



Karis Support Society Information Package

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Who Are We?

Mission Statement

Recognizing potential, supporting recovery, and restoring lives.

Our Mission

Karis Support Society contributes to genuine social transformation in the Okanagan Valley by providing *a safe home, support through recovery, and life skills development* for women struggling with life altering addictions and co-occurring disorders. Karis exists within the continuum of charitable organizations that provide social services for vulnerable individuals living in our community. Karis is committed to providing a safe and trustworthy environment where strength can develop.

Purpose

Karis participants are individuals whose negative experiences have led to substance misuse or mental health challenges, which have negatively impacted their lives; they are now actively working on personal recovery.

Karis provides recovery-focused programming, counseling and support to vulnerable, at-risk expectant women, women with babies or toddlers, women working towards reunification with their children and single women with no dependents, living in poverty, homelessness or at-risk of homelessness.

Our Story

In December 2006, a group of friends and family identified two significant gaps in Kelowna's continuum of social services; affordable housing for individuals living in or near poverty and program-based support for women seeking recovery from addictions. Although temporary shelters were available, there was no long-term, sustainable programming designed to empower women to transition from a life of addiction to a life in recovery.

Karis Support Society was formed from a heartfelt desire to respond to these significant needs. In 2008, Karis opened **BERNARD HOUSE**, an 8-bed recovery home for women over 35 years of age, who had not been able to maintain a recovery-based lifestyle with long-term sobriety. A caring team of support workers offered daily recovery and life skill programming, in a safe home where women could recover from addictions and restore their self-esteem. Secure housing, caring support and good programming empowered the women of Bernard House to grow strong physically, mentally and relationally.

Our Facility

In September of 2015, Karis opened a new 24,000 square foot home. This three floor LEED certified building is a beautifully designed modern facility equipped with 37 beds.

The building is further enhanced by full story glass windows, natural lighting, a third floor patio and a ground level landscaped garden, which is available to residents enrolled in Karis Support Society's addiction recovery program for women.

Karis is situated close to downtown Kelowna, parks, pedestrian walkways and resource services. The Karis facility offers the following residential options for those enrolled in the singles program:

- Single bedrooms with ensuite for women without dependents
- Two bedroom semi-independent suites
 - Potential roommate
- Single bedroom semi-independent suites

For those enrolled in the parents program:

- Single bedrooms with ensuite for women with babies
- Single bedroom semi-independent suites
- Three bedroom townhouse for women with children

Interested in Karis?

As you read through our program and services, if you decide that Karis would be a good fit for you and your recovery goals. Please follow the steps as detailed below. If you have any questions, please email **Intake@karis-society.org**.

Intake Process

1. Read through the website to see if you meet the program criteria.
2. Download and complete the application and send it out to intake department, **intake@karis-society.org**
 - The application form can be found through this link:
<https://karis-society.org/applications/>
 - The application can be a self-referral or a worker referral.
3. The intake team will call to inform you that you will be placed on the waitlist. We are unable to specify how long your application will be on the waitlist.
4. In order to maintain your place on the waitlist, you are expected to complete weekly check-ins via phone call to the intake team. Intake team **250 860 9507 ext 115**
5. With consistent check-ins you will be contacted by an intake worker when a space becomes available.
6. An interview will take place determining whether your recovery goals align with the services that Karis can provide.
7. As a referring agent, please ensure your client has read this information package.

Important Information to Note for Application Process

- Karis is a second stage recovery program, not a treatment program.
- Complete the application before sending it to our Intake Manager.
- Eligibility will be determined following the interview.
- Visits with children over the age of 5 must take place in the community

Prior to Admittance

As an Assisted Living Registry facility (ALR) eligible clients will need verification of Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR) income prior to intake. Please complete all intake paperwork and agreements before intake. Preferred method of submitting intake paperwork is via email.

- Prescriptions are requested to be switched over to a local pharmacy. Any filled prescriptions are required to be in a labeled bottle.

****If coming from a *detox or treatment program*, please provide your intake worker a list of all medications that have been prescribed in the past 4 weeks within 48 hours of intake date****

- As part of our commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy living space, we have implemented routine substance screening. This policy is in place to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all residents. A clear substance screen will be required at the time of intake.
- Please bring only two suitcases with you to Karis. Furthermore, please bring an overnight bag with all the items you will need for the first 24 hours so that it can be quickly searched and back in your possession. All personal items will be searched.

Program

Karis offers two programs: Non-parenting and Parenting. Maximum stay in either program is 2 years.

First Stage Non-parenting

Karis offers 12 individuals private ensuite bedrooms and shared common areas. Upon completion of the First Stage program (approximately 6 months). Participants' may be eligible to transition into the Semi-Independent Program.

Participants are assigned a designated key worker who will collaborate with you to create a Personal Care Plan dedicated to highlighting your personal goals while at Karis and building your Recovery Capital. You will meet with your key worker a minimum of once a week. During these key worker meetings, you will review and work through your care plan and discuss your progress within the program.

Participants in first stage programming are to focus on their recovery, and are not permitted to attend school, volunteer or work. Karis programming supports participants in building the foundational skills and tools required to pursue work and school following the transition to the Semi-Independent Program or community.

Maintaining First Stage Eligibility

- Participants will provide clear randomized substance screening.
- Stabilization Period: 2-week period that provides participants space and opportunity to settle in and familiarize themselves with Karis' structure (protocols and programming). During this time:
 - Personal electronic devices may be placed in storage to aid in the stabilization period.
 - Participants are expected to remain in the building except during outings with staff or an approved safe person.
- All rooms include a landline.
- Participants are able to independently participate in all programs and expectations of Karis, physical or otherwise. This includes completing chores, and medication compliance.
- Participants are expected to actively work on their life skills such as time management, completing room checks, cooking, and maintaining neutral relationships within the building.
- Participants are required to attend daily programming (monthly calendars are posted) as well as one-on-one counseling and individualized goal-setting sessions with a key worker.

Semi- Independent Non-parenting Program (up to 18 months)

Following the first stage program, participants who have built a foundation of Recovery Capital and have achieved recovery goals, may be eligible to move into the Semi-Independent Program. Semi-Independent suites include two individual bedrooms with a shared bathroom and living area. Group facilitation will continue in the Semi-Independent Program and you meet with the Semi-independent key worker. After stabilization, participants are supported in part-time work, school enrollment, or volunteering. As you go through your Semi-Independent Program, you will be working on your Personal Care Plan goals and discussing next steps after Karis.

Maintaining Semi-Independent Eligibility

- Actively engage in Karis programming (unless they are completing part time work, school, or volunteering), and key worker meetings.
- Continued progress in increasing Recovery Capital by showcasing growing independence, ability to support themselves and a commitment to sobriety.

Parenting Program

The Parenting Program offers life skill development opportunities for women who are pregnant, parenting, or in the process of having their babies or young children returned to their care. Parents are supported with teachings and tools for parenting through recovery. A support-based program providing these opportunities, participants are able to confidently strive towards self-sufficiency and independence.

First Stage Parenting Program

Expectant women and moms with dependents (up to age 2) will experience community living with a private ensuite bedroom and a shared kitchen. Upon completion of the First Stage program (approximately 6 months), and completion of personal care plan goals, participants may transition into the Semi-Independent Parenting Program.

Participants are assigned a designated key worker who will collaborate with you to create a Personal Care Plan dedicated to highlighting your personal and parenting goals while at Karis and building your Recovery Capital. You will meet with your key worker a minimum of once a week. During these key worker meetings, you will review and work through your care plan and discuss your progress within the program.

Participants in the first stage Parenting Program are to focus on their recovery and children. Therefore are not permitted to attend school, volunteer or work. Karis programming supports participants in building the foundational skills and tools required to pursue work and school following the transition to the Semi-Independent Program or community. .

Maintaining First Stage Parenting Program Eligibility

- Participants will provide clear randomized substance screens.
- Stabilization Period: 2-week period that provides participants space and opportunity to settle in and familiarize themselves with Karis' structure (protocols policy and programming). During this time:
 - Personal devices may be stored during this time..
 - Participants are required to remain in the building except during outings with staff or an approved safe person.
- All rooms include a landline.
- Participants are able to independently participate in all programs and expectations of Karis, physical or otherwise. This includes completing chores, and medication compliance.
- Participants are expected to actively work on their life skills such as time management, completing room checks, cooking, and maintaining neutral relationships within the building.
- Participants will attend daily programming, meet with a counsellor and their key worker to develop individualized goals.

Semi-Independent Parenting Program

Following the first stage program, participants who have built a foundation of Recovery Capital and have achieved recovery goals, may be eligible to move into the Semi-Independent Program. Mothers and their children move to a two-bedroom suite where a parent and their child have their own bedroom, as well as their own bathroom and living area. Group facilitation will continue in the Semi-Independent Parenting Program. After stabilization, participants are supported in part-time work, school enrollment, or volunteering. As you go through your Semi-Independent Program, you will be working on your Personal Care Plan goals and discussing next steps after Karis.

Semi-Independent Parenting Requirements

- Continued clear substance screens
- Actively engage in Karis programming (unless they are completing part time work or school), continue with stable recovery, and continue parents key worker meetings.
- Continued progress in increasing Recovery Capital by showcasing growing independence, ability to support themselves and a commitment to sobriety.

Aftercare

Supporting individuals and families to create strong connections and support in the community as they transition into safe, appropriate, independent living in the greater community.

What is Aftercare?

Karis offers offsite aftercare for participants who have completed program requirements and have successfully transitioned into the community. An aftercare worker serves as an advocate and a support during this transition process. By assisting the participant in setting up support systems outside Karis, the aftercare worker ensures the participant is able to continuously build on the foundation of their recovery capital that was created while at Karis.

Participants in Aftercare Program are entitled to:

- Weekly meeting with their aftercare worker for the first month
- Bi-weekly meetings with their aftercare worker for the second and third month
- Monthly meetings with their aftercare worker for the fourth month to one year.

Aftercare Requirements

- Engage with your aftercare worker and be consistent with scheduled aftercare appointments.
- Live a recovery-oriented lifestyle: maintain sobriety.

Aftercare Socials

Aftercare socials offers current clients the opportunity to connect with Karis alumni or guest speakers, hear their stories, ask questions, and build connections. Aftercare socials are a part of Karis' peer mentorship program.

Services Offered

Karis offers a wide variety of services that utilizes a holistic approach to support participants with addressing their needs and attaining their goals. Karis provides the following services:

- Group Facilitation and Supportive Classes
- Mandatory and/or Elective Classes
- Childminding for specific programming
- Counselling (12 sessions)
- One-on-one support (key worker meetings)
- Community partnership
- Extra-Curricular activities

Group Facilitation and Supportive Classes

Karis offers strength-based, recovery focused group facilitation geared to support participants with life-skills, cognitive strategies and abilities needed to be successful as they transition back into the community. As Karis places emphasis on utilizing a holistic approach and focuses on Recovery Capital, group facilitation equips participants with the tools to form strong social support networks, community, and self-confidence. Programs include Morning Check Ins, Mindfulness, Relapse Prevention, Dollars and Sense, psychoeducational courses and more.

Mandatory and/or Elective Classes

A focus on Recovery Capital includes an emphasis on a holistic approach to care. With this in mind, Karis works closely with community volunteers to provide opportunities for participants to take part in mandatory and/or electives classes which foster creation of alternative avenues of pleasure seeking outside the use of substances and allow participants to express themselves creatively. Classes include but are not limited to yoga, recreational therapy, and art therapy. These classes provide additional avenues for stress reduction and improved mood in participants.

Childminding

Karis offers on-site childminding to participants whose children are living with them at Karis and are over the age of six months. Childminding will only be offered to participants during mandatory programming. Childminding space is based on availability.

Counselling

Karis offers on-site counseling with contracted counselors from the community trained in various modalities. Clients are offered 12 counseling sessions during their time at Karis. At the discretion of the participant and therapist, more can be scheduled.

Key Worker

Each participant is assigned a key worker, who they meet with weekly. Key workers are advocates who offer one-on-one support with goal setting, meeting program requirements and identifying needs to maximize the individual's Recovery Capital. Upon entry, key workers work alongside the participant to create and implement an individualized *personal service plan* that will be referred to and revised throughout program participation.

Community Partnerships

Participants are encouraged to build networks in the community. Key workers are available to support participants in creating these networks which may include collaboration with community partners to volunteer. Karis also partners with community partners in the creation of programs for clients. Participants have access to programming through our community partners such as Building Healthy Families, WorkBC, Kelowna Community Resources (KCR), Ki-low-na Friendship Center and the Metis Society.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Karis plans extra-curricular activities, which may include snowshoeing, skating, and hiking, for clients to participate in.

Frequently Asked Questions

What services does Karis Support Society provide?

The Karis program facilitates the building of Recovery Capital, this includes self-directed goals of relapse prevention, effective interpersonal and relationship skills, recreational therapy, financial literacy and more.

What is Recovery Capital?

Recovery Capital is described as “the breadth and depth of internal and external resources that can be drawn upon to initiate and sustain recovery from addiction and related substance misuse concerns.” It is not a fixed value, rather it decreases in active addiction and increases during sustained recovery. By recognizing what resources can be mobilized within the individual, the participant is empowered to work from their strengths in the initiation and maintenance of their recovery.

What living amenities does Karis Support Society provide?

Groceries, bedding and bathroom paper products are provided to First Stage participants. Karis also provides on-site laundry free of charge to all participants. Participants are responsible to provide their own laundry soap and personal items (toiletries, feminine hygiene products, etc.).

How long can I stay at Karis?

Participants may be in the program for about two years. (Note: Approximately 6 months in the First Stage Program, and approximately 18 months in the Semi-Independent Program). Karis also provides an after-care follow up program offering offsite support for individuals living in the community (after completing all requirements for first stage programming), for one to two years.

What parenting specific services does Karis Support Society provide?

Karis provides parenting specific support through advocacy and collaboration with community partners and resources. Karis provides parenting classes, Essentials for Life, and ultimately offers participants the ability to be in recovery and have your children in your care.

How will I receive my government assistance cheques?

Individuals on income assistance through the Ministry of Social Development will continue to receive payment in the forms of cheques (delivered to Karis) and/or direct deposit.

Why am I to remain on-site for the first two weeks?

The Stabilization period is a 2-week time period that provides participants time to settle in and familiarize themselves with the Karis protocol and programming.

Will I be able to come and go as I please?

During the day you will be expected to actively participate in all programming, adhere to Karis protocols and curfew. During free times, participants sign in and out at the front desk reception area each time they leave and return to the property.

What is the curfew at Karis?

First Stage Non-parenting- 10pm

Semi-Independent Non-parenting- 11pm

First Stage and Semi-Independent Parenting- 8pm

Will I be able to make phone calls?

Each suite is fully furnished with a landline. Participants may call local numbers through this line. Long distance phone calls are not possible using this line. Staff is able to transfer long distance calls received through the CSW office line to individual suites. Only calls from individuals on participants' safe list will be transferred through to their suites.

Will I be able to go away for a day or two?

Following two months of stabilization, participants may be approved by their key worker for Out of House Agreements (OHA's). Participants will develop a safety plan with their key worker which will include particulars of their visits such as address and phone number of the individual they are staying with. Please see the Residency Agreement for more information.

If I am prescribed medication, can I keep it with me?

Prescriptions are faxed over by staff to local pharmacies. Arrangements will be made for all medications to be supplied and blister packed to be delivered to Karis. Medications are stored in the CSW office and taken in the presence of staff, as directed by the prescription. Taking of medication and/or refusals will be observed and documented. Please see the Residency Agreement for 'Medication Policy'.

Do you permit people on Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT) in the program (e.g., Methadose, Suboxone)?

The four forms of OAT medications that are welcomed at Karis are Methadose, Metadol-D, Suboxone, and Sublocade. Above mentioned medication protocols apply. A lock box and doctor's note will be required for participants to transport OAT medications offsite for OHA's.

What kind of support do you provide for participants with Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) involvement?

Karis offers advocacy, individualized support, and collaboration with MCFD. This is all done with the participant's interests as priority.

I am in the process of reunification with my children, can I do this while at Karis?

Yes. Karis will collaborate with MCFD and your social worker to facilitate the reunification process including arranging visits (for children up to 2 ½ years old), accompanying you to case conferences, court, etc. Individual circumstances can be reviewed if the child is older.

My child is in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), can they visit?

Yes, children can visit up to the age of 3 years old. For children over the age of 3 offsite is preferred.

Can my other children come to visit?

If children are under the age of 5 years old, the decision will be made on a participant-to-participant basis. Karis encourages off site visits. Please see visiting protocols in the Residency Agreement.

I have a supervision order in place from MCFD, what does that mean for me while at Karis?

The Karis Parenting program staff will collaborate with the actions laid out in the MCFD supervision order dependent on what is stated and the limitations to the services Karis can provide.

What will my MCFD social worker have access to?

Per Karis' confidentiality policy, your social worker will only have access if you grant it or if Karis is subpoenaed by the courts.

What happens to my child if I have a relapse?

Due to the individual nature of Karis care planning, this will depend on the specification noted in your safety plan.

What am I responsible for as the participant?

Individuals are responsible for maintaining accountability to the commitment they make to their recovery. As participants of the Karis program, individuals are also expected to maintain commitment to the Karis Structure (e.g., chores, protocols/procedures).

Will I be required to attend all programming?

All participants are required to attend all programming unless otherwise agreed upon by the Parenting Program Coordinator (PPC) and social worker. Participants in the reunification process are required to attend programming during the days that their children are not on site. During pregnancy participants are required to attend all programming until their delivery date (in terms of recreational therapy, decisions are made on a participant-to-participant basis).

Will counseling be available at Karis?

Karis offers on-site counseling with various contracted counselors from the community. Counselors maintain strictest confidentiality and information is not released without participants consent. Please see Counseling Service Policy.

Can I continue to access services from community/outside supports?

Participants are encouraged to build networks in the community, as these serve as a foundation for their community life post Karis. Key workers are available to support participants in creating and strengthening these networks.

Who is a key worker?

Each participant will be assigned a key worker. Participants will meet weekly with their assigned key worker. Key workers are advocates who offer one-on-one support with goal setting, meeting program requirements and identifying needs to maximize the individual's recovery capital. Upon entry, key workers work alongside the participant to create and implement an individualized personal service plan that will be referred to and revised throughout program participation.

Why can't I sleep with my baby in bed?

Per Provincial Best Practice guidelines, Karis follows "Baby's Best Practice," which states that co-sleeping is not safe until the child is 2 or more years old.

What is a Personal Service Plan?

Each participant will create a personalized service plan, with various worksheets, assessments, and exercises, which serves as the foundation for the building of their recovery capital and ultimately providing the support the participant will need to lead a recovery-focused lifestyle. Recommendations made by any other community support will also be integrated into the care plan.

What does line of sight mean?

The child must always be visible to their mother. If the child is sleeping in their bed, a mother may leave their room with a monitor .

Why are there Parental Controls on the Karis Netflix account?

In line with Karis' value of respecting each participant and their stage of recovery, parental controls ensure that participants maintain their right to exist in a safe space. As such the controls ensure that participants who may have lower tolerances for violence and triggering behaviors are not subject to these images while accessing the Netflix account. Furthermore, participants are encouraged to respect the rights of each participant when watching television in the common areas.

Why am I not allowed to drink energy drinks on-site?

Research has shown that energy drinks can act as a gateway substance as they may serve to replace the stimulation gained from active substance use. For this reason, participants are discouraged from consuming energy drinks.

Why can't I have a pet?

Considering the short amount of time participants spend at Karis (maximum of 2 years). A pet is a responsibility Karis believes should be reserved for when the participants successfully transition into community living.

Why can't I store my other belongings (e.g., car tires, furniture, etc.) here at Karis?

Due to the limited storage space available at Karis. We ask that participants limit their belongings to 2 suitcases.

Can I have a car at Karis?

Bringing a car to Karis is discouraged as parking at Karis is reserved for staff and volunteers, Monday to Thursday, 8am to 4pm. Participants will need to find on-street parking during those hours. Most on-street parking close to Karis is 2 hour parking.

Why can't I put stickers on the wall?

Repainting has to occur when stickers and other wall decorations are removed from the wall. This is a charge that will be taken off the participant's damage deposit. As such, participants are discouraged from placing any stickers or other wall decorations on their wall.

Why can't I leave my child with another participant?

For safety and liability issues, participants are not permitted to leave their child(ren) with other participants.

Contact Us

Address: 550 Rowcliffe Avenue, Kelowna B.C V1Y 5Y9

Intake Manager: 250-860-9507 **EXT. 115**

Parenting Manager: 250-860 9507 **EXT. 106**

Fax Number: 250-860-9517

Email Address: info@karis-society.org

Intake Department: intake@karis-society.org

Parenting Department: parenting@karis-society.org