



**WITS PROGRAMS  
FOUNDATION**

# **Presentation to Esquimalt Mayor and Council**

**Feb 10, 2025**

**by:**

**Andy Telfer, Executive Director**

# Mission & Vision

**Our Mission** is to empower children and youth to cultivate healthy relationships through educational community-based programming.

**Our Vision** is that all children and youth are living, learning, and playing in safe and caring communities.

# From 1998 as the Rock Solid Foundation...



- The Rock Solid Car -

# Origin of WITS: Lampson Elementary School, 1998



# Legacy: Youth empowerment programs like the Trackside Art Gallery

- \* each year we have an art competition for youth aged 5-25
- \* the winning art is photographed, blown up to billboard size and installed in the Trackside Art Gallery
- \* sponsors are attained for each art piece
- \* both sponsors and artists have their bio beneath each billboard
- \* sponsors receive the original art piece when sponsoring a new billboard
- \* we hold our annual celebration to honour both the artists and the sponsors



## HOW DOES THE GALLERY WORK?

**Youngest Artists** » Kindergarten-Grade 3

**Youth Artists** » Grade 4-High School

**Emerging Artists** » High School Graduates-Age 25

**Mentoring Artists** » Professional artists such as Robert Bateman, Ted Harrison, Art Vickers, Kristine Paton, Roberto Cerins, Carole Sabiston and Kerry Newman.



# our mascot: Witsup the Walrus



# to today's WITS Programs Foundation

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# WPF Programs

**Most programs are delivered in schools. We provide training, materials, online assets such as videos and lesson plans, and ongoing program guidance.**

# Goals

- **Create responsive, safe, inclusive school and community environments for all children**
- **Promote healthy relationships among children and adults and peers**
- **Promote social responsibility & prosocial leadership**
- **Prevent peer victimization**
- **Reduce chronic peer victimization**

# Recent funding

## Greater Victoria Credit Union Legacy Fund

WITS Focus Modules in 10 local schools

## Country Grocer

WITS in 3 island schools

## Van de Ker Khove Family Foundation

WITS Focus Modules in 7 island schools

# Local Support

All our programming is free for schools attended by Esquimalt-residing students

# École Victor Brodeur



# Shoreline Middle



# Rockheights Middle - video shoot: “What Kids Say about WITS”



# Maccauley Elementary *past assembly*





# Vic West Elementary

## Vic West Safety Plan

750 Front Street, Victoria, BC V9A 3Y4

Tel: 250-382-9131 Fax: 250-382-3741

Website: <http://www.victoriawest.sd61.bc.ca/>

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/viewestschool](http://www.twitter.com/viewestschool)

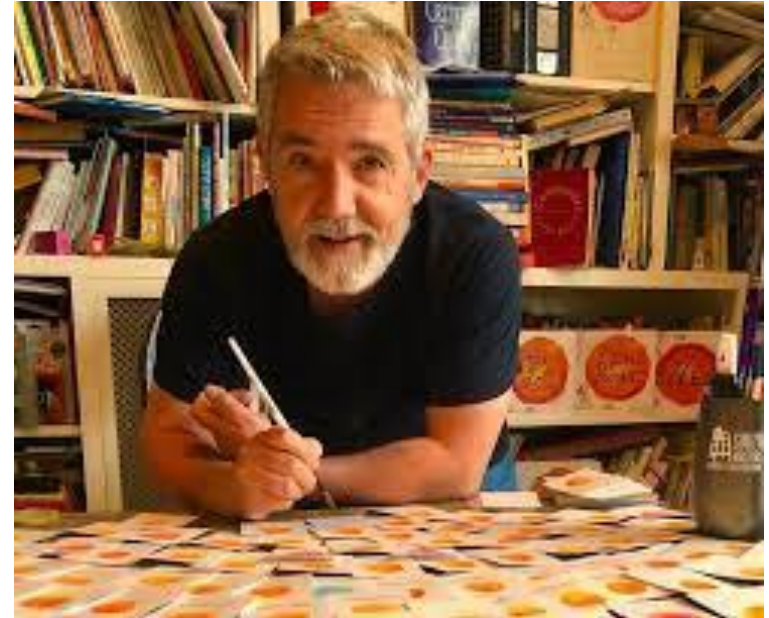


### Other Safety Programs

Through working together with our Police Liaison Officer, School Nurse, and teachers in the school, we have the following safety related programs in place at Vic West Elementary:

- Halloween Safety Presentation
- WITS Training for all students (Walk away, Ignore, Talk it over, Seek help)
- Anti-Bullying program (follow-up to WITS)
- C.A.R.E. Kit program for Kinder-

# **Pink Shirt Day Live broadcast via Zoom** *free to all local schools!*



*with Esquimalt teen host Maya Kara, Witsup the Walrus, and special guests*

[pinkshirtdaycanada.ca](http://pinkshirtdaycanada.ca)

# Local Support

We support as many Esquimalt initiatives as possible to encourage kindness amongst local children and youth.



# RibFest

# Esquimalt 5km & Kids 1km Fun Run



# Partnership with Esquimalt Neighbourhood House



# annual Pink Shirt Day



## what children say...

***“I like that there are no signs of bullying when I am on the field”.***

***“(WITS) has got our school a really better place, everyone has treated everyone in a really better way.”***





# Next

## Inclusion Strategies

***Preventing discrimination of all kinds by creating initiatives that encourage inclusion and acceptance.***

***Partners include:***



# Thank you Township of Esquimalt for your support!



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