

Stroll raises funds to support grandparents raising grandchildren

Event aimed at helping families across the province

[Sandra Thomas](#) / Vancouver Courier

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Grandparents raising grandchildren are celebrated with a fundraising walk Sept. 13.

In the province of B.C. alone there are more than 11,000 children being raised full time by their grandparents (or other relatives).

Their stories are varied, but many of the threads are the same: loss, isolation, grief, hardship, love and determination.

According to Parent Support Services Society of B.C., grandparents raising grandchildren face complicated bureaucracies — legal, financial and government-based — that are difficult and often expensive to navigate. Poverty is a serious risk — most grandparents receive little to no financial support and often spend what savings they might have on fighting for and supporting their grandkids. They not only lose friends, but seniors' programming and housing rarely meet the needs of these special families.

The grandchildren are their priority and these children need and deserve, love, stability and all the support possible to ensure they thrive.

On Grandparents Day, Sunday, Sept. 13, the society will recognize these caregivers with a fundraising walk. The society's first annual Grandparents Day Stroll promises to be a fun, lively, family event organized to celebrate all grandparents and raise funds to support the work the society does with grandparent-led families and its parenting programs across B.C.

Parent Support Services Society of B.C., founded in 1974, is a non-profit, volunteer-based society and registered charity dedicated to protecting the safety and well-being of children and promoting healthy families through peer-based supports, education, advocacy and research in Vancouver and across the province.

The society's Parent and Grandparent Support Circle programs provide free facilitated weekly educational support groups for parents, grandparents and other family caregivers.

In circles around the province, held in multiple languages, participants help others become successful parents.

The society also runs the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Line, the only one in Canada to provide support, advocacy and resource information to grandparents and other relatives raising a family member's child.

Proceeds from the stroll will help more families gain access to parenting support by expanding the number of vital Parent and Grandparent Support Circles across the province and provide free child-minding so all can participate. As well, funds will support programs that give opportunities for kids raised by their grandparents to meet others kids in similar families, enable the society to increase the number of valuable parenting workshops it provides, support the development of resources and provide a break for grandparents raising grandkids.

The Grandparents Day Stroll begins at 10 a.m. at River Market New Westminster, 810 Dr., on the waterfront boardwalk where participants can enjoy live music and entertainment. The site is easily accessible by car, bicycle and transit — it's one block south of New West SkyTrain Station.

For more information visit [parentsupportbc.ca \(http://www.parentsupportbc.ca\)](http://www.parentsupportbc.ca) or call 604-669-1616, toll free at 1-877-345-9777 or email office@parentsupportbc.ca.

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