

Transportation

Participants must provide your own transportation.

Meals

All meals are provided. While the fare tends to be simple, it is nevertheless nutritious and tasty. When eating at the hostel, participants will be served a hot meal prepared by our staff. When circumstances allow, participants will eat one meal at one of the many soup kitchens on the Eastside in order to allow them to truly experience what life is like when you are homeless, and/or an addict.

What to bring?

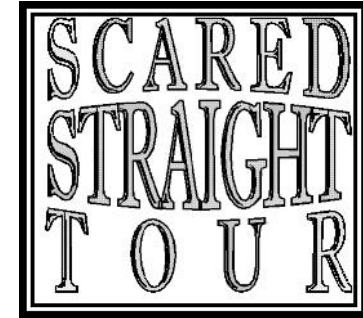
Each participant should bring comfortable clothing appropriate for the weather and the time or year they are visiting Vancouver. Be prepared that West Coast weather can be cold and wet. Participants should have proper footwear and SHOULD NOT have any open-toed shoes (such as sandals). Do not bring bedding (including sleeping bags) as it is provided by the hostel and will not be allowed in the rooms. Do, however, bring a towel along with any personal hygiene products. Participants are strongly encouraged to leave jewellery, cell phones, personal music devices, cameras and expensive clothing at home as theft is common on the Eastside.

Participants are also encouraged to bring food and clothing donations to hand out to the residents of the Downtown Eastside who are homeless and hungry. Please ensure that all clothing is clean and in good condition and all food must be easy to chew (many homeless people don't have any teeth and find it painful to eat things that are hard to chew).

COST

The program fee is \$325 and includes accommodations, meals, the tour itself, a t-shirt and aftercare support and monitoring of the participants. Chaperons are charged \$125 to come on the tour.

A 50% deposit is required to formally book a tour. Minimum group size is 12 (smaller groups can join other groups to make up the difference) and groups are required to provide chaperons (from 2-4 chaperons depending on the size of the group) to help supervise the group.



TO REGISTER

Simply contact the Scared Straight Program at
867-695-3012

Email: info@scaredstraighttour.com

For additional information:

Visit our website at www.scaredstraighttour.com



**A Drug and Alcohol Prevention
Program for Youth**

Contact information
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About the Scared Straight Program

The Scared Straight Tour is a program where we take youth (ages 13 and up) into Vancouver's Downtown Eastside to give them a reality check in terms of where they could wind up if they abuse drugs and alcohol. The tour lasts approximately 36 hours. Participants should be prepared for the fact that the agenda is very full and there is very little downtime other than a few hours on Day 2.



What will the kids see on the tour?

In this program we hold nothing back. The program is designed to give youth a healthy dose of realism and educate them about the dangers of using drugs or alcohol. In order to do this we expose them to the harsh reality of being an addict and/or homeless person on the Downtown Eastside. During the tour, participants will walk around the Eastside and visit various agencies and organizations who provide services to the people in the area. They will see and interact with a variety of people including drug addicts (some who are using and others who are in recovery), homeless people, general residents, sex-trade workers, HIV patients, outreach workers, police officers, paramedics, etc. While participants often witness disturbing scenes such as addicts buying and using drugs, people living on the streets and sleeping in doorways, sex-trade workers plying their trade, they also get to hear over and over again, from practically everyone they meet, how their lifestyle is the result of experimentation with drugs and alcohol as a teenager.

How effective is the program?

The effects on the kids are very dramatic. Most kids who come on the tour leave with a new-found resolve to either stop using drugs or to never start. While the program is most effective with youth who are not into heavy use of mood-altering substances, many participants come away from the program seriously re-evaluating where their lives are heading. Several years after the program started, we are still hearing how past participants are staying clean and sober.

What about safety?

When we are touring the Eastside we always have at least 2 chaperons and 2 escorts (ex-addicts in recovery who are hired by the program to provide supervision and protection while the group is walking around). In addition to this, we always stay together in a large group ensuring that everyone is safe. While the Eastside is an area where crimes take place on a daily basis, large groups are safe as criminals are not interested in risking confronting a large group of people. Also, residents of this area are very supportive of the Scared Straight program as they do not want to see any kids wind up where they are now. When locals see a group of youth coming, they yell out that kids are in the area and for everyone to be on their best behaviour as they are very mindful of not wanting to traumatize the kids unnecessarily. Sponsors are responsible for providing chaperons to supervise the kids and ensure their participation.



Are all youth appropriate candidates for the program?

The answer is no. First and foremost, the individual must be open to the experience. A youth who is too deeply entrenched in the belief that he/she has nothing to learn, will only create difficulties as he/she may not cooperate with the directives of the chaperons who have the responsibility of ensuring everyone a safe and positive learning experience. In some cases, such youth may be allowed on the tour as long as they are accompanied by a parent, or adult, who will deal with any issues which may arise. All participants must be physically, mentally and emotionally able and willing to participate in the program.

Accommodations

Accommodations are provided by Hostelling International. Participants stay at one of their hostels (either English Bay or Jericho Beach). The hostels are very clean, safe, comfortable and far removed from the lifestyle of the Downtown Eastside.

About the founder of the program

The Scared Straight Tour was founded by Pierre Morais, an addiction specialist holding a Master's degree in Counselling Psychology and is a registered Social Worker in the province of BC. He has worked since 1997 as an addiction counsellor in various clinics and schools on Vancouver Island. He is considered an expert on crystal meth, has served as co-chair for the BC Association of Social Worker Provincial Addiction Committee and travels throughout the province to give presentations on addiction, crystal meth and the Scared Straight Program.