

DAN'S LEGACY ANNUAL REPORT

2024 – 2025

Empowering youth. Impacting lives.

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We respectfully and gratefully acknowledge that our work takes place on the
unceded and traditional territory of the Coast Salish peoples.



At Dan's Legacy, 2024 was a transformative year achieving incredible growth, creating lasting impact, and deepening our unwavering commitment to sustainability.

We are committed to sustaining our programs for at-risk youth and driving lasting positive change. In this report, we reflect on our journey, celebrate the progress we've made, and look ahead to the goals we've set for 2025.

VISION

At risk youth, through insight and empowerment, have the opportunity to achieve their full potential and contribute to their community.

MISSION

To provide youth who have experienced trauma, with effective counselling, education, vocational and other support programming.



Kelso Kennedy

President

2024–2025



Following on a year of growth for Dan's Legacy, in 2024 we focused primarily on stabilizing our programs and procedures. Rapid expansion in 2023, due to a significant investment in funding from our supporters, meant that we were able to meet the need quickly, and this flexibility is one of our key differentiating factors. Building resilience in our organization mirrored the work we do with our youth clients, and we achieved a number of major milestones this year: finalizing our ShareVision client database, as well as completing the program evaluation study conducted by the research team at UBC's Stigma and Resilience Among Vulnerable Youth Centre (SARAVYC), both of which clearly demonstrate the impact of our work; updating and revising Board policies to guide us firmly in our mission; expanding our partnerships with more community organizations to be able to link our youth clients to their support programs across Metro Vancouver; and growing our customer base at Dan's Diner as well as our catering business to diversify the ways in which we generate funding for our programs. Looking ahead to fiscal 2025–2026, we plan to build out the framework for our proposed virtual Centre of Excellence, with the aim of sharing knowledge with various stakeholder groups across BC. We know that mental health issues among youth continue to be widespread, and our aim is to ensure we are there for the youth when they first reach out and ask for help. There is still work to be done in terms of addressing the stigma surrounding mental health issues, as well as investigating ways in which we can connect with at-risk youth in remote communities across the province where support services are desperately needed. With the continued support of our donors, volunteers, and ambassadors for the cause, as well as with the outstanding work of our staff, we look back with gratitude, but also forward, with renewed confidence and dedication to our mission.

Dan's Legacy provides trauma-informed and culturally sensitive counselling and life-skills intervention programs to youth at risk in Metro Vancouver. We embed our therapists in community partner locations, meeting the youth where they are. We also strive to maintain a minimal wait list and all our programs and services are offered free of charge. In 2024, we worked with 800 youth, helping them to stabilize their mental health and begin working towards their educational, employment and recovery goals.



Core Counselling Program

Dan's Legacy experienced meaningful growth this past year through the expansion and strengthening of our programs, alongside the standardization of operations, while maintaining our commitment to addressing our clients' psychosocial needs through a holistic and trauma-informed approach. The launch of the self-referral portal on our website further reduced barriers to care, making it easier for youth to access the support they need. Accessibility remains a core priority, and the increase in clients served this year reflects the success and impact of our approach.



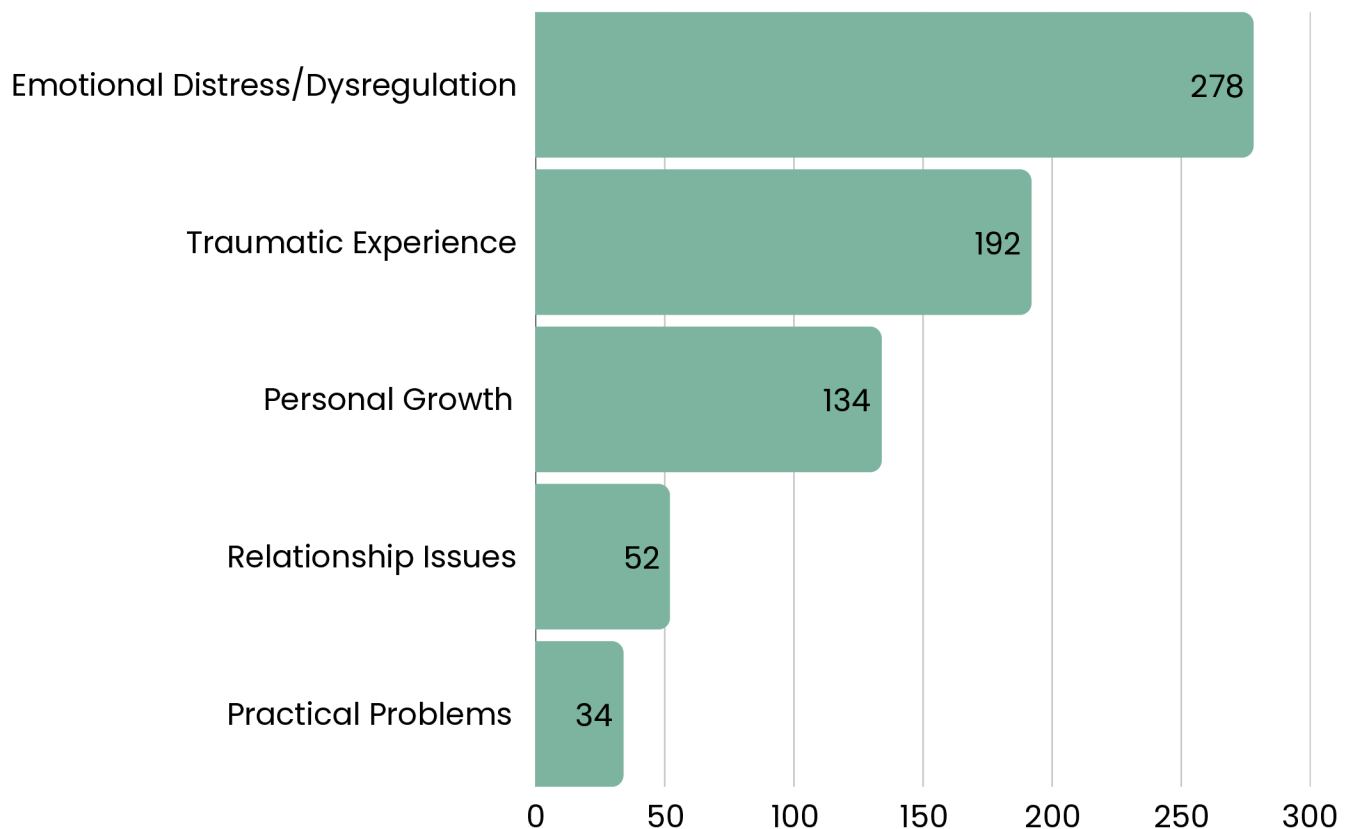
We support youth with complex needs, helping them navigate relational conflicts, build self-awareness, and foster personal growth. Our goal is harm prevention, guiding marginalized young people away from homelessness, addiction, overdose, and suicide, and towards a brighter future.

Counselling Outcomes



For the 2024-2025 fiscal year, 485 clients graduated from Dan's Legacy's counselling program after completing an initial assessment with a clinical counsellor. Of these clients, 62% demonstrated improvement, with the clinical model averaging 18 sessions per client to achieve therapeutic goals related to self-regulation and the processing of trauma and grief. On average, clients showed a two point decrease on the severity scale by the end of therapy, while clinician assessed functionality increased by one point.

Reasons for Seeking Counselling

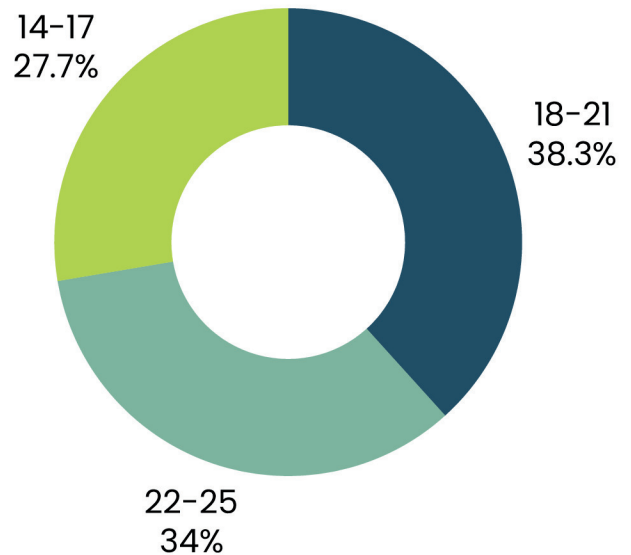


Our Impact

2024-2025

Dan's Legacy Foundation continues to be a lifeline for at-risk youth across the Lower Mainland, breaking down barriers and tackling mental health and socioeconomic challenges through trauma-informed, accessible programs focused on harm prevention and lasting change. With continued growth, we are poised to reach more young people and create an even deeper, long-term impact in the years ahead.

Age Range of Applicants



This year we registered 966 new clients between April 2024 and March 2025, averaging 80.5 new registrations per month. Clients referred themselves through our website or were referred through over 60 different organizations in the Lower Mainland that connect youth to services. In response to growing demand, projections estimate approximately 1,000 new referrals annually. This growth will require expanded therapist recruitment and strengthened partnerships to meet the increasing mental health needs of youth across British Columbia. At this average rate, we project receiving approximately 1,000 new youth referrals over the course of the next 12 months.



Wrap-Around Support Programs

To support the best possible outcomes in therapy, we begin by addressing the most urgent needs of each client through our stabilization process. Our Social Work and Outreach teams work closely with youth to provide practical and individualized support, whether it's helping them secure safe housing, apply for income assistance, obtain ID, open a bank account, provide them with a phone and phone plan to contact us, or ensure food security.

This year, we carefully reviewed our wrap-around supports and enhanced them in several key areas:

Grocery Hamper Program

Food insecurity remains a serious concern for our clients, and our Grocery Hamper Program is designed to directly address this need. Stocked with fresh produce, meat, dry goods, and other essentials collected through our Food Recovery Program, the hampers offer youth a dignified, personal “shopping” experience at our new New Westminster facility every Monday.

This past year, we delivered 1,469 hampers—valued between \$100,000 and \$150,000—and we anticipate distributing between 1,500 and 1,600 in the coming year.



Wrap-Around Support Programs

Fitness Program

Many of our youth clients have experienced multiple foster care placements, which often prevented them from participating in school or community sports and recreation. To help close this gap, our Fitness Program provided 720 sessions this year at community centres in Burnaby and New Westminster. As part of our holistic care model, these one-on-one sessions, led by a certified fitness instructor, support youth in building healthy habits, staying active, and engaging socially in a safe, supportive space. We project 800 sessions next year, with a program value of \$15,000 to \$20,000 in comparable private training and facility access.



Indigenous Cultural Workshops

Many of our Indigenous youth clients are disconnected from community and culture, and our Indigenous Cultural Workshops Program aims to close that gap. Our programming connects them to Elders and Knowledge Keepers, and these experiences help to build resiliency in the youth. This year we partnered with Collingwood Neighbourhood House in Vancouver with their Welcome Pole carving project. Sixty-three youth worked alongside Mike Billy, a 7th-generation Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish) carver. They learned carving techniques as well as the history and cultural significance of the Welcome Pole.



Wrap-Around Support Programs

Dan's Diner Social Enterprise & Catering Business

In November 2023 we launched our social enterprise Dan's Diner, and welcomed members of the community to our grand opening. Elder William Nelson provided the blessing, and MP Peter Julian, MLA Jennifer Whiteside (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions), and City of New Westminster Mayor Patrick Johnstone spoke about the impact that both Dan's Legacy and our social enterprise have on the community.

Youth in the Dan's Diner program are provided with a paid work experience, where they learn how to operate a small food service business. They also assist with our catering contracts, gaining more real world event-based experience. In our first year, Dan's Diner grossed approximately \$120,000 in sales, which we reinvested back into the program.

Cook Training Program

Our Cook Training Program, running since 2021, teaches basic cooking skills to youth facing barriers to education or employment. Using recovered food, youth prepare soups and stews in a commercial kitchen, which are sold through our Dan's Diner social enterprise. Participants earn their FoodSafe certification and receive support finding employment in the hospitality industry, or registering for higher levels of training to obtain Red Seal certification.



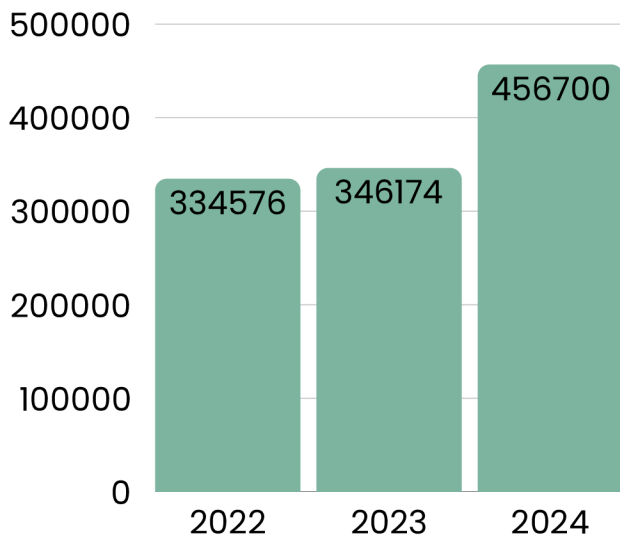
Giving Back: Centering Sustainability, Impact, and Community

Dan's Legacy currently supports 11 food banks and soup kitchens in our community with surplus food donations to address food insecurity. A portion of these donations are diverted to our Grocery Hamper and Cook Training programs, which serve as pillars in our mission to combat hunger while providing meaningful skills training.

Our Impact

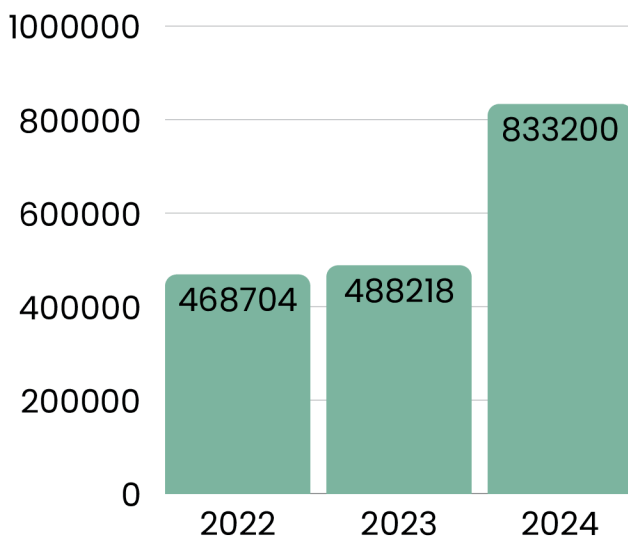
Statistics

Meals Provided

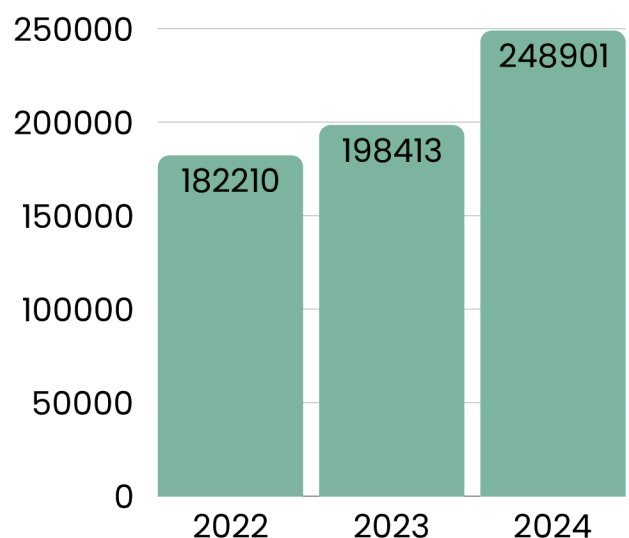


Participants in our Cook Training program prepare takeaway meals that are sold to the community through our Dan's Diner social enterprise at greatly reduced prices. This initiative not only provides affordable meals to local residents but also offers hands-on training for participants, empowering them with valuable culinary skills. Our program has a measurable environmental impact by diverting food waste from landfills, while simultaneously offering a sustainable solution to food insecurity. Each year, the combined efforts of our partnerships and community focused programs help to mitigate hunger and promote sustainability.

Co2 Reduced (kg)



Food Rescued (kg)

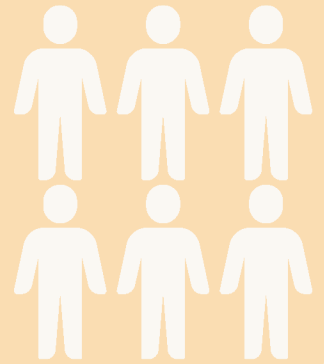


Additional Services for Youth

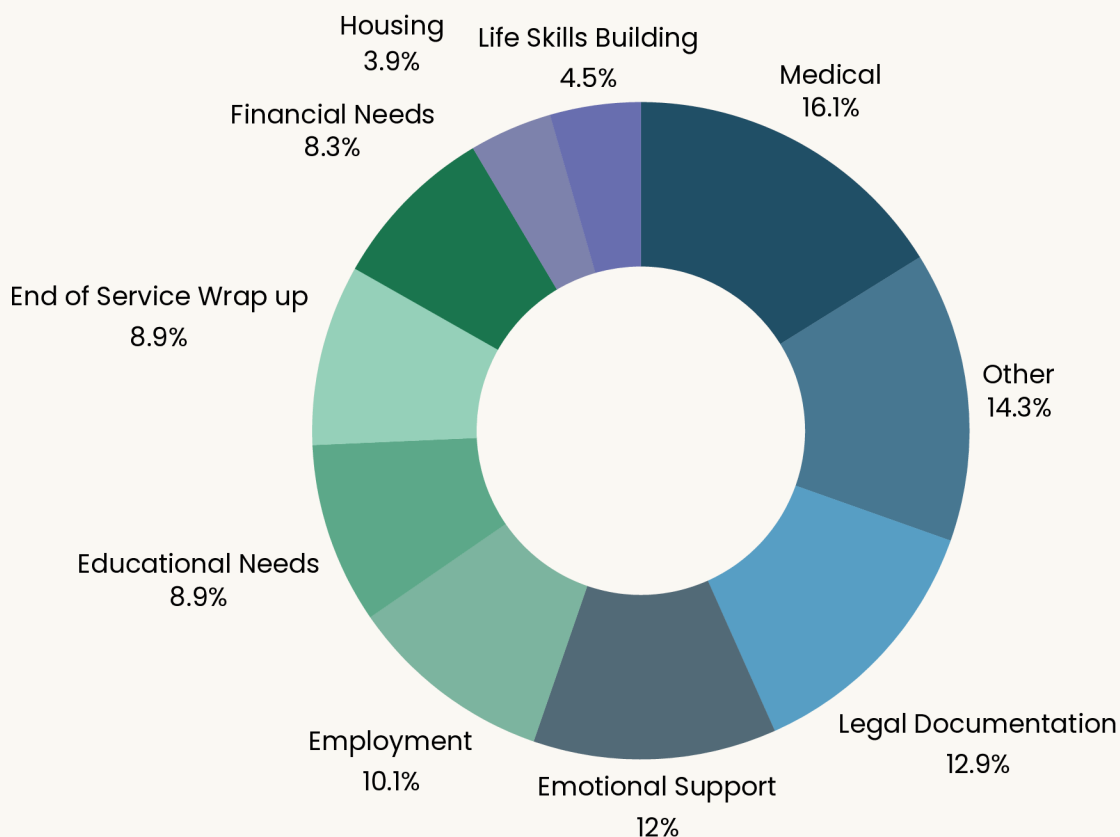
End of Service Wrap Up

- Successfully stabilized 72% of discharged outreach clients, connecting them with essential supports and achieving care goals.
- Addressed critical medical needs by helping clients access psychiatry, primary care, nurse practitioners, and prescription refills.
- Delivered advocacy and emotional support, guiding clients through complex systems and building trust through authentic, emotionally intelligent engagement.
- Provided consistent, region-wide service coverage from Vancouver to Langley, ensuring access for youth across the Lower Mainland.

Number of Outreach Staff at Dan's Legacy



Recorded Client Objectives in Outreach



Additional Services for Youth

Social Work

- Dan's Legacy attended the C.H.A.R.T. table in Surrey and the New Westminster situational table to coordinate referrals for at-risk youth requiring urgent support.
- Supported youth in navigating government financial assistance programs such as Income Assistance (IA), Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers, and Person with Disabilities.
- Conducted psychosocial assessments and identified service gaps, advocating for additional resources tailored to each youth's needs.
- Assisted clients in securing housing, employment, and education through a comprehensive, client-centered approach.
- Advocated for youth facing systemic barriers, including challenges with housing, education, and child welfare systems, while fostering empowerment and autonomy.



Key Facts

2024-2025

12 Number of therapists

2 Number of therapy team managers/clinical supervisors

835 Number of youth clients in 2024

25 Client load per therapist

250 Approximate outreach hours per month

9 Average hospital on-call hours per month

20% Indigenous youth clients

30% LGBTQ2S+ youth clients

25 Number of client self-harm or psychosis situations per month requiring hospitalization

1,334 Number of food hampers provided in 2024

Client Story

“Joy”

Named Changed
for Privacy

When Joy (22F) first approached Dan’s Legacy in June of last year, she was overwhelmed by anxiety and frequent panic attacks. Seeking counselling was a significant step for Joy, as it was her first experience with therapy. She had heard about the program through a friend but had no idea it would become a turning point in her life.

Joy carried the weight of unresolved trauma from her childhood. Growing up as the second eldest in a large family with immigrant parents was challenging. Although she had a strong bond with her mother and younger siblings, the home environment was difficult. A tense family dynamic left her feeling unseen and suffocating. At the time, Joy was burdened by resentment and anger. A major fight led her to move out of her family home, and she was also in an abusive relationship, further deepening her emotional struggles. To cope, Joy turned to cannabis to numb her feelings, but this only worsened her anxiety.

A pivotal moment in Joy’s journey was learning how to overcome her panic attacks. She had once been so terrified that she had to go to the hospital, fearing for her life. She had experienced a frightening episode with her roommate, feeling nauseous, with tight pain in her stomach and her heart racing. It was a traumatizing experience that left her shaken.

Joy’s first sessions at Dan’s Legacy were transformative. “Every session felt like a relief,” Joy recalls. Through breathing exercises, art therapy, and compassionate listening, Dan’s Legacy helped Joy gain clarity and rebuild her sense of self-worth.

Joy’s willingness to face her challenges allowed her to make compelling strides. She began to feel more comfortable discussing her struggles. Today, she balances a full-time job, school, and personal growth—a testament to her resilience. Gradually, she noticed improvements in her daily life: better sleep, increased confidence, and even a promotion to a managerial role at work.

After completing 16 sessions at Dan’s Legacy, she reflects on her journey with pride. Her newfound independence, alongside her academic pursuits at university, is laying the foundation for her future goals. Inspired by her own experience at Dan’s Legacy, Joy spoke about the possibility of becoming a counsellor, with a special focus on supporting minority communities facing similar struggles.

List of Community Partners

Vancouver

Aunt Leah's – Vancouver
Collingwood Neighbourhood House
Broadway Youth Resource Centre
Covenant House

Burnaby

Burnaby Neighbourhood House

New Westminster

Aunt Leah's – New Westminster
The Welcome and Wellness Centre

Langley

LFVAS (Lower Fraser Valley
Aboriginal Society)

Surrey

Pacific Community Resources Society
(PCRS) – Youth Hub
SAFE Centre (Surrey Anti-Gang Family
Empowerment)
Black Arts Centre
Solid State
North Surrey Learning Centre
Guildford Learning Centre (GLC)

White Rock

Vine Youth Clinic (part of Alexandra House)

Whistler

Zero Ceiling

List of Major Donors

BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions	\$1,730,000
AI Roadburg Foundation	\$300,000
Public Safety Canada Building Safer Communities Fund (New Westminster)	\$201,600
Public Safety Canada Building Safer Communities Fund (Surrey)	\$105,000
BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction	\$36,947
The Co-operators	\$20,000
Telus Friendly Future Foundation	\$20,000
BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General – Civil Forfeiture	\$15,000
Marilyn Snook	\$11,000

Year in Review 2024



We had so much to celebrate in 2024, including launching our client database system, partnering with researchers at UBC who evaluated our programs, growing our Dan's Diner social enterprise, and meeting the needs of over 800 at-risk youth in the community.

Every step we take is in honour of Dan, a vibrant young man who dreamed of becoming a chef and opening his own Dan's Diner. While he is no longer with us, his energy and vision live on in the hundreds of youth we support every year.

To all of our donors, supporters, staff, volunteers, and everyone who believes in what we do—thank you. You are the reason Dan's Legacy continues to help at-risk youth stabilize their mental health and build a future for themselves.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024 - 2025

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At Dan's Legacy, we are committed to bringing positive change in our community. As we continue on our shared journey, we look forward to working alongside our partners, donors, volunteers and our clients, together making an even greater impact in 2025.

How Can We Make a Difference Together? Let's Connect.
info@danslegacy.com

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