a VANDU Zine

ISSUE NO.2

LIVING ON THE E.I.D.G.E.

SUMMER 2025

EASTSIDE ILLICIT DRINKERS GROUP FOR EDUCATION

DTES DRINKERS TELLING OUR OWN STORIES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR/HNIC

HERB VARLEY

Welcome back to “Living on the EIDGE”.

We have reformatted, so this is Issue 1, Volume 2.
Sorry for the long delay.
There were things outside the HNIC’s control that made this happen.
I never expected to be the leader of a zine,
but here we are.

The aim of this zine is to talk about EIDGE’s political struggles and living stories from the community,
because far too often we talk about people when they’ve passed already.
Their lives are important, and we need to reflect that.
We also recognize that the heavy drinkers community are not likely to stop drinking, so we want to keep them as safe as possible.
We do this through navigating nutrition, illicit drug use, housing, intimate relationships, and whatever we can do.
We do this because the drinkers community knows the drinkers community best. As VANDU says, nothing about us, without us.

Who keeps us safe?
WE DO.
Who makes change?
WE DO.

EIDGE'UTAINMENT

COMMUNITY VOICES

'SVEN BLACK'

Hello, I am Sven Black,
board member at VANDU, and committee member of EIDGE.

My interests and contributions in this community are peer navigation/liaison work within the DTES/DEOD. This includes providing art, food once a week, getting to know people personally, and helping to build infrastructures and capacities within our organization for our membership and allies.

One important goal is to hear the community and amplify their voices. A big part of my work is to weave together all the different talents of people in a way that serves them and the community they're in.

Nothing about us, without us

EIDGE'UTAINMENT

COMMUNITY VOICES

'BOOM BOOM'

Steering Committee member, Boom Boom, shares the story of how 'Boom Boom Breakfast' came to be!

Boom Boom Breakfast, a well-loved and long-running fixture at the Drinkers Lounge, started 7 years ago. In the beginning, it wasn't just Boom Boom doing the breakfast; initially, it was a group of women at the Drinkers Lounge who had gotten their FoodSafe certification. The breakfast was started as a nice nutritious way to end off the week, as prior to the breakfast, only lunches had been provided to Lounge members.

As community members really enjoyed the breakfasts, Boom Boom took it upon herself to continue this new tradition. Fellow EIDGE member George Sedore came along and joined in with the breakfastsm and as George is really into BBQ, it became BBQ breakfast for year and a half! When George began to work with VANDU more, Boom Boom fully stepped into her role as the head breakfast chef.

In her words, she thrives in those areas! This is truly when Boom Boom Breakfast was born. Boom Boom loves doing work like this; she looks forward to it every month and loves giving back to the community in that way. Cooking is something that she has always enjoyed. She thought about becoming an interior decorator or a chef when she was little, and she's been cooking ever since she could see the top of a stove.

EIDGE'UTAINMENT

COMMUNITY VOICES

BOOM BOOM

At one point, Boom Boom felt like services weren't properly accounted for financially, and after she voiced this at a Tuesday meeting, members became upset. When management saw and understood how much the breakfast meant to people, Boom Boom received a well-deserved $20 raise.

In terms of breakfast preparation, it takes 8 or 9 hours total to make breakfast. What's on the menu?:

- **French toast: Boom Boom makes 3 loaves of French toast for every breakfast**
- **60 eggs: 30 eggs for French toast, 30 eggs for scrambled eggs**
- **Sausages for protein: Her method is to start making the sausages in the oven, and she uses uses olive oil to cook them. This is the healthiest way to prepare them. As she's she's working with many diets, she doesn't want to overseason the food.**
- **3 bags of loaded hash browns: Boom Boom adds garlic and cheese to hash browns and eggs**

Boom Boom Breakfast happens every last Friday of the month at the Drinkers' Lounge, 111 Princess Avenue.

EIDGE'UTAINMENT

COMMUNITY VOICES

GEORGE SEDORE

In this magazine, I mostly do nutrition, but I wanted to talk about housing and community voices.

I've spent a lot of time walking down Hastings and talking to the community. I ask them, "what's the reason that you spend so much time out here on the street?"

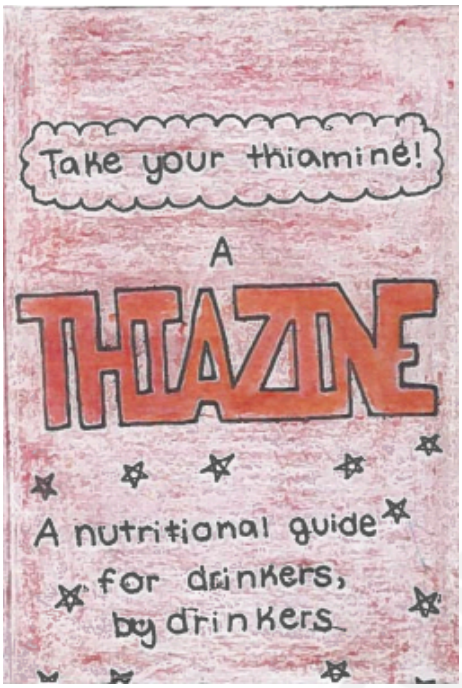
A lot of them express to me that their SROs are crappy and they feel unsafe, which is why they're on the street. There's many buildings where the elevator has failed, which is difficult for people with disabilities. Some elevators have been out of order for months. In many cases, the washroom is broken, and the doors to peoples' rooms don't lock. So they spend their time on the streets. They can chitchat with their friends too, because many SROs don't allow visitors.

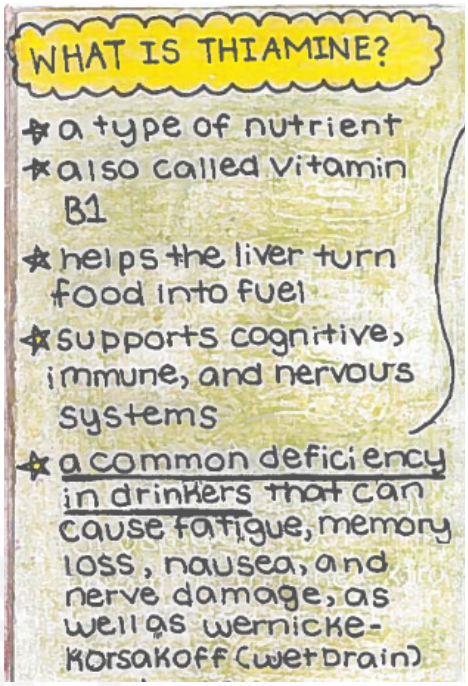
They feel safer there, they can hang out with their friends.

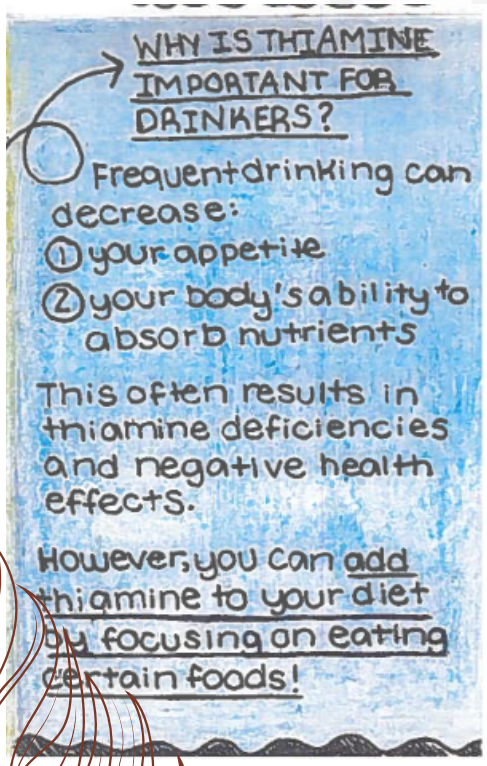
There are also convenient stores where people can buy on credit. That means that there's some business owners down here who care about this community.

There needs to be more understanding of people in the DTES on Hastings. They're not bad people, they're just in a bad situation. The police are not helping them by harassing them on the street, and people are afraid. They don't know where to go next. If City Hall won't help us, we will help us.

NUTRITION EIDGE'UCATION





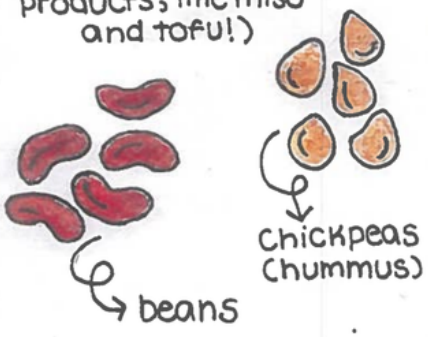


NUTRITION EIDGE'UCATION

foods rich in thiamine:

1 WHOLE GRAINS

(and other soy products, like miso and tofu!)

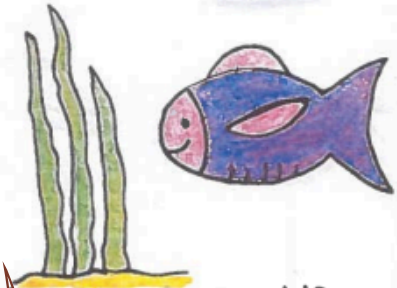


2 LEGUMES

3 FISH

salmon →

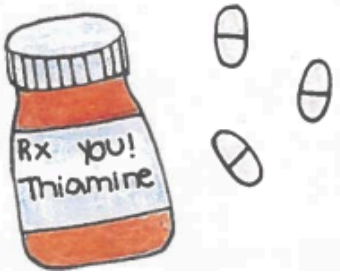
tuna →



bonus: seaweed is [illegible] with thiamine!

ask your doctor about a prescribed thiamine supplement, dosed to meet your needs

4 SUPPLEMENTS



NUTRITION EIDGE'UCATION

NUTRITION & ALCOHOL HARM REDUCTION

VANDU
Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users

NUTRITION AND DRINKING

Good nutrition is incredibly important for drinkers. People who are long-term, heavy alcohol users are at risk for several different vitamin deficiencies and related illnesses. This is because alcohol interferes with how your body absorbs and processes some important nutrients. Many people also don't feel hungry when they drink, and will go long periods of time without eating good food. All of these things can negatively impact your health.

Despite the important role of diet in protecting drinkers health, there are few resources designed for people who are actively drinking. This resource features a "Healthy Plate" for drinkers that is designed to help you, or the community you serve, to reduce the harms of illicit drinking with good nutrition.

WHAT IS EIDGE?

The Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education (EIDGE) is a group of people who use non-beverage alcohol (mouthwash, rubbing alcohol, etc) and people who drink in ways that are criminalized. We meet, organize, and conduct research to promote safety amongst our members.

SEE MORE OF EIDGE'S WORK AT: WWW.VANDU.ORG/EIDGE/

HOW DID WE MAKE THIS POSTER?

The idea for this poster came from EIDGE members, who were frustrated by the lack of accessible information on nutrition for drinkers. We did our own research and consulted medical professionals and dieticians to make sure it was correct. All of the recommended foods on this poster are accessible in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

A "HEALTHY PLATE" FOR DRINKERS

- Healthy diet for active drinkers includes mostly vegetables, with proteins and grains to get specific nutrients.

PROTEIN

- Thiamine (Vitamin B1)
- Vitamin A
- Zinc
- Selenium
- Proteins
- Riboflavin
- Vitamin B12

GRAINS

- Carbohydrates
- Thiamine (Vitamin B1)
- Vitamin B3
- Vitamin B6
- Magnesium

VEGGIES

- Vitamin C
- Vitamin A
- Magnesium
- Vitamin B6
- Niacin
- Potassium
- Folate

THIAMINE!

- If you drink every day, talk to your doctor or pharmacy about Thiamine (Vitamin B1) supplements. Thiamine protects your brain and nervous system, and most drinkers don't get enough from their diet.
- People who use alcohol and eat consistently should consider taking 100mg of Thiamine each day. People who eat less should consider taking 200mg each day.

EASY MEALS WHEN YOU'RE DRINKING*

BREAKFAST

- Low-sugar cereals
- Eggs
- Oatmeal
- Yogurt
- Fruits and berries
- Granola

LUNCH

- Tuna salad sandwiches
- Egg salad sandwiches
- Peanut butter & jam
- Miso soup

It's common for people who have been drinking most days for a long time to have low blood sugar and low energy. That said, candy and caffeine are still best in moderation.

DINNER

- Pasta casseroles
- Chicken
- Rice
- Instant noodles
- Vegetable soups
- Tuna salad
- Ensure / meal replacement

SNACKS

- Granola bars
- Veggies and dip
- Bananas
- Baby carrots
- Dried seaweed
- Citrus fruits
- Low-sugar freezies

DRINKS

- Water
- Herbal tea
- Fruit juice
- Pedialyte
- Gatorade

*EIDGE and members of the PHS Drinkers Lounge Community Managed Alcohol Program discussed drinker's nutritional needs and what is cheap and accessible in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, a food desert, to prepare these recommendations. These foods can also be prepared in Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing, shelters, and drop-in centres.

DIY HYDRATION

You can also make your own rehydration drink to fight off hangovers with the following recipe:

- 1 litre of water
- 1 handful of sugar
- 1 pinch of salt
- Some lemon juice

LIVER CARE BASICS

Your liver is a vital organ with more than 40 different functions. It helps to process nutrients and many drugs in the body. Long-term, heavy drinking damages the liver, but there are things you can do to protect it:

- Take liver holidays; The more safe breaks you take from drinking heavily, the more your liver can bounce back
- Talk to your health care provider about regular liver function tests. This involves an exam, bloodwork, and sometimes an ultrasound.
- See your doctor regularly, especially important if you live with HIV, Hepatitis C, or diabetes.
- Avoid some drugs that are hard on the liver, including:
  - Acetominophen (Tylenol)
  - Ibuprofen (Advil)
  - Iron supplements
  - Licorice root
  - St. Johns Wort

Sources:

1) www.vch.ca/en/vch-healthy-plate
2) www.harmreductionwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/181219-ACT-WFD-A-nutrition-guide-for-consumers.pdf
3) Kamran, U., Towey, J., Khanna, A., Chauhan, A., Rajoriya, N., & Holt, A. (2020). Nutrition in alcohol-related liver disease: Physiopathology and management. World journal of gastroenterology, 26(22), 2916
4) Martin, P. R., Singleton, C. K., & Hiller-Sturmhöfel, S. (2003). The role of thiamine deficiency in alcoholic brain disease. Alcohol research & health, 27(2), 134.
5) BCCDC Hepatitis C: The Basics. Online course. www.learninghub.phsa.ca/Courses/5935/bccdc-hepatitis-c-the-basics

COMM'UNITY KNOWL'EIDGE

Housing & resources

Boom Boom, one of EIDGE's Steering Committee members and a leader in the DTES community, shares her experience at the 'Connecting Our Streets: DTES Meets the West End' event at Gordon House in November 2024, and how she came to be serving her BOOM BOOM Breakfasts at the Drinkers Lounge.

Interview by Tuyaa

SCAN QR CODE FOR ALL THE DETAILS

EIDGE'UTAINMENT

survivors and champions

An intimate look into the life of our HNIC Herb Varley

SCAN QR CODE FOR ALL THE DETAILS

ART FROM THE EIDGES OF THE DTES

Featuring: Jim Jarvis

-65 yrs old

-from Winnipeg MB.

-Anishnabi Cree

-French.

IN MEMORIAM

Rest in Power

Sky
Mike
Billy
Stepheney
Delores Howard
Joeseph Howard
Barney Howard
Barnabus Howard
Lillian H.
Marc H.
Shawn Giroux
Melissa Giroux
Shane O'Pack
Trey Halten
Adeline
Sammy
Talla

We acknowledge all those not named here.

WHAT IS A HOSPITAL-BASED MANAGED ALCOHOL PROGRAM (HMAP)?

- HMAP programs provide people with heavy, long term drinking patterns and who are at risk for withdrawal with free beverage alcohol while they are in the hospital.
- Participants can usually get beer, vodka, and sometimes wine from the hospital pharmacy
- HMAP is usually prescribed for three main reasons:
  - To provide an alternative to non-beverage alcohol
  - To keep patients from having to leave the hospital to get alcohol
  - Someone is already drinking while in the hospital or on MAP in their community

HOW DO I ACCESS HMAP?

- HMAP is currently available at three hospitals in Vancouver: **St. Paul's, Vancouver General Hospital (VGH),** and **Mount Saint Joseph**
- HMAP can be ordered by the Addiction Consult Service at the hospital when you are admitted or in the ER.
- Clinical staff prescribe HMAP if they believe it will help a patient who is on MAP in community or drinking heavily to stay safe and comfortable.

ASKING FOR HMAP

If you are **1)** at risk of experiencing withdrawal, **2)** considering using non-beverage alcohol (like hand sanitizer), or **3)** thinking about leaving to get alcohol while in the hospital, you could use a statement like this one to ask to be assessed for the HMAP program at a hospital:

> ***"I would like to speak with the Addiction Consult Service about accessing the Managed Alcohol Program at this hospital. I believe that I am at risk of withdrawal and other harms if my access to beverage alcohol is restricted during my stay. Could you please arrange this for me?"***

We recommend asking for evaluation for HMAP in any hospital throughout the Lower Mainland. Using this resource does not guarantee that you will be prescribed HMAP in the hospitals that have been listed here or any others.

Drinker Activism in the Downtown Eastside

If you use beverage alcohol (like beer and wine) or non-beverage alcohol (like rubby or Listerine), there are several groups for you in the community.

The Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education (EIDGE)

380 Hastings Street

EIDGE is a group of people who use illicit alcohol. We work to improve the lives of illicit drinkers through education and support. EIDGE works to end the discrimination of illicit drinkers and promote safety amongst our members. Join our group to learn and participate in research to result in better services and programs, and to have a voice in the community. EIDGE meets every Monday at 11:00am, except the week after cheque day. Sign up at from 10:30-11:00am. Stipends provided.

PHS Drinkers Lounge Community Managed Alcohol Program

111 Alexander Street

The Drinkers Lounge is for individuals who struggle with severe alcohol use disorder and who sometimes drink non-beverage alcohol such as mouthwash or rubbing alcohol. CMAP works with members to substitute this with limited amounts of member-brewed wine and beer.

The Downtown Eastside Drinkers Mix

The Downtown Eastside Drinkers' Mix is a coalition made up of members of both the Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education and the PHS Drinkers Lounge CMAP. discuss issues that effect drinkers living in the neighbourhood and ensure that our voices are heard by policymakers. We meet every other Wednesday in Oppenheimer Park at 10:00am. Sifgn up from 9:30-10:30 at Drinkers Lounge. Stipends provided.

Together, we keep ourselves safe.

Amenities

- Legal place to sit and drink.
- Place to drink that is not legal but usually safe
- Place to drink that is not legal and sometimes safe
- Place to drink that is not legal where pour-outs have been reported
- Public washroom
- Place to buy beverage alcohol

Services

- Clinic
- Onsite Detox
  137 E. Hastings St.
- Harbour Light Detox
  119 E. Cordova St.
- New Fountain Shelter
  356 E. Hastings St.
- Union Gospel Mission Shelter
  320 E. Hastings St.
- First United Shelter
  320 E. Hastings St.
- EIDGE
  380 E. Hastings St.
- Drinkers Lounge
  111 Princess Ave.
- Kílala Lelum Health Centre
  626 Powell St.
- Powell St. Getaway
  450 E. Hastings St.
- DUDES Club
  626 Powell St.

Note: EIDGE cannot guarantee that police and bylaw officers will leave you alone if you choose to drink in public spaces marked light green, yellow, and orange. Please exercise caution, take care of your friends, and be respectful.

What is this map?

This resource was prepared for people who use alcohol in the DTES for other drinkers.

The places listed here have been recommended by EIDGE and Drinkers Lounge members. They include shelters, outdoor spaces to gather, detox, clinics, and other services that accommodate drinkers. We included resources where drinkers felt included, safe, and well-served.

We hope that this map will help other illicit drinkers in the DTES stay safe and healthy regardless of where they are on their harm reduction path.

Where can I go to learn more?

EIDGE

Weekly meeting
Mondays, 11:00am
Sign up at 10:30
380 E. Hastings

Drinkers' Lounge

Weekly meeting
Tuesdays, 11:00am
111 Princess Ave

EIDGE Meetings

Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education (E.I.D.G.E.) is a group of people who use illicit alcohol. We work to improve the lives of illicit drinkers through education and support. We work together to end the discrimination of illicit drinkers and promote safety amongst our members.

When: **Monday Morning**
Time: **Sign up at 10:30 am**
Where: **VANDU – 380 East Hastings St.**

~ Stipend Provided ~

A UBC researcher will take anonymous notes at the meeting for use in a report

The Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education (EIDGE)

EIDGE is a group of people who use illicit alcohol. We work to improve the lives of illicit drinkers through education and support. EIDGE works to end the discrimination of illicit drinkers and promote safety amongst our members. Join our group to learn and participate in research to result in better services and programs, and to have a voice in the community

Contact: aaron@vandu.org

The Canadian Managed Alcohol Program Study (CMAPS)

CMAPS is a national study of Managed Alcohol Programs in Canada based out of the Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research at the University of Victoria. The CAMPS project rigorously evaluates MAPs in Canada and generate insights into their implementation and effectiveness.

Contact: cisur@uvic.ca

PHS Drinkers Lounge Community Managed Alcohol Program (CMAP)

The Drinkers Lounge is for individuals who struggle with severe alcohol use disorder and who sometimes drink non-beverage alcohol such as mouthwash or rubbing alcohol. CMAP works with members to substitute this with limited amounts of member-brewed wine and beer.

Contact: cmap@phs.ca
778-945-2975

Downtown Eastside Drinkers' Mix

The Downtown Eastside Drinkers' Mix is a coalition made up of members of both the Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education and the PHS Drinkers Lounge CMAP. We meet biweekly in Oppenheimer Park to discuss issues that effect drinkers living in the neighbourhood and ensure that our voices are heard by policymakers.

Contact: aaron@vandu.org

OUR STREETS FOOT SOAK

"WHOSE FEET ? OUR FEET !!!!!!!!"

Ladies and Gentlemen of The Downtown Eastside,

" LEND ME YOUR EARS " !!!!!!!!!!

Are you or someone you know afflicted by one of the following factors that affect our most entrenched members of Vandu.

They are : 1) Street Feet
2) Foot Fungus
3) Athlete's Foot

Then come on down to Vandu @ 380 East Hastings for our monthly Foot Soak every 2nd Friday of every month from the " Our Streets " Block Group ". Our next soak will be on June 13th, 2025 until the end of the year.

The Foot Soak is staffed by members of our "Steering Committee",all who are peers with "Lived Experience" We are open from 11:00AM TO 12:30PM.
The Foot Soak is compromised of a 20 minute foot soak with warm water and

OUR STREETS FOOT SOAK (CONTINUED)

Epsom Salts.During this time, "Our Clients", are encouraged to sit back and relax,enjoy a hot cup of java while listening to some meditative musical ambience, concluding with a brand new pair of socks.

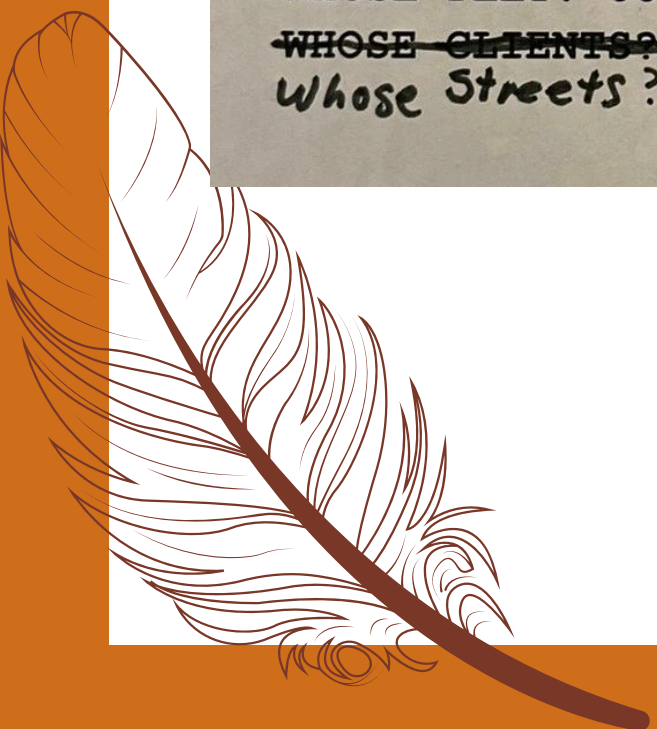
We personally guarantee that your feet will be Re-paired, ReJuevenated and Re-Energized for any terrain our members face while confronting the daily trials and tribulations as a resident of The Downtown Eastside Community.

WHOSE STREETS? OUR STREETS !!!!!

WHOSE FEET? OUR FEET!!!!!

~~WHOSE CLIENTS? OUR CLIENTS !!!!!!~~

Whose Streets? Our Streets !!!!!!



RIBBON SHIRTS WITH WAHRS

Ribbon Shirt's and Skirts
Mon Tues 2pm - 4pm
Wed 12pm - 2

< WAHRS members only

Location: VANDU 380 E. Hasting's
Stipends for both

BEADING WITH ELDER BRUCE

Beading with Bruce
Tues Wed 2pm - 4pm

> open to everyone

Location: VANDU 380 E. Hasting's
Stipends for both

WAHRS
WESTERN ABORIGINAL HARM REDUCTION SOCIETY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We, the EIDGE committee members could not have accomplished this project without the help of the J Healthcare Initiative's Summer Cohort Interns and greatly appreciate the efforts, time and knowledge of:

Gurleen Deol

Sylvia Kathir

Avra Pavrez

Your dedication, creativity, and hard work have been instrumental in bringing this magazine to life. We truly could not have achieved this milestone without your invaluable contributions. Thank you for your commitment and for inspiring us with your passion and fresh perspectives.

From left to right: Mark, Tuyaa, Boom Boom, Herb, Tyler, Atika, Sven, George
Your editorial board