

Who We Are

The British Columbia Schizophrenia Society is a community-based organization founded in 1982. BCSS provides vital frontline support and education for families within BC impacted by schizophrenia and other severe and persistent mental illnesses. BCSS offers direct services to family members, including children and youth, and serves rural, northern, and Indigenous communities throughout BC.

- Chronic and persistent mental illnesses significantly impact individuals, families, and communities. Based on new evidence, BCSS has adopted a figure that schizophrenia affects 1.8% and psychotic disorders (more broadly) affect 3% of BC's population. Both can severely disadvantage people living with these illnesses and their families.
- Effective treatments enable people to lead productive lives; however, when effective treatment and care are not available, negative outcomes include unrelieved suffering, substance use, longer stays in hospital, homelessness, family breakdowns and premature death. In extreme cases, untreated mental illness can result in violence, which only increases the associated stigma.
- The best way to reduce stigma and help ensure that people living with serious mental illnesses along with their families can thrive is to ensure effective treatment and support are available. There continues to be a great need for information, resources, and support among families living with severe mental illnesses in our province. BCSS is committed to mobilizing support for impacted families and developing a diverse funding base, but the stigma associated with schizophrenia and other serious mental illnesses discourages many private and corporate donors from giving to this important cause.

What Does BCSS Do In Communities

BCSS has a long-standing partnership with the provincial government. BCSS has received funding from the province that has allowed BCSS to continue providing critical programs, services, and resources to families, youth, and Indigenous communities throughout BC. These programs and services are making a meaningful impact on BC families.

- BCSS supported 1,200 new families in 2024-2025 (5,512 in total). Across the province, there were nearly 13,000 participants in one-on-one support, Family Support Groups, Strengthening Families Together programs, and education presentations.
- Redeveloping and piloting a culturally-centred and inclusive Strengthening Families Together – Indigenous program in partnership with the First Nations Health Authority and Indigenous communities.
- Piloting a Tweens in Control program and facilitating Kids, Tweens & Teens in Control programs across the province.
- Launching new websites for BCSS and BCSS Youth
- Increasing mental health literacy through Education Presentations, digital content, and the successful *Look Again: Mental Illness Re-Examined* podcast

BCSS's Impact

2024-2025 By The Numbers

