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## Community Food Security During COVID-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our northern communities, food security has become an increasingly important topic. In [northern BC 1 in 6 households struggle to put food on the table](#), and this may be exacerbated by COVID-19. Addressing food security is complex, and interventions must be considered across the [entire food system](#). All northern British Columbians should have the right to access to safe, reliable, and nutritious food, within a food system that is healthy, resilient, and sustainable.

- Interested in learning more about food security in the context of COVID-19?
  - Check out [this CBC interview with the Executive Director of Food Secure Canada](#).
- Looking for resources on community food systems planning?
  - Visit the [BC Food Security Gateway](#)
  - Check out the FNHA [Food security planning toolkit](#)
- Interested in information on food safety and COVID-19?
  - Visit the [BCCDC Food Safety](#) page
- In search of food program funding opportunities?
  - Check out these [food program funding opportunities](#)
- Want to learn more about the food system?
  - Check out these great webinar series:
    - [Farm to School BC](#) (recordings available for past sessions)
    - UBC [Future of Food webinar series](#)

## Resources

### Active Transportation and Physical Distancing

The Province of BC has compiled [resources](#) to help [local governments ensure space is available for active transportation within communities](#). The BC Cycling Coalition has also published a series of recommendations about [how to safely share spaces as the number of people walking and cycling increases](#).

### Food Security Toolkit

First Nations Health Authority has released a comprehensive toolkit designed to support the [development of community-level food systems](#) in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic, using a food systems approach.

### Overdose Support and COVID-19

Given the increase in overdose events and deaths in Northern Health, the BC CDC has released a provincial overdose alert for all health regions, warning of the increasing toxicity level of illicit drugs including both down and stimulants. [Toward the Heart](#) provides information about how to stay safe, including where to access [naloxone distribution sites](#) and [overdose prevention sites](#).

### COVID-19! How can I Protect Myself and Others?

The new [guide](#) aims to help young people ages 8-17 understand the science and social science of COVID-19 as well as help them take actions to keep themselves, their families, and communities safe.

### Integrating Health in Urban and Territorial Planning

This World Health Organization source book guides decision makers from public health, planning sectors and others towards [developing cities planned and built with a focus on human and environmental health](#).

### Health Equity, Determinants of Health and COVID-19

The National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health hosted five 1-hour conversations on health equity, determinants of health, and COVID-19. The recordings are available online. Topics include:

- [Primary health care responses, infectious diseases and equity, policy responses and pandemic planning with First Nations communities,](#)
- [Community impact and responses to COVID-19](#)
- [Indigenous perspectives on COVID-19](#)
- [Community impacts and responses related to food insecurity, disability and ethics](#)
- [Health equity, determinants of health and COVID-19](#)

### **Smoking and Vaping during COVID-19**

The Centre for Mental Health and Addictions has published resources that summarize key questions and supports related to [tobacco use and COVID-19](#), and [cannabis and COVID-19](#).

### **Review of Research and Evidence on Edible Cannabis Products, Extracts, and Topicals**

The Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse has published a [report reviewing research about edible cannabis products, cannabis extracts and cannabis topicals](#). Report findings include health and safety risks, risks of overconsumption, methods of use, unintentional ingestion and the psychoactive effects of these types of products.

### **FNHA Population Health and Wellness Agenda Executive Summary**

This [Executive Summary](#) provides an eagle-eye view of First Nations health and wellness in BC that is grounded in First Nations teachings and is guided by reconciliation and relationship building. The report discusses how to build healthy, self-determining, and vibrant BC First Nations populations, by nourishing the roots of wellness, like self-determination and connection to the land, and by building supportive systems that allow First Nations individuals and communities to lead their health and wellness journeys.

## **Online Courses, Programs and Activities**

### **Vaping Youth Researcher Job Opportunity**

QuitNow and the McCreary Foundation are [hiring youth vaping researchers](#). Youth (ages 12 – 18) must live in BC, and be available to work 20 hours between now and December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. There is a possibility of additional work if interested.

### **Creating Age-Friendly Communities – Approaches for optimizing your needs assessment and planning process**

**June 9, 2020 from 10am – 11am**

BC Healthy Communities is hosting a [webinar](#) exploring how local governments can ensure their Age-friendly needs assessments and action plans will have maximum impact. Issues including equity, engagement, and evaluation will be covered, discussing practical approaches that allow communities to move forward with Age-friendly planning and help navigate some considerations related to the arrival COVID-19.

### **Adapting BC sport, parks and recreation during COVID-19 and beyond**

**June 23, 2020 from 10:30am – 12pm**

From the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, B.C. residents have been encouraged to stay as active as possible while remaining physically distant. The sport, parks and recreation sectors have done their part by closing facilities and programs. Now, it's time to re-open safely and responsibly. But how should we be adapting? And what can we learn from others around the province at this uncertain time? This [webinar](#) will launch PlanH's new Active Communities Tool, and will create space for facilitated small group discussions.

### **Building Knowledge Capacity for Affordable Housing in BC Small Communities**

**June 23, 2020 from 10am – 12pm**

This [BC Housing webinar](#) will share the results of a series of workshops that worked to identify the affordable housing issues and capacity needs of small communities in B.C. The webinar will also share proven strategies in building affordable housing, and how to co-develop specific tools that will translate to more homes on the ground.

### **Exploring Food: COVID-19 Home Learning Lesson Plans and Resources**

A helpful list to support educators while adapting a variety of [age-specific, food-related activities and lesson plans for children learning from home](#).

### **Virtual Nutrition Education Teacher Workshops Throughout May and June, 2020**

Looking for nutrition education materials for home-based or classroom learning? [Virtual workshops](#), led by a registered dietitian, are being offered to explore a variety of grade specific, curriculum-connected programs.

### Being Active at Home Resources

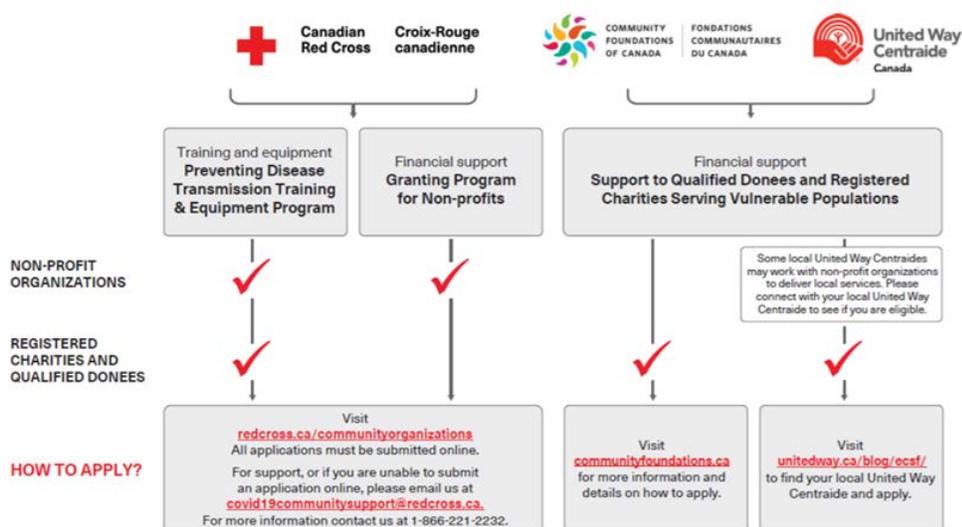
Choose to Move has developed a curated collection of evidence-based resources to [support older adults to get and stay active while at home](#).

## Funding Opportunities

### Emergency Community Support Fund

As of May 19, registered charities and non-profits are able to apply for funding to support [activities that address a pressing social inclusion or well-being need caused by COVID-19](#). The application process occurs through the [United Way Centraide Canada](#), [Canadian Red Cross](#), or [Community Foundations of Canada](#), and each organization has slightly varied criteria. For help understanding where to apply, follow this flowchart.

Thanks to funding from the Government of Canada's Emergency Community Support Fund led by Employment and Social Development Canada, the Canadian Red Cross, Community Foundations of Canada and United Way Centraide Canada are supporting community organizations across the country as they deliver services to those who are most vulnerable to the health, social and economic impacts of COVID-19.



### Y Mind Programs Partnership Opportunity June 24, 2020 at 5:30pm

YMCA BC wants to partner with BC community organizations and Indigenous-serving BC community organizations to deliver two streams of programming (Teen and Youth Mindfulness Groups and Teen and Youth Mind Medicine Groups). YMCA BC will fund the programs in 2020 and 2021. Interested organizations must submit a Letter of Intent by June 24<sup>th</sup>. For a LOI template or more information, contact [natalya.kautz@gv.ymca.ca](mailto:natalya.kautz@gv.ymca.ca).

### Northern Health Summary of Food Program Funding Opportunities Varied

Northern Health has compiled an [extensive summary of food program funding](#) opportunities relevant to northern communities. If you are currently, or plan to start, providing food support to local community members please review this list.

### PlanH Community Connectedness & Healthy Community Engagement Grants Deadline: Extended to July 15, 2020

PlanH is offering [\\$5,000 for community connectedness](#) and up to [\\$15,000 for healthy community engagement initiatives](#). The Community Connectedness Grant (formerly Social Connectedness) parameters have been revised in response to COVID-19, and now prioritize community belonging, mental health, and community resiliency.

### Vancouver Foundation – Responsive Neighbourhood Grants Deadline: To be determined based on Public Health Orders

The [Responsive NSG grant stream](#) provides grants of up to \$500 for projects led by BC residents that connect people socially or involve sharing skills or talents with each other. Projects must comply with public health orders for physical distancing. The funding stream opened April 15.

### **Breakfast Club of Canada – Special Grant Application**

**Deadline: Ongoing**

Breakfast Club of Canada is issuing special grants for community organizations to help ensure [children and families have access to food during the crisis](#).

### **President's Choice – School Nutrition Grant**

**Deadline: Ongoing**

Provides up to \$10,000 to schools and non-profit to [deliver meals, snacks and food-based education programs](#). The grant supplements existing programs, allowing for higher quality, more sustainable programming.

## **Share Your Experiences and Ideas**

- [The Rural Evidence Review and BC Rural Health Network would like to hear about the experiences of rural communities during COVID-19.](#) The findings will be used to understand community innovation and resiliency in the face of the pandemic.
- [The Public Health Association of BC would like to understand how you rate your financial status as a result of the pandemic, how you feel about lifting the state of emergency in BC, and what your perspectives are on food security and COVID-19.](#)
- [The National Physical Activity Measurement is conducting a study to understand how children and youth from across Canada with disabilities spend their time being active and engaging in daily activities. To contribute, contact ri.sharma@mail.utoronto.ca.](#)

## **Northern Health Stories**

### **Choosing Wisely – What to do (for fun and wellness!) during COVID-19**

There are still many fun and fulfilling things we can do while doing our part to [flatten the curve](#) and help [conquer COVID-19!](#) In fact, we're being encouraged to be [creative about ways we can stay active](#), connected to each other (but apart), and connected to nature. We just need to ensure the activity we're considering isn't going to put our health (or the health of others) at risk. ...[continue reading](#).

### **Planting seeds for healthy eating: Easy ways to grow food with kids**

Kids learn best when they can engage their senses: when they can see, touch, smell, hear, or maybe (eventually) taste food. There's rich learning in hands-on food activities, such as caring for a seedling or foraging for wild finds (like [fiddleheads](#) or local berries). These activities are fun, and they benefit kids in many ways. ...[continue reading](#).

### **Mind full or mindful: Practising mindfulness during COVID-19**

As health care professionals and supporting personnel, our work responsibilities, conversations with co-workers, and questions from family and friends have us saturated in COVID-related discussions. Add that to the stressors we may be experiencing in our personal lives, and it's easy to get caught in a cycle of stressful emotions, worries about the future, and concerns that fill our mind and pull us away from the present. This is where practising mindfulness can help. ...[continue reading](#).

See the latest stories at [stories.northernhealth.ca](#).

## **E-Brief Information**

The Healthier Northern Communities [E-Brief](#) is produced by [Northern Health's regional Population and Preventive Public Health program](#).

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