



Power To Be
EVERYONE BELONGS IN NATURE

2024

Impact Report

Thank You For An Incredible 2024



From left: Dana Hutchings, Rahul Ray, and Jason Cole

Dear friends of Power To Be,

We're so proud to share our 2024 Impact Report with you and reminisce on the incredible year we've had. Our organization relies on the extraordinary work shared between our staff, volunteers, board of directors, donors, community partners, and supporters worldwide. The dedication and passion that exists in this community truly inspires us every single year, and has for over 25 years. Thank you to absolutely everyone who played a role in ensuring we brought nature to hundreds of participants all year long!

We believe that nature can transform lives, and our mission to build community by removing barriers remains at the forefront of every program. With our ever-expanding reach through new partnerships and opportunities, our vision of a world where everyone can experience the transformative power of nature becomes clearer every day.

In 2024, through partnerships with more than 70 organizations, we offered a wide array of accessible and inclusive activities to 980 unique participants within 3,719 total participant visits. These activities included adaptive hiking, kayaking, canoeing, and snow camping. We spent over two thousand hours in nature, and focused 166 of our programs on environmental education.

Our Family Roots and Wilderness School programs celebrated their 16th and 17th anniversaries, respectively, and graduates joined us for numerous alumni programs throughout the year that worked to strengthen community connections. Our Landscape and Restoration Training Program celebrated its second cohort graduation and many enjoyed their first alumni program, with some participants also returning eagerly to the site as Site Stewardship volunteers, working on the garden and taking care of our Prospect Lake site!

We explored new trails in nature and inclusion education, leading workshops with Outward Bound Canada Training Academy on Adaptive Foundations training, as well as facilitated a workshop for Camp Goodtimes on inclusion for their volunteer training. We enjoyed continued collaboration with our many community groups, such as: Foundry Vancouver, District of West Vancouver Youth Services, Island Sexual Health, ŁÁU, WELNEW TRIBAL SCHOOL, and Community Living Victoria in order to live out our mission and values, and invite people to explore what's possible in nature.

In 2024, we maintained both our Living Wage and Inclusive Employer certifications, and are excited to further align with our mission of removing barriers within the community. We became a qualified 1% for the Planet Environmental Partner for our work with site preservation, outdoor recreation, and youth education, and inspiring participants to steward our shared environment. We also received accreditation from the BC Camps Association (BCCA), celebrating all the hard work our staff put into training standards and signage for our campsites.

We couldn't do the work we do without the generous support of our donors and community partners, so with our whole hearts - we **THANK YOU!** Please enjoy our 2024 Impact Report, and thank you for being part of our community now, and into the future!


Dana Hutchings
Co-CEO


Jason Cole
Co-CEO


Rahul Ray
Board Chair



what s'mores are
fueled by

Mission, Vision, and Why

what we're
fueled by

Power To Be is driven by our mission, inspired by our vision, and grounded in our reason for why we do what we do. We are grateful to everyone who has been a part of our journey and contributed to the sense of home and community that we feel and embody today.

We affirm, with respect, that Power To Be's site is on the unceded lands of the **W̱SÁNEĆ** First Nations [these are the lands of the **W̱JOŁEŁP** (Tsartlip), **STÁUTW** (Tsawout), **W̱SÍ,KEM** (Tseycum), **BOKEĆEN** (Pauquachin), and **MÁLEXEŁ** (Malahat) First Nations], and the **Lək̓ʷəŋən** People (known today as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations).

Our Mission



We build community by removing barriers and inviting people to explore what's possible in nature.

Our Vision



Everyone belongs in nature.
Nature belongs in everyone.

Our Why



We believe that nature can transform lives.

2024 Programs



We had a lot of magical moments, made a lot of connections, and saw a lot of impact in 2024! Our Wilderness School celebrated its 17th anniversary, Family Roots their 16th anniversary, and we launched a new Adaptive Foundations program in collaboration with Outward Bound Canada Training Academy.

We elevated our environmental education curriculum and activities in new ways, learning about bears, bats, carnivores, birds, and more with partners like the Capital Regional District (CRD). We spent time owl banding with Rocky Point Bird Observatory, went paddling with humpback whales in the Johnstone Strait, and planted our first garden: it was a year filled with plants and animals!

We saw our highest turn out yet for our Victoria Have A Go day (HAG), piloted a HAG in Vancouver, and spent cherished time with partners and participants that we have worked with for over a decade.

Thank you to our program facilitators, co-op students, practicum students, volunteers, and our enthusiastic participants, who engaged with one (or many!) of our programs in 2024. We are lucky to work and play with so many incredible people dedicated to making nature more accessible and enjoying adventurous activities all across Vancouver Island and the Mainland.

In 2024, we saw exponential growth in our program structure. We **increased our hours in nature by over 20%**, and we focused on **more environmental education programs, increasing by 80%**. We brought even more participants into nature, and **increased our participant visits by nearly 40%**!

416

PROGRAMS

2,006

HOURS IN
NATURE

3,719

PARTICIPANT
VISITS

Activities We Offered This Year:



CAMP CRAFT



CAMPING



CANOEING



GEOCACHING



INCLUSIVE
HIKING



KAYAKING



MINDFULNESS



NATURE
EXPLORATION



PADDLE
BOARDING



ROCK
CLIMBING



SNOWSHOEING



YOGA

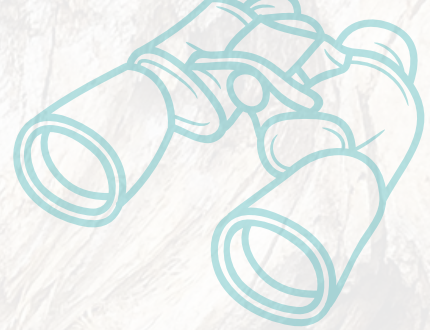
Did You Know?

"Thousands of years ago in the High Arctic, Inuit hunters invented the lightweight *qajaq* (or kayak) so they could more easily harvest seals and whales out on the water." (destinationnunavut.ca)



Spinal Cord
Injury BC
Paddle Trip

How It Works



From land to water, we provide equipment and support participants' needs to experience year-round adventures. We've structured our programs to fall into three categories, dependent on where participants are in their journey, and what they're looking for.

SINGLE-DAY



For those looking for a recreation program or nature access. Canoeing; kayaking; paddle boarding; rock climbing; yoga; hiking (TrailRider option); Have A Go days

MULTI-DAY



For those looking to take the next step in their adventures. Overnight camping programs, spring break and summer day camps

COHORTS



For those looking to explore their comfort zones and engage long-term.

Ferns & Salal

Adaptive weekly after-school programs, ages 7-11, 12-15

Wilderness School

Two-year program, youth ages 12-14

Landscaping & Restoration Training Program

12-week program, ages 18-25

FAQ



COST? We provide a sliding-scale payment structure to prevent financial barriers to outdoor access.



WHO? To ensure our programs are a good fit for new participants and groups, we meet with them to discuss goals, barriers, attitude, commitment, and nature connection.



WHEN? Join a program all year long! Individual participants regularly receive a calendar of opportunities with specific dates and times.

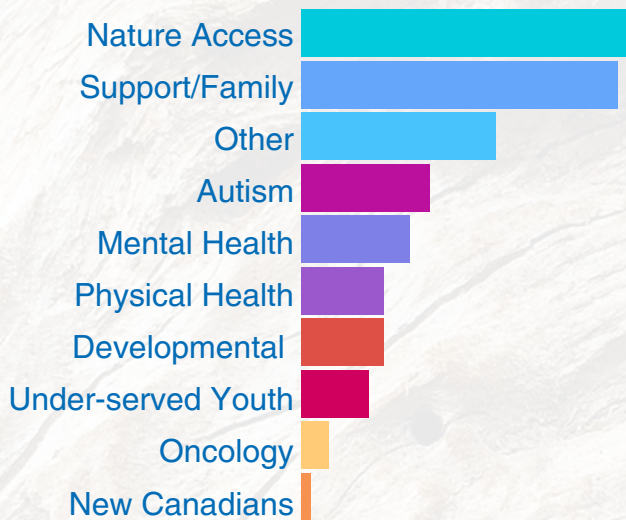
arts and
crafts

camping

Photo courtesy of BC Parks

Who We Support

Needs We Support



While 100% of our programs are nature access, the statistical category of Nature Access describes organizations or communities seeking nature access, like Indigenous communities, schools, youth groups, and community-service teams. Support/family represents those who are supporting others on program e.g. caregivers, family. Other describes people who sought us out for a primary reason not otherwise reflected here and where their reason represented 1% or less of the total. Examples include ADHD, rare illnesses, and elder support.

Age Groups We Support

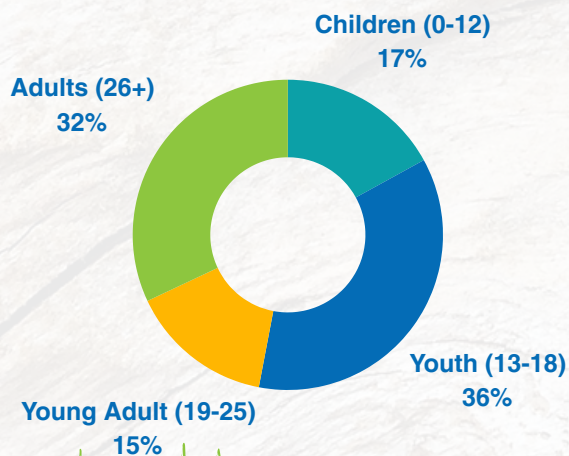


Photo courtesy of SCIBC

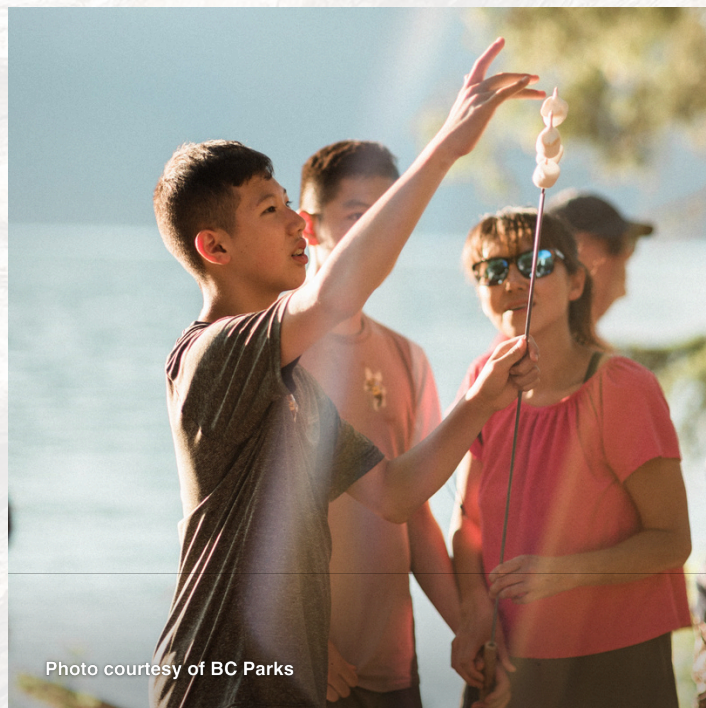


Photo courtesy of BC Parks



Community Voices



"We are so grateful for Power To Be as an organization but we are most grateful for everyone whom we've met there. They have so much heart and understand the challenges and how much it means to be included and explore nature and activities. Both our boys have gained confidence and skills with life changing adventures, climbing, kayaking, canoeing, golfing, and invaluable support."

Inclusive Adventures Family Participant



Photo courtesy of BC Parks

"I really love it here. I immediately felt safe, and I normally feel very anxious and uncomfortable in new places."

Community Group Participant



Did You Know?

"The earliest evidence of tent construction, carbon-dated to around 40,000 B.C., shows shelters made from mammoth hides and bones, used for survival and protection from the elements" (valleyandpeak.co.uk)

"I was in a group full of people who've immigrated and it's always been easy to find connection in those kinds of spaces. Despite coming from all parts of the world, we were all able to share stories and deeply understand each other solely through the idea of migrating to a country that is [a] stranger to us."

Community Group Participant



Photo courtesy of BC Parks

"My child's anxiety often prevents him from participating in various peer groups and regular school, and he was initially anxious to go to the program, but quickly warmed up and has been loving it. He feels comfortable, and that really means a lot to his mental health and wellness."

Ferns & Salal Parent



Photo courtesy of SCIBC



Oh, the Places We Went!

In 2024, we discovered so many new places, both far away and close to home. From kayak expeditions to beach cleanups, from snowshoeing to learning about salmon spawning, we had a beautiful year of exploration and growth!



We welcomed **3,460** visitors to our Prospect Lake Site!

A Few Spots We Explored in 2024...

- **BROUGHTON ARCHIPELAGO** | Kayak expedition
- **CAPILANO RIVER REGIONAL PARK** | Camp skills & salmon education at the hatchery
- **DEEP COVE** | Kayaking
- **EAST SOOKE** | Beach adventures, exploring bears & wildlife with the CRD
- **ELK LAKE** | Exploring plants & native species with the CRD
- **FRENCH BEACH** | Beach Cleanup
- **GOLDEN EARS PROVINCIAL PARK** | Hiking & camping
- **GROUSE MOUNTAIN** | Snowshoeing & hiking
- **MALAHAT SKYWALK** | The accessible Skywalk
- **MYSTIC BEACH** | Hiking & camping
- **PORTEAU COVE** | Learn to Camp
- **PORT RENFREW** | Hiking & camping
- **ROYAL ROADS** | National Indigenous Peoples Day
- **SEA TO SKY GONDOLA** | Gondola rides, snowshoeing, & hiking
- **STANLEY PARK** | Hiking, geocaching, & leadership skills
- **SXÉCOTEN** | Kayak camping overnight
- **TəMTəMÍXwTəN** | Firebuilding
- **TSARTLIP** | Big canoe on the ocean
- **WHEY-AH-WICHEN** | Big canoe on the ocean
- **WHISTLER** | Hiking, ziplining, & gondola rides

2024 Volunteers

There's no way that Power To Be would be able to be what it is today without decades of support from our volunteers, practicum students, and our volunteer Board of Directors. Driven by a shared love for the outdoors and commitment to our community, and with a wealth of unique and valuable experience and perspectives, our volunteer team supports our staff and participants in so many ways. In 2024, our volunteers supported Power To Be through numerous activities, from website assistance and event support, to trail and site maintenance, rock climbing belaying, and paddling encouragement.

Our volunteers make us laugh, make us move, inspire us to push our strengths and capabilities to new horizons, and above all, make it possible for us to deliver the accessible, inclusive programs that we offer our participants. This year, we saw an extraordinary **45% increase in volunteer hours!** In a busy world filled with challenges, full-time jobs, and personal commitments, thank you for dedicating your time and energy, and volunteering in support of the inclusion movement. The future is accessible, and with the hard work and commitment of our volunteer team, we are able to create access to nature, run life-changing programs, and build community and belonging.



146
Volunteers



5,057
Hours



INFINITE
Appreciation

Join the fun!

Become a volunteer today:
powertobe.ca/volunteer



Our 2024 Board

Rahul Ray | Simon Bruce-Lockhart | Navdeep Gill | Lauren McNeil
Adam McLean | Alyssa Hindle | Andrea Carey | James Heth
Mary Lou Newbold | Paul Corns

2024 VOLUNTEERS

Abigal I	Beth L	Didi A	Gabrielle K	Jessica U	Lucy R	Nicole B	Savannah M
Adam S	Brandee D	Don K	Gary S	Joanna C	Lukas Z	Nicole G	Shylayne D
Aidan L	Cameron M	Elan F	Gillian E	John Z	Lynn A	Nimrod R	Sophie L
Alex J	Carmen C	Eleni H	Ginny K	Jonathan F	Manoj J	Noel K	Steven O
Alexander T	Carmen G	Elizabeth K	Grace W	Josée M	Mathias C	Pamela G	Tania F
Alexis V	Cherie C	Ella H	Hailey F	Justin B	Matt K	Rachel K	Tayah G
Alistair M	Claire W	Elly C	Hanna C	Karun T	Matthew D	Ravil Will J	Taylor B
Allison D	Corinne R	Elyse R	Harmony B	Katherina H	Max T	Ricky K	Tim B
Allison G	D'Arcy M	Emmanuel S	Harry W	Katherine O	Michael R	Ring P	Tim C
Amal K	Dan D	Eric S	Heidi W	Katy W	Mohammad A	Rio I	Trace Q
Amanda C	David G	Erik M	Iris H	Kaylem V	Moiria B	Rory P	Trent S
Amber C	Debbie C	Erin D	Jackie G	Kimberleigh D	Monique G	Ruby A	Tyler P
Angelina W	Dee-Ann M	Erin H	Janice M	Lacy B	Morgan M	Samuel P	Tyler T
Anna B	Devin S	Evan S	Jay S	Laura O	Mya B	Sana M	Wendy M
Annelise M	Devon L	Eyla P	Jeannette J	Laura W	Naechal G	Sarah M	Wesley J
Aurelio	Diane T	Fay C	Jenna B	Lauren W	Naomi F	Sarah W	Xia Bailey H
Ben M	Dianne G	Fleur F	Jennifer H	Leonhard B	Neil C	Saurabh R	Yeats M



Photo courtesy of SCIBC



Have A Go Day

Landscaping Graduation

In the spring of 2024, we delivered the second year of our Landscaping and Restoration program with a brand new cohort of participants. Eight youth aged 18-25 with a self-identified disability developed social and professional connections, employment skills, and landscaping and horticultural expertise over the course of 12 weeks.



The legacy of this cohort will be the creation of a universally accessible garden that will house food, native species, herbs, and sensory plants for future generations of participants.

Not only did they plant a successful garden, they also got to enjoy it, making salads from the fresh veggies they grew from seeds.

This year's cohort saw participants eager to get their hands dirty and work directly with the land. Even in the pouring rain, the landscaping crew was ready to mulch the front beds and work together as a team. A favourite gardening task was pulling thistles; it was an exciting day of weeding when they collected giant piles of thistles and saw their hard work pay off.

Participant favourite activities included: field trips to Heart Lake Farm to work with therapy horses and Satinflower Nurseries to learn about native plants, meeting local landscape architects, invasive species removal, site maintenance, meadow and stream restoration, and instruction on how to use hand tools, mowers, weed whackers, trimmers, and safety equipment.

A huge thank you to our many partners within this program: Patio Gardens for bringing our crew to their classroom and helping participants build their own planters to take home; Mustang Landscape for donating time and materials, and for their mulch deliveries, and Hatch and Seed for working with us in their garden.



Did You Know?

The SENĆOTEN name for Prospect Lake is XOĆEs TTE WSÁ, SENEĆ which translates as "lake of the little emerging mountain."

Thank you to PEPAKEN HÁUTW, The Horticulture Center of the Pacific, and permaculturist Bethany of Garden Alchemist who helped design our permaculture garden. Thank you to CanAssist, the program's delivery partner, for providing participants with First Aid certification, Food Safe certification, outdoor work attire, and job coaching sessions during and after the program.

These technical employment teachings, in conjunction with hard skills training and one-to-one wrap-around emotional support from Power To Be's facilitators, means that in a world that historically fails to serve young people with barriers, youth are graduating this program with confidence, ready for future endeavours.





Wilderness School Graduation

Our 15th Wilderness School cohort graduated in September 2024, beginning their outdoor adventures with us in the spring of 2022. This was the first group to complete the full Wilderness School program since the pandemic.

For the first year, participants stayed close to home, went on lots of hikes, practiced wilderness skills like shelter building, knots, and fire building, and learned about our natural world and their place in it. Participants also learned about relationship management, group dynamics, and how to be with and work with one another in the best ways possible.

For this group's week-long spring adventure, they did the Juan de Fuca, and ended up going back to do another part of it for their summer trip, hiking nearly the entire trail throughout the program. In early 2023, they took their first big trip up to Mount Washington. For many participants, this was their first experience snowshoeing, and being immersed in such a magical, snow-filled environment.

In their second year, participants honed their skills in ways that challenged, inspired, and expanded their comfort zones. They were excited to go on the first Tofino surfing trip since the pandemic, as well as a hiking trip to Bamfield, and a sea kayaking trip to the Broughton Archipelago. In Bamfield, the group hiked to Keeha and Tapaltos beaches and visited the Cape Beale Lighthouse – one of the last staffed lighthouses on the Canadian coast. They met the lighthouse keeper, saw whales, and learned from the rain.

The sea kayaking expedition was the last trip that the group did – and it was incredible, explains lead guide Mike Milner, “we just had a stellar time. We saw all of the charismatic megafauna you would want to see up there, it was absolutely beautiful. Whales, sea otters, bears - it was pretty special.”

One of the great things about the Wilderness School program is that while the trips are highly planned, and the structure is beautifully laid out, it's all “built with the flexibility to tune the program to the specific cohort,” says Mike. One group might be a little more adventurous; another might be more focused on the social side of things.

Program guides, Mike, Tess Horner Bourassa, Kyla Schenk, and Myah Rach-Sharpe, noted the amazing resiliency and growth of this particular cohort. “When we met these kids, they were 12 and they had just spent the last two years isolated at a time in their life when human beings need to socialize to learn how to be human beings,” Mike says. On top of the impressive technical skills learned, the program saw these participants make enormous strides in socialization, confidence, and connection, and develop the ability to laugh it off when things got tough. What an incredible last couple of years for these youth – **a huge congratulations to the 15th Wilderness School cohort!**

Alumni Programs

After graduating from Wilderness School or the Landscaping program, participants become Power To Be alumni. For over ten years, the Wilderness alumni have exemplified the legacy of Wilderness School, as each participant builds on the program to reach future success. These young leaders are ready to face the world with experience and skills, prepared to take on challenges in their careers and beyond.

2024 was the first year of the Landscaping Alumni program, where the alumni were invited to work as part of our monthly, supervised restoration work-party; provide mentorship to subsequent cohorts; and participate in Power To Be programs such as camping and canoeing. The ripple effect continues on past graduation: participants have been eager to stay involved, forging friendships and finding their niche. Many participants have now tried camping programs after their experience in the landscaping program.

In 2024, we invited all previous Family Roots alumni to join a program together, which saw families from over 15 years of Power To Be programs connecting over shared values and powerful memories, with both new and familiar faces.

The strength of our alumni programs is fundamental to the way Power To Be creates a wrap-around approach - we want to make sure our participants feel supported beyond our programs, and we're always here for another program days, months, or years from now. When we're needed, we are here.

"At the end of the first day of the alumni program, I remarked that it felt like coming home. Power To Be is kind of magic, and to me, I think it's sacred. Reflecting on our time in the program, it's clear that the skills and relationships we built have had a lasting impact."

-Alumni Participant



Did You Know?

"The earliest record of salmon in North America is of the 'Saber-Tooth Salmon' in fossils dating up to 7 million years ago ... at up to three meters long these weren't your typical 'salmon'!" (psf.ca)

Salmon Pit Cook

JB Williams, traditional knowledge keeper and ethnobotanist, also known as The Native Plant Guy, invited alumni participants from three previous Wilderness School cohorts and two Landscaping program cohorts to a salmon cookout. It was the biggest turn out for an alumni program yet.

JB taught students the traditional methods for doing a salmon pit cook. They made bannock over the fire after harvesting evergreen huckleberry on the reserve. It was an amazing connection between five cohorts learning from a member of our community.



fire
starting

Inclusion Workshops

In 2024, Director of Programs Carinna Kenigsberg represented Power To Be at the BC Camps Association (BCCA) conference and presented as a keynote speaker on inclusion. The BC Camps Association is an organization in BC that accredits summer camps across the province after in depth reviews of safety standards and practices in the camping industry, to keep camps safe and fun. After hearing about us at the conference, **Camp Goodtimes, with the Canadian Cancer Society**, reached out to us asking if we could facilitate a workshop for their annual staff training week for their staff and volunteers.



Our Vancouver program team travelled to Camp Goodtimes and delivered a workshop to 100+ attendees on basic inclusion practices and approaches for their volunteers who would be working with their participants. From nurses to university students, the message of inclusion spread far and wide.

At the end of 2024, **Power To Be became an official BCCA accredited camp**. We were assessed on several areas - from our training standards to our signage and site use - and we met all the criteria. Moreover, the staff that did our assessment felt that our site and our work needed to be shared more within the BCCA **as they felt we were amazing leaders when it came to universal access, accessibility approaches, and inclusive program design**.

Our presence at the conference, as well as our accreditation, has solidified Power To Be as a valuable resource for accessibility and inclusivity in the outdoor industry. Looking forward to the future of workshops at Power To Be, we have been developing online training modules where we can continue seeing the ripple effect of our programs on the greater community, and beyond. A huge congratulations to our Vancouver team for leading this new and exciting avenue for the inclusion movement at Power To Be, and delivering ten unique workshops this year with Canada-wide reach!

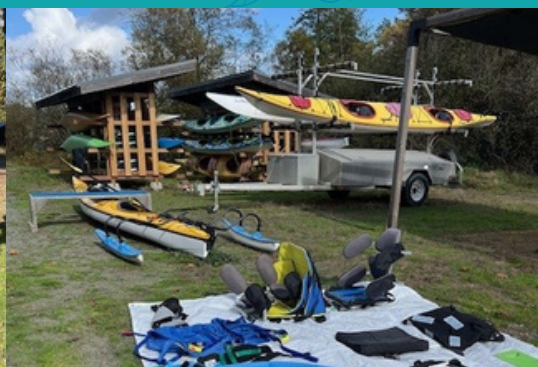
2024 Workshops

- BC Camps Association 2024 Conference
- Capilano University (Outdoor Recreation Students)
- Parks Canada (Learn To Camp Team)
- BC Parks Foundation (Discover Parks Ambassador Team)
- Nanaimo Canoe and Kayak Club
- Sea to Sky Gondola
- NatureKids BC
- Camp Goodtimes
- Interpretation Canada Conference
- Regional Parks Symposium (Metro Vancouver Regional Parks x CRD)

Outward Bound Training

In collaboration with Outward Bound Canada Training Academy, we offered a blended learning program with a mandate to build a more diverse sector of outdoor professionals across Canada through accessible and inclusive free training programs. Each participant brought a ton of excitement and experience and felt that this program could give them the tools, confidence, and tangible concepts to combine with their passions and experiences.

The group started as strangers who had very different life experiences and ways of learning, and became a group of friends who built their resilience and confidence together over the four days at our Prospect Lake site. They practiced things like knots and tarp building, learned and experienced what it's like to facilitate group development, and learned introductory risk management skills and other program curriculum - all while the learning structure was adapted and modified as needed.



Nature's Path to Inclusivity

In 2024, we collaborated with Altitude Sports and our community partner Fjällräven on a video highlighting our inclusive programs here at Power To Be. Marie-Pierre of Altitude Sports visited our Alumni Camping program to follow Kyla, Ashton, and fellow participants as they planted lavender, attended a bird banding session with Rocky Point Bird Observatory, made s'mores, went for a group canoe, and ate delicious meals together. Pitching their tents in our accessible camping sites, participants bonded together around the campfire in our roundhouse and made long-lasting connections with both new and old friends.

We are so thankful to the Altitude Sports and Fjällräven teams for creating this video with us, and thankful to our participants for being a part of a film that helps connect Power To Be and the inclusivity movement to an immense audience. At time of writing, the Nature's Path video has over 411,000 views, and has been shared far and wide.

Storytelling causes a vast ripple effect: it allows participants to see themselves reflected in our programs and welcomes them to Power To Be, and spreads awareness of the importance of inclusion and accessibility to nature.

**Everybody should have access to nature.
Not only because it's important for their mental health
and well-being, but also so that we can steward and
protect our natural surrounding areas.**

- Carinna Kenigsberg,
Director of Programs and Impact





Building connections can be hard when you have a disability. Power To Be [is] very accepting, and they understand what my needs are.

- Kyla

Society has this stereotype saying a normal person is a normal person, so I personally think it's kinda cool to see people that are struggling be regular people as well and just see them in nature overcome that kind of stuff, and see how much fun they're having as well.

- Ashton



Watch Now!

*Nature's Path to Inclusivity
Altitude Sports x Fjällräven*





Long-term Partnerships

From site partners that use our beautiful Prospect Lake site, to community groups that we collaborate with to deliver programs, we are deeply grateful to work with over 70 incredible partners. Creating meaningful and long-lasting connections with local organizations who share our vision that Everyone Belongs In Nature is important to us, and while we are building new connections with amazing new partners each year, some partners have been with us from the very beginning.



BCCH Kayak Expedition to the Broken Islands, summer of 2001



Did You Know?

"Nature can generate many positive emotions, such as calmness, joy, and creativity, and is also associated with lower levels of depression and anxiety." (mentalhealth.org.uk)

Power To Be has been running life-changing programs with the BC Children's Hospital since the start of our journey. One of our first-ever community programs was a small kayak expedition in the Gulf Islands with youth from the BCCH in 2000. Since then, we ran several more youth kayak expeditions, and began to offer adventures like surf trips in Tofino, and rafting and ziplining trips in Whistler with youth who were current or past patients in the Oncology unit, as well as their siblings.

Eventually, Suzanne Dunbar, Patient/Parent Advocate at BCCH asked about supporting parents, and the Annual Moms' Retreat was born. From day programs and family programs to big, wild adventures, we've run so many amazing programs with the BCCH, have had the chance to meet some incredible people, and witness the powerful impact that these programs have had on all who have been a part of them.

This year, we headed up to Whistler in July with the Teen Adventures program, and to Merritt in October for our annual Moms' Retreat.

TEEN ADVENTURES

Ten teens travelled up to Whistler for four days. They stopped at the Sea to Sky Gondola, went ziplining, took in the mountains on the Peak 2 Peak Gondola, went hiking, and explored the Whistler train wreck. Along with the teens and our Power To Be team, two amazing oncology nurses volunteered their time and joined us on the trip to support with any medical needs. This offered parents some comfort and peace of mind, knowing that if anything were to happen, their children would be cared for in the ways that they needed to be.



The trip offered the teens a chance to connect with one another and experience fun and independence in ways that many of them had never been able to before. “For many of these teens, because they experience medical complexities, they also experience a level of parental concern that other teens might not,” notes program facilitator Kyla Schenk. “So to be able to come out on this trip, let loose in Whistler Village, and connect with peers who are going through similar things offered a newfound freedom.” Because the trip was open to siblings as well, it was “a really special opportunity for them to bond, and have this shared experience with their siblings, with their parental figures removed – for most of them, for the first time,” says Marin Puffer, Community Engagement and Education Lead.



ANNUAL MOMS' RETREAT

Over the weekend of October 4th – 6th, moms from all over BC came together for the first time and headed to Cold Water Ranch, a beautiful lodge run by the Abilitas Foundation. “The Annual Moms’ Retreat is such a special weekend for our caregivers. It gives them time to breathe, connect

with other moms, and focus on some self-care,” says Suzanne of BCCH. We had fun, created meaningful connections, and relaxed. We played games, did some crafts, did a bit of hiking, and had a wonderful afternoon at the Mellah Leuca Day Spa.

.....

**The experience was
transformational.
Never since
becoming a mom
have I had such a
sense of belonging.**

- Moms’ Retreat
Participant, 2024

.....

A moment of interconnectedness and community-building, Marin shared, was when some of the moms of teens who had been on a Teen Adventures trip before, shared those positive experiences with the rest of the group. Parents who were struggling to find a good programming fit for their kids were able to ask questions, gain confidence, and find encouragement from parents who had been through it all before.



“The gratitude, reflection, storytelling, tears, and laughter that was shared was never-ending,” says Marin. “Nature is healing. Nature was our host and provided a container for this group of caregivers to feel a sense of peace and safety, which allowed them to truly step away and disconnect from their day-to-day stressors and responsibilities, open up with one another, and form deep connections that will be cherished for years to come.”

We are so grateful to play a role in providing the space for these youth and their families to build connections, be supported, cared for, and encouraged, and find laughter and solace in nature.

Family Roots: Welcome Back



This year marked the 16th anniversary of the Family Roots program. The idea for the program was born from a meeting of three minds: Katy Rose, who was working at the Sooke Family Resource Society at the time, Jason Cole, Power To Be's then Director of Programs and now Co-CEO, and Lindsay Cornell of the Boys and Girls Club. Inspired by Bonnie Dyck's work at Enviro's Wilderness School, and their shared understanding of nature's healing qualities, they formed a partnership aimed at helping families build sustainable positive dynamics. Katy, Jay, Lindsay, and eventually Dave Segal, current Executive Director of Human-Nature Counselling, created a unique program that was the first of its kind for our community.

Family Roots continues today as a collaborative partnership between Power To Be and Human-Nature Counselling, and since its inception, the program has served over 85 families. Through family bonding, adventure, play, and immersion in an accessible, barrier-free outdoor environment, Family Roots strengthens family systems and increases the well-being and resiliency of youth and their families. Participants are also supported by clinical counsellors with monthly family therapy sessions and parenting resources.



A Family Roots group in 2010

In 2017, the program focus shifted to exclusively serve single-parent families, and the Single Parent Resource Centre, who identified a need for more support, was brought on as a partner. Many families in the program go through various stages of transition or grief, and being able to connect with others with similar experiences is significant. "There's a caring and connection that comes from being in community together like this", says Sylvia Storry, Power To Be's Head of Program Practice. "For the kids as well. It's a totally different experience being a kid from a single-parent family, and having the space to relate to peers around these experiences and build community is so valuable."



Longtime Family Roots participants, together at Prospect Lake



Did You Know?

"Adventure Therapy is the intentional facilitation of adventure or nature-based activities involving challenge aimed at creating opportunities for personal and interpersonal change towards therapeutic goals" (humannaturecounselling.ca)



It's safe to be me.



- Family Roots
Participant, 2024



This year was a unique one for Family Roots. For the first time, the program focused on serving “alumni” families who had participated in the Family Roots program previously. We welcomed nine families from different years – 2023 all the way back to 2009. There is a lot of comfort and ease in knowing what to expect when coming back to a Power To Be program like this, and that’s a welcome thing for families who may not experience a lot of ease in their day-to-day lives.

“They don’t have to worry about feeding their kids. They don’t have to worry about forgetting a rain jacket”, says Sylvia. “That’s a big part of what we heard from a lot of families – they knew that when they arrived, they could just be present – all they had to do is show up. Their kids will be safe, and they’ll be taken care of. That allows people the space to think about integrating what they’re learning into their lives, and see how real change could happen in their families”.



From left: Bonnie Dyck, Katy Rose, Dave Segal, and Jason Cole, some of the Family Roots program’s founders and collaborators

While the Family Roots program has helped so many families navigate life’s challenges, and become more resilient, the program has also been instrumental in creating space for practitioners to learn how to do family work in a meaningful, community-minded, and nature-based way. “We want to show people that there’s a different way of doing this type of work – that you can support people in a way that isn’t the hospital or a counsellor’s office, where kids don’t want to go”, says Sylvia.

Like all our programs at Power To Be, nature acts as the co-facilitator - but here, nature is also the co-counsellor. The program often helps families recognize that just as nature cycles through different phases and seasons, so do families – rupture (conflict), repair, connection – families begin to see themselves and the systems that exist in their families reflected in the ecosystem, and develop the skills to navigate through these cycles in a holistic, connected way.

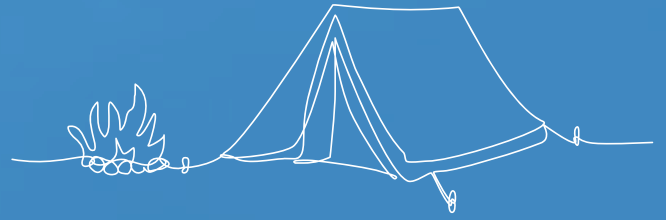
When asked what the best part of the 2024 Family Roots program was, one participant’s response was “changing lives.” We couldn’t have put it better ourselves.

Human Nature Counselling

Human Nature Counselling has been a partner of Power To Be’s for over 15 years. Formed out of a desire to take the therapeutic process beyond the office walls, Human Nature Counselling specializes in supporting children, youth, and families through an experiential and engaging Nature-Based Therapy approach.

Family Roots is Human Nature Counselling’s longest standing program, and we are so thankful for our ongoing partnership with them. “I think this program embodies the power of true collaborative partnerships”, says Katy Rose, Human Nature’s Clinical Director and Co-Founder of Family Roots. “Different organizations bring together each of their resources, skill sets, and talents to move forward a shared passion for reducing barriers and promoting healing communities of care.” The Family Roots program would not be here today without the tremendously impactful work of Human Nature Counselling. We are beyond grateful for our longstanding collaboration, and we’re excited to see what comes next!

Power To Be In The Wild



Our team's first time joining **The Rick Hansen Foundation's** accessible fishing boat, tagging sturgeon!



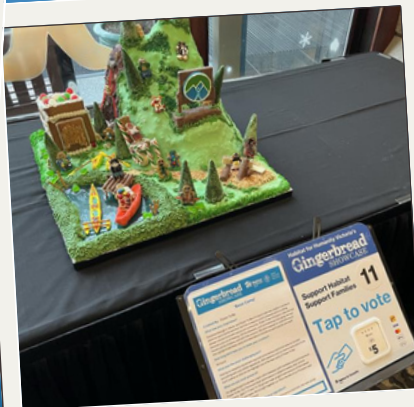
Program staff and participants joined the **Santa Claus parade** in downtown Victoria!



Our staff paddled a canoe for **National Indigenous Peoples Day** at Esquimalt Lagoon



Power To Summit racers & cheerleaders connected on the last day at **Malahat Skywalk**



Ferns and Salal & PTB staff team participated in the **Habitat for Humanity Gingerbread Showcase**



Our events team had booths at **Sidney Night Market**, Touchdown Pacific, and more!

OUR NATIVE LAND

with Tchadas Leo

Brought to you by:



Watch It Here!



Our site and programs were featured on **Our Native Land!**



The Power To Be Vancouver team facilitating the **Camp Goodtimes** workshop!

Environmental Initiatives & Awards



Nature is one of Power To Be's core values, and in 2024 we took big strides in nurturing our relationship with the environment, and working with our community to offer environmental education and sustainable solutions. From writing a chapter about adaptive recreation for an outdoor recreation textbook, to working with MEC to donate sleeping pads to our community, to offering one of the only accessible parking areas with electric chargers at our Prospect Lake site, we continue to explore new ways that we can take care of our environment, and each other.

We are grateful to be able to share our Prospect Lake site with amazing partners that are doing impactful work in support of our environment, such as Rocky Point Bird Observatory, EPIC, Human-Nature Counselling, Swim Drink Fish, Special Bird Services, and Arboriculture Canada. We have also expanded our reach this year by fostering partnerships with the parks system, and offering training and advising for Parks Canada, BC Parks, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks, and the CRD.

In October, **we became an official 1% for the Planet Environmental Partner** for our work around site preservation, outdoor recreation, and youth education. Being a 1% partner makes a world of difference in helping us run no to low-cost inclusive and accessible nature programs.

This year, we also became officially accredited with the BCCA, maintained our Living Wage Employer and Inclusive Employer certifications, as well as our One Planet Saanich membership, and continued to work towards our Living Building Challenge Petal and Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility certifications - which are well on their way!



Accepting our Living Wage Employer plaque in March of 2024

Environmental stewardship takes centre stage in our programming, and participants learn about Leave No Trace principals, weather patterns, plant identification, and the importance of recognizing the Indigenous community's connection to the land and waterways. We facilitate many hands-on activities like trail building, gardening, and community-led annual broom pulls.

WE FACILITATED **166** ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS IN 2024

Our commitment to environmental initiatives only grows stronger from year to year. With plans for community restoration projects, invasive species management, and working with schools to expand environmental education for children and youth, we are excited at what the future holds!



Did You Know?

Over the last two years, we worked with MEC to divert nearly 60 inflatable paddleboards and kayaks destined for the landfill. We fixed them up, and gave them a new lease on life!



1% for the Planet
Environmental
Partner



BC Camps
Association
Accreditation



Living Wage
Employer
Certification



Inclusive Employer
Certification



One Planet
Saanich Participant



Living Building
Challenge Petal
Certification



Rick Hansen Foundation
Accessibility Certification



Invasive species management
down at the dock!

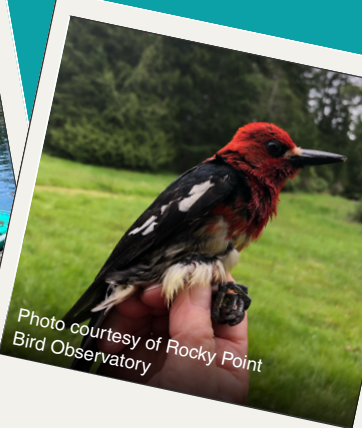


Photo courtesy of Rocky Point
Bird Observatory

The Power Of Nature

Our vision is that **Everyone Belongs In Nature**. But why is spending time in nature important? Our **Theory of Change evaluation model** highlights some of the amazing long-term goals and benefits that our participants experience through the combination of partnership, activities, and education in our nature programs.

Group activities with people of all ages and backgrounds

Outdoor adventures (kayaking, hiking, rock climbing, etc.)

Environmental education curriculum

Influential partners like Parks Canada, Victoria Community Connections, Capital Regional District, and Habitat Acquisition Trust

1 Social Skills

Develop and strengthen social skills by spending time interacting with peers

2 Inclusion Understanding

Deepen an understanding of inclusion, equity, and diversity

3 Sense of Belonging

Feel a deeper sense of connection, safety, and comfort within our community

4 Environmental Literacy

Increase knowledge of the outdoors and appreciation for natural spaces

5 Physical Activity

Be more active, and enjoy the experience

6 Outdoor Proficiency and Confidence

Gain skills, knowledge, and confidence in a variety of outdoor recreation activities

7 Nature Access

Gain more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy all its benefits

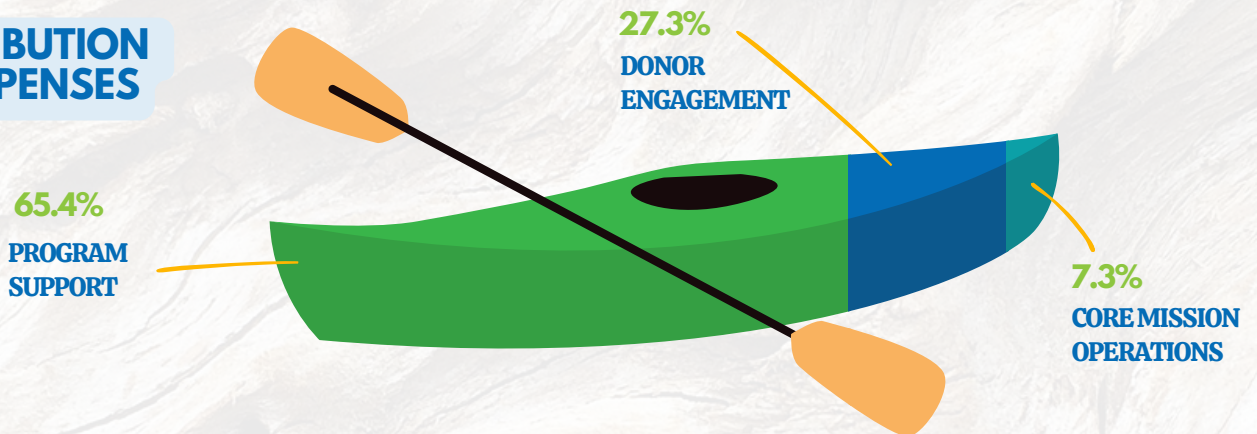
8 Emotional and Mental Health

Build tools and skills to improve mental and emotional health

Financial Report

We are proud to lead with responsible financial decisions, which are crucial for the quality of our programs and our impact in our community. We are so grateful to everyone who continues to invest in our journey of removing barriers to nature and fostering inclusive spaces of learning, exploration, and adventure. Thank you!

DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENSES



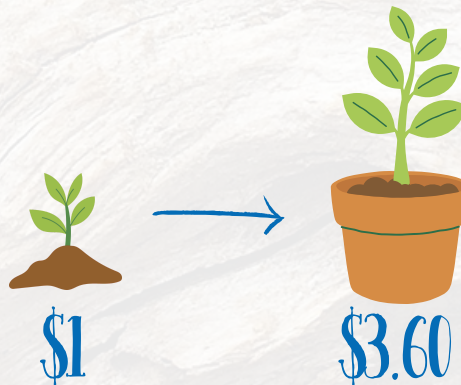
REVENUE:

\$3.875M

IN-KIND SUPPORT:

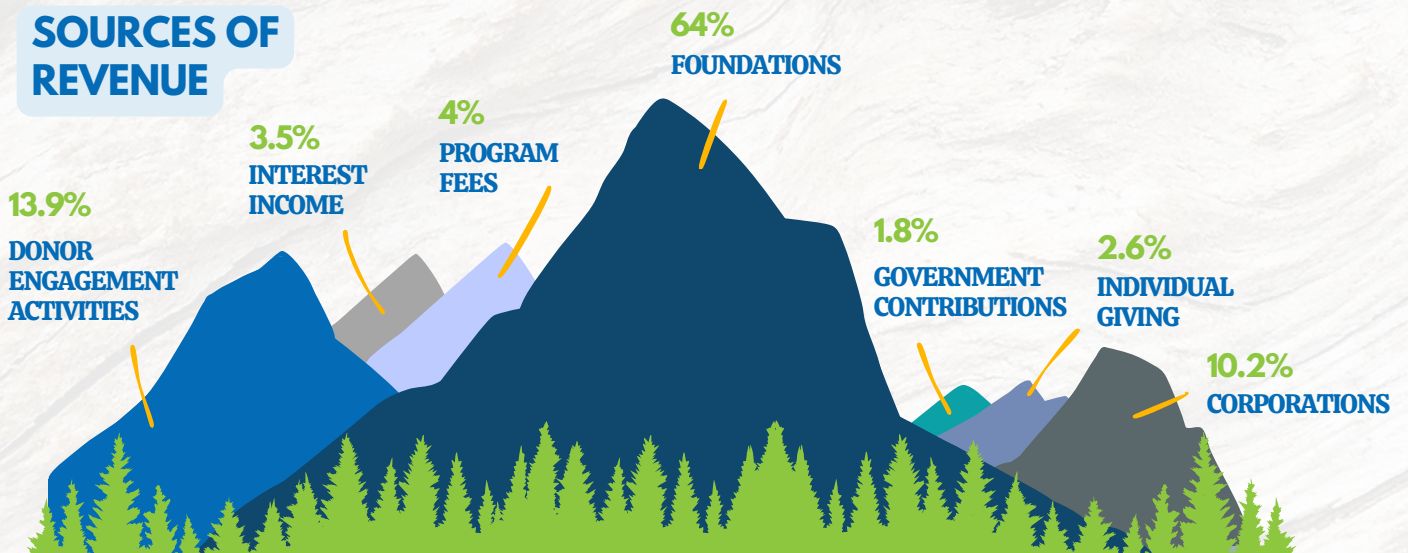
\$123,386

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

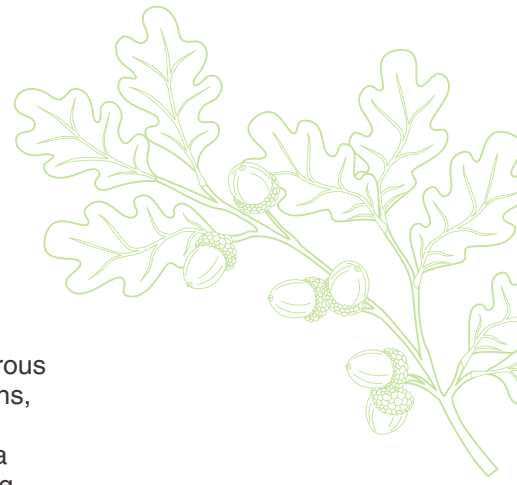


For every \$1 fundraised, \$3.60 is returned to our core mission.

SOURCES OF REVENUE



Thank You



The impact created in our community happens because of the kind and generous contributions of the following individuals, families, businesses, and corporations, who are all champions of Power To Be – we thank you! We'd like to offer our sincere, heartfelt gratitude for the donation made in honour of Ted and Loretta Rogers, and thank the Steele Family for believing in Power To Be, and making our dream of inclusion a reality.



**The Blidner
Family Foundation**



**children's
HEALTH FOUNDATION**
OF VANCOUVER ISLAND



**DENNIS & PHYLLIS
WASHINGTON
FOUNDATION**

**Hannon Widdifield
Charitable Fund**



**The Hepburn
Family Foundation**

IHNATOWYCZ FAMILY FOUNDATION

**In Honour of Ted
& Loretta Rogers**

ISLAND FLOOR CENTRE LTD.



**PETERSON FAMILY
— FOUNDATION —**



**R. Howard Webster Foundation
Fondation R. Howard Webster**



**vancouver
foundation**



**The WB Family
Foundation**





Power To Be



Everyone Belongs IN Nature

We are so grateful to share and celebrate natural spaces with our community, which allows us the opportunity to deepen our intentions towards reconciliation, land stewardship, and inclusion. Thank you to everyone who participates, volunteers, or supports Power To Be's programs.

DONATE



Learn more and donate today!
Thank you for being a part of our adventure.



[powertobe.ca](https://www.powertobe.ca) info@powertobe.ca 250.385.2363

Charity #: 861269959RR0001