

**MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
INFORMATION BRIEFING NOTE**

**Cliff: 1226362**

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Sheila Malcolmson, Minister – **FOR INFORMATION**

**TITLE:** Enhancing Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction in BC Schools

**PURPOSE:** To provide information and a status update on a Ministry of Health (HLTH)-funded project to support substance use prevention with the province's Mental Health in Schools initiative.

**BACKGROUND:**

In June 2019, the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA) released *A Pathway to Hope: A roadmap to making mental health and addictions care better for people in British Columbia (A Pathway to Hope)*. One of the key actions under *A Pathway to Hope*'s pillar of "Improved Wellness for Children, Youth and Young Adults" is the Mental Health in Schools initiative. In September 2020, the Ministry of Education (EDUC) released its Mental Health in Schools (MHIS) strategy, with an aim to embed positive mental health in all aspects of the education system—including culture, leadership, curriculum and learning environments—in alignment with and supportive of its ongoing and expanded Expect Respect & a Safe Education (erase) initiative, which includes both mental health promotion and substance use prevention.

HLTH has funding targeted toward support for prevention of substance use and associated harms. This funding has been used for contracting service provision by an external agency, at arms-length from government, for over twenty years. In December 2020, following consultations with MMHA and EDUC about how best to use the existing HLTH funding (\$200K/year) to support the Province's multi-system and cross-government approach for enhancing substance use prevention efforts, HLTH issued a Request for Proposals on BC Bid (Appendix A), with a focus on the curation and promotion of evidence-based substance use prevention resources and approaches for professionals working in BC schools, such as teachers, counsellors and administrators. The RFP was developed, and proposal submissions evaluated, in full collaboration with the MMHA, EDUC, as well as the HLTH's Population Public Health Division.

In March 2020, a successful proponent to the RFP was selected: Bunyaad Public Affairs (Bunyaad), a BC-based non-governmental organization with linkages to both the public health and education systems, in partnership with the McCreary Centre Society. Bunyaad was awarded a two-year contract (currently expires March 31, 2023, with possibility for up to 2 years renewal at Ministry's discretion) for a total of \$419K to support the Province's efforts to enhance substance use prevention and harm reduction in BC schools. The first year of the project focused on identifying current perceived needs of school-based professionals, parents and youth for substance use-specific prevention and harm reduction resources, and curating evidence-based learning and other materials that fit within a comprehensive school health approach to substance use issues.

## DISCUSSION:

The project is in alignment with the *Pathway to Hope* and MHiS strategy, as well as current BC Curriculum. To ensure the project remains aligned with these, EDUC provides feedback at every step of this project, and provides direction when appropriate. Additionally, EDUC also sits on the project's Inter-ministry Committee, which includes representation from EDUC, HLTH, MCFD and MMHA. The Inter-ministry Committee reviews and provides input on all project deliverables.

Project deliverables are also overseen by an educators advisory committee comprised of school system stakeholders, including principals, school trustees and members of the BC Teachers Federation. This committee was formed by Bunyaad, and ensures their products are aligned with the needs of BC school districts. A youth advisory committee formed in partnership with McCreary Centre Society ensures that the voices of young people are also well represented in their work.

Bunyaad successfully completed all initial deliverables in 2021, including development of:

- A comprehensive needs assessment (including an analysis of data available through the McCreary Centre Society);
- An environmental scan of substance use prevention resources currently available for BC Schools;
- A project management plan for the duration of the contract period that follows project management best practices;
- A monitoring and evaluation framework for the duration of the contract period that captures progress towards outcomes

With support from Ministry of Citizens Services, in the summer and fall of 2021, Bunyaad conducted a province-wide public survey of parents on the topic of youth substance use to identify parental learning expectations and caregiver needs. At the same time, a targeted survey of school trustees was conducted, to gather information about knowledge mobilization needs relating to substance use concerns in schools. As a result, the project workplan has evolved to include the establishment of both a Community of Practice (CoP) for health system stakeholders and a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for educators. Inaugural meetings of these groups began in April 2022, and the content and format of both were vetted and approved by the project's Inter-ministry Stewardship committee. These forums are a space for members of these respective professional groups to discuss emergent topics related to substance use and youth, with a focus on supporting substance use prevention and harm reduction through school settings.

In early 2022, the project has been re-branded as the "*ABC's of Youth Substance Use: A Knowledge Mobilization Campaign*." The ABC's refer to Autonomy, Belonging and Competencies, three factors that promote youth wellbeing and prevent, delay and reduce substance-related harms. Under this project branding, Bunyaad is mobilizing and curating evidence-based approaches to preventing substance use and associated harms in school settings. An example of this work is the ABC's of Youth Substance Use Digest, which is a monthly bulletin where school professionals working with children and youth, including educators, will find practical, web-based information to support their work. The

Digest will continue to grow based on need and feedback from the PLC and CoP, as well as the inter-ministry committee.

**ADVICE:**

- In 2022/2023, Bunyaad will continue to provide professional development opportunities for educators, including disseminating knowledge and recommended resources or approaches through a monthly digest, and a podcast planned for the fall 2022.
- HLTH, MMHA and EDUC continue to collaborate in the stewardship of the ABCs of Youth Substance Use project and support the contract Bunyaad in achieving the objectives of enhancing substance use prevention elements of the MHiS initiative.

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**Date:** May 10, 2022

**MINISTRY OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS  
INFORMATION BRIEFING NOTE**

**Cliff # 1227094**

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Shelia Malcolmson, Minister - **FOR INFORMATION**

**TITLE:** 22/23 Stop the Stigma Campaign and Sports Partnerships

**PURPOSE:** Update on planned 22/23 activities for the Stop the Stigma campaign

**BACKGROUND:**

MMHA has an annual STOB 67 budget of \$2.37M to support marketing activities to reduce stigma. The Partnerships and Engagement team works closely with GCPE-HQ to develop an annual spending plan to ensure maximum impact and coordination across other government campaigns.

In November 2021, MMHA launched a new stigma-reduction campaign (Stop the Stigma). The six-week campaign included TV, streaming audio/radio, out-of-home, and various digital platforms. Partnership agreements with the BC Lions and Vancouver Canucks provided additional promotions both in-arena and through digital channels to help extend the message. Following the campaign, public opinion polling was conducted and demonstrated strong campaign recall and positive shifts in attitudes and beliefs among the target audience.

**DISCUSSION:**

Given the continued rise in overdose-related harms due to the toxic drug supply, the Partnerships and Engagement team - in partnership with GCPE-HQ - is developing a spending approach that will ensure key messages related to the impact of stigma remain highly visible across the province through broad market coverage and sport partnerships.

*A. Media Buy*

The Stop the Stigma campaign is tentatively scheduled for two media ‘flights’ this year. One in the spring (May/June) and one in the fall (Oct/Nov). Exact dates and placements are still being negotiated but will reach across the province through diverse communication channels, including TV, radio, streaming audio, billboards and transit and social media.

*B. Renewed Sports Partnerships*

Professional sports partnerships continue to be a key marketing tactic to reach the target audience. The combination of raising the profile of the existing provincial campaign, paired with bringing new voices – through Ambassadors – into the conversations adds significant value. In 22/23 three teams will participate in the campaign, which provides media coverage throughout the year, due to their season schedules.

Vancouver Canucks: *The reach and impact of BC’s professional hockey team is significant and campaign assets that were created in 21/22 will continue to be promoted.*

- Investment: \$150,000
- Season / promotions schedule: October 2022 – March 2023

BC Lions: *Strong alignment with target demographic and opportunity to use innovative marketing tactics, like podcasts, to spread key messages. Campaign assets that were created in 21/22 will continue to be promoted.*

- Investment: \$100,000
- Season / promotional schedule: June 2022 – March 2023

Vancouver Whitecaps (new for 22/23): *This new partnership will capitalize on the significant growth of soccer across North America and there is strong alignment with the values of their fanbase. Existing campaign elements will be used in stadium in addition to the creation of new assets (will be shared with GCPE-MMHA and MO).*

- Investment: \$100,000
- Season / promotional schedule: Early May – October 2022

Details of each partnership agreement can be found in Appendix A.

**ADVICE:**

While the full media plan is being finalized, the pairing of a spring media buy with sports partnerships provides immediate marketing opportunities to ensure the stigma reduction messaging remains highly visible as drug toxicity deaths continue to rise. By re-investing with the BC Lions and Vancouver Canucks, MMHA can maximize previous investments, while adding fresh content and reaching new audiences with the addition of the Vancouver Whitecaps.

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**Date:** May 02, 2022

## Appendix A

Vancouver Canucks (\$150K) To Be Confirmed	BC Lions (\$100K)	Vancouver Whitecaps (\$100K)
1.07M Twitter Followers 1M Facebook Followers 530K Instagram Followers 100K YouTube Subscribers	500,00 TSN Viewership 125K Twitter Followers 155K Facebook Followers 47K Instagram Followers	336K Twitter Followers 276K Facebook Followers 148K Instagram Followers 35K YouTube Subscribers
<b>At Home Visibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtual Glass Signage during broadcast</li> <li>Reach of 1M Canucks fans with an AMA of 331K for every regionally broadcasted game on Sportsnet (approx. 10 periods per season)</li> </ul>	<b>At Home Visibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtual Field logo – Follows on-field play and StopOverdoseBC.ca messaging for 6 playlist minutes during 9 regular season home games</li> <li>TSN: 500K viewers (100K in Van/Vic)</li> </ul>	<b>At Home Visibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>200m of broadcast visible LED signage situated on-pitch</li> <li>Ability of dynamic or animated msg</li> <li>Broadcast on TSN with 99,200 AMA</li> <li>80% of audience lives in BC</li> </ul>
<b>In-Arena Visibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hockey Talks - Game Night Activation (Opportunity for booth and meet and greet with Ambassadors)</li> <li>Hockey Talks - Game Night Alignment (Video and PA announcement during game)</li> <li>Digital In-bowl LED Signage</li> <li>Concourse LED Signage</li> <li>Washroom Signage</li> </ul>	<b>In-Stadium Visibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>360 Ribbon and Field Board LED Signage</li> <li>Concourse Stadium Vision Signage</li> <li>Washroom Signage</li> <li>Terry Fox Plaza Digital Board (*outdoors)</li> </ul> <b>Radio - Access to Lions Radio Network</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two (2) :30sec spots for all home and away games to 50K listeners and 26 stations across BC</li> </ul>	<b>In-stadium Visibility</b> LED Ribbon Dynamic Signage Sideline Static Signage (3'x20' Board) Concourse Stadium Signage  <b>Radio</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>:30sec spots on radio partner AM730 (34 matches)</li> </ul> <b>Ambassador Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tosaint Ricketts – Ambassador</li> <li>Work with Whitecaps to produce videos, stills, audio content to support key messages on Stop the Stigma</li> </ul>
<b>Digital Visibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hockey Talks – Custom online Contest page to support campaign, including social posts for entire contest period</li> <li>Ambassador Support (use existing)</li> </ul>	<b>Digital Visibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Big Box and Banner Ads</li> <li>Stop The Stigma webpage (features Ambassador Videos)</li> <li>Ambassador Support (use existing)</li> </ul>	<b>Digital Visibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Media – Whitecaps will distribute Ambassador content via Instagram, Facebook &amp; Twitter</li> <li>Website ads and featured article</li> <li>Pre-roll video content</li> </ul>