

SPARC BC works to build a just and healthy society for all



THE SOCIAL PLANNING and Research Council of British Columbia is a non-partisan, independent charitable organization whose members and Board of Directors are drawn from across the province. Since 1966, SPARC BC has worked with communities in building a just and healthy society for all. Our vision includes the following values:

- **Equity:** The recognition that some individuals or groups require more or less than others in order to flourish, and that some individuals are capable of contributing more to address social deficiencies and promote fair distribution of programs and services.
- **Social Inclusion:** The recognition that both the right and the opportunity to participate in all aspects of human life enables individuals and communities to celebrate their diversity, and recognize their responsibilities.
- **Security:** The recognition that individuals and communities flourish when they have confidence in their surroundings as safe, supportive, and stable environments.
- **Adaptability:** The recognition that sustainability requires resilience for both individuals and communities, and the ability to respond creatively to change.

How does SPARC BC work to achieve our mission?

SPARC BC conducts public education on priority issues identified by our provincial Board of Directors and volunteer committees. Currently, SPARC BC focuses its efforts on the key social issues of income security, accessibility, and community development. We work through systemic advocacy, policy advocacy, and three types of direct advocacy:

- **Public Education:** We conduct public education campaigns, such as our annual province-wide Access Awareness Day, to increase public consciousness and understanding of key issues.
- **Community Support:** We support interest groups with shared concerns by providing information, publications, and tools for community development.
- **Policy Positions:** SPARC BC researches and states formal positions on topics that fall under the concerns of our mandate and within our expertise.

Parking Permit Program for People with Disabilities

SPARC BC has actively worked on accessibility issues since 1969. In 1984, SPARC BC convinced the provincial government that disabled parking was not a luxury, but a necessity.

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Today, we issue parking permits on a province-wide basis, helping more than 85,000 people arrive safely at their destination with the help of designated accessible parking zones.

Research & Consulting Services

Access to high-quality, independent research and consulting services is important for communities looking for ways to improve. Research provides the information communities require to make decisions, forge action plans, and devise alternative policies and approaches.

SPARC BC provides independent social policy research on issues affecting our communities. Our approach to research provides clients with the opportunity to be involved in the process and seeks to build community and organizational capacity.

Community Development Education

Our Community Development Education Program provides free or low-cost assistance in building local assets to address social issues and to develop strong, sustainable community networks. The program works with community-based organizations in rural and northern regions of B.C.

The CDE Program was developed out of recognition

of the growing interest and need among community workers to increase their understanding of social, economic, and environmental issues, to share strategies and ideas, and to improve their skills in community development.

SPARC BC News

Our quarterly magazine, *SPARC BC News*, provides independent, in-depth reporting on social issues in B.C. and updates on SPARC BC's programs and initiatives. Each issue focuses on a theme important to our work and presents a diverse examination of the issue with articles written by academic, government, and community leaders across B.C.

The Deryck Thomson Award

Awarded annually, the Deryck Thomson Award for Community Social Planning honours an individual, group, or organization that has made an outstanding contribution to social planning and community well-being, either in their community or in B.C. as a whole. Named for one of SPARC BC's founders and a great contributor to the social well-being of British Columbians, the award celebrates the community achievements of outstanding community leaders.



Social Planning and Research Council of BC

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ABOUT SPARC BC

SPARC BC is a non-partisan, independent charitable organization. Since 1966, SPARC BC has conducted public education and research on key social issues, focusing our efforts on the areas of income security, accessibility, and community development.

OUR MISSION

The Social Planning and Research Council of BC works with communities in building a just and healthy society for all.

SUPPORT SPARC BC

Our work would not be possible without the generous support of British Columbians. Please consider making a donation or becoming a member. For more information, visit our website at: www.sparc.bc.ca/support_us