



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

June 29, 2006

FRASER-BURRARD COMMUNITY JUSTICE PARTNERS WITH MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL IN PILOT PROJECT

Coquitlam, BC – Fraser-Burrard Community Justice Society is thrilled to announce an agreement has been reached with the Ministry of the Attorney General to implement a vital pilot project. Soon the Crown Counsel Offices in Port Coquitlam and New Westminster will begin diverting appropriate young people to Fraser-Burrard's extrajudicial Community Youth Justice Program. The program is modelled on family conferencing which is based on restorative justice principles. The process provides the youth and the people harmed an opportunity to come together with trained volunteers for a confidential conference to determine a means to repair the harm in ways that are meaningful to all parties. The awarding of this pilot project marks a significant breakthrough for Fraser-Burrard. This exciting new development is the result of many people demonstrating and voicing the need to increase alternatives to the court system for young people.

The pilot project will be similar to one initiated in Nanaimo earlier this year. Details to meet Nanaimo police requirements have been ironed out and the project is working to everyone's satisfaction. Fraser-Burrard Chairman Dave Allen stated, "I am very happy and optimistic with this opportunity". He went on to say, "We will be making revisions to our current procedures and working together with our police partners to ensure a smooth transition into this additional service". In the situation where a case does not proceed to conference, Crown Counsel will pursue the case through the courts. Hazel Bissky, Coordinator of Outreach and Development stated, "Fraser-Burrard is looking forward to assisting young people and their families". All systems are now in place and referrals are expected to begin in July.

The Fraser-Burrard Community Justice Society was started in 2000 by a group of local citizens determined and committed to restorative justice extrajudicial sanctions to youth involved with the police. The Community Youth Justice Program was put into action and receives referrals from TriCities, Anmore, Belcarra and New Westminster. After six years community partners and families alike know they can rely on Fraser-Burrard for services that address the needs of today with vision for the youth of tomorrow.

30

Contact:

Dianne Archer, Chair Advocacy Committee

Board of Directors

Fraser-Burrard Community Justice Society

604.465.3358 | 604.313.5988

www.fraserburrard.org