MYST funding update

**April 24, 2023**

*“I am pleased to confirm one-time funding was provided for Pacific Centre Family Resource Association and its MYST and CRED programs. The total approved one-time funding for this initiative will be $130,000.00 to enable CRED and MYST programs to continue to provide services to at-risk youth in the Capital Regional District.”*

*Sincerely,*

*Mike Farnworth Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General and Deputy Premier*

Background Details

<https://www.vicnews.com/news/greater-victoria-on-verge-of-losing-frontline-counsellor-as-youth-exploitation-cases-spike>

**Greater Victoria Integrated Police Units, 2021-22 Annual Report (see pg. 9 for MYST report) ...**

<https://fliphtml5.com/cbck/lngb/basic>

The CRD Board voted unanimously on Jan. 11, 2023 in favour to Director Little's motion as follows: *That the CRD board of directors send an advocacy letter to the Province to encourage renewed support for the Pacific Centre Family Services Association’s Mobile Youth Services Team (MYST) and its crime reduction and exploitation diversion (CRED) program.*

The original **VFCYJC advocacy letter** (Oct. 7, 2022) was directed to the **Regional Governance Council - Integrated Police Units**, parent organization for the Mobile Youth Services Team.

It asked specifically for the council to lobby for "increased staffing and resource funding" for MYST and CRED. It also requested that the length of time regional police representatives (currently Victoria PD's Gord Magee) are appointed to MYST be extended.

Letters from the **District of Metchosin, the City of Colwood** and the **District of Sooke letter** (December, 2022) added notes of further urgency by emphasizing that funding for Mia Golden's position with CRED ends on March 31, 2023. A cc was sent to **Premier David Eby** given his Nov. 20 announcement of the Safer Communities Action Fund ~ <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022PREM0090-001743>.)

Ms. Golden's work with the Pacific Centre Family Service Association's CRED program (and through it with MYST) has been made possible since 2019 through grants from the Ministry of Public Safety Canada's **Gun and Gang Violence Action Fund (GGVAF)**.

PCFSA Executive Director Liz Nelson notes that federal funding for GGVAF had been channeled to provincial agencies through the BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. That funding has now been allocated to the federal Building Safer Communities Fund, which is providing four-year funding to select communities. On Vancouver Island, the two communities that have received the funding are Nanaimo and Colwood. This decision is apparently based on police statistics for violent incidents across the province.

As Ms. Nelson explains: "GGVAF is still hopeful that they will receive some money from the Federal Government but have told us that we need to look for an alternative funding source for CRED because if they do receive funds, there will be a new application process and there are no guarantees. The funding will likely be less and one time. And we know that that we need more services, not less."