



COMPASSION, POWER, RESPECT
artemis place
SECONDARY SCHOOL

ARTEMIS PLACE SOCIETY

Annual Report 2014 -2015



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Vision

Young women experience educational success, find their voice, fulfill their potential and have the power to achieve their dreams.

Mission

To Provide:

- Holistic social and emotional support and high school education to young women in our nurturing community.
- An enriched early childhood experience to infants and toddlers of young moms while modeling care-giving skills and supporting each mom in her parenting.

History

Artemis Place Society has been delivering women-centered, educational services in the Capital Region since 1971. The Society has evolved over time and has been known as the Victoria Society for Educational Alternatives, Artemis Options Society and the Girls Alternative Program.

Artemis Place Society now operates Artemis Place Secondary School which has a Counselling and Life Skills Program. The Society also operates Artemis Young Parent Program which includes the Artemis Child Care Centre. The Society is in the process of moving away from the name “Artemis Place for Girls” however the Society is not losing any of the holistic and nurturing programming that we have become known for.



Strategic Plan:

In the Spring, Board Members and the Leadership Team participated in a Strategic Planning session to identify and clarify goals and directions for the Society. Amidst a climate of transition, the group decided to create a one year Strategic Plan from 2015 - 2016 and reconvene in 2016 to look more comprehensively at a three year plan. The following is a summary of the Strategic Plan:

Program

- Continue to develop and enhance the positive Artemis community and philosophy;
- Encourage strong student engagement and participation;
- Review and update the Society's Policies and Procedures.

Network

- Develop community networks through the Society and Board;
- Advocate and fundraise for financial support through government, foundations and donors to ensure the continued financial stability of Artemis;
- Increase partnerships with local First Nations.

Sustainable Development

- Continue to explore sustainable and long term options;
- Explore options for adding childcare for 3-5 year olds;
- Develop a fundraising plan to address the identified needs for operating and capital funds.



Letter from the Executive Director

2014 - 2015 was a year full of transition and growth for Artemis Place.

Artemis Place delivered all of its programming at one site for the first time in many years. The move from our Douglas Street location was a significant endeavor. Staff, volunteers and a moving company all worked very diligently to get through the heavy lifting to set up the school year for September 2014.

The Richmond Road location, although a new location for many staff, also felt like coming home. The history is not only on the walls, with photos of every baby or toddler who had been through the program; but, it is also in the walls. Past staff, students, and Board Members enter the building and they immediately have the sense of being back at a very familiar and special place.

In a significant organizational shift, the previous Executive Director, (ED), Lisa Ellis, decided it was time to pursue other opportunities and moved on in January, 2015. Lisa served as Executive Director for 7 years following years of service on the Board of Directors. I was working in the capacity as Program Coordinator from the Douglas Street location of Artemis Place when this opportunity arose and eagerly took on this important responsibility. I am immensely honoured to be entrusted with the oversight for Artemis Place Society.

I hope you enjoy reading through the highlights of the 2014 - 2015 school year as we are very proud of the work that happens here. Our programming has lasting and profound impacts on our participants, both the students, and the children, and provide us with much inspiration to guide and shape our work.

Thank you for your support, on all levels, for the past, current and future success of Artemis Place.

~ Rachel Calder



Annual Summary

September 2014 began with the two staff groups merging into one location. Thirty-six students were led through orientation and team building activities to create a safe and positive community. Counsellors were allocated caseloads of 12 students each and the teacher and teacher assistant rolled out the curriculum for students' to progress in their academic goals. The 2014 Open House and AGM had a terrific turnout and felt more like a reunion than a Society event with all the past staff and students in attendance.

Some highlights were Halloween, Galey's Farm, community lunches and baking, Goldstream Park, Christmas celebration and the Annual Christmas Gift Project. In January, Maria Mulronev was hired to be the Teacher/Principal; Maria had previously worked at GAP via the Victoria School District and then she was a Board Member for many years. Both teachers were situated in the Academic Room working collaboratively to deliver coursework. The entire staff team attended the Annual Conference for the Alliance of Professionals Serving Young Parents, in Nanaimo.

Spring Break was two weeks long and Easter was celebrated with an Easter Egg Hunt (a student favorite). It was decided that the program needed administrative support and in the spring, a Program Assistant position was created, posted and filled. Artemis began publishing a quarterly newsletter that is a collaborative effort of various staff and Board members to provide updates to our stakeholders about the happenings within the programs.

In early 2015, students worked towards walking the 5km Goddess Run in June, and a team of students and staff participated in this event. The Grad Ceremony in June was a beautiful event hosted again by Central Baptist Church. Church volunteers beautifully decorated the venue for this special ceremony. Six students participated in the ceremony and invited family members or friends to join them. Tradition has seen Artemis Place purchasing silver goddess necklaces for each graduate as they move on to the next chapter of their life. The year was closed with a picnic on Willows Beach with beautifully crafted Annuals handed out for student to view and sign.

In the summer of 2015 we had all our approvals in place and were able to proceed on a renovation in the Main Office. The Executive Director and the Program Coordinator now have their own offices. The reception area has also been developed into a very practical and workable space. Fortunately, the renovations were complete in the summer and school start-up was not impeded by the updates.

Average daily attendance dropped significantly and although attendance is impacted by many issues, this is partly attributed to the facility move and the impact that the change of location had on the two distinct groups of students coming together. At the end of 2014-15, almost all of the students who had been at the Douglas St location either graduated, changed schools or moved on to other endeavors.

Statistics

First Nations/Metis	19
Involved with Criminal Justice System	3
Pregnant	6
Designated "Special Ed"	22
MCFD involvement/open file	17
Were homeless at some point during the year	10
Living in foster care/care home	8
Living independently	17
Living with single parent/relative	19
Living with 2 parents	10

Number enrolled over program year	43
Average number enrolled at one time	38
Meals Served	1590
Bus tickets distributed	680
Monthly bus passes distributed	114

Total # of individual counselling/ life skills sessions	927
Total # of other supports (outreach, integrated case meeting, community appointments, etc.)	712
Average hours a month of individual counselling per student	2
Average hours a month of group life skills per student	5.5
Number of life skills groups offered	167

Attendance Average	39%
Average # of students per day	18
Course Completions	67
Dogwood Graduates	5



Artemis Place Secondary School

Artemis Place Secondary is a Group 1 Certified Independent School through the BC Ministry of Education, Independent Schools. Teachers deliver self-paced curriculum that is designed to meet the students' goals, interests, challenges and needs.

The student population increased in September to 36, up from 24 the prior year while Artemis was still on Douglas St. Over the course of the year, we enrolled 43 students. Some of the elective opportunities at Artemis include visual arts, drama, cooking, fibres and fabrics, outdoor education, First Nations studies and family studies.

Course selection, placement, and delivery are individualized to the needs of each student.

There were Seven graduates in 2015. Five graduated with Dogwood certificates and 2 were Program Grads. The number of course completions for 2014/15 was 67, almost double from the year prior. Two scholarships were distributed to students in the amount of \$500 each thanks to a generous sponsor.



Artemis Young Parent Program

Artemis Young Parent Program has successfully served the needs of pregnant teens and young mothers for over 25 years. AYPP provides:

- A licensed infant/ toddler centre where babies and toddlers receive exceptional care along with guided opportunities to explore a safe and stimulating environment;
- A flexible schedule to meet the individual needs of the children;
- Healthy snacks and lunches;
- Individual and group counselling support and advocacy;
- Prenatal and parenting information and education;
- The opportunity to connect with other young moms and share the joys and challenges of parenthood.



Sixteen moms and babies were enrolled in Artemis YPP throughout the year. More than half of the families had First Nations ancestry. There were six pregnant students in the Fall and by January all of their babies were enrolled in the Child Care Centre. Four moms withdrew from the program - two chose to stay home, two moved up-island to be with family. 75% of the moms stayed enrolled until June. This number is significant because of the multitude of challenges they face, such as unstable housing, unhealthy relationships, poverty, mental health issues and poor community connections. As well, they are young single mothers having to cope with the challenges of parenting, public transport to and from school, appointments with social workers and health professionals, court appearances and a myriad of other responsibilities. This year there were 3 children diagnosed with special needs, and several others who were in need of extra care and nurturing. There were monthly visits from infant development staff, physio and occupational therapists, and nurses from the Family/Nurse Partnership team. The Youth and Family Counsellors work with the moms and their children doing individual and family counselling. The most significant challenges faced by the Moms are issues of poverty, and housing.

Teaching positive parenting is an on-going theme at AYPP. Each Early Childhood Educator facilitates 3 mother/ infant relationships and the influence of the caregiver modelling and encouragement is very effective. There is also a weekly moms' group facilitated by the counsellors and some of the topics discussed this year have been self care, effective discipline, understanding children's different temperaments, creating and using a support system, and learning about community resources.

Artemis Counselling and Life Skills

The Youth and family Counsellors meet regularly with the students on their caseloads. At the start of the year, they work with the students to complete assessments to identify students' needs, challenges, strengths, interests and goals. During the year, they collaborate with the students, the teachers and Early Childhood Educators (as applicable) as well as community supports and resources to support each student in her goals.

Counsellors deliver life skills workshops. This year included topics such as Relaxation, Cooking, Budgeting, Healthy relationships, Non-violent Communication, Hopes & Dreams, Grief & Loss, Time Management, Montreal Massacre Memorial, Dealing with Stress, Scrap-booking, Crafting, Arts, Baking, Goal Setting, Community Building through Community Meetings, and more.



Guests are also brought in either as a one time workshop or ongoing workshops depending on the topics and groups. Some of these this year included GT Hiring, Young Parent Support Network, Public Health, Bi-Polar Babe, LifeCycles, Outreach Librarian, Herbalist Practitioner, Out in School, Volunteer Victoria Youth Connections, Alive after Five, Living Life to the Fullest, Ready to Rent, Seven Teaching, TCO2, Project Respect and Slam Poetry.



Donors and Supporters

Artemis Place Society gratefully acknowledges all of our donors, funders and sponsors. Please accept our apologies if we have missed anyone on these lists.

We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia.

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Children and Family Development

Individual Donors

Terry Loepke
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Barb Peck
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Organization/Business Donors

Knox Presbyterian Church
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Allison Crowe Music
Sacred Heart Christian Charities
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Central Baptist
Breakfast for Learning

Thank you to all of our volunteers who have generously shared their time and talents with Artemis Place. We would like to especially acknowledge our Board of Directors who served over the 2014 - 2015 year:

Jane Arnott
Enid Elliot
Suzanne Gatrell
Joss Hurtig - Mitchell
Diana Nicholson
Peggy Palmer
Barb Peck
Sandra Bitz
Connie Thompson

Student Quotes:

“I came to Artemis Place (previously the Girls Alternative Program) after becoming pregnant at the young age of 16. Artemis guided me by assisting with my education and life skills. They offered incredible support by maintaining an open door policy. I was able to talk to someone when I needed it most, be it a counsellor, daycare worker, teacher, secretary, and so on. Artemis gave me the courage and confidence I needed to take the next step in my life towards becoming the successful young woman I am today. After graduating in 2013, I continue to frequently take the time to visit the staff at Artemis and contribute in any way I can to the students and children who attend the school.”

~ Arielle

“I’m thankful Artemis accepted me this year, because they offer a calm and resourceful environment where I can work self-paced and gain life skills.

I actually feel happy at school now and that’s really important to me.”

~ Heather



“To me Artemis is a place where I can be myself and not worry about the stress or what else is going on in life.”

~ Bliss