

# EXtreme REALITY

## Northern AIDS Connection Society

### What's New ?

#### Wednesday Lunch N' Grab

Open to persons who access the NACS needle exchange.

Return used needles on Wednesday and have lunch on us !!!

Forum on the NACS website—get connected and share your views.

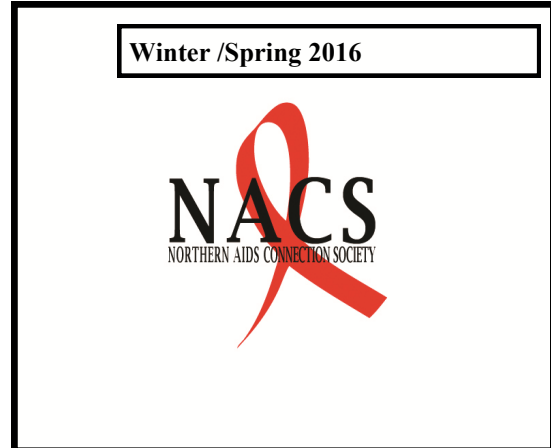
Share your story in the newsletter—and our new You Tube series—confidential and anonymous.

Do you have too many conference bags ???

NACS has started a recycling program where old conference bags are stuffed with educational material and donated to the local Food Bank.

These bags not only act as a stronger bag for carrying food, but also provides an opportunity to share knowledge and information and is good for the environment.

Please donate your used cloth conference bags to NACS.



Northern AIDS Connection Society is now on Twitter.



#### Parent PhotoVoice Project



This project started due to key findings and evaluation from a previous project targeting LGBTQ youth. The methodology behind PhotoVoice is to map a personal journey and capture life experiences through photography and art. This group is open to parents, grandparents, guardians, support personnel and members of the clergy who are either living with or supportive of transgendered children and youth. The aim of the program is to share stories/experiences about some of the challenges and barriers in raising or supporting a transgendered child or youth. Parts of the program cover various subjects as well as shared experiences in navigating the system. It always helps when you know that you are not alone !! Funding for this program is generously provided by the N.S. Department of Health & Wellness/Mental Health & Addiction Services.

Please call 902-895-0931 for information.

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### Lighthouse— Youth PhotoVoice Project

NACS has  
once again  
been awarded  
funding  
through the  
Department of  
Justice to offer  
this program

Start date is  
Jan. 7, 2016

There is still  
space  
available...call  
soon at  
902-895-0931

Referrals are  
coming in  
from John  
Howard  
Restorative  
Justice, Mental  
Health and the  
RCMP

### Hep C Aware Project

Are you HEP C Positive? Would you be interested in being a part of a teleconference to share your experiences living with Hepatitis C. It could be very helpful and offer support to those newly diagnosed. We are looking at starting a sharing session ... a way to share what worked for you and what didn't. A peer to peer sharing session. Call the office at 902-895-0931 and find out information or register to become part of this ANNONOYMOUS sharing session.

The Hep C Aware Project is looking for volunteers to tell their story about what it is like living with Hep C on YouTube. We value your input and we respect your anonymity and privacy, so we have arranged not to have your picture or name on YouTube.

Your story will be highlighted only and will serve as an educational and awareness piece. If interested please contact Janet at 902-895-0931. If you are interested in receiving information on NACS Hep C Aware Project or tattooing and piercing please contact Janet at [nacsaccountant@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacsaccountant@eastlink.ca).



### FACE 2 FACE



**(Face to Face is a new article where we will be featuring interviews with people who have accessed NACS Services or Programs & want to share their stories. Contact us to be heard.)**

Q) "How long have you been visiting the NACS office for services or programs?"

A) "I've been visiting NACS since I was accepted to complete a student placement."

Q) "How did you feel coming into NACS?"

A) "I was a little worried that I might be labelled as a person involved in injection drug use."

Q) "What service were you obtaining?"

A) "I received information on the support group for parents of trans children & youth."

Q) "How did you find out about NACS programs and services?"

A) "After learning of the programs offered through my role as a RCMP School Liaison."

Q) "What are you taking away from your visit to NACS?"

A) "I have learned so much about the vast resource library at the NACS office."

**NEW LOCATION FOR THE OPIATE TREATMENT & RECOVERY PROGRAM—...  
733 Prince Street in Truro, Nova Scotia...902-893-4776**

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The Photovoice Project funded by Nova Scotia Health & Wellness will be open to offer support to parents, guardians, members of the clergy working with LGBTQ youth in the Truro area.

This group will be commencing on January 6, 2016  
Call office for details at :  
902-895-0931.

**NACS is very happy and excited to be offering this program and appreciates the funding made possible from the Department of Health & Wellness.**



**The Northern AIDS Connection Society would like to acknowledge that Janet MacPhee, long time employee has joined the Board of Directors of the Canadian AIDS Society serving as the Atlantic Regional Director.**

**Congratulations Janet**

**If you are a member of the Canadian AIDS Society from Atlantic Canada, you can reach Janet at 902-895-0931 or via email at [nacsaccountant@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacsaccountant@eastlink.ca)**

### YOUTH PHOTOVOICE PROJECT

A Youth PhotoVoice program commenced on January 7, 2016 and will be offered for approximately 14 weeks. The funding for this program has been provided by the Nova Scotia Department of Justice—Lighthouse Grants. Some topics to be covered during this time will be on Sexual Health, Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infections, Internet Safety, Self Esteem and Feelings, Cooking, Addictions and much more. For information on this program, please contact the office at 902-895-0931 or by email at [nacs@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacs@eastlink.ca)



### **Did you know?**

**NACS in partnership with Mainline Needle Exchange offers clean needles for those engaged in Injection Drug Use. If you need us call 902-895-0931 or stop by 33 Pleasant St. Truro.**

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### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

National Non-Smoking

Week—January 17-23,  
2016

National Condom Day—

February 14, 2016

Pink Shirt Day—February

24th

International Women's

Day—March 8th

International Harm

Reduction Day—

May 7, 2016

National Prescription

Drop-off Day—

May 21, 2016

World Hepatitis Month—

May

International Day

Against Homophobia—

May 17th

World Hepatitis Day—

July 28th

International Youth

Day—August 12

International Over Dose

Awareness Day

—August 31

Scotiabank AIDS Walk

September 25, 2016

AIDS Awareness Week—

last week in November

World AIDS Day -

December 1st

Different Options for Testing—The Forms of testing vary in how the test is tracked and recorded.

**ANONYMOUS TESTING**—The name or identity of the person being tested is not required, nor is any identification or proof of medical coverage. The test is ordered using a code known only to the person being tested. If the test comes back positive epidemiological data (including age, sex and risk factor for HIV infection) may be collected and reported, depending on the province where the test was carried out.

**NOMINAL TEST**—The service provider ordering the test using the person's full name. If the test is positive, the laboratory is required to report the result to the local medical officer of health, for data collection and partner notification. Nominal testing which is provided by family doctors, clinics and other health facilities, is available throughout the country.

**NON-NOMINAL-TESTING**—This test is similar to the nominal test, except the test is ordered using a code or the person's initials, so only the person being tested

and the health-care provider or tester know the result. If the test is positive, it is recorded in the person's medical files and reported to the to the local medical officer of health for data collection and partner notification. This test is available throughout the country .

**RAPID HIV TESTING**—This test uses a drop of blood to detect the presence of HIV antibodies within approximately 60-120 seconds. The rapid test is reported to reduce the stress associated with the period spent waiting for results, it can be carried out in a broad range of locations and contexts and allows for continuity in the pre and post test counselling experience

**THERE ARE CONCERNS HOWEVER**—That voluntary, informed consent and counselling could be diminished in certain situations or settings. Rapid testing is unavailable in NS and most of Canada, with the exception of a few specialized clinics and pilot projects.

### Why do I need to use a condom?

Condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are the **only** form of protection other than abstinence that can help stop the transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as HIV/AIDS.

Condoms are available for FREE from different centres ~ the NACS office (33 Pleasant Street Truro), Teen Health Centres, Women's Resource Centres, Centres for Sexual Health and the John Howard Restorative Justice for Youth (Truro). There are no age limits to buying condoms. Buying a condom no matter how old you are shows that you are taking responsibility for your actions.

### ??Condoms, Lube and Flavour??

Condoms are typically made of latex. Latex condoms can only be used with water based lubricants, NOT oil based lubricants such as Vaseline as it breaks down the latex. Flavoured condoms should be used for oral sex only as the sugars they contain may cause yeast infections.

### Condom Co-op

NACS's condom co-op offers condoms at cost to local groups, community partners and businesses. **Be a part of the solution and not the problem...offer free condoms !!!**

When condoms break, it is often due to not using them properly.

This website includes a video showing proper use:

<http://www.sexualityandu.ca/stis-stds/how-do-i-protect-myself-from-stis-stds/male-condom>

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## Northern AIDS Connection Society



Like us on Facebook!

[www.facebook.com/nacsns](http://www.facebook.com/nacsns)

Volunteers are welcome !!!

Volunteering provides great experience, the chance to meet new people, utilize your skills and give back to the community.

Remember... volunteers are the core of any organization !!



NACS Volunteer of the Year in 2015 was Cara MacPhee.

**The mission of the Northern AIDS Connection Society (NACS) is to promote the health and well being of persons living with and those at risk for HIV/AIDS, STIs, HCV and other Blood Borne Infections (STBBIs).**

**NACS also offers support, services, referrals and education to individuals, families, loved ones, groups and communities throughout the northern region (Colchester ~ East-Hants, Pictou and Cumberland Counties). All services are provided in a safe and confidential environment—free of judgment.**

Five new resources developed by Northern AIDS Connection Society staff are Brochures outlining issues facing the LGBTQ community and their families.

- So You Think Your Child Is Gay ?
- So You Think Your Child Is Trans ?
- The Guide to the LGBTQ+ Community
- So You Think Your Child is Asexual
- So You Think Your Child is Bi/Pansexual



These resources may serve very useful to parents who have youth questioning their sexuality. The comic strip booklet will assist parents in the various terms related to the LGBTQ community.

The Northern AIDS Connection Society (NACS) wants to invite interested members of the broader LGBTQ community in the Colchester-East Hants area to attend a meeting to discuss the future of or a new beginning of a vibrant LGBTQ active community.

Throughout the years there have been groups and activities, but lately things have been placed on the back burner...so to say. NACS wants to invest some time and resources in setting a meeting to discuss future opportunities and gaps in programs and services offered to individuals who identify as LGBTQ Colchester-East Hants. The date for this meeting has been set for March 8, 2016 at St Andrew's United Church on King Street in Truro. The time will be from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Refreshments will be provided.

For information or to RSVP contact Al McNutt at 902-895-0931.

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### BENEFITS OF IMPROVING SELF ESTEEM...

Persisting in face of difficulties and challenges

Improved decision making

Greater independence

Greater self respect

Increased creativity and improved ability

Treat people how you want to be treated...with respect

Improved personal happiness

Confidently expressing your values

Identifying attainable goals

Greater honesty

Willingness in admitting mistakes



### School Healthy Decision Making Fair

Northern AIDS Connection Society (NACS) in collaboration with the Truro Boys and Girls Club & Truro Junior High School will offer a “Stand Up for Youth” Health Fair at Truro Junior High School on April 21, 2016. There will be many exhibitors participating in the fair that promote overall wellness within the Truro area. The mandate at Northern AIDS Connection Society is first and foremost to be supportive of healthy choices for individuals living, working and raising their families within Northern Nova Scotia (Colchester — East Hants, Cumberland and Pictou Counties)

The Truro Boys & Girls Club has a similar vision as they recognize that every young person has the ability and potential to fulfill their wants and dreams and it is their objective to help the youth see this potential in themselves. The combined focus and desired outcome of this event will be about empowering youth within our community to learn about their own bodies and how to keep themselves well, and to be aware of healthy decision making and healthy choices. This is the second year for this event and NACS looks forward to holding it year after year.



The Northern AIDS Connection Society (NACS) received funding through the Colchester-East Hants Community Health Board to assist in the operation of “InfoBag”. This program is where cloth bags are delivered to the Colchester Food Bank with awareness and education material to reach out to individuals who may not otherwise access services at the NACS.

This program has a two fold approach — to provide access to much needed printed material on Sexuality, Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infections (STBBIs), Healthy Decision Making and how to contact NACS.

A very special thank you to the Community Health Board for this assistance. Anyone or any companies who have extra cloth bags or used cloth conference bags, please pass them on to the program. This not only provides stronger bags for carrying groceries from the Food Bank, but also helps get rid of using plastic, therefore supporting and assisting with the environment. Call 902-895-0931 for information on how to access or assist.





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### First Voices Need To Be Heard — Never GIVE UP !!!!

Life has knocked me down a few times, it showed me things I never wanted to see. I experienced much sadness and many failures, but one thing for sure, I never gave up. I was almost 16 years old when I left home. I was battling depression due to family trauma and I turned to drugs right away. By the time I reached 18, I surprisingly graduated and had many friends. I wasn't ready to help myself, I felt lost and frustrated. The drugs were my disguise of happiness, but I knew deep down I was making my depression stronger and getting very unhealthy. My depression turned into self harm and I had many suicide attempts. I no longer cared for myself or the choices I was making and so was soon introduced to escorting. It built nothing but regret, guilt, shame and fear into my life. After I was in the escorting business, I could buy anything I wanted, do whatever I wanted, buy all the drugs I wanted and I couch surfed or lived in hotels. My family and I grew apart. I went weeks, months, almost a year one time not speaking to them. Not long afterwards I met a man who paid my rent and gave me over \$150.00 a day. I had myself convinced money does buy you happiness. I was happy on the outside, but still hurt on the inside. All my so called friends loved to use me; I guess, of course they loved to use me, I let them. I gave them a roof over their heads, I fed them and made sure they went to school, most importantly, I bought the drugs and liquor we needed for the night. Our choices kept leading to bad choices like robbing people and stores. We could never get enough money, liquor or drugs. That's when things got intense, my so called friends were lying and stealing from each other, robberies weren't going right, people were going to jail and things were brutal. The man I was escorting with constantly tried to control me and verbally abused me every day, so I stopped seeing him after two years. I ended up being homeless again and broke. No one wanted to stand by my side as I had nothing to give to them but a bad reputation anyways. I was more in trouble with the law and my addictions took the best of me. I was no longer myself anymore. I didn't even know who I was anymore. I had no hope, support, confidence, self compassion, no future goals, no job, no interest or hobbies. The only thing I had left was to do more drugs. Being lost and feeling alone was not how I wanted to live my life. I was close to giving up. Of course, giving up wasn't for me, so the first thing that came into my head was rehab. Getting the help I really needed for no one other than myself. From there my life continued to bloom into wonderful things like healthy relationships with family and real friends, lots of support. I made healthier choices and had future goals. I even had skills I never know I had like being an artist and my favorite part about it all is I had nothing but true happiness, a clear mind and happy heart. When life pushes me down, I just get right back up and keep moving forward.



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## Northern AIDS Connection Society

# Services



**Our Contact Information**  
Tel: 902 895-0931  
Toll Free 1-866-940-AIDS (2437)  
E: [nacs@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacs@eastlink.ca)  
Web: [northernaidconnectionociety.ca](http://northernaidconnectionociety.ca)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/nacsns](http://www.facebook.com/nacsns)  
Twitter: [NACSNorthernAIDS](https://twitter.com/NACSNorthernAIDS)

### Amherst

**Sexual Health Centre  
Cumberland County**  
Information, Education  
Workshops, Free  
Condoms  
902 667-7500  
[shccc@ns.aliantzinc.ca](mailto:shccc@ns.aliantzinc.ca)  
11 Elmwood Drive  
(side entrance)

### Pictou

**Pictou County Centre  
for Sexual Health**  
Services for both  
women and men  
902 695-3366  
[pcsexualhealth@hotmail.com](mailto:pcsexualhealth@hotmail.com)  
[www.pictoucountysexualhealth.com](http://www.pictoucountysexualhealth.com)

**Pictou County  
Women's Centre**  
902 755-4647  
[pcwc@womencentre.ca](mailto:pcwc@womencentre.ca)

### Truro

**Central Nova  
Women's  
Resource Centre**  
82 Esplanade. Truro  
902 895-4295  
[cnwrc@eastlink.ca](mailto:cnwrc@eastlink.ca)  
[cnwrc.weebly.com](http://cnwrc.weebly.com)

### **Colchester Sexual Assault Centre**

Provides Support &  
Information to Anyone  
Affected by Sexual  
Assault  
902 897-4366  
80 Glenwood Drive,  
Truro  
[Trurosexualassault@hotmail.com](mailto:Trurosexualassault@hotmail.com)

### **RESPECT**

Students Making  
Healthy Decisions  
Dalhousie Agricultural  
Campus  
902 893-6300  
[respect@nsac.ca](mailto:respect@nsac.ca)

### **DalOut—Dalhousie Agricultural Campus**

**BLAST Youth  
Colchester-East  
Hants Regional  
Library ...Truro, N.S.**  
Contact Chris  
Wildbore at  
902-895-4183

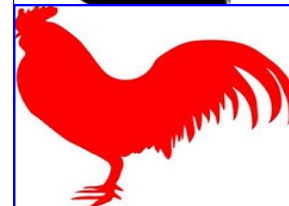
**SLATE Youth  
883 Prince St.,  
Truro, N.S.  
902-893-8044**

**Mental Health Services — Crisis Response**  
600 Abenaki Road, Truro, N.S.  
B2N 5A1  
902896-2606 or toll free at  
1-800-460-2110 ext. 2606  
[www.cehha.nshealth.ca](http://www.cehha.nshealth.ca)

**Opiate Treatment & Recovery Program**  
733 Prince St.,  
Truro, N.S.  
902-893-4776  
[www.addictionservices.ns.ca](http://www.addictionservices.ns.ca)



Play it Safe...Always Use Condoms



Cover your cock and protect your pussy !!