

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

BLG team Sleeps Out to raise awareness for homeless youth

When her three-year-old daughter asked BLG Partner Tamara Wong why people are sleeping on the streets of Vancouver, she felt compelled to respond through more than words.

She did so by taking action and joining Covenant House Vancouver (CHV)'s annual Executive Sleep Out — a fundraiser aimed at raising awareness and donations for Vancouver's homeless youth.

On November 19, 2020, Tamara (a CHV board member), along with a BLG team made up of BLG partner Sean Muggah (a long time CHV board member and advocate), and BLG associate Scott Gorski spent one night Sleeping Out. They wanted to raise awareness and funding so that Vancouver's youth may get a second chance at life.

(Pictured: Tamara's daughter offers food to a homeless individual at their makeshift shelter in Vancouver.)

Covenant House's Continuum of Care

"Covenant House provides continuous care services (to these youth) that extend far beyond a bed to sleep in," said Sean.

"It also encompasses mental and physical health supports, recreational opportunities and scholarship and other education assistance, to name but a few."

CHV "serves youth during a very vulnerable time in their development as they transition from adolescence to adulthood, and who often have limited support available to them," he concluded.

"Covenant House provides continuous care services (to these youth) that extend far beyond a bed to sleep in" - Sean Muggah

Sean knows all about the challenges facing these youth. He has been involved with CHV, as a board member, and later as chairman of the board, for more than 10 years.

(Pictured: Tamara slept in her front yard in order to raise funds for Covenant House)

BLG team's Sleep Out

"I am painfully aware that I cannot satisfactorily answer my daughter's question without being able to say that I help," *Tamara wrote to her contacts in an effort to raise donations.*

"I will be sleeping out in solidarity with those youth who face physical, sexual and/or the emotional abuse, which the majority of street youth experience," Tamara wrote.

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"As a mother, the safety and well being of young people in our communities is something that I connect with personally. As a board member, I have made it a priority to highlight the critical services that CHV provides to youth facing abuse, homelessness, addiction, and identity issues."

The Covenant House Sleep Out Movement is happening across Canada and the United States.

BLG's Vancouver team has so far raised more than \$20,000 to help provide critical funds and awareness for the Residential Crisis Programs at Covenant House Vancouver.

(Pictured: Scott slept on his balcony in order to raise awareness about homeless youth)