



URBAN NATIVE  
YOUTH ASSOCIATION

The  
**COMING HOME**  
Society

2021



**Dear friends,**

**Resilience.** It is the single word that explains why colonizing powers have never been able to extinguish the culture and spirituality of our Indigenous peoples.

This year, resilience has been particularly tested. The ongoing discoveries of the remains of children who did not make it home from Residential School has re-traumatized survivors and brought grief and pain to all Indigenous people.

In this challenging year, the **Coming Home Society** believes that it is more important than ever to support **Warriors Against Violence** and **Urban Native Youth Association**. They are warm and caring places that connect Indigenous people in our urban setting with their traditional ways. They help each person build a strong foundation of cultural and spiritual resiliency for their life. A resiliency that has sustained Indigenous peoples through all the impacts of colonization, and is continuing to sustain them today.

*Linda Adams,  
President, Coming Home Society*



*Elder making beaded hearts*

## Warriors Against Violence—restoring family values



*Warriors Against Violence  
street outreach counselling*

When you grow up away from your family with a Residential School for a parent, you are not taught how to handle emotions. Anger can become a default emotion to cover feelings of pain, loneliness, or vulnerability. Anger can lead to family violence, or conflict with the justice system. Anger affects your children and your children's children.

Warriors Against Violence brings men and women into safe and supportive circles, both separately and together. Everyone gets to share their feelings and hear how violence is experienced by both the abuser and the abused. They learn to recover their culture's values of honour, respect, and equality for all family members.

**Your donations will support struggling families at Christmas and throughout the year as they face the ongoing challenge of meeting their basic needs for food and clothing.**

## Warriors Against Violence—new life in the community

"In November I spent a couple of hours outside a coffee shop with counsellors Joe and Blair. Two of the men who stopped by shared their stories with me. They showed me how Warriors Against Violence is changing the lives of the men and women they have had contact with over the years."

- Jerry Adams, *Coming Home Society Board member*

"John is on parole and living in a halfway house. He has spent his life going in and out of correctional institutions. When he wasn't in jail he lived in the Downtown Eastside. One of his parole conditions was to seek anger management for himself. He has been attending meetings at Warriors Against Violence regularly and he has just written a book about Residential School. I could feel that he is a very relaxed and kind man, and no one would ever guess that before he found 'Warriors', his life was full of anger and violence."

"Jack is a young fellow who was also required to attend an anger management program because he was a violent man. He tried many community programs for youth but nothing worked for him. Then he found Warriors Against Violence. The counsellors doubted that he would be able to make it through the program and heal himself. But he is now working in construction, and practicing his passion, which is real-life drawing. He showed me his drawing of an eagle that was so incredibly detailed and real looking. It showed his great gift for his craft."



## 'Warriors' Elders' support

Elders gather on Tuesday nights for a potluck meal. Then the women share while doing crafts, while the men play crib. **Your donations provide a staff member and supplies to give our Elders a place of mutual support.**



## Urban Native Youth Association—youth support



Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA) runs 18 programs to support urban Indigenous youth. During the pandemic UNYA created a Food Pantry program to help youth and their families meet their essential food needs. It is now operating at a reduced level. **Your donations will enable UNYA to make bulk food purchases to give each youth and their family a Christmas Hamper in early January when resources are scarce.**



2019 Hampers ready for delivery

**“He has sent me....to proclaim release to the captives.” *Isaiah 61:1***

My husband Jerry and I were sitting in a coffee shop, meeting with Joe and Joyce, the Elders who run “Warriors Against Violence.” Mid conversation, a tall, vibrant young Aboriginal man strode up and greeted Jerry and Joe enthusiastically.

“Hey – remember me? Good to see you guys! I’m just coming from work - on my way home to the wife and baby. Want to see a picture of him? He’s almost two already!”

I asked him where he worked, imagining him to be a former colleague of Jerry and Joe. He answered, “Got a great job – I used my 14 years ‘inside’ to train as a Health & Safety Officer on construction sites. It was hard. You really gotta want it. But that way when I got out I got a really good paying job right off the bat. My wife and I just bought a condo in Coquitlam.”

“Inside?” I was flabbergasted.

“You guys were really great – helped me a lot. Jerry - that halfway house of yours – it was just like family. You know?” He went on to laugh with Joe about times they had shared. Then, “I’ll buy you guys a coffee next time I see you!” And he was gone.

I felt stunned. It was nearly impossible to imagine that this appreciative young man, successful by any measure, had done a 14-year prison stretch for a very serious crime. I turned to Jerry - “Who was that?” He smiled. “That’s Jamie. He spent quite a few months at “Circle of Eagles” after he got out of jail. He went to see Joe at “Warriors” too, for counselling.”

When Jamie’s cell door had finally opened, he was physically free. But he had arrived at “Circle of Eagles” and “Warriors Against Violence” still captive behind walls of distrust and anger. Hesitantly, I asked Jerry what Jamie’s crime had been. He said he had never looked to find out. He and Joe had simply accepted the Jamie who stood before them, journeying with him day by day, meeting him where he was.

In the coffee shop that day I saw living proof of how the Creator’s unconditional love and acceptance, offered through people like Joe and Jerry (and by us in our own lives), has the power to break down walls and free people from their bondage. In the young man who breezed so exuberantly through the coffee shop that day, I saw a former prisoner who had been truly released - in every sense of the word.

*-Linda Adams*

**THREE WAYS TO DONATE: (*All will issue a charitable tax receipt*)**

- Mail a cheque payable to the Coming Home Society, to 303 East Cordova Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1L4
- Google Canada Helps and donate to the Coming Home Society
- Go to [www.stjames.bc.ca](http://www.stjames.bc.ca) Click on the ‘Giving’ tab. Scroll down to the ‘Donate now’ button. On the ‘Fund’ line choose ‘Other’. In the ‘Message’ line underneath, enter ‘Coming Home Society’ Thank you all!

For more information please contact [ladams99@shaw.ca](mailto:ladams99@shaw.ca) or call Linda Adams at 604-290-4117