

# Spring Newsletter & Winter Impact Report 2024-25



## Hello from the JBCP Executive Director

As Spring emerges, it brings renewal and hope—a fitting backdrop as we celebrate our 50th Anniversary and envision the next 50 years of community impact. At the core of our work is building resilience through social connection. Studies consistently show that a strong sense of belonging is essential for optimal health and quality of life. Our programs support low-income seniors and vulnerable families with young children by meeting practical needs while fostering community bonds that empower individuals every day.

This season of rebirth inspires us to reimagine our services and reach even more people in need. As we launch our Spring Campaign, we invite you to join us in nurturing hope and creating lasting connections in our community. Monthly donations are vital to sustaining our programs, and matching contributions further amplify your impact—ensuring every gift makes a difference.

In the pages that follow, you'll find powerful reflections and inspiring stories that further illustrate the transformative impact of connection. Together, let's build a future where everyone feels connected and resilient.

Sincerely,  
*Mary Lee Crocker*



**Because of YOU, we raised \$25,000  
throughout Fall 2024 & Winter 2025**

Every time a donation comes in to support our programs, we feel a gift has been bestowed on our agency, knowing our program participants are receiving compassion and love from the larger community of James Bay and Victoria.

Words cannot describe our gratitude for the kindness from our donors. We hope these numbers will show the impact you make. Our staff and volunteers provide 19,000 hours of support to participants each year.

—Thank you so much!  
*Elissa Bergman, Fundraiser (Part-time)*

## A Letter From A Grateful Participant

Hello,

I am eighty-one and live with my cat, Howie, in a co-op housing unit in James Bay. My children... and all other relatives [live abroad]. Being divorced and having no partner, I spend quite a lot of time by myself with only Howie for company.

Since retiring, I had my right hip replaced and yet continue to have mobility issues—making walking stressful and, at times, painful. I have become bored and must ‘fess up that I became depressed; becoming content to just sit in my Lazy Girl chair, contemplating life as it goes by.

On a visit to the James Bay Community Project, the outreach worker told me about the Connections lunch and asked if I would like one-to-one visits.



The lunches provide nutritious soups, delicious desserts, tea, vibrant conversations and opportunity to listen to local musicians. ...Initially, I had reservations about participating in a group of “old farts” - yet have come to acknowledge myself as an “old fart”... and am getting older! I look forward to the lunches, feeling a sense of inclusive acceptance and [enjoy conversing with the others]. For a few hours, I forget I am lonely. And if there’s extra soup, I get to take some home which provides me with another meal. This is very much appreciated as I live on a fixed income.

The one-to-one visits are wonderful. A volunteer comes to my home once a week: we talk, play cards, chess, Scrabble, and worked on computer challenges when applying for a travel visa. I enjoy the company very much, and knowing that should I need help, there is a good chance the help will be forthcoming, thereby lowering my stress levels a lot.

I am grateful to the James Bay Community Project for providing these services: my overall health is greatly benefitted by them. The success of the two services I use owe much to the personality and skills of the outreach worker.

Thank-you to all involved.

Marion

# JBCP Impact Reports:

## Seniors’ Programming

### SENIORS’ OUTREACH IN JAMES BAY:

➤ This program supports around 70 active participants. Demand for outreach support continues to increase as more people want to stay at home to age in place for as long as they can to maintain their independence.

➤ In December 2024 we were able to make our participants’ holiday season extra special. We partnered with Amica House who kindly provided 40 beautiful gift hampers to which we added a turkey dinner, made and delivered by our staff and volunteers.



### CONNECTIONS – SENIORS’ LUNCHEON COMMUNITY PROGRAM:

➤ This past December, we saw an increase of around 80 people. To celebrate the 2024 holiday season, participants enjoyed a sit-down turkey dinner.

➤ At the weekly luncheon, we continue to provide soup and dessert, as well as extra soup for people to take home. The amount of food provided to participants has doubled due to the rising cost of living.

### DIGITAL DIVIDE – COMMUNITY PROGRAM:

➤ Sessions with an IT professional—who is not only kind but also exceptional at building relationships and making people feel comfortable and confident in their learning—helped seniors master the use of their phones, laptops, and tablets at their own pace.

# FALL/WINTER 2024-2025

➤ The participants speak very positively about the program, that it helps them stay connected to friends, family and their community. It also provides them with access to their healthcare providers and government-based resources.

## FUN THROUGH MUSIC - INTERGENERATIONAL MUSIC PROGRAM:

- This program was created by our Seniors' Outreach and Family Outreach staff to foster connections between families with children and seniors in the community.
- It's facilitated by a music teacher and is very popular with young families. Some grandparents attend the group with their families.



## Family Resource Centre and Youth & Family Outreach

### YOUTH OUTREACH:

- About 20 youth and five families served.

*"I like having a person I can talk to who isn't my teacher or parent and I like that we can do things like go outside and get snacks together. We have fun and we talk, it's nice."*

### BABY PLAYGROUP:

- We've seen both new families and returning families with a total of 67 visits in December and January (35 parents/caregivers, 32 babies).

*"Having positive and helpful affirmation about how I parent from someone who sees me with my child every week... makes me so much more confident as a parent and helps me to be a more patient parent too."*

### SOUP & PLAY:

- 52 visits in December and January (24 adults, 28 children).
- There are a few families that attend consistently and always benefit from the food provided.

*"Getting out of the house and... conversing with*

*other parents is really helpful for me and my child's mental health. I always learn new things about the community... or get tips on certain issues I might be struggling with."*

### BABY GROUP:

- Our winter session ran January to March with 11 moms and babies registered. The babies range in age from 6 weeks to 6 months. A recent guest speaker featured an infant development consultant from Island Health.

*"Love the community feel... I always feel welcomed and never judged as a parent."*

### MOTHER GOOSE:

- 14 families with babies registered for this 8-week group. This popular program currently has a wait list of 14 families.

*"I moved here recently, finding other moms has been hard. This program has allowed me to meet new people."*

### FUN THROUGH MUSIC:

- Together with the Seniors' Outreach staff, we started two intergenerational music groups.
- Families are very enthusiastic and both classes filled up with 22 families.

### MORNING PLAYGROUPS:

- We saw a total of 282 adults and 323 children's visits in December and January – an average of 21 per day.

- Families were thrilled to be back after the holidays and our groups filled up quickly.

*"I feel part of a community, feel I found supportive people I can trust and rely on."*

*"Not feeling alone helps my mental health."*

### FAMILY OUTREACH:

- We supported several families with phone and in-person outreach during this period.
- Issues some families are facing include: ongoing poverty, health concerns, food security, disability applications, child development assessment, anxiety, etc.



## Volunteer Services and Community Programs

### VOLUNTEERS:

- We relied heavily on volunteers to support our holiday giving and programming (mainly food security) once again. Volunteers were involved in cooking and cleaning, meal preparation and serving as well as hamper and meal delivery drives.
- We completed the onboarding process for 11 new volunteers for the Community Closet thrift store, friendly visiting, medical/errand drives, soup-making for the Connections program, Family Centre and CVITP preparer (free tax clinic).

### COMMUNITY CLOSET THRIFT STORE

- Our social enterprise is a hidden gem in the community, bringing visitors from across the city and even around the world.

*“Knowing that my money is going back to the community when I purchase anything from the Community Closet brings me a sense of peace that is sometimes hard to find when shopping. It was my first time in, and though the outside is unassuming, the contents are quality. The owner is delightful, the volunteers are helpful and kind, and the stock is truly amazing! I've been thrifting for over a decade and I am impressed. 10/10!!”*

## JAMES BAY COMMUNITY PROJECT

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### GET SOCIAL WITH US:

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## Victoria & Oak Bay Better At Home Program (BAH)

### CONNECTIONS – SENIORS SOCIAL LUNCH:

- 69 meals provided.

### LIGHT HOUSEKEEPING:

- 126 active participants
- 271 housekeeping services

### HOUSEKEEPING WAITLIST:

- 4 new participants onboarded from the BAH Waitlist
- 37 individuals currently waitlisted

### DRIVE PROGRAM:

- 23 medical/errand drives were provided by our volunteers.

### VOLUNTEER MATCHING:

- 60 friendly visits were provided.

### GROCERY SHOPPING PROGRAM:

- 4 grocery shops were provided.

### OAK BAY VOLUNTEER SERVICES (OBVS):

- 210+ BAH jobs provided to BAH participants.

### PHONE CALLS AND ENQUIRIES:

- We received and responded to 150+ phone calls related to the Victoria Better at Home program.

