PCHS

HEALTH MAGAZINE

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CONTENT HIGHLIGHTS

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LETTER FROM THE CEO

Amandeep Kaur CEO, PCHS

Together in Fall - Reflecting on Partnerships and Priorities

As the vibrant colours of fall emerge, we welcome a season of renewal and reflection. September marks the start of the school year, a time of excitement and new possibilities for children and families. At PCHS, we are proud to have supported the children of newcomers and low-income families by providing essential school supplies. Our Newcomer Settlement Program staff also worked closely with families, educating them on Canada's school system. Ensuring that every child begins the school year on equal footing is part of our ongoing commitment to the well-being of our community.

On September 18, 2024, we held our Annual General Meeting, where we gathered with our valued members, partners, volunteers, the Board of Directors, and staff to reflect on the year's achievements. After the business meeting, we shared videos of client testimonials, which beautifully illustrated PCHS's holistic service delivery and highlighted our Integrated Holistic Service Delivery Model. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to all the clients who courageously shared their journeys to recovery, offering others an opportunity to learn from their experiences.

During the meeting, PCHS recognized 12 outstanding volunteers for their exceptional dedication and contributions across various programs. Their commitment embodies PCHS's spirit, and we are deeply grateful for their tireless efforts.

This year's Impact Report was a remarkable achievement, reflecting the collective hard work and dedication of all departments within PCHS. Each department played a crucial role in documenting the significant strides we have made in delivering holistic, culturally responsive care to our clients. The report highlights our progress, challenges, and the impact our programs have had on the community over the past year.

I would also like to extend a special thank you to our Information Technology Department, whose tireless efforts ensured the seamless execution of our hybrid Annual General Meeting. Their attention to detail in coordinating both in-person and virtual participation allowed us to engage with our members, partners, and stakeholders inclusively and efficiently, ensuring that everyone could participate, regardless of location.

September also brings World Alzheimer's Day, observed on September 21. This day serves as a reminder of the importance of awareness and support for individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's disease. At PCHS, we remain committed to raising awareness and providing culturally responsive care through our Caregiver Support, Respite, Behaviour Support, and Integrated Seniors Team.

On September 30, we observe Truth and Reconciliation Day, also known as Orange Shirt Day, to honour the survivors of residential schools, their families, and the children who never returned home. At PCHS, we stand in solidarity with Indigenous communities and commit to listening, learning, and working to address colonization's historical and present-day impacts. Together, we can create a society where fairness and equity are at the heart of everything we do, ensuring that everyone can thrive regardless of background or circumstance.

Wishing everyone a wonderful and healthy fall season!

PCHS 29th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On September 18th, 2024, PCHS proudly held its first hybrid 29th Annual General Meeting, bringing together community members, partners, and staff both in person and virtually. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the community partners, community members, and dedicated staff who attended and contributed to making this event a huge success. A special thanks goes to the staff who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure everything ran smoothly. We are excited to share that our 2023-2024 Impact Report is now available on our website, highlighting the incredible work we have accomplished together over the past year.

Our 2023-2024 Impact Report is Here!

Please click on the following image to view the report.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

By Arpan Gill, Nursing Student - SHPP Program

Every year, September 30th is observed as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, a day to honor the memory of the children who never returned from residential schools and to acknowledge the survivors, their families, and communities. It serves as a reminder of the tragic and painful history of residential schools and the continuing impacts on Indigenous peoples.

At PCHS we are committed to supporting Truth and Reconciliation by actively engaging in reflection, partaking in meaningful actions, and addressing the ongoing impacts to this community.

We recognize the importance of education and awareness initiatives to promote a deeper understanding of the history and legacy of residential schools. Working together to create equitable opportunities to empower Indigenous communities is important to the PCHS team. By fostering an environment of respect and inclusivity, we aim to contribute to the healing and reconciliation journey.

September 30th is also recognized as Orange Shirt Day, a movement started by the Indigenous community. Orange shirt day highlights the message that “Every Child Matters.”

It serves to draw attention the children lost and the effects on intergenerational trauma brought on by the tragedies of residential schools. The orange shirt represents the cultural loss, erosion of identity, and stripped dignity that Indigenous children endured during their time in these schools.

At PCHS, we encourage staff and community members to wear orange on Orange Shirt Day to honor residential school survivors and show solidarity with Indigenous peoples. This reflects our commitment to raising awareness and fostering understanding in the journey of reconciliation. Additionally, we have provided staff with events, resources, and trainings to stay informed about National Truth and Reconciliation Day, promoting an inclusive and compassionate community where every child matters.

Reference: https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/national-day-truth-reconciliation.html

WORLD ALZHEIMER'S DAY

By Jagdeep Kainth, Psychogeriatric Resource Consultant

Over 55 million people worldwide are living with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. World Alzheimer's Day, observed every year on September 21st, is a global initiative aimed at raising awareness and challenging the stigma surrounding these conditions. Increasing public awareness about Alzheimer's and dementia fosters better understanding and support for those affected by memory loss. Families and caregivers, when better informed, can more effectively navigate the unique challenges they face in providing care and support.

Early detection plays a critical role in improving patient outcomes and quality of life. Raising awareness encourages early diagnosis, allowing patients to access specialized care that can help improve memory retention, reduce challenging behaviors, and support greater independence in their homes.

The theme for Alzheimer's Day 2024, "Know Dementia, Know Alzheimer's," highlights the importance of raising awareness and understanding about these debilitating conditions. Dementia is not a specific disease but a general term used to describe a range of symptoms associated with cognitive decline, including memory loss, impaired reasoning, and difficulties with daily functioning. While Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia, there are various other types as well. Alzheimer's disease, a degenerative brain condition, leads to significant memory loss, cognitive decline, and impaired ability to perform daily tasks. It is important to note that dementia is not a normal part of aging.

Unfortunately, misconceptions persist, with some people believing that memory loss is just a normal part of growing older. This misunderstanding can prevent individuals from seeking the help they need. World Alzheimer's Day emphasizes the importance of education and the need to dispel harmful stereotypes, promoting the understanding that memory loss is a serious condition requiring specialized care.

There are everyday actions we can take to improve brain health, potentially lowering the risk of cognitive decline, including Alzheimer's and dementia. It's never too early or too late to take steps toward maintaining a healthy brain.

- **Stay Curious:** Keep your brain active by learning new skills, trying artistic activities, or taking up mentally stimulating hobbies. Challenging your mind can have both short-term and long-term benefits for brain health.
- **Exercise Regularly:** Physical activity that raises your heart rate and increases blood flow to the brain is key. Incorporate more movement into your daily routine, whether it's walking, dancing, or gardening.
- **Prevent Injuries:** Protect your head from injury, especially for older adults. Preventing falls is critical, and seniors should take steps to reduce the risk of falls.
- **Quit Smoking:** Smoking can increase the risk of cognitive decline, but quitting can lower that risk to the same level as nonsmokers. It's never too late to stop.
- **Manage Health Conditions:** High blood pressure and Type 2 diabetes can increase the risk of cognitive decline. Work with healthcare providers to manage these conditions through medication, healthy eating, and regular physical activity.
- **Eat Healthier:** A balanced diet rich in vegetables, lean proteins, and minimally processed foods can help reduce the risk of cognitive decline. Choose meals and snacks that are healthy, enjoyable, and accessible.
- **Prioritize Sleep:** Quality sleep is essential for brain health. Reduce screen time before bed, create a comfortable sleep environment, and address sleep issues such as sleep apnea by consulting a healthcare provider.

In conclusion, being informed about Alzheimer's disease and dementia, along with adopting preventive measures, can help maintain both physical and cognitive health. By taking action today, we can all contribute to a future with a better understanding of dementia and stronger brain health.

Newcomer Welcoming Week

PCHS celebrated Newcomer Welcoming Week for Newcomer Adults on Monday, September 16th, 2024, from 10:00am to 1:00pm EST.

The purpose of the event was to create awareness for newcomers regarding the services and resources that are available at PCHS. Not only did the newcomers become aware of various services, but they also got an opportunity to meet and greet staff from a wide range of Settlement Programs.

The event was set up in an interactive format where newcomers had the chance to speak with every staff member and the clients were in-turn encouraged to share their concerns and questions. Various program stations were created so that each station could provide information related to their program and answer subsequent questions. In addition, refreshments and promotional items were also provided to the newcomers.

For this event, activities such as information sessions, passport stamping, and raffle draw were organized. Many lucky participants won prizes and went back home with many useful resources within the community. This was a great event for networking and making new connections amongst the clients.

By: Kanwalpreet Kaur, Program Coordinator: Building Capacity Program

NEWCOMER YOUTH PROGRAM

YOUTH WELCOMING WEEK

On September 21, the Newcomer Youth Program celebrated Youth Welcoming Week with a lively and engaging event that drew in 15-20 newcomer youth for an afternoon filled with fun and creativity. The atmosphere was vibrant as participants enjoyed a delicious spread of food while diving into a variety of games. From testing their knowledge with Canadian trivia questions to playful rounds of Twister and Connect 4, the event was designed to encourage interaction and build camaraderie among the youth.

A standout feature of the day was the birdhouse painting activity, where participants tapped into their artistic flair and transformed simple wooden birdhouses into colorful expressions of their creativity. This hands-on project not only sparked their imaginations but also served as a wonderful icebreaker, allowing youth to bond over shared interests and experiences.

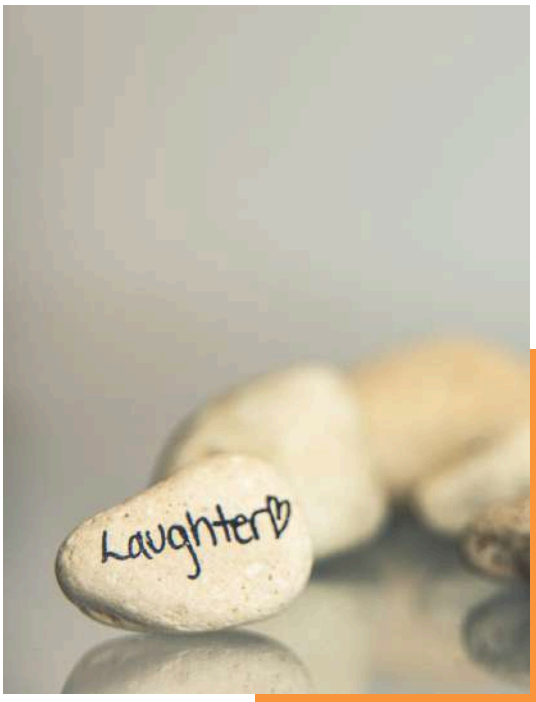
In addition to the games and painting, the event created a welcoming environment for newcomers to connect with one another, fostering conversations on diverse subjects and encouraging the exchange of stories. Overall, the Youth Welcoming Week event was a resounding success, providing a meaningful space for the youth to form friendships, build community ties, and enjoy a memorable day together.

By Disha Mehta, Youth Worker

Laughter Yoga Workshop

By Navdeep Kaur, CHA

The SHPP team held their second Laughter Yoga Workshop on September 4th, and it was a great success! The event began with refreshments, followed by an introduction to the origins and health benefits of laughter yoga. Participants engaged in various exercises, including rhythmic clapping, stretching and smiling, and concluded with a relaxing cool-down featuring breathing exercises.



This session introduced a new activity called "Five Senses," which is a helpful technique for grounding yourself and staying present when feeling anxious. The workshop also featured a group discussion where participants could share their feelings and build social connections. If you missed it, don't worry—the next laughter yoga workshop is scheduled for October 9th, 2024. For more information on the upcoming workshops, please refer to the flyer on page 18.

Paint the Night Away Workshop

By Ramanpreet Kaur, CHA

On September 12, 2024, we hosted an evening filled with creativity. The SHPP team welcomed nearly 30 participants from children to seniors, for a “Paint the Night Away” workshop. This was a great opportunity to play with colors and use creativity to design artwork. Additionally, we offered refreshments to keep everyone energized throughout the workshop.

The workshop started with an ice breaker to make community members comfortable and feel connected to the staff. This was followed by a brief presentation highlighting the therapeutic benefits of painting as a meditative activity rather than a competition. As calming music played in the background, participants selected from two images to express their creativity on canvas using paints and brushes.

Our team had the opportunity to see the participants' creative work, reflecting their enthusiasm and imagination. Many expressed their appreciation for the workshop and their interest in attending future sessions. The day concluded with group photos and warm farewells until the next workshop.

SHPP Team Attends "Be Well UTM"

By Fariha Abdul Muqeet, Preventative Care Specialist

On September 19th, the Sahara Health Promotion and Prevention (SHPP) team were invited to attend the Be Well UTM: Resource & Activity Fair, the largest annual wellness event held at the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) as a community partner. The fair showcased an incredible range of mental health and wellness resources, programs, and services available to the community, both on-campus and across the GTA.

In collaboration with over 40 resources and community partners, the event aimed to support holistic health and well-being of its student body. Our team engaged with the students and provided information about our program's three pillars: Diabetes education, Mental health and addictions, and Breast cancer education.

During our conversations, we shared important statistics and information about the prevalence of these health issues and emphasized the critical importance of prevention and early intervention. While Diabetes and Breast Cancer are chronic conditions primarily affecting adults, students showed a keen interest in learning about preventing and managing them, noting down information and taking pamphlets to share with their families. Many students shared how meaningful it was to see PCHS representing their community, highlighting the importance of culturally relevant health promotion initiatives. Several students also expressed interest in volunteering with the organization.

The entire fair was filled with energy as students engaged in a variety of creative wellness activities and games. There were self-care stations offering unique experiences like Dog Therapy, Henna, Massages, and Pressed Flower Art. A Photobooth added an element of fun, capturing memories of the day for the students and staff.

Our team had the opportunity to connect with many community partners who share our mission of fostering health promotion and prevention. We built many new connections with community partners and resources which would benefit the clients we serve. It was inspiring to witness the UTM's commitment to well-being, and we look forward to future collaborations and furthering our initiative to promote health.

BEHAVIOURAL ADDICTION

By: Akanska Sharma, Addictions Case Manager

Behavioural addictions refer to compulsive behaviors that individuals engage in repeatedly, despite negative consequences. Unlike substance addictions, behavioural addictions do not involve the consumption of psychoactive substances but instead revolve around activities such as gaming, internet use, gambling, and social media engagement. In recent years, behavioural addiction has become a growing concern among young people due to the rapid expansion of digital technologies, which provide constant stimuli and rewards.

Young people are particularly vulnerable to developing behavioural addictions because their brains are still in the process of maturation, especially in areas responsible for impulse control and decision-making (Casey, Jones, & Hare, 2008). The ubiquitous availability of internet-connected devices and the social nature of many addictive behaviors, like online gaming and social media use, amplify the risk for this population. Adolescents are more likely to engage in risky and impulsive behaviours, seeking immediate gratification, which makes them susceptible to addictive behaviours (Wegmann & Brand, 2016).

Internet addiction has become one of the most prevalent forms of behavioral addiction among youth. This condition involves excessive and uncontrollable use of the internet, often to the detriment of other important life activities, such as schoolwork, physical activity, and social relationships (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). Studies suggest that internet addiction can result in social isolation, depression, anxiety, and lower academic performance among adolescents (Yen, Ko, Yen, Chen, & Chen, 2009).

Video game addiction, also known as Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD), has gained attention due to its inclusion in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) as a condition requiring more research (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). IGD is characterized by persistent and recurrent gaming behaviour, leading to significant impairment in personal, social, and educational functioning. Research has shown that young males, in particular, are more prone to gaming addiction, driven by factors such as peer pressure, escapism, and the need for achievement in virtual environments (Cheng, Cheung, & Wang, 2018).

Behavioural addictions can have profound consequences on the mental health and well-being of young people. Excessive engagement in addictive behaviors often leads to increased stress, poor academic performance, social isolation, and disrupted sleep patterns (Griffiths, Kuss, & Demetrovics, 2014). Furthermore, there is a growing body of research showing that behavioral addictions are associated with comorbid mental health issues, such as anxiety, depression, and substance use disorders (Brand, Young, & Laier, 2014).

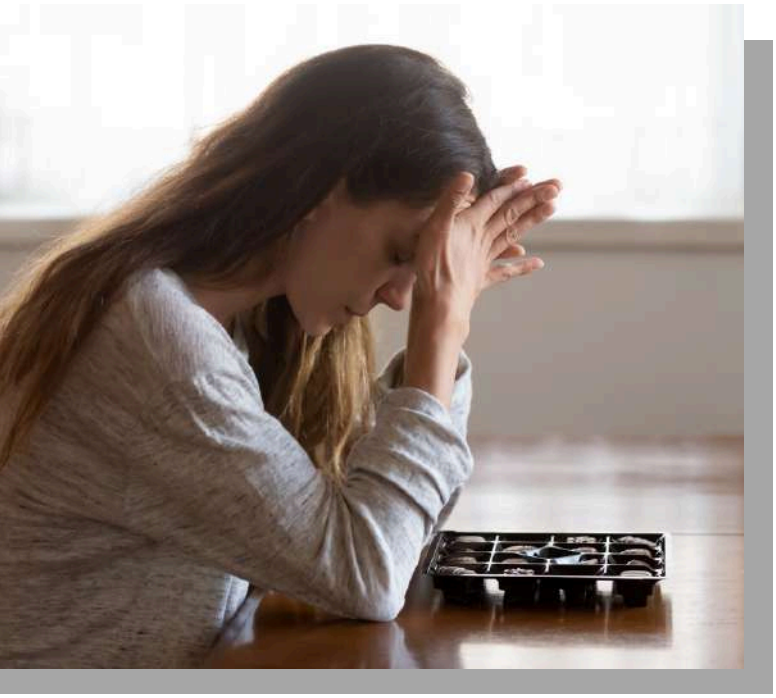
Prevention and intervention strategies for behavioural addiction often focus on education, awareness, and the development of self-regulation skills. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is one of the most widely used treatments, aiming to help individuals identify and change maladaptive thoughts and behaviours (King, Delfabbro, & Griffiths, 2010). Additionally, setting time limits on screen usage and promoting activities that engage young people in physical and social activities can help reduce the risk of addiction (Young, 2017).

Community Awareness Statement on Anxiety, Overthinking, and Opinion

By Brahmjot Dhillon, Case Manager - RRSL

Anxiety is a common mental health challenge that affects individuals from all communities regardless of their ethnic background, race, age, gender, etc. It is often described as persistent worry, fear, or nervousness, leading to overthinking, which is an excessive focus on potential problems or negative outcomes. While it's natural to feel anxious from time to time, chronic anxiety can disrupt daily life, relationships, and overall mental health and well-being.

Overthinking can create a cycle of negativity, where individuals become trapped in their thoughts, unable to move forward. This often leads to feelings of helplessness and frustration. However, it's essential to recognize that there is hope. Optimism plays a crucial role in counteracting anxiety and overthinking.



By fostering a positive outlook, we can shift our focus from what might go wrong to what can go right. This shift not only reduces anxiety, but also empowers individuals to take proactive steps toward their goals and move forward in life. Building resilience is the key. Here are a few strategies to cultivate optimism and manage anxiety:

1 Practice Mindfulness

Engaging in mindfulness techniques, such as meditation or deep breathing, can help ground you in the present moment and reduce overthinking.

2 Challenge Negative Thoughts

Identify and reframe negative thoughts into more balanced perspectives. This can help break the cycle of overthinking.

3 Set Realistic Goals

Focus on achievable objectives and celebrate small victories, which can build confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

4 Seek Support

Don't hesitate to reach out to friends, family, or mental health professionals for guidance & support.

Together, let's create a community that prioritizes mental health, fosters resilience, and embraces optimism. Always remember to move forward in life towards positive outcomes carried by hope & positive thinking.

Professional Development and Networking Forum

By Kanwalpreet Kaur, Program Coordinator - Building Capacity Program

A professional development and networking forum was recently organized by the Peel Newcomer Strategy Group (PNSG) funded by IRCC on September 25th and 26th, 2024. PCHS actively contributed to this forum throughout the coordinating and facilitating process. Kanwalpreet Kaur, Program Coordinator for the Building Capacity Program, co-moderated the event on day one. PCHS settlement staff attended the event, and two staff members also helped with the organization and execution of the event. The forum was attended by frontline settlement and employment staff across Peel and Halton Regions.

Through this capacity building forum, PCHS Settlement Staff had the opportunity to actively participate in the workshops and bring back the best practices from the forum to be shared with the other staff members. The staff gained immensely in terms of networking with other settlement counsellors and participating in the workshops.

Cafe and Shop Name Reveal

On September 27, 2024, PCHS and Peel Senior Link proudly revealed the name of their newly opened Café and Shop at Peel Manor Long Term Care Centre—*__Crossroads Village__*. This collaborative venture represents a unique space dedicated to fostering community engagement, providing seniors with a welcoming environment to connect and enjoy. The name reflects the vision of creating a vibrant meeting point for residents, staff, and visitors alike. We are thrilled and excited to embark on this journey, offering a blend of cultural inclusivity, social interaction, and meaningful services to enhance the lives of those in the long-term care facility.

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SAHARA HEALTH PROMOTION AND PREVENTION (SHPP)

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Laughter Yoga Workshops
Mindfulness & Joy

Laughter Yoga Workshops

Due to overwhelming demand, we are thrilled to announce that we will now be hosting laughter yoga workshops every month! Our workshops offer an incredible opportunity to unwind, de-stress, and embrace the joy of laughter. Engage in a series of lively laughter exercises, rhythmic clapping, and deep breathing techniques that are not only fun but also great for your well-being.

Laughter exercises

Meditation

Rhythmic Clapping

Light refreshments

Workshops will be held on the following dates:

August	September	October	November
07	04	09	06
Wednesday	Wednesday	Wednesday	Wednesday

Unit 109, 50 Sunny Meadow Blvd,
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2:00PM - 3:30 PM

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Scan this QR code to register!

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For detailed information: supportline@pchs4u.com

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WOMANYA

WOMEN ONLY

Celebrating Women

18+

Join us for a Women's Wellness Event to empower your mind, body, and spirit as we commemorate Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Discover self-care tools, connect with others, and embrace a healthier lifestyle.

Breast Cancer Presentation

Breast Cancer Risk Assessment

Bingo & Other Fun Activities

Event Giveaways

01 | Oct

Tuesday | 2024

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

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Breast Cancer Awareness Event

SATURDAY
19 OCTOBER, 2024
11:00 AM - 2:30PM

Let's come together to support breast cancer awareness and commemorate Breast Cancer Awareness Month! Empower yourself with knowledge, promote early detection, and make a difference in women's health!

Unit # 109, 50 Sunny Meadow Blvd, Brampton

Guest Speaker

On-site Breast Cancer Risk Assessment

Refreshments

Vendors

For more information, please call

437-243-3735

WELCOME

NEW STAFF

Rashvir Gill
Case Manager,
Mental Health

Ishika Ishika
Book-Keeper

Seart Gill
Family Worker,
OAP

Oksana Bobrova
Youth Worker,
Ukrainian Speaking

Client Testimonial

"I have had diabetes for 25 years; this is the first time I heard someone deliver it in easy-to-understand Punjabi. The highlight of the presentation was understanding how many calories there are in our cultural foods, and how important it is to eat a healthy balanced diet. The team also distributed pamphlets in all south Asian languages which our group appreciated. I think it is very important to look at diabetes through our culture's perspective, as we south Asians have the highest rate of diabetes, and we need to change our diets and lifestyle to be healthy."

22ND ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY GALA

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