

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION PACKAGE

Comox Valley Transition Society

2019 / 2020

Who we are and what we do

For more than 30 years, the Comox Valley Transition Society (CVTS) has been providing services in the Comox, Cumberland and Courtenay areas and beyond (including Denman and Hornby Islands) to women and children who have experienced violence. Our mission is to promote the creation of a healthy community through positive contributions to the lives of women, children and families. We achieve this by offering a wide range of programs and services that provide safety and support personal well-being. These include shelter and housing, counselling and support, healing and recovery, crisis intervention, advocacy and education, prevention and awareness.

CVTS also operates the Too Good To Be Threw thrift shops in Courtenay, the goals of which are to generate funds to support current and future programs for CVTS, as well as to provide clothing and household goods at no cost to women and children in need.

Our vision is for a community of people who are safe and supported.

I've come to know the staff and some of the women from the program, and the entire experience has really grounded me. For me, it's been a reality check that our community has so many people in need, and it makes me thankful for the life of opportunity that I've had. Volunteering with CVTS is meaningful and worthwhile work, and I am glad I am able to contribute to this amazing community in a small way."

-Sue, Volunteer



Coldest Night of the Year Walk For Homelessness, February 2019
CVTS' largest, annual fundraising event

CVTS Services Include:

- Lilli House
- Amethyst House
- Women's Counselling
- PEACE Program (formerly Children Who Witness Abuse program)
- Homeless Outreach
- Second Stage & Affordable Housing
- Drop-in programs, and much more

Volunteer Opportunities

with Comox Valley Transition Society

Volunteers have a vital role in our programs. Without volunteers, CVTS could not offer wrap-around services for women and children in need. If you are interested in any of the volunteer opportunities below, please contact **Anne Davis, Volunteer Coordinator**, by phone at 250-897-0511 or by email at coordinator@cvts.ca.

SPECIAL EVENTS Volunteers are called when CVTS is hosting a special event or another organization is hosting a special event for us. Volunteers on this list are not obligated to attend every event, but it's very helpful to have a pool of volunteers we can call on for this purpose. **Requirements:** basic knowledge of CVTS programs (available through monthly volunteer orientation sessions) and enthusiasm for the work of the organization. **Various locations** in the community, flexible hours.

TUESDAY DROP-IN LUNCH Assists staff in facilitating a safe and welcoming space open to all, assists with room set-up and clean-up and food preparation (no cooking involved), greeting clients, bussing dishes back to the kitchen. **Requirements:** comfortable working with marginalized populations, non-judgemental and compassionate, respect for diversity. Women only. **Location:** Downtown Office, Tuesdays, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

CONNECT PROGRAM Assists the Outreach Worker in facilitating a safe and welcoming space open to all, assists with room set-up and clean-up, offers snacks, assists clients with filling in forms. **Requirements:** comfortable working with marginalized populations, non-judgemental and compassionate, respect for diversity. **Location:** Courtenay Library, Mondays and/or Thursdays, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

COOKING Prepare a meal (s) for the freezer, possibly with help from residents; work with the House Coordinator regarding availability of ingredients. **Requirements:** Food Safe, open to sharing skills with learners. Women only. **Location:** Amethyst House or Lilli House, flexible hours

GARDENING With input from the House Coordinator, provides basic gardening, weeding, care of window boxes, possibly with the assistance of residents. **Requirements:** light lifting, kneeling, bending, some knowledge of gardening, open to sharing skills with learners. **Location:** Amethyst House or Lilli House, flexible hours.

SORTING DONATIONS Sorts a variety of donations, mostly toiletries, for use by women accessing the Downtown Office. **Location:** Downtown Office, regular schedule or flexible hours.

CRAFTS Facilitates small groups of residents in learning beading or other crafts. **Requirements:** Knowledge of a craft, open to sharing skills with learners. Women only. **Location:** Amethyst House or Lilli House, flexible hours, likely evenings or weekends, ideally a regular schedule.

MOVEMENT Facilitates small groups of residents in exercise, yoga or Tai chi, etc. **Requirements:** Knowledge and experience in the area that is being taught. Women only. **Location:** Amethyst House or Lilli House, flexible hours, ideally a regular schedule.

LIGHT MAINTENANCE Carries out minor repairs and tasks such as putting up shelves. **Requirements:** basic maintenance skills. Amethyst House, Lilli House, Downtown Office, flexible hours or when requested

CHILD MINDING Care for children while their mothers are otherwise occupied in the house, provides age appropriate activities and/or supervises play. **Requirements:** training and/or experience in child care. **Location:** Lilli House, flexible hours or when requested by staff. Could be a regular schedule.

ACCOMPANIMENT Accompany women on outings while they are in a recovery program, checks with House Coordinator regarding any restrictions, may involve driving. **Requirements:** Vehicle in good working order, driver's license, strong boundaries. Women only. **Location:** Amethyst House, when requested by staff

ERRANDS Examples: transporting items from the Outreach Office to Lilli House, picking up diapers and baby formula for Lilli House. **Requirements:** Vehicle in good working order, driver's license. **Locations:** Amethyst House, Lilli House or Downtown Office. As requested/needed.

GROCERY SHOPPING Working with a list provided by staff, this volunteer shops for groceries on a regular basis, using grocery store gift cards. **Locations:** Amethyst House or Lilli House, weekly or biweekly.

TOO GOOD TO BE THREW THRIFT STORE A variety of roles in a retail setting. If interested, please contact the thrift store directly. Unit #1-239 Puntledge Road, Courtenay. Phone: 250-338-0601

SAFETY FIRST

At Comox Valley Transition Society, the safety of clients, volunteers and staff is our highest priority.

Wherever you may be volunteering, you will be shown the location of all exits and the location of the muster area in case of emergency evacuation.

There will almost always be a staff person present or nearby, unless you are volunteering for a task such as grocery shopping.

If at any time you feel unsafe for any reason:

1. Tell a staff person.
2. If that is not possible, quickly review where you are and how you can remove yourself from the situation.
3. Keep a safe distance from the person.
4. Speak slowly and calmly. Avoid confrontational language.
5. Let the person know you are a volunteer and you are taking their concern to a staff person.
6. Exit the situation. Avoid turning your back on the person if possible.
7. If all else fails, do not hesitate to yell for help and/or call 911.



Lilli House



Amethyst House



Too Good To Be Threw
Thrift Store



Events!

Did you know?

- Comox Valley Transition Society (CVTS) was **founded in 1987**.
- CVTS originally operated a volunteer-run **Safe Home Network** for women and their children fleeing abuse.
- In 1992 we purchased and opened **Lilli House**, a comfortable, safe and supportive shelter for women fleeing abuse and their children.
- CVTS now has **60 staff** working in a wide range of programs, all of which are offered for free.
- Lilli House shelters **almost 300 women and children each year**. In 2018, the house was full or overfull on 222 nights.
- On average, our **24 hour crisis line** receives up to 1500 calls each year from women in the Comox Valley who are experiencing or are fleeing abuse.
- CVTS currently owns and/or operates **23 units of short-term/long-term housing** for women and their children. Rents are geared to income.
- **Amethyst House** residents can access up to one month of withdrawal management (detox) and up to two months of supportive recovery.
- CVTS started a **Men's Group** in 2015 for men who wish to work on their relationships. The group is attended by an average of 10 men every week.
- CVTS' **Girls Group** was founded in 1999 and continues to this day as an empowerment group for girls who are marginalized for a variety of reasons. Girls who graduate can take training to become Peer Facilitators and co-facilitate a group with an adult facilitator.
- The **Too Good To Be Threw** thrift store is a vital source of revenue for CVTS, making it possible to provide services that are not otherwise funded. All revenue from the store goes directly into services for women and children in need.



For more than 11 years, Sue F. has been a consistent, friendly face for thousands of women who have come through our doors for the weekly drop-in lunch. Sue is one of our longest running volunteers and we are so grateful for her ongoing support!

How to find us

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Online at
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