

## **Mental-health resource centre saluted**

The Vancouver Province

Thu 14 Aug 2008

Page: A18

Section: News

Byline: Cassidy Olivier

Source: The Province

As the mother of two teens who've battled mental illness, Keli Anderson knows how tough it can be to find help.

Nine years ago, when her then-10-year-old son became suicidal and was eventually diagnosed with bipolar disorder, Anderson said she would spend the greater part of her days on the phone in a desperate attempt to get in touch with the appropriate authorities.

"There was no place that I could go that had everything kind of compiled," said Anderson, executive director of the childhood mental-health group Families Organized for Recognition and Care Equality.

So it's not surprising that Anderson -- whose daughter also struggles with an anxiety disorder -- is a big supporter of the new mental-health centre at B.C. Children's Hospital, which will act as a one-stop shop for parents and youth in need of help for mental-health or substance-abuse problems.

"It is long overdue," she said.

Opened unofficially earlier this year, the Kelty Resource Centre connects families with the mental-health services and resources they require.

Dr. Jana Davidson, the acting medical director of mental-health programs at B.C. Children's, said the centre can be accessed in person, by phone or online, with a staff member on hand to answer questions, identify specific needs and point people in the right direction.

She said the relative anonymity of the service should help users overcome the stigmatization associated with mental health and facilitate early detection and treatment.

A recent study, conducted by Simon Fraser University for the Ministry of Children and Family Development, found that about 15 per cent of B.C. youth suffer from a mental-health disorder.

For more information, visit [www.bcmhas.ca/KeltyResourceCentre](http://www.bcmhas.ca/KeltyResourceCentre).