

- [f Share](#)
- [t Tweet](#)
- [in Share](#)
- [g+ Share](#)

[Share](#)

- [f](#)
- [t](#)
- [in](#)
- [g+](#)

[Click here to see a web copy of this email](#)

BURNABY BEACON

FRIDAY, MAY 21

Good morning, Burnaby!

Happy Friday! It *is* Friday, right? Listen, this time travel business—it's finicky, and you don't always stick your landings. Anyway, I've [travelled here from the year 1990](#) to tell you this: I got my first dose yesterday—2 days ago in your ~*future*~ time—and I am officially a Pfizer boy, or as the kids call it, a fizzyboi. Yes, they definitely do call it that, and no, you can't look it up. Just trust me. I am cool; I know these things. I *am*. *I'm cool*. Whatever. Anyway, unlike some friends and family, I have been lucky enough to escape with only a slightly sore arm.

— **Dustin Godfrey, reporter**

HAVE A STORY BURNABY NEEDS TO DIG IN TO?

TIPS@BURNABYBEACON.COM

**TODAY'S
EDITION:**

GEN Z
VACCINATIONS

YOUTH AND
GANGS

ANTI-MASKER
ASSAULT



British Columbians aged 12-17 can now get vaccinated with Pfizer—and some, who spoke to the Beacon, couldn't be happier. 🇨🇦 Shutterstock

Burnaby highschoolers 'hyped' for COVID vaccines

Vaccinations are now open for British Columbians aged 12-17

Watch out, world—Gen Z is coming. (For their shots, that is.)

BC has released its updated vaccine rollout plan to include 12-17 year olds after Health Canada approved the Pfizer vaccine for the age group.

Those who are registered should be receiving invitations already, but if you haven't gotten one or don't have a personal health number, you can call the province's vaccination hotline at 1-833-838-2323. Teenagers can also tag along with their parents to their existing appointments to get vaccinated.

Meanwhile, teenagers in Burnaby are already booking and receiving their vaccines.

17-year-old Burnaby Central student Meghan Unadkat got hers Thursday morning.

"It just makes me feel safer, especially because I'm still going to school. It's not online for me. And then I'm also going to work."

Unadkat works at Starbucks and said she's felt a little uncomfortable over the past year dealing with customers who can be "careless" sometimes.

"We have plexiglass and stuff up. But you have those customers that want to argue everything and—I have my mask on, but sometimes they will argue it and they come closer, and then you just panic a little," she said.

"So yeah, when I heard I was eligible, I was like, OK, I've got to get on this really quick."

Burnaby North Secondary student Haleluya Hailu, who's also 17, told Burnaby Beacon she is beyond excited to get her shot next week. Her friend group began receiving text messages to book their appointments Wednesday morning. Some of them have already received it.

"I'm just so hyped to be able to go out in public and have that extra [protection], as well as a mask. It's so amazing," Hailu said.

Hailu works as a day camp counsellor during the summer, and she's relieved she's got a chance to get vaccinated before heading to that job.

"[I was worried], 'what if I don't get vaccinated before I have to go back to work because I [work with] little kids. And it's an amazing job. I love working with kids ... but also the younger ones aren't getting vaccinated like this. And we all love kids, but they get sick so easily."

BC's back-to-school plan has focused somewhat on the theory that kids aren't affected as badly by COVID as adults. There hasn't been widespread consensus yet on the role played by children below 12 in COVID transmission, but a member of the Ontario Science Advisory Table said in November [older kids play a role "comparable" to adults](#). Putting aside the fact that Hailu is nearly an adult, she said her personal experience in getting COVID earlier this year actually taught her to be more cautious—in spite of the fact that she didn't have severe illness.

"I did notice firsthand—me and my brother had no symptoms, right? And it freaks me out in that sense. Imagine how many people are walking around everyday and not realizing that they're probably getting other people sick," she said.

It's been a challenging year for Hailu's class. They're graduating this year, and she hopes to go to college in Nelson before transferring to Berklee College of Music in Boston a year later.

Hailu said she had an easier course load, but others, who had pushed some of their mandatory classes and had to take them this year, were forced to do them in condensed 10-week intervals. Burnaby North's hybrid program has students doing online classes every other afternoon.

And students who were in those afternoon classes online had a tougher time staying alert and attentive, Hailu said. At the beginning of the school year, she was eager to get back to in-person classes.

"At first I was like, 'I can't wait to see people again.' So I went right back in September, and then I got back into class, and it was like COVID notification, COVID notification, like oh my God. Especially in November, I think especially with the cold weather when you couldn't eat lunch outside," she said.

Unadkat is in Grade 11. She said they had "a few cases every now and then" at Central, but for the most part, her friends and classmates were good about wearing masks and keeping up their safety measures.

Central is also under a hybrid system, which means Unadkat heads home to Zoom Secondary every Tuesday and Friday at 2:30.

"Grades wise, I like being in school [in person], because it's easier to focus. It's easier to just get things done. But for the safety part of it, I'd go online full time, if I could," Unadkat said.

She's hopeful that with more people of her age group getting vaccinated, she can have the Grade 12 year that resembles something normal—with grad ceremonies, proms, and celebrations.

"This year, I heard they're not getting anything. That's rough, right? Because everyone looks forward to it. I've heard from a few people that, if we keep going with these vaccines and get everything done, at least we'll have a graduation. I don't know about a prom or anything. But I'm hoping I get to walk across the stage."

Hailu's got her vaccine appointment booked for next Monday. Her friends have told her their arms hurt a lot afterwards—but she's got what she calls a "very teenager" remedy ready to try out.


"Somebody realized if you exercise your arm after getting your vaccination, your arm hurts less. So there's a bunch of people on TikTok swinging their arms around right after they get their shot."

—By Srushti Gangdev



FEATURE STORY



Burnaby RCMP mentioned the need for more police supports but Upkar Tatlay says there must be a focus on mentorship.  Shutterstock

Grassroots mentorship missing from discourse around youth and gangs

A Burnaby RCMP community meeting emphasized more resources but one youth advocate says a "deep 1-on-1 engagement of mentorship" needs to be bolstered

A Tuesday evening public meeting hosted by Burnaby RCMP regarding recent gang activity in the city had police addressing public questions around whether they need more support and resources to prevent and put a stop to the violence.

The session came after 2 fatal shootings in the city within the past month.

On May 8, 19-year-old Blerton Dalipi, also known as Toni, was killed near a vape shop on 6th Street. 20-year-old Ahmed Riyaz Tahir was arrested in connection with Dalipi's death and he was charged with 1st-degree murder. Authorities have confirmed that both Dalipi and the suspect had previous criminal affiliations.

On May 13, 23-year-old Jaskeert Kalkat [was shot and killed](#) in the parking lot at Market Crossing Burnaby. Kalkat was known to police. 2 others associated with Kalkat—a man and woman in their 20s—sustained serious injuries and were transported to hospital. The incident was confirmed to be gang-related and was reportedly in retaliation for another deadly shooting on May 9 at the Vancouver International Airport.

The general consensus from officers who spoke during Tuesday's meeting was that an increase of resources and funding were needed to add "more boots on the ground" to deal with the ongoing conflict

"I've been doing policing for almost 33 years, so I've been absolutely looking for a policing Santa Claus ...," stated Insp. Kathy Hartwig of Burnaby RCMP.

"I'm going to speak from my gut, I would say that if you ask police leaders and police officers, I believe we always believe we need more boots on the ground, as we call it."

The statement came after Burnaby city council recently approved a budget that called for [a 2.8% increase](#) in funding to its local RCMP detachment for this year and projected increases of 3.4%, 2.7%, 2.4%, and 2.2% up to 2025. In a previous interview with the Beacon, Mayor Mike Hurley said the funding was needed to deal with a growing population and issues like gang activity.

Hartwig also commented on the role of school liaison officers, after she was asked a question about the "doing away" of the program in the New Westminster and Vancouver school districts.

"I 100% believe that the school program is effective," she said. "I believe exposing the police that interact with elementary students and secondary students in our day-to-day life as operational police officers is good for the

youth and good for us."

While Burnaby RCMP reaffirmed its position to bolster its own supports, little has been mentioned in recent police press conferences and community sessions about the importance and the meaningful impact grassroots, community-based work, and mentorship have on at-risk youth.

During a May 14 press conference, Burnaby Beacon asked Burnaby RCMP Supt. Graham de la Gorgendiere what community-based programs—that were not police-oriented—were being bolstered in the wake of heightened violence and the younger ages of youth getting involved in gangs in the city. He did not provide specifics.

"I know it's important for us to work with community partners. For us, we work with the school district," he said.

"I think any program that's going to keep our youth focused on positive endeavours, whether that be youth sports, arts, anything that's going to be focused on sort of the outcome there and be a positive part of society is important. So I would say all those programs are important."

During Tuesday's community meeting, Sgt. Frank Jang with the Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) said while efforts like the school liaison programs and afterschool programs are needed "desperately", there are "a small percentage of these kids" who are "committed to self-destruction and destruction of others."

"The only answer is to put them in jail for as long as we can," stated Jang.

"The deception and the lure of easy money is just a seduction that they can't overcome and so... there's going to be no amount of goodwill, after-school programs, and mommy and daddy trying to do their best and siblings and friends trying to talk them out of it."

This is something that Upkar Singh Tatlay, the Surrey-based founder and executive director of non-profit Engaged Community Canada Society, said was "deeply painful to hear."

Tatlay said a shift needs to occur when it comes to valuing the importance of grassroots organizations that provide a "deep 1-on-1 engagement of mentorship" which he said, "has to be in touch with youth generationally, and culturally."

The youth programs with Engaged Community Canada Society start working with kids as young as 3, but Tatlay said that "at no point was [the age group] adjusted to prevent them from joining gangs."

"We bristle at even the mention of gangs, crime, and drugs. We do not permit that whatsoever; not those words. We do not operate with that lexicon," he said.

Tatlay explained that staying away from that kind of dialogue acts as a preventative measure that actually helps youth.

"It's been done and we were tired of seeing it, because your entire social and scholastic ecosystem is just imbued with this language and tone, constantly. You know, 'gangs are out there, we're talking to you because that's a problem in your community ... violence, that's a problem in your community.' Kids start hearing it from a very, very young age and they are hearing it from administrators, from police, from crime prevention experts, and speakers who walk into classrooms and just inundate our youth with this stuff."

Burnaby Beacon followed up with Jang on Thursday regarding his comments on youth. He said that he does not include high school students in his previous statement.

"When I was referring to the small percentage of young people ... the people I was thinking of when I said those comments are the people who are engaging in this tit-for-tat going back and forth [with] the gun violence and the killing right now," he said.

"So the youth in schools, I would say they don't fall under that category that I just described. I mean the youth in the schools ... you can change. When you're in high school, you can change. You've got enough life and you don't understand life well enough that you can change," he said.

In the follow-up discussion, Burnaby Beacon asked Jang what he thinks is missing when it comes to how to support at-risk youth who may be vulnerable to joining gangs.

"This discussion is as old as dirt," he said. "It's not a simple solution ... that is a loaded question," he said.

Jang said that he doesn't think that "we should just focus on cops as the only tool to deter young people from this lifestyle."

He said he is a proponent of there being mentorship programs with professionals within the community and he understands that kids need other avenues of making connections with positive role models.

"I think we should bring in professionals in the community and come into the school and ... even do a 1-on-1, 1-on-3, 1-on-5 mentoring," he said.

"I think when we're talking about steering kids away from a serious lifestyle, a high-risk lifestyle, I think you need to occupy them and help them develop a dream and a healthy aspiration and that involves non-police people coming in."

But Tatlay emphasized that the mentors working with kids need to build deep and long-lasting relationships with them and that requires time and commitment.

"What I can tell you is that those youth [who have come into our programs]—they had deeply connected relationships with us," he said, adding that younger mentors allow for youth to bond with someone they can see themselves becoming.

"Those [mentors] are way stronger than I am. Because a child can look at someone who is 22 and say 'man, that's not that far removed from where I am and so I can do that too. I can walk a different path,'" he said.

"And it's not necessarily different because we've been schooling our community from 3 to 4-years-old. This is who you are. You are an amazing child and you have such an amazing path ahead of you. You have so many opportunities to do great things. And not once is gangs, drugs, or violence mentioned to them."

—By Simran Singh, with files from Dustin Godfrey

BURNABY BULLETIN



Cruise ships to bypass BC: Both houses of Congress have passed a bill that, if signed by US President Joe Biden, will allow cruise ships between the Pacific Northwest and Alaska to skip BC ports while Canada's temporary ban on cruise ships is in place. The bill, which temporarily overrides a law requiring cruise ships to stop in BC ports between Alaska and Washington, is set to expire either next March or sooner, when Canada's federal government lifts its ban on cruise ships. That's currently set for February 2022. The move will not affect BC's cruise ship tourism industry for the time being, but BC Liberals have raised fears Congress will make the change permanent. Their concerns have been, to some degree, validated by Alaska Rep Don Young, who [posted a confrontational tweet](#) yesterday morning, appearing to imply the bill could be made permanent.



Anti-masker allegedly assaults store employee: Police are seeking a man accused of assaulting employees of a store on 1st Ave just east of Boundary Rd after he was asked to put on a mask. The man is shown, in a [video posted to the Burnaby RCMP's website](#), immediately after the alleged assault, as he leaves the shop. According to police, he was asked why he wasn't wearing a mask before he "attacked the employee and continued punching him in the

head and back when he fell to the ground." Another employee reportedly intervened, and the man threatened to kill that employee with a knife. On his way out, the man stole a pair of bolt cutters and smashed the glass front door. After leaving, he charged at an employee with the bolt cutters. The suspect is described as Caucasian with a blonde buzz cut, and he was wearing a dark-grey hoodie, blue jeans and dark running shoes. "This was an unprovoked attack and very scary for everyone involved," said Cpl Mike Kalanj of the Burnaby RCMP.

👉 **Protester suing Hilton Metrotown:** A protester whose foot was run over by a bus is suing the Hilton Metrotown and Lufthansa over the incident. The protester was on the picket line with the hotel's workers, who have been locked out of the hotel amid a labour dispute over the firings of dozens of employees. Unite Here Local 40, which represents the workers, wants the hotel to rescind the firings and instead lay the workers off so they can come back at their existing wages when the tourism industry resumes. Lufthansa, a German airliner, is continuing to put its crew members up at the hotel, and it was a bus full of Lufthansa staff that ran over the protester's foot. The union claims a security guard yelled "Run them over" just before the protester's foot was run over and posted a video of the incident. The lawsuit also names Charter Bus Lines of BC and Excalibur Security, and the protester is seeking damages, "including \$10,000 for pain and suffering, over the motives of the hotel, bus driver, and security for driving him over."

COVID-19 UPDATE (THURSDAY, MAY 20)

BC

- 357 new cases. Total 140,953
- 3 new deaths. Total 1,661
- 4,636 active cases (-179). 331 people in hospital (-9), 113 in ICU (-5)
- Rolling 7-day average of new cases is now 441 (-40).

FRASER HEALTH

- 210 new cases in Fraser Health (58.8% of BC). Total 82,179
- 2 new deaths (out of 3 in BC). Total 876
- 2,753 active cases (-149, 59.3% of BC).

- 181 people in hospital (-11, 54.6% of BC), 65 in ICU (-4, 57.5% of BC)

COVID-19 NEWS

- **Circuit breaker restrictions expected to be partly lifted**
Tuesday: The circuit breaker expires Monday night at midnight, and the province will present details on its reopening plan the next morning. Premier John Horgan wouldn't confirm whether that will include lifting the ban on indoor dining in restaurants. Provincial health officer Dr Bonnie Henry described the plan as a "dimmer switch", saying it will include gradual changes rather than reopening everything at once.
- **BC Teachers Federation calls for vaccine clinics in schools:**
The BCTF says schools have ample space to coordinate pop-up clinics for students, who would already be there. Henry said apart from the added resources, it would be impossible, to allocate clinics equitably to schools. She said families also often want to go together to get vaccinated, and said clinics are open long hours on weekends. "I'm thinking of those families for whom this will present a significant barrier to their children getting vaccinated. It's critical that we use an equity lens when it comes to public health," BCTF president Teri Mooring said on Twitter in response to that. "Some folks work multiple jobs, and aren't easily able to bring their kids to a clinic."
- **Outbreak declared at Burnaby long term care facility:** Fraser Health declared the outbreak at Chartwell Carlton Care Residence, which is in Cascade Heights, after 1 staff member and 1 resident tested positive for COVID. There are now outbreak control measures in place, including restrictions on visitation and movement within the facility, and enhanced cleaning and screening.



👁️ **Students' art published** - 5 grade 11 and 12 students from Burnaby had their art featured in an e-zine, titled [Leaving No One Behind](#): Voices of Changemakers and Unsung Heroes. The e-zine features work that has been and is being done on social justice and decolonization, and it features artwork from across the province. More on the artists and how they came to be published in the e-zine can be [found here](#).

👁️ **Pipeline treehouse tour** - An environmental group is holding tours, every Saturday from noon to 2 pm, of the Brunette River area where endangered hummingbirds nesting forced a work stoppage on the Trans Mountain pipeline in the area. Anna's hummingbirds were found nesting in the area, and construction on that section of the pipeline, which has been a focal point for activists opposing the pipeline, was halted until late summer. Find out more about [Protect the Planet Stop TMX's tours here](#).

👤 **Digital literacy** - The United Way is seeking to increase digital literacy among seniors and older adults with a year-long digital learning pilot project, noting the reliance on technology to retain social connections during the pandemic. The Burnaby Neighbourhood House is the participating agency locally, with other nonprofits participating throughout BC. For more information, visit the [United Way of the Lower Mainland's website](#).

🍗 **Eye-popping new restaurant** - If you live in southeast Burnaby and love fried chicken (who doesn't!?), you are in for a treat: Popeye's is opening its next Metro Vancouver location on Kingsway just before 10th Ave. And it's coming soon—like, next week soon! [According to Daily Hive](#), the location is tentatively set to open on Weds, May 26.



Sunlight peeking through the blossoms is a quintessential Burnaby view. 📷 Evan Chan / @platypus.arts

SUBMIT PHOTOS OR NOMINATE A RESIDENT:
NEWSLETTER@BURNABYBEACON.COM

HAVE NEWS, THOUGHTS, OR A STORY?
NEWSLETTER@BURNABYBEACON.COM

**Bringing the local
news to your inbox,
every weekday.**

burnabybeacon.com



Sent to: carrie.sera@burnabyschools.ca

[Unsubscribe](#)

Overstory Media Group, 101-524 Yates Street, Victoria, BC V8W 1K8, Canada

Email Marketing by ActiveCampaign