



# OUT OF HARM'S WAY

## The Story of North America's First and Only Public Legal Supervised Injection Site

*hosted by Community Insite*

### **Liz Evans**

Vancouver, Canada

OSF Fellow 2015/2016

Founder & Former Executive Director, PHS  
Community Services Society

<http://communityinsite.ca>

# Context of the Downtown East Side of Vancouver



Massive low  
income  
population

Huge density  
of social  
problems

Negative  
imagery by  
media

Community members plagued by problems  
Alcoholism  
Homelessness  
Poverty  
Homelessness  
Death



Negative  
imagery by  
media

Massive low  
income  
population

Huge density  
of social  
problems

# Community Members plagued by problems

Alienation

Brutalization

Illness

Incarceration

Death

# A HUMAN STORY




# A COMPREHENSIVE DRUG STRATEGY

*Evidence based... not grounded in ideology  
Public health policy that is pragmatic and cost effective*

Death means there is no hope



A photograph of a body of blue water meeting a green grassy shore, with a paved path in the foreground. The text is overlaid on the grassy area.

**Evidence based... not grounded in ideology**  
**Public health policy that is pragmatic and cost effective**

# ONE THOUSAND CROSSES

## 1990s Population



between 1988 and 1998

**2,413** deaths by  
heroin overdose

Crisis Peaked in 1998 with

**413** preventable deaths

Taking a complicated problem,  
but keeping the message  
simple

A black and white photograph showing a person sitting on the ground in a field of white crosses. The person is hunched over with their head buried in their arms, appearing to be in a state of grief or despair. The crosses are arranged in rows, stretching into the distance. The background shows trees and a clear sky.

# A COMPREHENSIVE DRUG STRATEGY



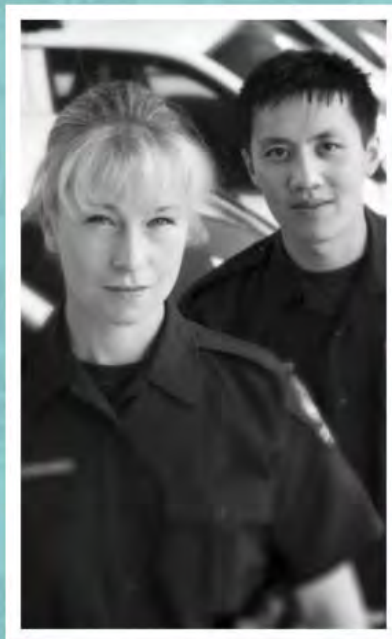
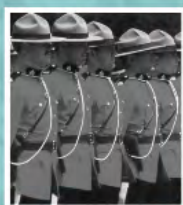
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Death means there is no hope



# PREVENTION

# ENFORCEMENT



ON



TREATMENT

# Out of HARM'S

Way

Be open to new solutions

**LOCATION AND TIME**  
Oppenheimer Park at Powell St  
and Jackson St, Vancouver BC  
8:30am to 5:00pm

**TICKETS**  
Ticket price includes breakfast, coffee,  
snacks, lunch, and an afternoon snack.  
To register for the event or to get more  
information, leave a message at 609-  
7358 or call the CBC ticket hotline  
at 904-5637.

**PARKING/SHUTTLEBUS**  
Parkade parking is available in  
Chinatown on Keefer St. at Columbus.  
This is at a cost of \$4.00 for the day.  
A free shuttle bus will run to the  
conference from the west side of  
Columbus St. at Keefer, outside of the  
new wing of the Chinese Cultural  
Centre. Shuttle service will start at  
8:30am and run until 8:25am. Return  
trips to the parkade will run from  
5:00pm to 8:30pm.

**PARTICIPATION IS IMPORTANT**  
Thank you in advance for taking part in  
this valuable discussion as a start to  
finding a workable solution. Vancouver's  
Downtown Fascioid is in the grip of a  
devastating public health emergency.  
Hundreds of people are dying. The  
information at this conference is  
intended to help us come up with a  
solution. As this will be a working day  
with a lot of information, it is critical to  
be there for the whole conference.  
Sorry, but no late admission.

**AREA MAP FOR OPPENHEIMER PARK**  
Powell St  
Dunsmuir St  
Park Building  
Keefer St  
E. Columbia St  
400 block of E. Hastings St.

**CAR PARKING AND SHUTTLEBUS**  
100 block of E. Hastings St.  
TD Bank  
East Pender St.  
Columbia St.  
Keefer St.  
Hastings Field  
Multi-story  
Car Park

**HOSTED BY:**  
DANIEL RICHLER OF  
CBC TV'S 510 LIVE  
AND  
IAN MULLIGAN OF  
THE VANCOUVER SUN

**INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM**  
LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND  
NEW YORK, USA  
FRANKFURT, GERMANY  
ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

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**TRANSFERRING, RESERVATIONS,  
AND REGISTRATION PROVIDED BY:**  
BRITISH AIRWAYS  
HOTEL VANCOUVER  
REAL AIRLINES

**CARNEGIE COMMUNITY  
ASSOCIATION  
PRESENTS**

**OUT OF  
WAYS**

**A ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL  
SYMPOSIUM ON SOLUTIONS TO  
DRUGS, CRIME AND ADDICTION  
IN THE INNER CITY.**

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1998**

#### LOCATION AND TIME

Oppenheimer Park at Powell St.  
and Jackson St., Vancouver BC  
8:30am to 5:00pm

#### TICKETS

Ticket price includes breakfast, coffee  
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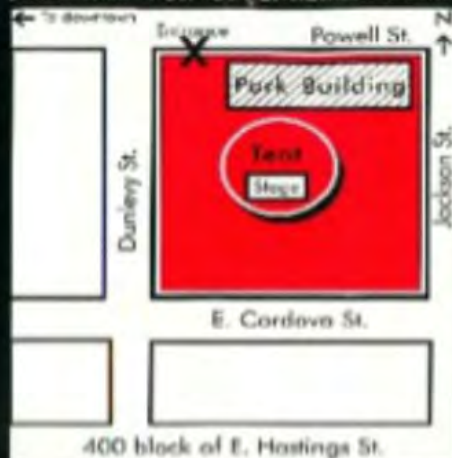
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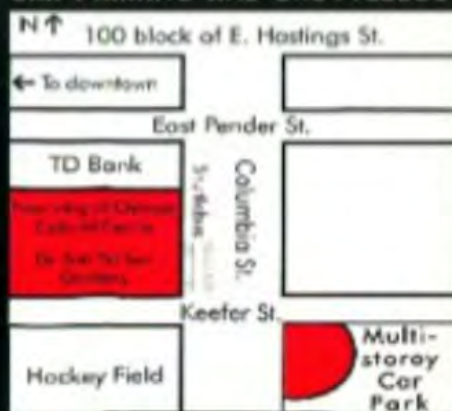
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#### AREA MAP FOR OPPENHEIMER PARK



#### CAR PARKING AND SHUTTLEBUS



Parkade parking the corner of Columbia St. and Keefer St., parking is by hour is \$4 for the day.

#### HOSTED BY:

DANIEL RICHLER OF  
CBC TV'S BIG LIFE  
AND  
IAN MULGREW OF  
THE VANCOUVER SUN

#### INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS FROM:

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1998



# A Four Pillars Approach

## **A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION**

A Four-Pillar Approach  
to Drug Problems in Vancouver

PREVENTION

TREATMENT

ENFORCEMENT

HARM REDUCTION



Donald MacPherson,  
Drug Policy Coordinator, City of Vancouver  
April 24, 2001



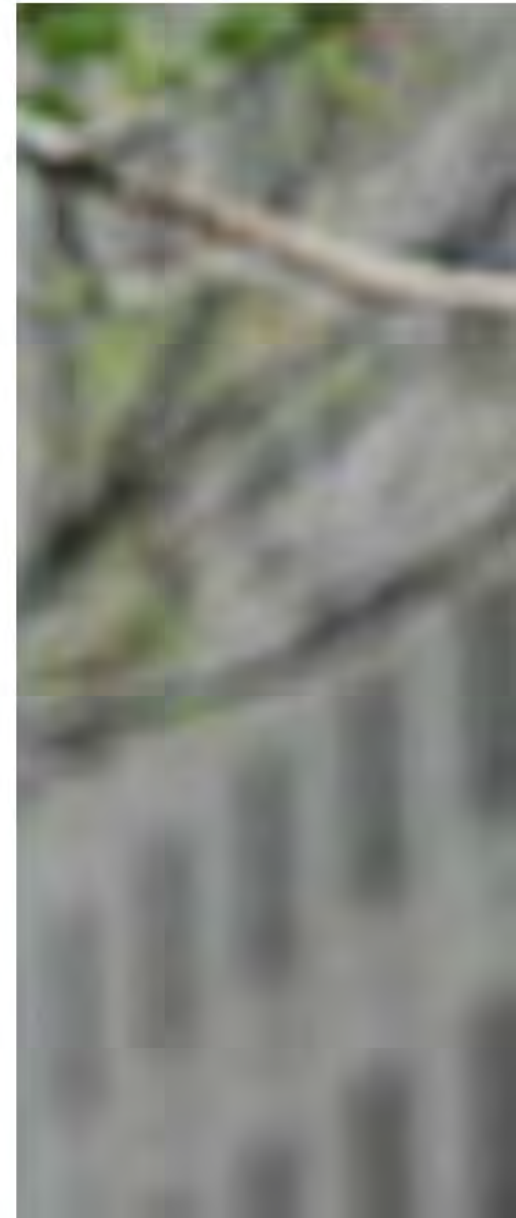
# to Drug Problems in Vancouver

**PREVENTION**

**TREATMENT**

**ENFORCEMENT**

**HARM REDUCTION**





Family Members



Canadian Filmmaker  
Ann Claire Poirier



# Amplify Other Voices



Drug Users

# Family Members



Canadian Filmmaker  
Ann Claire Poirier



# Family Members



Canadian Filmmaker  
Ann Claire Poirier



# Toronto Aids Conference



**Make use of every opportunity**

# Getting Attention By The News



# Getting Attention By The News

The image shows the exterior of a multi-story building. The upper floors have windows with dark frames. The ground floor features a large glass storefront. A hanging basket with purple and pink flowers is visible in front of the glass. The sky is overcast.

# Insite: North America's First and Only Legal, Supervised Injection Site

**'INSITE'**  
Becomes a reality

INSPIRATION  
Becomes a reality





# Support for Insite is Extensive

E HASTINGS ST 300

FIRST UNITED CHURCH  
SAVE THE SAFE INJECTION SITE  
SUNDAY WORSHIP 1030 AM

Insite has **76%** support from Vancouver residents  
- (Mustel Research) June 27th 2007

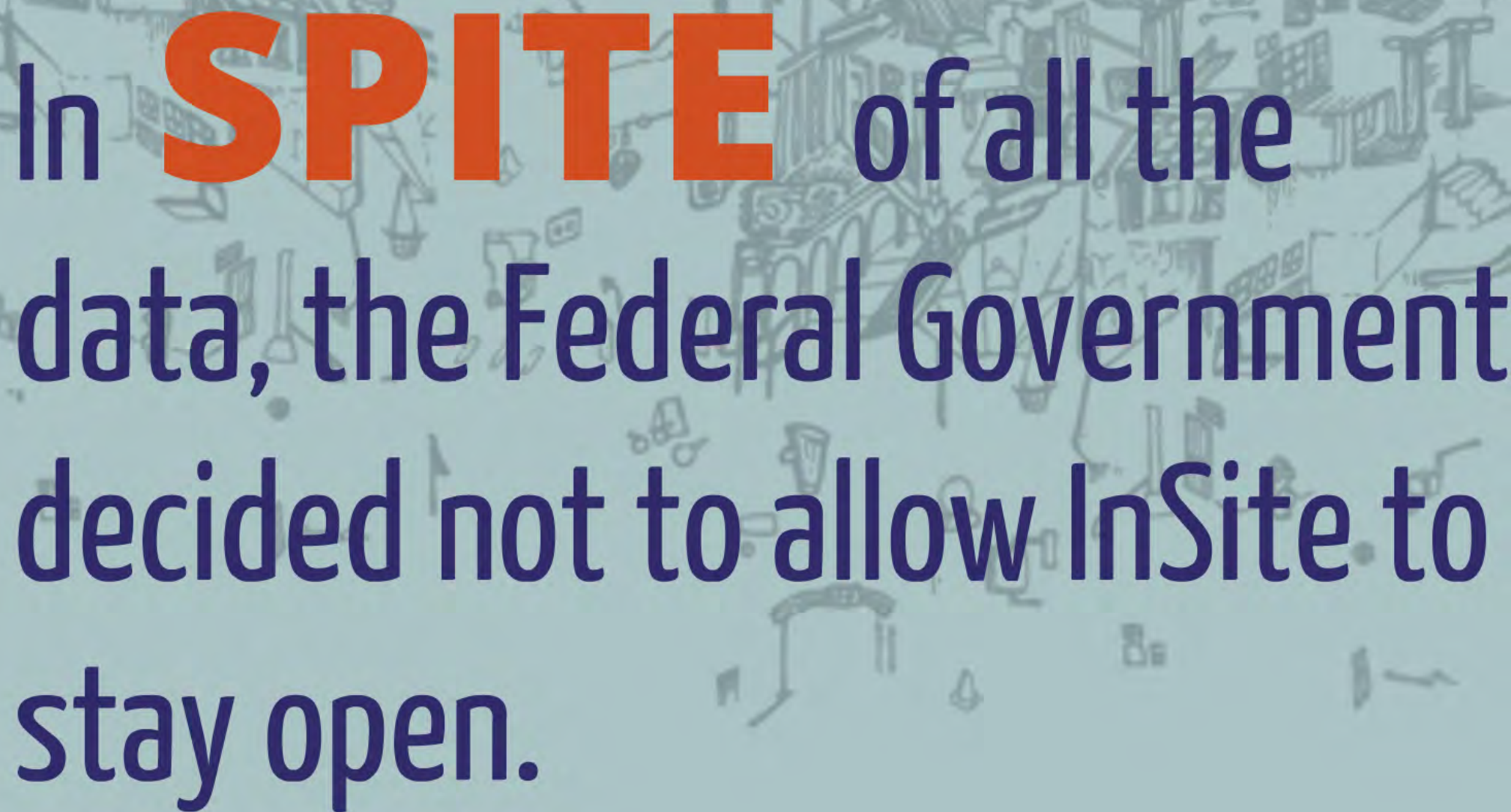
THE EVIDENCE  
Over **40** peer-reviewed studies showed that InSite...

FIRST

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- (Mustel Research) June 27th 2007

# THE EVIDENCE

Over **40** peer-reviewed studies showed that InSite...



In **SPITE** of all the data, the Federal Government decided not to allow InSite to stay open.



# Relying on the Justice System as a last resort



JANUARY  
2004

**SEPTEMBER 2003**

InSite opens with a limited exemption from Canada's Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA)

JANUARY  
2005

**SEPTEMBER 2006**

Insite's exemption is extended to the end of 2007

JANUARY  
2006

**AUGUST 2007**

The PHS files a constitutional claim in the BC Supreme Court

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The federal government appeals the decision and the case is taken up by the Supreme Court of Canada

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**MAY 2011**

9 Supreme Court Justices hear InSite's case in Ottawa

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**InSite saves lives**

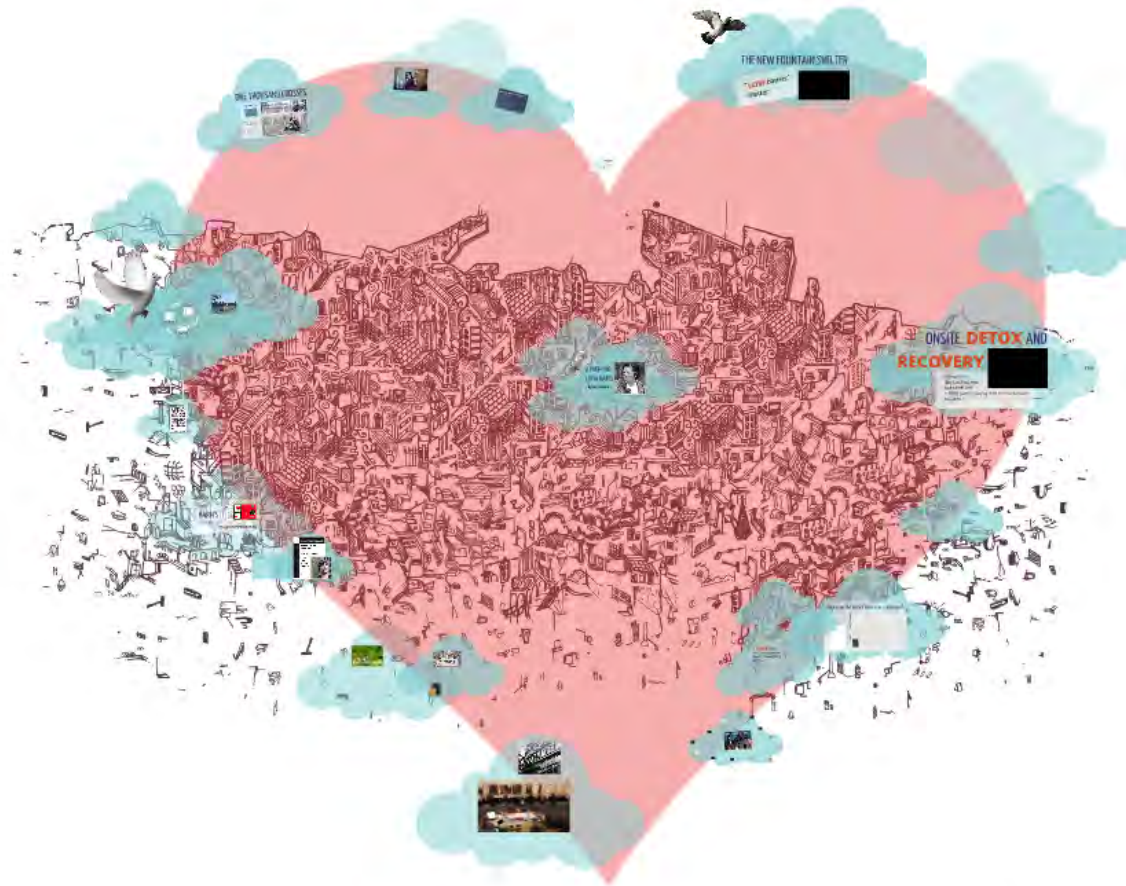
Thank you so much for supporting InSite from...  
Your faith and encouragement meant the world to us.

**WE WON!**

wore "junkies" they were Aids.

**We Won!**





"Dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is not a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed."

*Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed*