

## Place Based Safety

The Inner City Safety Society takes a community development approach to dealing with safety issues in the belief that coordinating initiatives and utilizing community resources will maximize individual empowerment and neighbourhood safety. It is made up of community-based organizations, community-based business, and residents, governed by a Board of Directors with equal representation from each sector.

The Society has developed ongoing relationships with all inner city Business Improvement Associations (BIAs); with inner city and Strathcona residents and the Residents Association; with various community organizations including inner city community centres, a number of urban Aboriginal organizations, and a wide variety of community organizations and networks; with the Vancouver Police Department, the Vancouver Fire Department and the Vancouver Board of Trade; and numerous individual residents and businesses.



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## Inner City Safety

*Improving community safety,*





## Neighbourhood Challenges

Families living in this area, including youth and seniors, face particular challenges as they try to maintain safety and stability in the face of ongoing social dysfunction and institutional neglect. Predators who seek to intimidate the weak for financial gain are too often neighbours. Youth on their way to school are approached by johns seeking sex or are coerced by pimps seeking control. Parents struggle to cope with the challenges of managing on inadequate welfare budgets, while attempting to keep their children safe.

Our seniors report the fear they have every time they go outside. At a monthly safety meeting over 85% of those present reported having experienced intimidations, strong arming, extortion, and even beatings from desperate addicts who took what valuable items/cash they carried. Many of our families have had their homes broken into so many times, they literally have nothing left of value that can be carried away. Children's toys, TVs bedding and garden hoses are but a few of the items plundered and pawned in search of cash for drugs.

## Developing Capacity

The Safety Society believes that true safety for community residents is achieved through fostering individual and group capacities, building cross-sectoral community relationships, and ensuring the inclusion of all neighbourhood residents – particularly those most at risk – in determining priorities and solutions. Rather than simply undertaking specific activities, we support residents in an ongoing process of learning, training, and fostering mutual support.



## Building Connections

The Society's philosophy is that safety and health are best fostered through building connections. Its strategy is to connect neighbours – including those most marginalized such as immigrants, refugees, residents with mental health challenges, sex trade workers – with other individuals, organizations and businesses in the common goal of keeping everyone safe. It creates networks, giving people who are isolated and alone somewhere to turn for support, by linking and supporting them where they live through community centres, key organizations and local businesses.



## Working Together

The Safety Society has participated in a number of community-wide safety-related events, including the “Where Change Happens” safety fair; “Place Based Strategies - A Community Dialogue on What Works for children and families”; the “Healthy People, Healthy City” community dialogue; supporting local families in their efforts to bring traffic calming to Prior Street; and working with community partners, the office of the BC Representative for Children and Youth and the Ministry of Children and Family Development on safe and appropriate housing for at-risk and street-involved youth.

### Strategies for Safety

Education and Training

Community Coordination

Disaster Response