



# BC Epilepsy Society

## BCES Newsletter NOVEMBER 2018

**Improving Lives. Inspiring Courage.**

**INSIDE: Brain in Mind Education Day, Veterans & Epilepsy AND MORE!**

## Brain in Mind Education Day

To share knowledge on topics of interest related to epilepsy, the BC Epilepsy Society, in partnership with LivaNova, hosted Brain in Mind Education Day, a free educational event on Sunday November 4th at the Burnaby campus of Simon Fraser University (SFU).

First, Cameron Finlay from LivaNova presented about Neuromodulation VNS Therapy. Participants enjoyed getting to learn about the various treatment options for epilepsy, including medications, the Ketogenic Diet, brain surgery, CBD, and the VNS therapy. He also went over what it means to have drug-resistant epilepsy and how the VNS therapy could impact the lives of people with drug-resistant epilepsy.

Participants were then treated to the musical stylings of Joshua Wood, a Vancouver-based signed recording artist, singer, and songwriter, who recently came off a Canada-wide tour. In between songs in his set, Joshua discussed being the child of a parent with epilepsy and living with and overcoming depression. He also talked about how he became involved with the BC Epilepsy Society and how much he believes in the work done by the BC Epilepsy Society.

Next, Chris Lal, our Epilepsy Peer Support Lead, discussed how important his support networks are in the treatment of his epilepsy and for his mental health and well-being. He also mentioned our [Peer Support](#) program and urged participants living with epilepsy to reach out to us for support.

After this, Sonia Ali, our Program Coordinator, talked about our [Partners in Teaching](#) program and going to schools throughout BC to provide seizure first aid training to teachers and to present epilepsy awareness workshops for teachers and students. Sonia also gave a presentation on seizure first aid and safety for the various types of seizures associated with epilepsy, which participants found incredibly practical and valuable.

To finish off the day, Kim Davidson, our Executive Director, took to the stage to mention some of our other programs and services, including our [BC Epilepsy Parents Network](#) support groups for parents of children with epilepsy; our [Epilepsy Friends Forever](#) program for children, youth and

adolescents with epilepsy; the [Brain in Mind Club](#), the first neurology club at SFU sponsored by the BC Epilepsy Society; and our ["I AM A VOICE" Campaign](#) to promote awareness of epilepsy in the community.

We hope that the information shared at Brain in Mind Education Day increased the knowledge base of participants and will assist people to be voices for epilepsy in their communities.

Videos of the presentations from Brain in Mind Education Day will be shared on our website and social media shortly, so stay tuned!



## Remembrance Day is November 11th: Veterans & Epilepsy

Veterans with epilepsy are an underrepresented demographic of people with epilepsy. In fact, veterans have been shown to have a proportionately higher risk of developing epilepsy than the general public, with nearly half of all veterans with head trauma developing epilepsy within their lifetime. As Remembrance Day is close approaching on November 11th, the BC Epilepsy Society

hopes to promote public awareness of the impact of epilepsy on the lives of veterans and to provide support to these veterans with epilepsy to live full, productive and successful lives.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is the leading and most common form of injury in men and women in the military. TBI occurs when a person's brain is physically injured, usually by sudden force; with men and women in the military, this usually occurs due to a concussive blast or explosion.

TBI is often undiagnosed or underdiagnosed because the damage by TBI is internal and there may be no visible head wound. Additionally, men and women in the military tend to underreport mild TBI to avoid removal from combat situations/active duty. This is why early diagnosis and treatment are important, as well as a discussion on the risks of TBI and head trauma.

TBI and head trauma increases the chances of developing epilepsy. Nearly half of all wounded veterans with TBI will develop epilepsy in their lifetime. Post-Traumatic Epilepsy (PTE) is a form of epilepsy that is caused by TBI. If you have suffered a TBI and think that you could be experiencing seizures, you are encouraged to see a health care professional for a proper diagnosis.

In the United States, the [US Department of Veteran Affairs Epilepsy Centers of Excellence \(ECoE\)](#) provide epilepsy evaluation and care for veterans with epilepsy. The BC Epilepsy Society urges the same kind of support for epilepsy in the Veteran Affairs Canada health care system and for a national coordination of epilepsy clinical care for veterans.

For information, you can contact the BC Epilepsy Society at 604-875-6704 and [info@bcepilepsy.com](mailto:info@bcepilepsy.com) You should also visit the [Veteran Affairs Canada website](#) to find your local Veteran Affairs Canada office for resources and support.



# Chalet Lights Charity 2018



*Michael Iwasaki 2017*

The Ribalkin Viau family is at it again – covering their roof, gardens, gutters, railings and driveway in thousands upon thousands of lights, blow-up displays, Christmas decorations and holiday cheer. Check out Chalet Lights, an awe-inspiring Christmas lights display at 4967 Chalet Place in North Vancouver.

The proposed date that the lights will go up is December 2nd, 2018 at 7:00 PM. You will be able to see the lights on after that daily from 5:30 PM to 11:00 PM. The lights will be shut down on January 6th, 2019 at 11:00 PM.

From 2010 to 2017, Chalet Lights Charity has raised \$96,919.99 and 951 bags of groceries. Last year they were able to raise \$31,667.61 and 182 bags of groceries. This year, they hope to beat that number and raise \$35,000 and 250 bags of groceries.

Thank you to the Ribalkin/Viau family for their generous support in accepting donations for their chosen charities – the BC Epilepsy Society is grateful to be one!

For more information about Chalet Lights, including driving directions and information on how to donate, please click [here](#).

## **BC Epilepsy Parents Network Sessions Have Started!**

Parents of children with epilepsy comprise a significant portion of our membership. Through our work with people living with epilepsy in BC and their families, we have received feedback that there is interest in a support group for parents of children with epilepsy.

The BC Epilepsy Society is excited to announce that we have recently launched the BC Epilepsy Parents Network (BCEPN), which are support groups for parents of children with epilepsy. Find out more [here](#).

We held our very first BCEPN session in October at our offices in Vancouver. Everyone that participated in the session had a great time and were grateful for the support provided.

The November session of BCEPN is coming up! We are currently offering two options for sessions, both taking place at our offices in Vancouver:

- The third Thursday of every month from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM
  - **Taking place Thursday November 22nd**
- The third Saturday of every month from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM
  - **Taking place Saturday November 17th**

If you are interested in participating in BCEPN, please email [sonia@bcepilepsy.com](mailto:sonia@bcepilepsy.com) at your earliest convenience to register. We would love to have you there!



## Epilepsy Friends Forever Sessions Have Started!

Epilepsy Friends Forever (EFF) was introduced as a way for children, youth, and adolescents with epilepsy to have fun and relax with their peers, with whom they share common experiences. These 2-hour sessions provide friendship, understanding, education and support in a fun and creative environment for youth with epilepsy. Find out more [here](#).

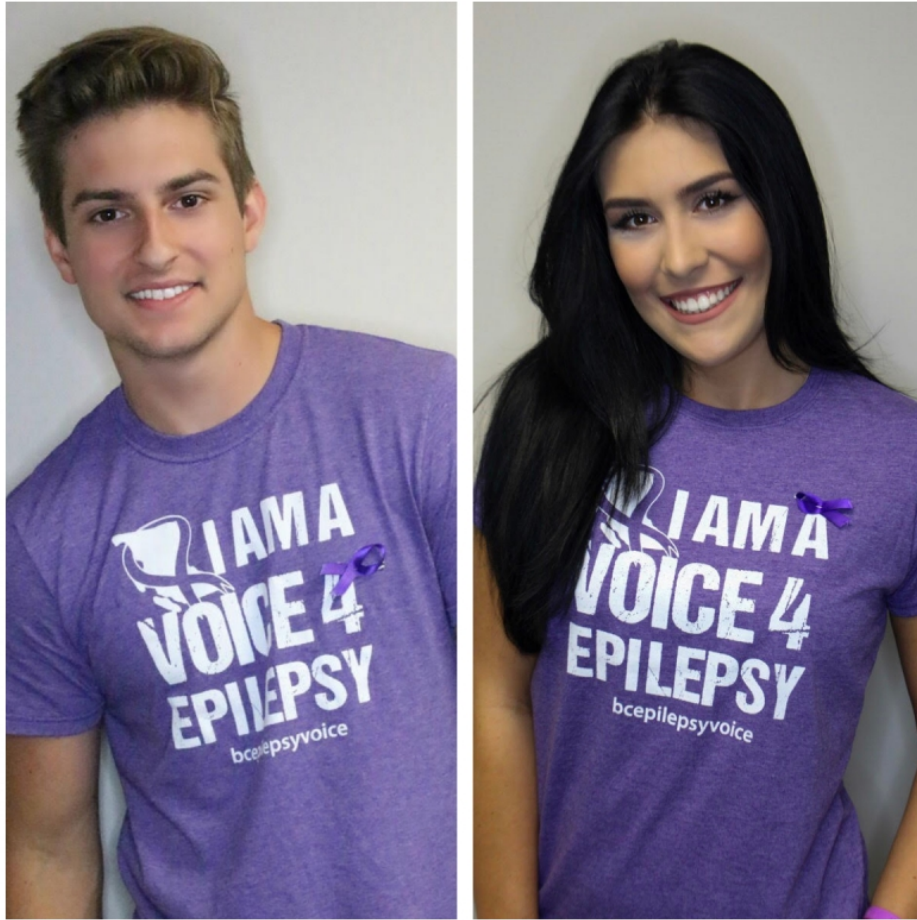
The EFF session for the month of November was recently held at our offices in Vancouver. Everyone that participated in the session had a great time getting to know others on similar journeys as them.

EFF is held on the first Saturday of every month, at our offices in Vancouver. **The December session will be held on Saturday December 1st.** The session times are as follows:

- 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM (Ages 7-9)
- 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM (Ages 13-15)
- 2:30 PM to 4:30 AM (Ages 10-12)

If your child is interested in participating in EFF, please email [sonia@bcepilepsy.com](mailto:sonia@bcepilepsy.com) at your earliest convenience to register. We would love to have them there!

## Get Your Christmas Shopping Done at the BC Epilepsy Society Store!



Christmas is less than 8 weeks away and many of us have probably already started to make our Christmas lists and begin shopping for our loved ones.

If there are people on your Christmas list who are impacted by epilepsy, what better way to show them how much you care than by giving them an epilepsy awareness gift?

If that sounds like something you would love to do but you don't know where to find a product like that, we know just the store for you! Check out the BC Epilepsy Society Store, our new online store that features our "I AM A VOICE" t-shirts!

A great way to spread Christmas cheer is to give the gift of epilepsy awareness to your loved ones who are impacted by epilepsy because they will truly appreciate the chance to wear their support for epilepsy! They will also love the fact that 100% of the profits from the sales of these t-shirts go directly to supporting people living with epilepsy!

You can purchase "I AM A VOICE" t-shirts from the BC Epilepsy Society Store [here](#) for everyone on your Christmas list! Happy Christmas shopping!

**Our mailing address is:**

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