

## LIVE. WORK. WELL.

For this newsletter we decided to switch it up! Rather than offering you wellness information, tips and tools, we decided to use our Newsletter to help you get to know us a little better, and understand more closely how things work at Upper Island Counselling – **YOUR community nonprofit EFAP**. You will learn some interesting stats and figures, and also hear from our counsellors as they reflect on their experience at UIC.

We hope that this newsletter will help *de-stigma, de-mystify, de-barrier* (we know those aren't real words, just roll with it ;) and *de-construct* (we know there's no hyphen, keep rolling ;) any misconceptions you may have about counselling in general, or our agency specifically. We also invite you to reach out with any questions you may have!

Let's kick things off with a few **DID YOU KNOW's** to get us started.

**Did you know** that Upper Island Counselling started in 1987 as Campbell River Assessment and Referral Services? And that our Campbell River office has been in the same location at 625C 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue since then! That's 35 years and counting. Fortunately we had a lovely office renovation in 2017!

**Did you know** that we began by efforts of union and management in the forestry industry? Since then we have expanded to serve many diverse groups in the public, private, and nonprofit sector, from the Comox Valley all the way to Port Hardy.

**Did you know** that we are *AN EFAP*, but not *THE EFAP*? We offer an Employee and Family Assistance Program to our member organizations and we are extremely unique in that we are a nonprofit community based society. Other EFAP's are large, nationwide for-profit companies who often provide service through a large insurance company. We are a stand-alone benefit that any organization can join regardless of affiliation to insurance programs. Even if a company "doesn't offer benefits" they can still offer us. 😊

And finally, **did you know** that 2022 marks my 15th year here? Yikes, how did that happen? Sometimes when you find a job that's so much more than a job, you just stick with it. This agency has provided me a rewarding career, a healthy workplace culture, wonderful professional colleagues, and the balanced lifestyle I need to maintain my own wellness in a mentally draining position, and the needs of my family too. In 15 years I've now worked with well over 2500 counselling clients in our communities. I love what I do and feel honored and privileged to sit with clients who let me into their world, their heart, their pain, and their secrets. They let me accompany them for a while on the journey – both of us hoping things will look a little brighter when our time together is through. Thank you for trusting me with your hearts, your story, and your family. I've learned so much from each of you.....**Kelsi Baine, MSc, CCC**



---

### Our Mission

**Caring for our clients, member companies,  
and communities with compassion, clinical  
expertise, and a commitment to overall  
health and wellness.**

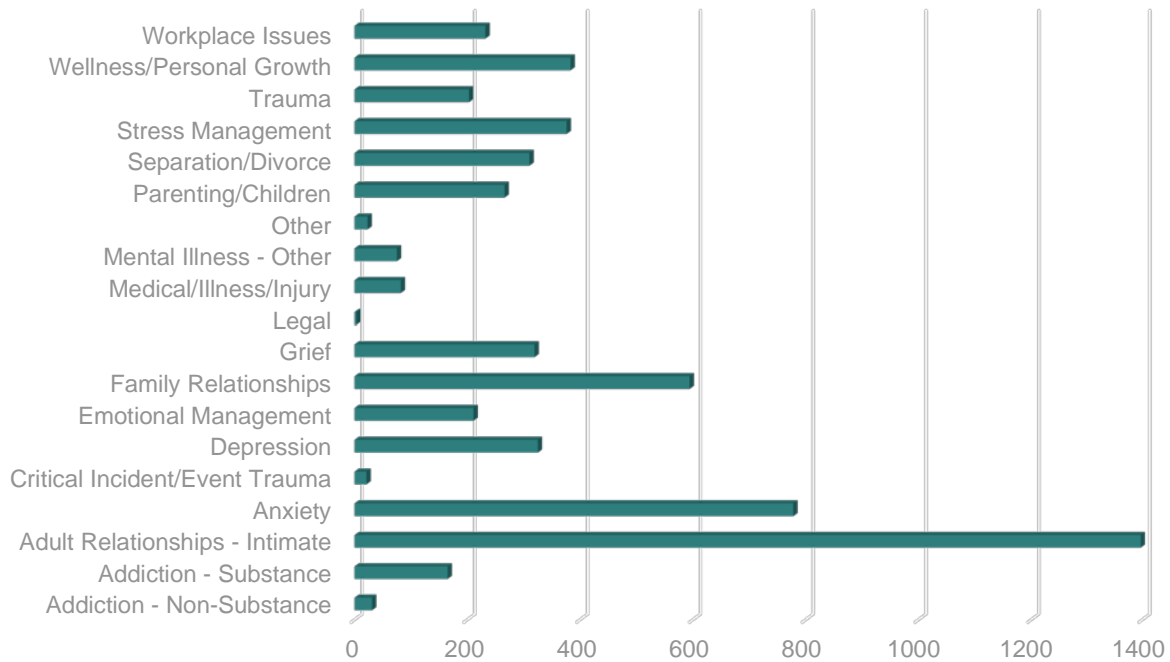
---

I started working with Upper Island Counselling in February 2014. I can confidently say that my time with UIC has been among the most rewarding experiences of my professional career. The team members we have in our office have always impressed me with their kindness, professionalism, and commitment to supporting our clients, member companies and each other.

My journey as a counsellor with UIC has been one of continued learning and growth. The relationships with my colleagues have been an important part of this journey, as have the relationships with my clients. Every day I have the privilege of sitting with remarkable people who are struggling in one way or another with what it means to be human, and I try my best to help them navigate their challenges. I find these encounters are often mutually beneficial. In the best-case scenarios, my clients come away with tools and insights to help them in their lives, and, in the process, I learn valuable lessons from them on courage, vulnerability, humility, forgiveness, compassion and resilience..... **Graham Walker, MA, RCC**



### Presenting Issues 2019 to 2021



***The counsellors at UIC held 1985 sessions in 2019, 1783 in 2020 and 2,023 in 2021 for a total of 5794 counselling sessions in 3 years!***

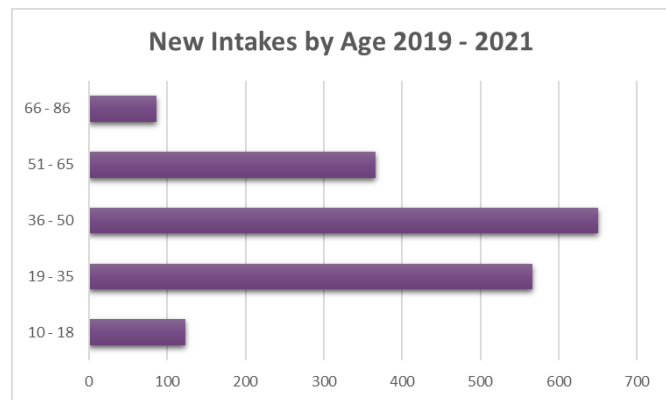
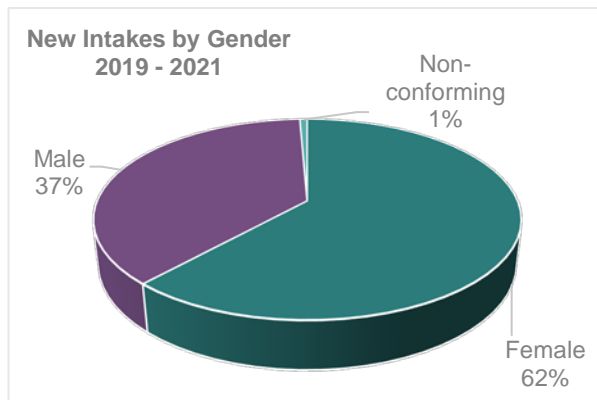
### What about Confidentiality?

**Did you know** that accessing service at UIC is completely confidential? While your employer may pay for and provide the benefit to you and your family, they do not have access to your information and won't know that you or your family have attended, unless you choose to tell them. Confidentiality is one of the many professional and ethical code of conducts that our professional counsellors are committed to, and our administrative staff are equally committed to this necessary component of the important work we do.

I've been with UIC 3 years this month! One of the things that I found most challenging when starting at UIC, I now find the most rewarding and engaging - and that is, striving to meet the individual needs and concerns of such a diverse clientele. When I meet a client for the first time I never know if I'll be assisting someone experiencing anxiety, grief, work stress, relationship issues, or any other combination of topics. I truly value the trust that clients offer me to support them on their unique journey, and it's a privilege to serve such a huge cross-section of the community. This work keeps me motivated to continually engage in personal reflection and professional development.



On a slightly different note, counselling can sometimes be an isolating profession, but having the team of clinicians and supportive admin staff at UIC means I have access to supervision and consultation, thought-provoking conversations about theory and modalities, and recommendations on resources and trainings. I also get my much-needed daily dose of genuinely enjoyable, and often humorous, casual conversation at the office.....**Cheryl Close, MA, CCC**



***In 2019, UIC had 648 new client activations while in 2020 there were 544 and in 2021 there were 583, for a total of 1775 new intakes in 3 years.***



A year and a half ago I made a decision to make a change – I took a position with Upper Island Counselling and haven't looked back. An ambitious and idealistic much younger version of me completed graduate training in clinical forensic psychology and jumped right into working with really complex clients in some pretty gritty settings. For over a decade that work really filled my bucket. However, I began to recognize that although the work was rewarding, it was also starting to feel depleting. It was a heavy load, and I wasn't sure it was sustainable as a long-term career. In the interim, I'd had two children and my priorities had shifted. My family and I wanted to escape the big city, and personally and professionally I was ready to bring the intensity down a notch. We chose Campbell River both because we had family here, and because it is truly one of the most beautiful places on Earth.

I find being a counsellor fulfilling for so many reasons. As a person who values connection, and finds the individual paths we walk so interesting, I feel privileged at the opportunity to bear witness to my clients' personal journeys, and for the chance to walk alongside them for a time. As a counsellor at Upper Island Counselling there is diversity in both the clients I work with and the issues they bring to the table. This keeps me on my toes and challenges me in just the right measure. A year and a half ago I made a decision to make a change — today I'm so grateful that I did.....**Holly Kleban, MC, CCC**

**What is an EFAP?** An employee and family assistance program (EFAP) is a service designed to assist employees who are experiencing personal and job-related problems that affect general health and well-being, coping, and work.

An EFAP provides assessment, short term counselling, referral to appropriate agencies, and the promotion of wellness through various programs and activities. Employee participation is voluntary and programs are completely confidential.

**Why have an EFAP?** Each of us faces a variety of challenges and problems in our daily lives. While most difficulties can be resolved personally, some problems persist over a period of time, either constantly or intermittently. When these problems become too much to handle, they can affect personal happiness, family relationships, performance at work and general health. Help in dealing with these problems can result in higher job satisfaction and performance, increased self-esteem, improved personal and interpersonal relationships, better coping skills and reduced sick leave.

**What issues will an EFAP deal with?** Upper Island Counselling welcomes ANY issue including;

- physical/mental illness/injury
- relationship issues
- substance misuse
- depression and anxiety
- grief and bereavement
- workplace problems
- stress
- parenting/kids
- wellness/balance

Early identification and pro-active intervention and prevention is the key for an effective EFAP.

---

## Additional Resources - Online Workshops Available Through Achieve Centre for Leadership

### **Managing Mental Health in the Workplace**

Live Virtual Workshops: June 16, 10am-1pm CDT or October 20, 9am-4pm CDT

This workshop provides a roadmap to help managers participate in conversations with employees who may require support when experiencing difficulties related to mental health.

Some of the Topics Included:

- Employer Responsibilities and Rights
- Signs and Symptoms of Mental Health Concerns
- How to Approach Someone About a Mental Health Concern
- Return-to-Work Strategies
- Best Practices for Workplace Mental Health

---

### **Leadership and Culture – How to Create a Workplace Where People Like to Work**

Live Virtual Workshops: June 1, 10am-1pm CDT or October 4, 10am-1pm CDT

Based on our book, The Culture Question, this workshop provides a guide for how every organization can increase employee engagement and become a great place to work.

---

### **Mental Health Awareness and Support**

Live Virtual Workshops: Jul 26, 2022 (10:00 AM - 1:00 PM Central Time)

Mental health concerns will directly impact one in every five people. The remaining four will know a friend, family member, co-worker, or acquaintance that struggles with their mental health. Given this prevalence, it is essential that people build capacity to support those with mental health concerns because early identification and support typically lead to continued well-being.

**LEARN MORE**

<https://ca.achievecentre.com/workshops/>