



**VANCOUVER ABORIGINAL HEALTH SOCIETY HOSTS A FATHER'S DAY POW WOW
CELEBRATING SACRED FATHERHOOD, JUNE 16 - 18, 2023**

***Featuring Grammy Award Nominees drum groups Young Spirit from Frog Lake First Nation
and the Blackstone Singers from Treaty 6 Territory***



VANCOUVER, British Columbia, June 6, 2023 - The Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society (VAHS) will be hosting a full weekend of song and dance honouring fathers, grandfathers and sons this upcoming Father's Day weekend at the Britannia Community Centre Soccer Field in Vancouver. At its heart, the Pow-wow event is about rebuilding traditional family systems and reclaiming Indigenous culture and identities. The Father's Day Pow Wow is a free and inclusive event. Everyone is welcome to attend.

The Pow Wow kicks off on Friday evening at 7:00 pm and on Saturday and Sunday at 1:00 pm. In addition to a host of singing, dancing, food vendors and Indigenous creators from across Turtle Island, two well known and celebrated drum groups will be performing throughout the weekend. Grammy nominee Young Spirit from Frog Lake First Nation in Alberta is known for their contemporary take on this traditional and sacred form of music which the Plains Creek received from the Assiniboijne in the late 19th century. The award-winning Blackstone Singers from Sweetgrass First Nation, Saskatchewan is the recipient of numerous world singing titles and championships.

Based in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, VAHS has been working hard to offer culturally grounded health and wellness practices to the community. Well before the event date, VAHS has hosted weekly regalia making workshops at the centre in preparation for the Pow Wow. The workshops are part of a larger and important healing and educational journey for their clients.

"As we move forward into truth and reconciliation, it is critical that we to build our people up and give them the space for cultural knowledge that can be shared with future generations," says Rosemary Stager-Wallace, executive director of VAHS. "For 75 years, the Indian Act prohibited the celebration of ceremonies and dance, including Pow-wows. Hosting this Father's Day Pow-wow is one way that we can all reconnect with our cultures and gently heal from the harmful impacts that colonialism has on our people."

Attendees are encouraged to come for the Grand Entry at the start of each day that features all of the day's dancers, and the Coming Out Dance where the new regalia that was made at VAHS' workshops will have their first dance. In addition, Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House and Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House will be offering complimentary meals to the community with First Nations favourites including deer stew and bannock.

For more information about the event, visit the Father's Day Pow-wow Facebook page [here](#).

Since 1991, VAHS has provided culturally grounded health care for the urban Indigenous community of Vancouver to promote physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellness. Today, VAHS has created a health system that reclaims and revitalizes traditional Indigenous health and wellness practices, incorporates the wisdom of Elders and the teachings of Knowledge Keepers, and creates pathways to healing that are trauma-informed, relevant, and unique to each person. VAHS has grown from an after-hours clinic to a leader in full-scope medical, dental, cultural, and social services. For more information, visit www.vahs.life.

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Interview opportunity:

- Rosemary Stager-Wallace, Executive Director, Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society

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Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society

www.vahs.life