

# PEACE Program 24 Hour Census Report 2024

A One Day Snapshot of the Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment (PEACE) Programs for Children and Youth in BC

PEACE

April 2025



BC Society of  
Transition Houses

# 24 Hour Census Report:

## PEACE Program 2024

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The BC Society of Transition Houses’ office is located on unceded Coast Salish territory, shared by the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), xʷməθkwə́yəm (Musqueam) and sə́lilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

### INTRODUCTION

The BC Society of Transition Houses (BCSTH) is a member-based, provincial umbrella organization that, through leadership, support and collaboration, enhances the continuum of services and strategies to respond to, prevent and end violence against all women, children and youth. The Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment (PEACE) Program for children and youth experiencing violence, (formerly the Children Who Witness Abuse Program) is a free, confidential program across British Columbia (BC) for children and youth aged 3 to 18 who have experienced domestic violence.

BCSTH surveys PEACE Programs annually to document a snapshot of services provided in a single 24-hour survey period through an annual 24 Hour Census. BCSTH conducted this 24 Hour Census survey on November 27th & 28th, 2024. This census is a snapshot count of a 24-hour period where children and youth with experiences of violence and their non-offending caregivers were served by PEACE Programs. This census provides a provincial picture of how many people were seeking services for their experiences of violence, how many were unable to be served, and the scope of the current PEACE Program support services.

While most PEACE Programs submit their data to the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (MPSSG), that data may include duplicate information (e.g., a child or youth may have been served by two different PEACE Programs in

one quarter). The 24 Hour Census data aims to eliminate duplication by capturing all individuals served within the same 24-hour time frame. Regional comparisons of the results are also included in this report – please see Appendix A.

The PEACE Program is a psycho-educational program that provides age-appropriate individual and group counselling services to children and youth to:

- Label and express the feelings they have experienced in relation to the violence they have encountered;
- Understand healthy ways of dealing with anger and expressing anger;
- Understand that they are not at fault for the violent actions of others;
- Teach safety skills, strategies and develop safety plans;
- Encourage open communication;
- Acknowledge loss and separation issues;
- Facilitate understanding of abuse and myths about violence against women;
- Explore other violence issues such as violence in the media; and
- Encourage self-confidence.

For more information about BC's PEACE Programs and to find a PEACE Program in your community, visit our website at <https://bcsth.ca/program/peace/>.

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

### BACKGROUND

There are 87 PEACE Programs in BC, two of which are entirely self-funded and the remainder of which receive a minimum of 17.5 hours per week in funding from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (MPSSG). There have been 85 PEACE Programs in BC for more than 15 years and, despite the demand and the waitlists for services that extend back just as long, the provincial government has not provided any new funding to support new PEACE Programs in BC. The two self-funded programs are BCSTH members who recognized the importance of the PEACE Program for their children, youth, and families and after their organizations were advised by MPSSG that no provincial funding was available, committed to fundraising and grant writing to self-fund a PEACE Program and they both receive training and resources from BCSTH. In recent years, ten other communities in BC representing Indigenous (8), Metis (1) and immigrant and refugee communities (1) have also requested PEACE Programs because of the recognized value of the more than 30-year-old PEACE Program and the need for services for the children, youth and families they support.

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**“The PEACE counselling program is a high demand program that needs more program hours to be funded in order to adequately serve the large population of people seeking services.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

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# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

### IN 24 HOURS

67 of the 87 PEACE Programs participated in BCSTH's 2024 24 Hour Census (77%). Thank you to all of the PEACE Programs who took time out of their busy days to participate in the survey.

On November 27th and 28th, 2024, over a 24-hour period, **466** children and youth who have experienced violence and their non-offending caregivers were supported by PEACE Programs across all regions in BC. Also, during this 24-hour period, PEACE Programs in BC:

**Responded to 550** service-related calls, emails, and texts by providing information and support; and

**Educated 859 people** about the dynamics and impacts of violence against women through training and public presentations.

During the same period, an additional **206** children and youth and their non-offending caregivers were unable to be served. There were a total of **548** children and youth on waitlists for PEACE Program services in BC.

Program waitlists was the most relevant barrier to providing PEACE Program services during the 24-hour reporting period. Waitlists have been identified as a key barrier to PEACE Program services in the 24 Hour Census survey every single year since 2018. The next most relevant barriers to service identified were insufficient staff, the needs of children and youth falling outside of the PEACE Program mandate, and the financial needs of the program not being met by provincial government funding.

**BCSTH sincerely thanks the PEACE  
Programs for the difference they are  
making every day in the lives of children  
and youth with experiences of violence.**

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024



### PEACE PROGRAM SUPPORT SERVICES

**“Thank you for helping me see that I’m not a bad person,  
just a hurt person.”**

(Program Participant, Youth)

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Over a 24-hour period, **466** children and youth with experiences of violence and their non-offending caregivers were provided support services through PEACE Programs that participated in the census. Eleven of the responding PEACE Programs noted that their program was closed during some or all of the 24-hour period due to the part-time hours that the program is funded to operate on (6), vacation (3), sickness (1) and a vacant PEACE Program counsellor position (1). During the 24-hour period, **358** children and youth and **108** adults were supported to respond to the impacts of violence (Table 1).

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**“I feel safe here.”**

(Program Participant, Child)

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

Table 1: Number of children, youth and non-offending caregivers served by PEACE Programs in-person and remotely during the census period

Age Range	Number
Female Older Adults (50+)	10
Male Older Adults (50+)	2
Female Adults (25-49)	84
Male Adults (25-49)	4
Female Young Adults (19-24)	6
Male Young Adults (19-24)	2
Female Youth (16-18)	18
Male Youth (16-18)	11
Transgender <sup>1</sup> Youth (16-18)	1
Female Children/Youth (11-15)	76
Male Children/Youth (11-15)	57
Transgender Children/Youth (11-15)	3
Female Children (6-10)	79
Male Children (6-10)	85
Female Children (0-5)	12
Male Children (0-5)	16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>466</b>

<sup>1</sup> Transgender is an “umbrella term for those who gender does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. The term ‘transgender’ i.e., trans may include those with a binary (man or woman), non-binary, or other non-static/fluid gender identity.” (Alex Vanderveen, Counselling Clients With 2SLGBTQIA+ Identities in Canada)

“My daughter really wants to come here.  
She never wants to miss an art therapy session.”

(Program Participant, Caregiver)



In the 24-hour period, PEACE programs responded to **550** service related calls, emails and text messages: an average of 22-23 calls, emails and texts every hour.

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

Many children, youth and non-offending caregivers served by PEACE Programs during the 24-hour period were known to belong to marginalized communities, as displayed in Table 2. People belonging to more than one marginalized group were counted more than once.

Table 2: People from marginalized communities supported by PEACE Programs during the 24-hour period

	Number
<i>Indigenous (First Nations, Metis, or Inuit) people</i>	106 (22.7%)
<i>Black people</i>	6 (1.3%)
<i>Racialized people (visible minorities other than black or Indigenous)</i>	40 (8.6%)
<i>2SLGBTQI+ people</i>	17 (3.6%)
<i>Refugee, immigrant, newcomer or non-status people</i>	34 (7.3%)
<i>Living with disabilities</i>	11 (2.4%)
<i>Neurodiverse people</i>	31 (6.7%)
<i>Sex workers</i>	1 (0.2%)

**123** children, youth and non-offending caregivers served (26.4%) were known to be experiencing challenges related to mental wellness or substance use as follows:

- 87 people supported (18.7%) were facing challenges related to their mental wellness.
- 24 people supported (5.1%) were facing challenges related to substance use.
- 12 people supported (2.6%) were facing challenges related to both mental wellness and substance use.

**“Due to drop-in service at high school, I was able to connect two youth with suicidal ideation to CYMH. Both were able to get service right away due to their risk level.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

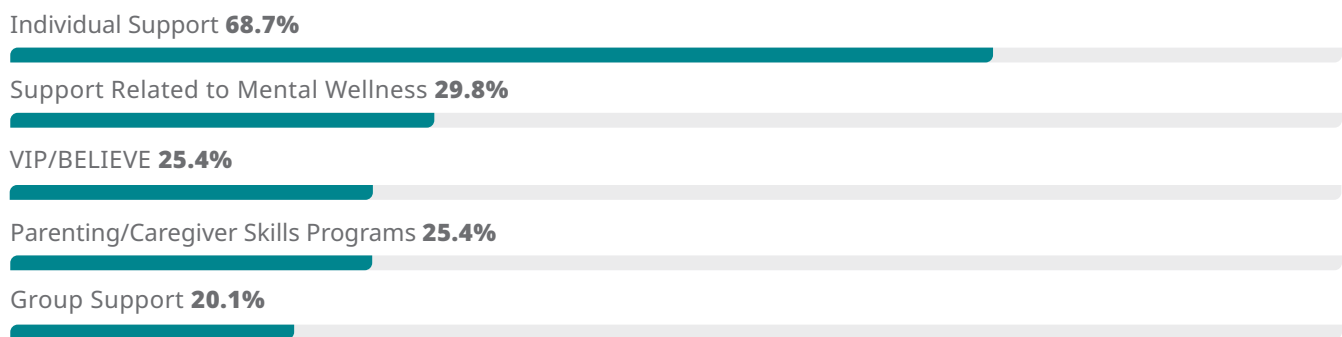
# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

### STANDING BESIDE: SUPPORT & ADVOCACY

As in the previous four years, Individual Support services and Support Related to Mental Wellness were the activities that PEACE Programs most frequently reported engaging in during the 24-hour period, at 68.7% and 29.8% respectively. This year, this was followed by delivering the Violence Is Preventable (VIP) and/or BELIEVE projects at 25.4%, an increase of 10.7% since last year. Providing parent/caregiver skills programs (also 25.4%) was equally common, with a similar percentage of programs reporting this as last year (26.5%). This was followed by Group Support at 20.1% (an increase of 5.4% since 2023) (Table 3).

Table 3: Percentage of PEACE Programs who reported providing each activity during the census period



“I am so much more confident during  
the week after seeing you.”

(Program Participant, Youth)

“This session was healing. I feel seen.”

(Program Participant, Youth)

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024



During the **24-hour period**, PEACE Programs provided:

- **226 individual** counselling sessions to children and youth
- **11 group** counselling sessions to children and youth
- **53** sessions to **parents or caregivers**

In the **24-hour period**, PEACE program Counsellors delivered **290 support sessions**.

**"My anxiety has been better; I am doing hobbies I haven't done in a while and I am working regular hours."**

(Program Participant, Youth)

**"[A mother] shared that she is very appreciative of the service her children receive from our agency. They made a huge progress with expressing their feelings, improving communication and problem-solving skills."**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

### SHARING KNOWLEDGE: VIOLENCE PREVENTION & PUBLIC EDUCATION

**“Wow. I had never heard of anything like this before.”**

(Young Male Student Talking About Healthy Relationships)

Violence prevention education that PEACE Programs provide includes reaching out to children and youth in schools through the [Violence is Preventable \(VIP\) Program](#). Through VIP, PEACE Program counsellors educate young people and school staff about healthy relationships and the resources that are available regarding domestic violence.

**“The kids in my classroom loved the VIP program.”**

(Teacher)

During the 24-hour period, PEACE Programs delivered 27 public education sessions to 859 people in the community. **This is the highest number of sessions and attendees reported in the census prior to 2018, indicating that these services have now recovered from the impacts**

**of severely restricted access to schools during the pandemic (Table 4).**

**“Being able to provide outreach in schools and deliver VIP has been such a great way to be able to support those who may not be able to access these services otherwise.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

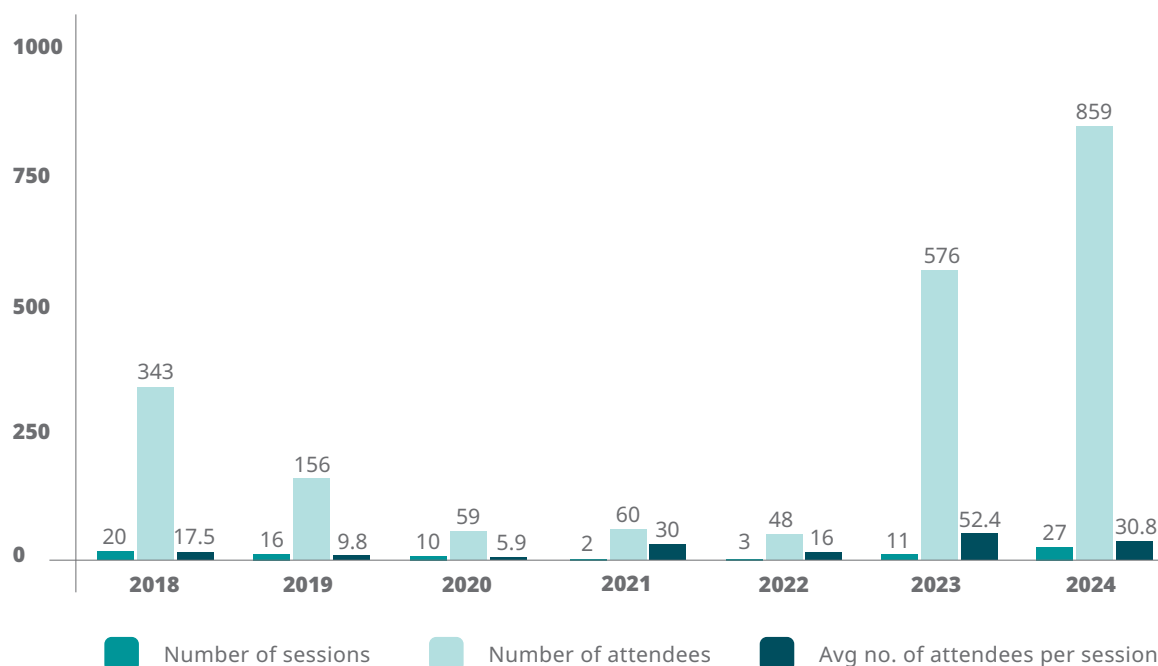
**“This program matters. It is important. We really fill a void in our community and help the schools by giving extra support to students who struggle day to day.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

**PEACE** programs educated **859** people about the dynamics and impacts of violence against women through training and public presentations during the 24 Hour Census period.

# 24 Hour Census Report: PEACE Program 2024

Table 4: Comparison of number of public education sessions delivered during the 24 Hour Census period and number of people attending between 2018-2024



With that said, PEACE Program counsellors described the challenge of delivering VIP whilst also meeting PEACE Program service demands and managing program waitlists with limited funding.

**“With great pressure to deliver VIP presentations and with no additional hours offered it feels as though we are having to choose between what is most important when the reality is that both VIP and waitlists deserve equal attention.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

**“Once you implement the VIP program in schools the number of intake and referrals goes up to an unmanageable number.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024



### UNMET NEEDS

**“There is a large need for kids to find help when needed. [There is] too long of a wait for support.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

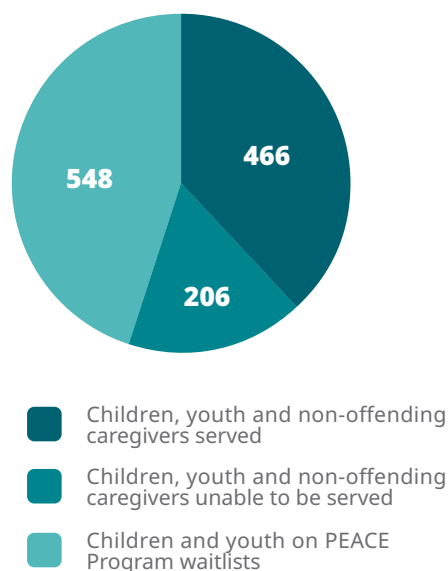
Over the 24-hour period, **206** BC children, youth and their non-offending parents or caregivers could not be served by PEACE Program services. Furthermore, just over half of the PEACE Programs who responded to this survey reported that their program was carrying a waitlist during the 24-hour period (50.7%). Between them, there were **548** children and youth on waitlists for PEACE

Program services, which is more than the number of children, youth and non-offending caregivers served (466 vs 548) (Table 5).

**“Families are dealing with more intricate struggles than ever before and often this results in a lower number of clients on my caseload and more families on the waitlist to ensure that the support being provided is meeting the needs of the families.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

Table 5: People served vs. unable to be served and on PEACE Program waitlists during the 24-hour period



Program waitlists was the top factor identified by PEACE Programs as a barrier to providing services during the 24-hour period for the fourth year in a row, with more than one quarter of respondents (28.4%) citing this issue (Table 6). Increased funding for the PEACE Program remains vital to enable them to meet service demands, reduce long waitlists and also deliver VIP.

**“Mothers who have children on the waitlist commented that they wished the program didn’t have a waitlist and some removed their children due to the waitlist and limited counsellor hours.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)



During the 24-hour period there were  
**548** children and youth on waitlists  
for PEACE program services.

PEACE Program waitlists have been  
identified as a key barrier to services in the  
24 Hour Census every single year for the  
last eight years.

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

Table 6: Top 5 reasons PEACE Programs were unable to serve women, children and youth during the 24-hour period

Reason	n	%
Waitlist for programs	19	28.4
Insufficient staff	10	14.9
Financial needs of program not being met by provincial government funding	6	8.9
Needs of child/youth out with PEACE Program mandate	6	8.9
Insufficient resources to support children/youth with varying levels of mental wellness and/or substance use needs	4	6

Closely related to the issue of program waitlists, insufficient staff was the second most common barrier identified to providing services (14.9%) and this was followed by the financial needs of the program not being met by provincial government funding.

**“The needs of our clients more often than not exceed the services we are able to provide... limiting session numbers and underfunding programs keeps women and children at risk. The severity of violence is on the rise creating higher risk for our clients than we have ever seen.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

**“We need more funding! Ideally, our program should be staffed by 2 FTE positions. 1.5 FTE at the least would help our community better.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

The same number of respondents cited the needs of children and youth falling out with the PEACE Program mandate e.g., clinical counselling is required, and just slightly fewer reported insufficient resources to support children/youth with varying levels of mental wellness and/or substance use needs (6%). In addition to long waitlists and inadequate funding for PEACE Programs, there is a severe lack of mental health services in many communities, and particularly in smaller rural communities. Where these services do exist, they also tend to carry extensive waitlists and make referrals to the PEACE Program. The need for more free or affordable services for families on a low -income is an ongoing issue.

**“Mental health resources should be more accessible for BC residents. We see the results of poor mental health and addiction all around us with the high drug and homelessness rates. Please invest in the mental health and wellness of families and children and youth.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

**“One staff expressed feeling pressure to meet the needs of a child who’s issues greatly exceed the capacity of the program.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

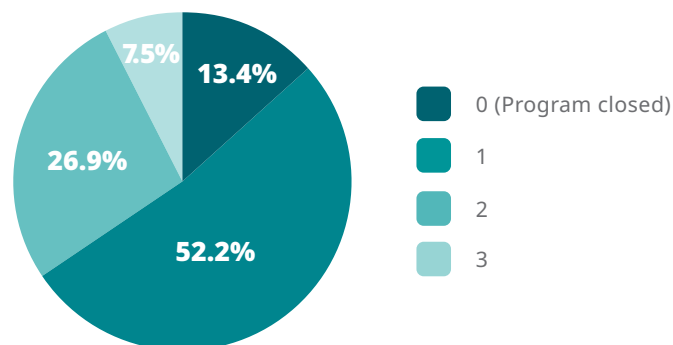
During the 24-hour period, the number of staff working in the PEACE Programs who responded to the survey ranged from 1-3, with a median of 1 and an average of 1.5. More than half of the programs who responded (52.2%) were operating with just one staff member during the 24-hour period (Table 7) and there was a total of eight volunteers (including practicum students) supporting PEACE Programs in BC during the 24-hour period.

The overwhelming majority of respondents continued to stress that full-time hours and secondary staff are vital if PEACE Programs are to be able to meet the needs of the children, youth and families in their communities in BC.

**“More funding for rural areas would be great. If I could get another 8 hours and have a staff with 8-16 hours, then we could possibly cover for each other while sick, or on vacations and alleviate some of the waitlist.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

Table 7: Percentage of peace programs operating with 1-3 staff members during the 24-hour period



**“It’s so important to have appropriate funding to staff more hours in the program.”**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024



### SUPPORTING PEACE PROGRAMS

**"I would like to emphasize the importance of the PEACE program and the VIP Program as integral supports for small communities across BC...In many small communities, access to resources and educational programs on healthy relationships and violence prevention is limited. The PEACE and VIP programs bridge these gaps by providing safe spaces for children and youth to process their experiences and gain tools to navigate and break the cycles of violence."**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

BCSTH and the PEACE Programs are sincerely grateful for the funding commitment in 2018 from MPSSG to provide a minimum of 17.5 hours/week of PEACE Program services to 85 of the 87 PEACE Programs in BC. BCSTH is also sincerely grateful for the funding from 'Safe and Supported: B.C.'s Gender-Based Violence Action Plan' and through the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence enhancing the PEACE and VIP Programs. Investing in the VIP Program is one action identified under the 'Breaking cycles of violence through prevention, healing and accountability' priority of 'Safe and Supported'. In spite of these investments, however, the findings in this report demonstrate that the demand for services continues to outweigh these funding commitments.

**"Our community has grown and the population has increased, the hours remain way underfunded as it is only a part time program!"**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

**"It would be great to have more hours in my program - 17.5 hours for four rural communities is not enough!"**

(PEACE Program Counsellor)

There is ongoing need for increased hours for PEACE Programs so that every child and youth in BC who is experiencing domestic violence, along with their non-offending caregiver, has timely access to appropriate supports to live safely and build PEACEful relationships. BCSTH and the PEACE Programs are committed to working collaboratively with the provincial government to ensure that these critical needs are met so every postal code in BC has access to PEACE and VIP supports.

Please visit the BCSTH [Directory of Member Programs & Services](#) or the [Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General site](#) to find more information about a PEACE Program in your community.

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

### APPENDIX A: REGIONAL COMPARISONS OF CENSUS RESULTS

#### Response Rates

Region	Programs in region	Programs who responded	Programs who responded (%)
Region 1: Vancouver Island and Powell River	13	10	76.9
Region 2: Lower Mainland	10	10	100
Region 3: Fraser Valley	12	9	75
Region 4: Kootenays	13	11	84.6
Region 5: Okanagan	14	13	92.9
Region 6: Cariboo	11	6	54.5
Region 7: Northern BC	14	8	57.1
TOTAL	87	67	77

Eleven respondents reported that their program was closed on one or both days during the 24-hour census period, as shown below:

Region	Program Closed
Region 1: Vancouver Island and Powell River	0
Region 2: Lower Mainland	0
Region 3: Fraser Valley	2
Region 4: Kootenays	1
Region 5: Okanagan	5
Region 6: Cariboo	0
Region 7: Northern BC	3
TOTAL	11

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

### People Served

Region	No. Supported
Region 1: Vancouver Island and Powell River	144
Region 2: Lower Mainland	88
Region 3: Fraser Valley	30
Region 4: Kootenays	72
Region 5: Okanagan	48
Region 6: Cariboo	46
Region 7: Northern BC	38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>466</b>

### Demographic Information

Region	Indigenous	Black	Other racialized minorities	2SLGBTQI+	Refugee, immigrant, newcomer or non-status	Living with disabilities	Neurodiverse people	Sex workers
Region 1: Vancouver Island and Powell River	14	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
Region 2: Lower Mainland	4	3	22	3	24	1	3	0
Region 3: Fraser Valley	3	1	12	5	8	3	8	0
Region 4: Kootenays	14	2	4	3	2	6	9	1
Region 5: Okanagan	49	0	0	2	0	1	4	0
Region 6: Cariboo	7	0	0	2	0	0	4	0
Region 7: Northern BC	15	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

### Support Sessions Provided

Region	Individual Sessions	Group Sessions	Caregiver Sessions	TOTAL
<i>Region 1: Vancouver Island and Powell River</i>	48	2	3	53
<i>Region 2: Lower Mainland</i>	36	3	13	52
<i>Region 3: Fraser Valley</i>	36	0	5	41
<i>Region 4: Kootenays</i>	36	2	10	48
<i>Region 5: Okanagan</i>	22	1	8	31
<i>Region 6: Cariboo</i>	25	2	8	35
<i>Region 7: Northern BC</i>	23	1	6	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>290</b>

### Service-Related Calls, Emails or Texts Received

Region	# of service-related calls, emails or text messages received
<i>Region 1: Vancouver Island and Powell River</i>	64
<i>Region 2: Lower Mainland</i>	92
<i>Region 3: Fraser Valley</i>	149
<i>Region 4: Kootenays</i>	102
<i>Region 5: Okanagan</i>	87
<i>Region 6: Cariboo</i>	28
<i>Region 7: Northern BC</i>	28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>550</b>

# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024

### Public Education Sessions

Region	# of public education sessions delivered	# of people who attended	Ave. attendees per session
Region 1: Vancouver Island and Powell River	10	312	31.2
Region 2: Lower Mainland	2	61	30.5
Region 3: Fraser Valley	3	80	26.7
Region 4: Kootenays	3	55	18.3
Region 5: Okanagan	8	341	42.6
Region 6: Cariboo	1	10	10
Region 7: Northern BC	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>30</b>

### People Unable to be Served

Region	# of people unable to serve
Region 1: Vancouver Island and Powell River	32
Region 2: Lower Mainland	39
Region 3: Fraser Valley	71
Region 4: Kootenays	7
Region 5: Okanagan	22
Region 6: Cariboo	0
Region 7: Northern BC	35
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>206</b>



# PEACE Program

## 24 Hour Census Report 2024



### Programs With a Waitlist

Region	# of programs with a waitlist	# of children and youth on waitlist	Average C&Y per program waitlist
Region 1: Vancouver Island and Powell River	6 (46.2%)	151	25.2
Region 2: Lower Mainland	7 (70%)	81	11.6
Region 3: Fraser Valley	4 (33.3%)	91	22.8
Region 4: Kootenays	7 (53.8%)	40	5.7
Region 5: Okanagan	6 (42.9%)	123	20.5
Region 6: Cariboo	2 (18.2%)	22	11
Region 7: Northern BC	2 (14.3%)	40	20
Total	34 (50.7%)	548	16.1



BC Society of  
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