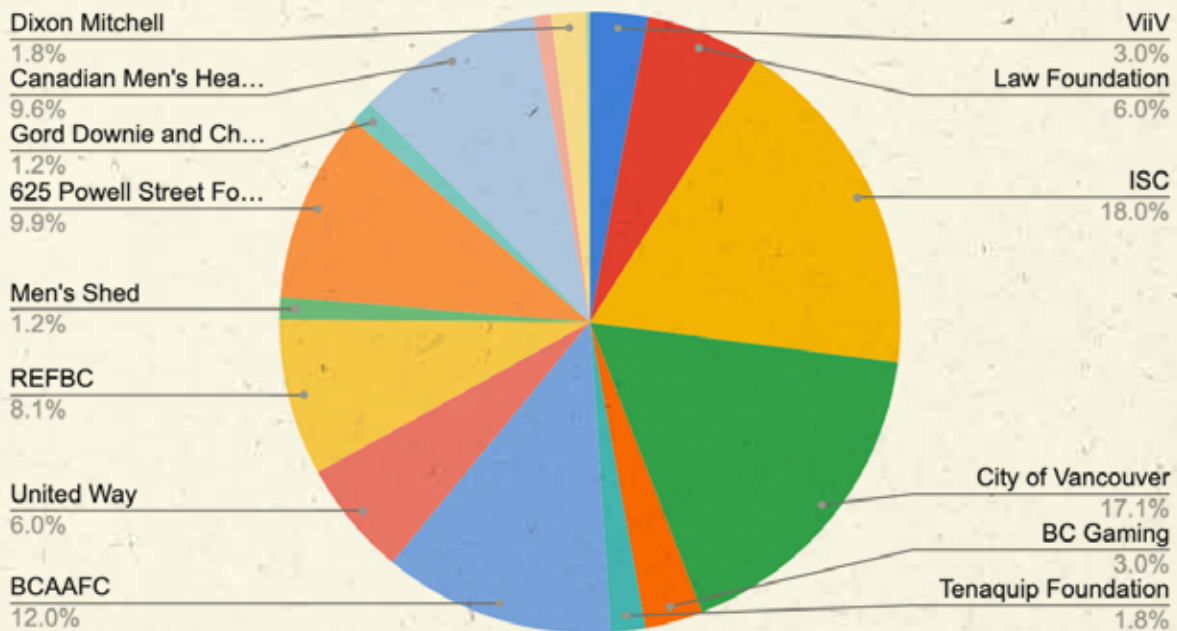
TO DATE SINCE JUNE 2024

FINANCIALS

Funders by Category

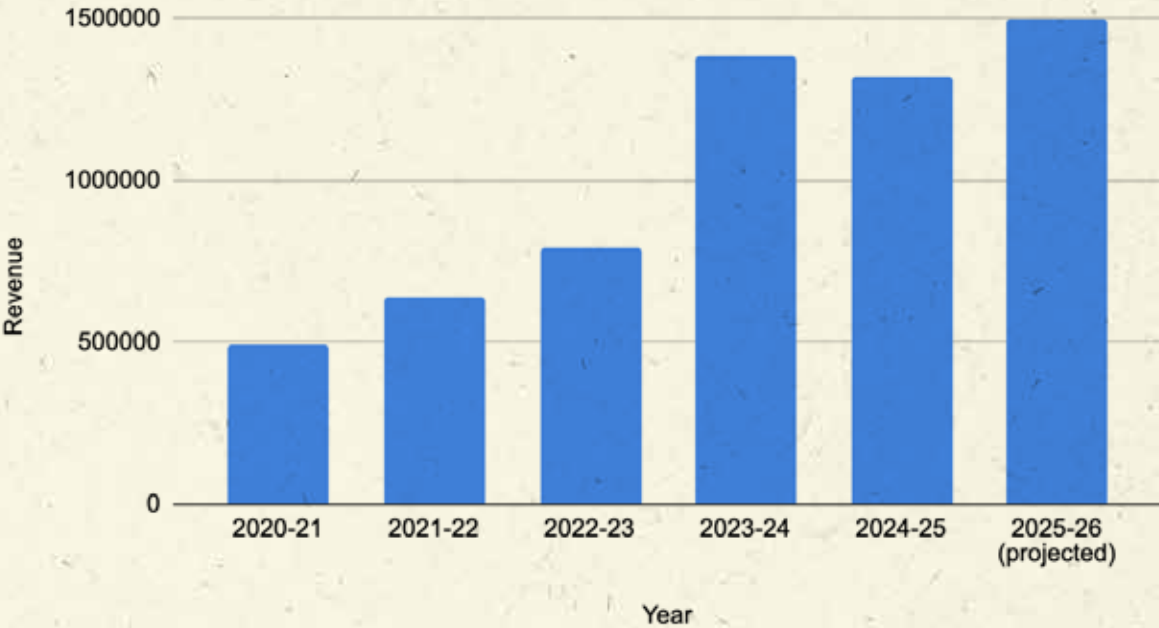


Funders by Percentage

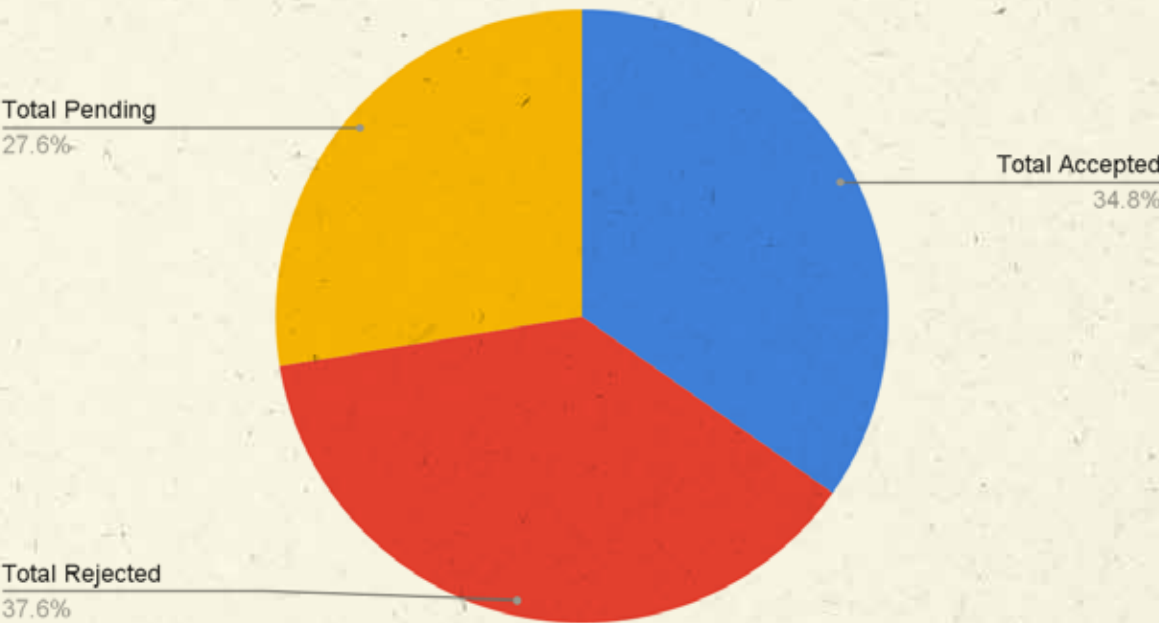




Revenue by Year



Funding Status





Kyler Tang

IN MEMORIAM: KYLER TANG

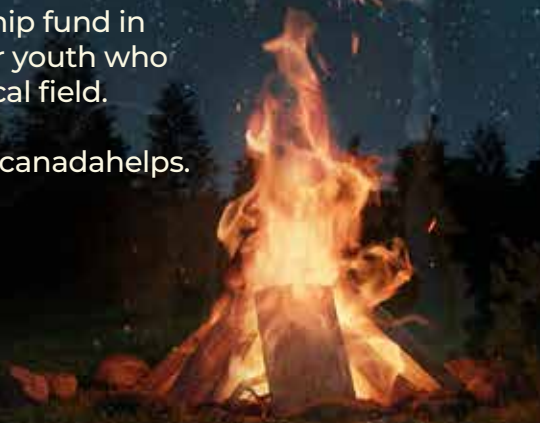
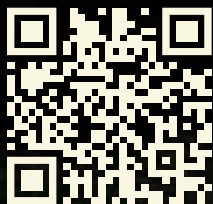
June 14th 2003 - November 6th 2024

Kyler Tang was a project assistant with NexUp and thrived in creative or athletic spaces. Kyler was a first generation Canadian with over 5 years of experience working and volunteering in the community. From piano, to sports, to coding languages, he enjoyed new discoveries and picking up new skills. He used his previous experience planning, facilitating, and leading recreation groups as a base for his work while continuing to learn and grow. Kyler was working towards a degree in nursing at Langara. In the future he had hoped to complete his program and practice travel nursing around the world. In his spare time, he binged tv shows, tried new restaurants, and trained martial arts.

Kyler Tang was a vital and influential member of the neXup youth team and the DUDES Club Society. His absence is felt everyday and his spirit lingers in his legacy; the relationships, laughter, and healing he gifted us before he journeyed to the spirit world.

DCS is building a scholarship fund in Kyler's honour, available for youth who want to study in the medical field.

Donate Here: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/128334>







THE PATH FORWARD

As we look ahead, the work of uplifting Indigenous men's wellness still lives in the shadows of patriarchy. DUDES Club Society will keep pushing these systems to recognize Indigenous men as vital in the Canadian landscape. Our model works - and we see it every day in the men reclaiming their roles, culture, and responsibilities.

Funding for Indigenous communities - especially Indigenous men - is getting harder to access. The new federal budget brought more uncertainty and fewer clear pathways for long-term support. It's like walking through fog: the direction is there, but not always visible. Still, our men keep moving. We've always relied more on teachings, relationships, and heart than on government dollars.

As systems shift. Doors may close. But our teachings don't. Our responsibilities don't. Our brotherhood doesn't. With support of DCS, Indigenous men will continue to gather, learn, heal, build, and reclaim what was taken. The sacred roles of our men are returning - one circle, one fire, one heartbeat at a time.

Healing begins when we remember the land loved us long before we learned to love ourselves. Our men are learning again - to stand strong, to be honest, and to step back into those sacred roles. Even when the way is blurry, we walk it together as we have since time immemorial.



THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS



United Way
British Columbia



REAL ESTATE
Foundation
OF BC

LA FONDATION
TENAQUIP
FOUNDATION

6 Powell
2 Street
5 Foundation



THE  LAW
FOUNDATION
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

**MEN'S
SHEDS**
CANADA



BCAAFC | BC Association of
Aboriginal Friendship Centres

ViiV
Healthcare



Indigenous Services
Canada



Art by DUDES Club member Fred Anderson Jr.

