

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**With the Commencement of B.C. Child and Youth in Care Week, SOS Children's Village  
B.C. Emerges From a Protracted Identity Crisis**

**Surrey, British Columbia** For the past 28 years, SOS Children's Village B.C. has been suffering from an identity crisis. A small non-profit organization started in Richmond, the dedicated staff and volunteers of SOS B.C. worked hard over the years to nurture the charity's growth, and in 1999, the first home for foster children opened on a beautiful piece of land in Surrey. By 2005, a total of five homes had been built, with room for five more. Canada's first SOS Children's Village was born.

With the fiscal contraction of the last decade, SOS Children's Village B.C. always thought of itself as a minor player in a vast community of children's charities. **With roots in Europe where SOS Kinderdorf is a household name, SOS B.C. never had the same kind of brand recognition in North America**, with the name evoking puzzled looks among many British Columbians.

However, some wonderful people have stepped forward and helped the non-profit realize that it is not an isolated West Coast entity, but an integral part of a dynamic global organization. With recent linkages to other sister Villages and societies, especially around the Transition to Adulthood issue, the shroud has finally been lifted.

**SOS B.C. is not a small local charity, it is truly a leading, grassroots, passionate team of professionals - backed by the largest non-governmental, non-denominational child development organization in the world.** SOS Children's Village B.C. may have suffered from an identity crisis before, but it is now the frontline of 2,365 Village programs worldwide, including 545 SOS Children's Villages providing full-time care for over 74,000 children and young people whose families have been torn apart.

Indeed, SOS International ran an 'I Matter campaign' from 2009 to 2013, carried out by Villages in some 21 countries in Europe and Central Asia, and over the same period **SOS B.C. had unknowingly been on the cutting edge of Transition to Adulthood programming even within its own parent organization.**

With programs designed to fill devastating gaps in the provincial foster care system - that include arts and cognitive behavioural therapy, neurofeedback training, learning clubs, camp and cultural exploration, music education, and caregiver support - SOS Children's Village B.C. is now co-hosting SOS events internationally and setting the tone for where the global organization is heading.



**About SOS Children's Village BC**

SOS Children's Villages is the world's largest non-governmental, non-denominational child development organization for orphaned and abandoned children. It has existed for over 60 years with presence in 133 countries and over 550 villages. British Columbia is home to the only SOS Children's Village in Canada. SOS Children's Village BC provides community-based family care services to improve and sustain the quality of life for foster children and foster families through a variety of programs that address social development and healing. Headquartered in Surrey, the organization actively creates opportunities, programs and services to increase stability and continuity for foster children and their foster parents.

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**We hope you will be inspired to assist us in publically cementing our identity by picking up our 'dark side of foster care in BC' series over the next few days.**

**For more information please contact:**

William Brennan, Communications Coordinator  
SOS Children's Village BC  
T: (604) 574-2964 ext. 231  
E: [williambrennan@sosbc.org](mailto:williambrennan@sosbc.org) Web: [www.sosbc.org](http://www.sosbc.org)

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