



Bell True Patriot Love Fund grants \$350,000 in support of mental health for military and Veteran families

Eleven local community programs across Canada have received funding from True Patriot Love Foundation to support programs that focus on mental health and wellness of active military members, Veterans, and their families, thanks to generous contributions from Bell Canada and the Government of Ontario.

Programs range from virtual camps for military children, PTSD trained service dogs, peer support training and providing access to music, yoga, and other wellness programs. *With the pandemic giving rise to two years of unprecedented challenges, it is more important than ever to ensure our Veterans and their families have access to programs that support their mental health and well-being. We are proud to partner with Bell Let's Talk and the Government of Ontario to support serving members, Veterans and families most in need in communities in the Province and across Canada,*" said Nick Booth, CEO, True Patriot Love Foundation.

Launched in 2013 in partnership with Bell Let's Talk, the Bell True Patriot Love Fund is a multi-year initiative supporting mental health programs for the military and Veteran community across Canada. Since the launch, a total of \$2.3 million has been committed to the mental health of military families with 116 grants distributed to date to support much needed programs and resources.

New this year, the Government of Ontario has stepped up through the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to provide funding for Ontario based programs to expand access to specialized mental health services and support for Ontario's veterans returning to civilian life. *"Our veterans have made tremendous sacrifices to keep our province and country safe, and we have a responsibility to be there to support them when they need us,"* said Dr. Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. *"I am proud that our government is prioritizing our veterans and I am grateful to the True Patriot Love Foundation for their delivery of this important specialized programming."*

Programs receiving funding in 2021 include:

Operation Entrepreneur – Mental Health Programming (National)
Prince's Trust Canada

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<https://www.princestrust.ca>

This project will expand OE's work nationally through bootcamps, workshops and mentorship to provide Veterans, military support organizations, OE volunteers and staff, with comprehensive mental health resources, including four new modules, as well as community training and awareness of available supports.

Warrior Kids Virtual Camp (National)

Wounded Warriors Canada

<https://woundedwarriors.ca/>

The Warriors Kids program is grounded in the understanding and responsiveness to the impact of trauma and emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both providers and survivors. Warrior Kids aims to empower children to increase their capacity for developing resilience. They will deliver two additional six-week virtual kids camp programs to 30 kids and youth of uniformed service personnel.

Guitars for Vets Guitar Clinic (National)

Guitars for Vets / Veterans Emergency Transition Services (VETS) Canada

<https://vetscanada.org/>

The Guitars for Vets program is based on a simple concept: veterans (CAF/RCMP) who suffer with PTSD or other service-related disabilities are provided with a new or gently used guitar and matched up with a volunteer guitar instructor, if available, for 10 weeks of free lessons. Veterans will receive a once in a lifetime experience of working with Canadian celebrity guitarists and/or singer/songwriters and highlight their skills on stage following lessons.

Calgary MFRC: - MindBeacon Digital Therapy (Alberta)

Calgary Military Family Resource Centre

<https://www.cafconnection.ca/Calgary/Home.aspx>

The Calgary MFRC are looking to partner with MindBeacon to provide digital Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, designed to effectively help people struggling with symptoms of depression, anxiety, panic disorder, and sleep problems. This clinically proven approach, guided by a therapist, helps people become more resilient to life's many challenges.

PTSD Service Dog Program (BC, Alberta)

Pacific Assistance Dogs Society (PADS)

<https://pads.ca/>

Under this project, PADS will breed, train, and match certified PTSD Service Dogs with military personnel and Veterans living with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in British Columbia and



Alberta. This program will assist Veterans living with PTSD to return to normal daily living, reintegrate into their communities, and participate more fully in work and social activities.

PEERs Facilitator Training – Virtual Edition (Ontario)

Trenton Military Family Resource Centre

<https://trentonmfrc.ca/>

In this train-the-trainer program, participants will be trained to become certified facilitators of PEERs to provide support and training for groups of youth in grades 7 to 12. Funding will be directed to Ontario based trainers. By increasing youth's abilities to make friends, understand social cues, and how to manage and avoid bullying, the program will increase their life skills and social skill development and build upon their resiliency and capacity for healthy and strong mental health and wellbeing.

Team Rubicon Canada's Mental Health Programming (Ontario)

Team Rubicon Canada

<https://team-rubicon.ca/>

This an intensive, service-based program that will help foster and grow a thriving community of veteran emergency management leaders, empowering them to own the narrative of their transition and integration into civilian life. This intensive eight-week group experience will see cohorts of 12 Team Rubicon veterans immersed in guided discussions, focused on strengthening mental health through self-awareness, resilience, and peer support. This program will equip Canada's Warriors with the tools and community to navigate the challenging times of transition and the impact it has on mental health and sense of being.

Wellness Programming in Support of Mental Health for Veterans (Quebec)

Quebec Veterans Foundation

<https://deretourenforce.ca/en/>

The QVF offers a program of wellness activities designed to optimize the mental health and quality of life of Veteran women and men and to support the treatment/care offered to them. Funding will support the improvement of mental health through Music Activities, Recreational Yoga, Pet Therapy and Wellness/Physical Activities.

Facilitating access to health care and enhancing virtual mental health services (Quebec)

Centre de ressources pour les familles militaires Valcartier

<https://www.cafconnection.ca/Valcartier/>

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Expansion of MindBeacon's services through virtual appointments. In addition, during COVID-19, access to health services and appointments with doctors has deteriorated in a context that was already complicated before in the province of Quebec. Funding will support mental health program delivery through virtual delivery of Bonjour Santé's services and thus facilitate access to care.

Francophone Mental Health & Well Being Counsellor Contractor - Pilot Project (Nova Scotia)

Halifax & Region Military Family Resource Centre

<https://www.halifaxmfrfc.ca/>

Access to mental health support in the community is limited and has long wait times, this challenge is even more compounded for Francophone military families. This project would allow contracting out services to a Francophone social worker/counsellor on an as need/ as requested basis. This approach means Francophone families will have access to the same supports as all military families, which means no wait time, appointments can be accessed at either H&R MFRC site for family's convenience, or via online platform.

Veteran Wellbeing Support Project (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick)

Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia

<https://www.mentalhealthns.ca/>

The proposed project is an extension of the existing foundation program at Landing Strong that will focus on adding resources and capacity to a mental health support platform for members of the military, Veterans and first responder communities. The Foundation's program, based on a clinical therapeutic framework, provides intensive day treatments to clients who have suffered operational stress injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) due to their service.