

News & Stories

April 2026 Edition

ST. PATRICK'S DAY & BUG ZOO ADVENTURES

Bugs and hot sauce? Maybe not everyone's idea of fun and games—but it definitely was for our Sanctuary youth! We couldn't let St. Patrick's Day go by without doing something a little out of the ordinary.

Inspired by the Hot Ones show, our amazing volunteer Andrew set up a challenge where youth worked their way through increasingly spicy hot sauces on chicken bites. There were plenty of red faces, sweating, and laughs (and yes, a bit of pain!), but one brave youth, Liam, came out on top as the winner.



Our second adventure was a trip to the Bug Zoo just down the road. Youth got hands-on with millipedes, leaf insects, and even whatever that wild-looking bug is sitting on one brave youth's face!



These special events and outings also remind us how important it is to create space for joy. In the middle of life's challenges, laughter, curiosity, and new experiences can be powerful tools for healing and growth—and we're grateful to provide those moments whenever we can.



BOXING CLUB

Sanctuary was excited to connect with Ryan Usage, an amateur boxer who wanted to share his skills with our youth—and it didn't take long for that idea to turn into something great. We now have a Boxing Club every Thursday from 5:30-7:00 PM, and it's quickly become a favourite. Ryan brings a calm, easygoing presence—but don't let that fool you. He puts the youth through solid drills while teaching real boxing skills. It's been incredible to watch connections grow as youth show up, push themselves, and cheer each other on.

What stands out most is how quickly the youth have taken ownership of the space. They arrive ready, focused, and eager to improve—not just physically, but mentally as well.

Boxing provides an outlet for stress while building strength and confidence, helping youth feel more grounded and in control. Beyond the gloves and drills, relationships are forming. Trust is being built, mentorship is happening naturally, and a strong sense of community is developing—one Thursday night at a time.

UPCOMING FUNDRAISER EVENT



Step into the mystery at our Mafia Murder Mystery Dessert Night Fundraiser:

Friday, May 22

7:00 PM

Lambrick Park Church

As a member of the "family," you're invited into an evening of intrigue, desserts galore, a silent auction, and meaningful stories from the lives of youth at Sanctuary.

Come dressed in your best 1930s attire (optional but fun!) and put your detective skills to the test—there may be a murder (or two) to solve.

Get your tickets on Eventbrite—scan the QR code here.

This is more than just a fun night—it's an opportunity to support and uplift the youth we serve every day.



THINK A BOWL OF SOUP CAN CHANGE A LIFE?

We do, and we're grateful to be moving ahead with a food-based social enterprise here in Victoria. Keep your eyes open for news from Darin next month about how we're combating marginalization and creating belonging and employment for youth in our city through this initiative.



THANK YOU VICTORIA FOUNDATION!

Sanctuary is grateful to have received two grants through the Vital Youth School Fund from the Victoria Foundation. With the increase in youth attendance, our program costs have also grown, and these funds will help us meet those needs. The grants will go directly toward our bus ticket program and providing daily warm meals for the youth who come through our doors.

Thank You!



Victoria Foundation



MEET JOSHUA

Hello, everyone! My name is Joshua, and I have been a practicum student at the centre for the past three months. To tell you a little bit about myself, I am studying in the Child and Youth Care program at the University of Victoria, and I love spending time with close friends, having conversations about our faith, and serving God together.

My experience at the centre has been a great learning opportunity, and I'm really grateful for it. I've loved simply being present—hanging out with the youth, staff, and volunteers. While games of pool were always a highlight, my favourite moments have been the small, everyday laughs that helped build deeper relationships with the youth.

We're also excited to share that Josh has been hired on as summer staff—he's already been a great addition to the team, and we're so glad he'll be continuing with us!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



The Centre is looking for individuals who want to make a difference by volunteering on Sundays and possibly other days as well.

If you are interested in getting involved and giving back, please contact: tracy@sanctuaryyouth.org

Volunteering at Sanctuary is more than just giving time. It is about becoming part of a community that is committed to supporting youth in practical and meaningful ways.

For those who step in to serve, it often becomes a place of growth, connection, and purpose. Whether helping with meals, activities, or simply being present, every role makes a difference.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SANCTUARY

Everything that happens at Sanctuary—from fun celebrations and meaningful training to opportunities like Logan's work experience, is made possible because of the generosity and support of our community.

Your encouragement, prayers, volunteering, and financial support allow us to continue creating a safe place where youth can belong, grow, and find hope.

Thank you for being part of the Sanctuary story.



sanctuary youth centre

IMAGINING A FUTURE WHERE ALL YOUTH LEAD HEALTHY AND FULFILLING LIVES