

SPRING/SUMMER 2024

Canadian Burn Survivors Community



What's Inside?

- Past & Upcoming Events
- Wellness
- Important Information
- How to Contact Us

Welcome

A message from our Chair

Hi everyone, welcome to our 2024 Spring-Summer Newsletter. 2024 promises to be a very exciting year for our burn community as we finally are emerging from the pandemic.

We had a virtual conference on May 25th and we continue with our popular bi-weekly Wednesday chats. Thank-you to all our volunteer board members for all their work to ensure our bi-weekly Wednesday Chats that help burn survivors, family, and caregivers with peer support.

The next in-person Canadian Burn Survivor Conference is scheduled for April 30 to May 3, 2025 in Victoria, BC as hosted by the BC Professional Firefighters Burn Fund.

Please enjoy the newsletter and thank-you our Communications Committee Chair Victoria Vass and her team for all their work putting it together.



Michael Cook
CBSC Chair

Canadian
Burn Survivors
Community

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Upcoming Conferences (2024 & 2025)

Mamingwey Burn Society Conference

October 24-26, 2024
Winnipeg, Manitoba



Join us in Winnipeg and be part of a place where every journey is honored, and truly, where We All Belong.

Register Now!
www.mamingweyburnsocietyconference.ca

Join Us We All Belong

Mamingwey Burn Survivor Conference
October 24 to 26, 2024

Canadian Burn Survivors Conference

April 30-May 3, 2025
Victoria, British Columbia



Financial Support is AVAILABLE



www.canadianburnsurvivors.ca/financialsupport

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Are you looking for financial support to attend the Canadian Burn Survivors Conference?
If so, please complete the form below.
If you require assistance with the financial support form, please email kyle@mycbcs.ca.

CONFERENCE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE REQUEST

Hi there, please fill out and submit this form.
12 Questions

START →

Meet Our Newest Board Members



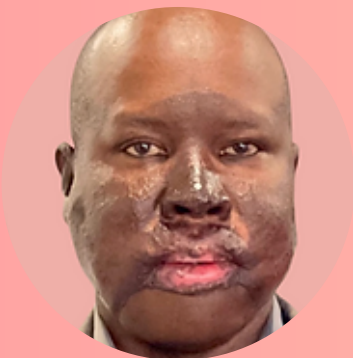
Daniel Nguyen, Quebec, daniel.nguyen@mycbsc.ca

Daniel Nguyen is an international executive with a keen ability to successfully building inclusive and high-functioning teams, developing customer partnerships, creating global scale, and identifying opportunities for innovation. With over 20 years of experience with Fortune Global 500 companies such as L'Oréal, COTY and Danone, as well as start-ups and medium-sized businesses, Daniel has held leadership roles in sales, marketing and corporate strategy spanning the healthcare and technology industries, with a successful track record in enabling high employee engagement, customer outcomes, and delivering investor and stakeholder value. He also serves on several boards of non-profits, including the CBSC which supports a cause very dear to his heart.



Catherine Liao, British Columbia, c.liao@mycbsc.ca

Catherine Liao (she/her) is an experienced registered nurse, health leader, and nursing educator with a strong background in critical care nursing. With over two decades of experience in the field, she has worked in diverse roles across the United Kingdom, Sierra Leone, and Canada. Currently pursuing her Ph.D. at the University of British Columbia, Catherine's research is focused on burn injuries in underserved communities, motivated by her dedication to social justice. In addition to her academic pursuits, Catherine serves as the director of ReSurge Africa, a global organization committed to improving burns care in Sierra Leone and Ghana. Catherine strives to enhance equity-oriented burns care and promote equal access to high-quality care by addressing structural and systemic barriers through her research and global health equity projects.



Hakiem Alier, Alberta, h.alier@mycbsc.ca

Hakiem Alier was burnt in a workplace accident in March of 2022. He was burnt to 45% of his body from a vapour gasoline explosion and fire. He has 3rd degree burns to both legs from boots lines to hips, and 1st and 2nd degree burns to his face. Hakiem advises that CBSC has been a huge help to his recovery. He has learned a lot about burn treatment and recovery from the experiences of many survivors. He stated that his recovery journey has been cut short by years because of the CBSC. Hakiem has had the opportunity to share his story and experience with others. He continues to be a volunteer peer supporter at the burn unit at the University of Alberta Hospital in Edmonton.



Rob Sandhu, British Columbia, r.sandhu@mycbsc.ca

Rob Sandhu is a Chartered Professional Accountant with a comprehensive background in financial reporting, audit, tax, and complex accounting. He has experience working with and advising organizations in various industries, including mining, manufacturing, real estate, nonprofit, and financial services. He has a history of driving organizational excellence through inclusive leadership and a commitment to integrity. His dedication extends beyond financial realms and to serving the community as well. Rob is excited to leverage his skills and experiences to support CBSC.

Thank You to Our Past Board Members



Barbara-Anne Hodge

Thank you for 16 years of serving the CBSC board.



Andrew Ward

Thank you for 14 years of serving the CBSC board.



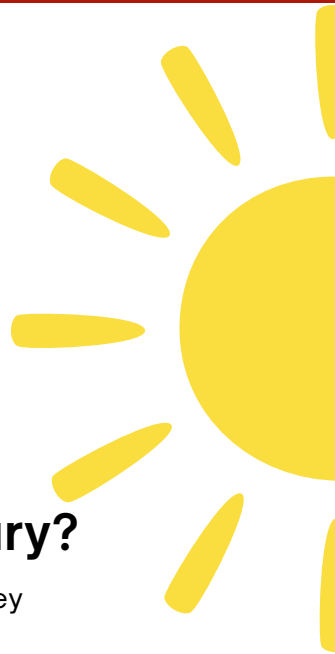
Don Adamson

Thank you for 14 years of serving the CBSC board.

Thank you all to your unwavering dedication to the Canadian Burn Survivors Community. We deeply appreciate your service and dedication.

Protecting Your Skin from Sun Damage After a Burn Injury

Submitted by Catherine Liao



The sun is a source of many good things, like warmth and Vitamin D, but it also emits ultraviolet (UV) light that can harm our skin. This type of light has been linked to skin cancers and vision problems. If you've had a burn injury, your skin might be even more sensitive to sunlight, especially if you have healed burns, donor sites, or skin grafts.

Why is Sun Protection Important After a Burn Injury?

Skin Sensitivity: Healed burns or skin grafts can be super sensitive to the sun, meaning they can burn easily, even after a short time outside.

Pigmentation Changes: The colour of your skin might change after a burn injury. Sometimes, areas that were burned or grafted can become lighter or darker than the surrounding skin, and this process can be influenced by sunlight.

Increased Risk for Everyone: Even if you've never had issues with sunburn before, areas that were burned or grafted are more susceptible to sunburn and pigmentation changes.

How to Protect Your Skin from the Sun?

Sun Avoidance: Limit your time outside when the sun is strongest, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Seek shade whenever possible, and remember that clouds don't always block harmful UV rays.

Wear Protective Clothing: Choose clothes made from tightly woven fabric, preferably dark-coloured, and consider specialized sun-protective clothing with a UPF rating of 30 or higher.

Use Sunscreen: Look for a sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher that protects against UV-A and UV-B rays. Apply it generously and frequently, especially in areas prone to burning.

Other Tips for Sun Protection After a Burn Injury:

- Wear sunglasses with 99–100% UV protection and wide-brim hats to protect your eyes and face.
- Avoid tanning beds, as they emit harmful UV light.
- Understand the difference between sunblock (reflects UV rays) and sunscreen (filters UV rays), and use whichever works best for you.

These steps allow you to enjoy outdoor activities safely and protect your skin from further damage.



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Virtual Programs



**CBSC Peer Support Group: Biweekly on Wednesday's
5pm PST | 8PM EST**

June 19


July 3, 17, 31

August 14, 28

September 11, 25

Email Barb b.hodge@mycbsc.ca

www.canadianburnsurvivors.ca/event-calendar



**NEW! Loved Ones & Caregivers Support Group:
Every 4 weeks on Thursday's
4pm PST | 7PM EST**


June 27

July 25

August 22

September 19

Email Peggy at p.tsukamoto.lab@gmail.com



**Foothills Hospital Group Meetings (Hybrid): 2nd Wednesday
of the Month at 6:30pm MT**

Email burn.survivors@albertahealthservices.ca

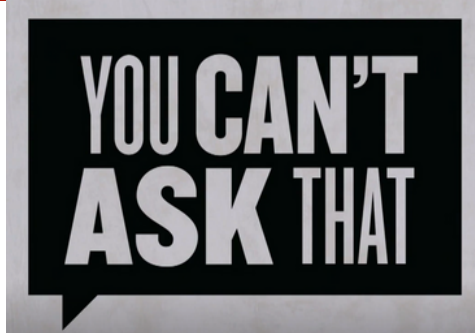
www.cfbts.org



CBSC Virtual Conferences

Email Heather for questions or if you'd like to be a speaker.

h.beveridge@mycbsc.ca



Several burn survivors from our community recently appeared on a CBC program called You Can't Ask That.

This show delves into the lives of those who are often misunderstood or stigmatized, offering viewers a chance to ask the questions they've always wondered about.

It aims to dismantle stereotypes and provide authentic insights into the experiences of people living with various labels. From inquiries like, "Were you in an accident?" to "Can I touch your burn scars?" and "Are people afraid of you?"

Canadians share their personal journeys and the stigmas they confront as burn survivors. Currently accessible on AMI, the episode will soon be available on CBC Gem.



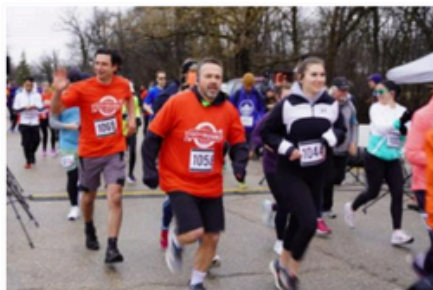
[WATCH IT HERE](#)

<https://www.amiplus.ca/m/V82l4yqW/burn-survivors?r=xxxxx&seriesId=Show%2FYou+Can%27t+Ask+That&app-config=%2Fc%2Ftv>

Go For the Burn Run Mamingwey Burn Survivor Society



The Mamingwey Burn Society hosted a very successful Go For the Burn Run, which took place on April 27, 2024 in beautiful Assiniboine Park, in Winnipeg. The Go For the Burn Run is a fundraiser, but also a way for us to raise our profile in Manitoba as well as promote health and wellness within the burn survivor community.



We had 280 people registered across all events (the timed 10K run, timed 5K run, the 3K walk and the 3K Youth Run), which is 60 more than last year. Our 50 volunteers were there to marshal the course, provide water and encouragement, set up and take down the course and much more.



The weather was very windy, but dry for the most part. Everyone was able to warm up after their event in the Pavilion where there was a hot breakfast and coffee waiting for them. We had a great morning and look forward to holding this important event again next spring!

Barbara-Anne Hodge
Chair, Mamingwey Burn Society
Race Director, Go For the Burn Run



“Thriving After Burns” Community Event



Toronto, Ontario
May 4, 2024



www.lifeafterburns.ca

Calgary Burn Survivor Group Building Connections and Support

As part of the Canadian Burn Survivors Community's (CBSC) Strategic Plan to support survivors' lifelong journey by informing through experience, the CBSC is hosting programs and events for the Calgary Burn Survivor Group part of the Calgary Firefighters Burn Treatment Society (CFBTS). We are dedicated to supporting, educating, and connecting burn survivors, their families, friends, firefighters, healthcare professionals, and anyone affected by burn trauma. This initiative, led by Kyle Hynes, co-chair of the CBSC, focuses on creating a strong, supportive community.



Goal 1

Support survivors' lifelong journey.

Objective

Informing through experience

Tactics

Host programs and events



So far, we've hosted several successful events, including game night, paint night, and a "Bowling Bash! Strike Out the Stress" event. Our most recent event was in May, and we are excited about our upcoming Summer Solstice Walk on June 15.

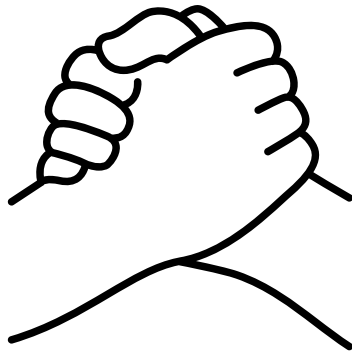
If you're in Calgary, we'd love to have you join us. Reach out to Kyle at kyle@mycbcs.ca to be added to our invite list and stay updated on future events.

To join our Summer Solstice Walk, please RSVP at <https://forms.office.com/r/p8SH9WGtpp>

We are committed to providing hope, healing, and connection within the burn survivor community. Together, we can create a supportive and uplifting environment for all.

Always Together, Never Alone.

CBSC T-Shirts for Sale!



Volunteer With Us!

Other volunteering opportunities include:

- Administrative
- Board of Directors
- Communications
- Fundraising
- Development
- Peer Support

The CBSC now has T-Shirts available on our website!!
\$35/shirt (Shipping fee within Canada included)
Visit our website to purchase!
Small - XXXL available



If you are interested, fill out our **Volunteer Form**.

Any questions? Email Victoria at v.vass@mycbsc.ca

Go to our website

www.canadianburnsurvivors.ca/volunteer

Donate to Support the CBSC

Since 2006, the CBSC has aided over 1,000 burn survivors in Canada and the US. We facilitate monthly chats, provide 1-on-1 mentoring, and host nationwide conferences uniting survivors, families, caregivers, and the medical community to share advancements.

To continue our mission of supporting burn patients as they transition to becoming survivors, we depend on your support. Our volunteer-run organization depends on individual and corporate donations. With this support, we've assisted 1,000+ patients but our work isn't complete.

Your contributions enable us to aid more survivors, particularly in areas lacking local support. Your donation to the CBSC assists burn survivors in their journey to recovery, empowering them to move forward confidently. Support our cause by donating today!

Go to our website <https://www.canadianburnsurvivors.ca/donate>

The Healing Power of Gardening and Green Spaces

Submitted by Catherine Liao

Growing evidence shows that spending time around plants and green spaces, especially through activities like gardening, is great for our mental and physical health.



What is Green Care?

Green care, or therapy through exposure to plants and gardening, is a holistic approach to improving health. Research, including surveys and randomized trials, shows it can be very effective. Simply observing nature or looking at images of natural scenes can boost your mood and mental health.

Benefits of Being Around Plants

In a Japanese study, just looking at plants changed brain activity, reducing stress, fear, anger, and sadness. It also lowered blood pressure, pulse rate, and muscle tension. Another study found that looking at a green hedge was more beneficial than looking at a concrete fence (Thompson, 2018).

Walking in Nature vs. Shopping

The charity MIND compared short walks in a garden with walks in a shopping mall. They found that garden walks improved mental health, while mall walks made it worse.

Why is Gardening So Good for You?



Physical Activity: Gardening involves lots of physical work, like digging, raking, and mowing, which can burn as many calories as a gym workout.

Social Interaction: Gardening with others can help combat loneliness and provide a sense of community, especially in communal or therapeutic garden projects.

Exposure to Nature and Sunlight: Sunlight boosts vitamin D levels and lowers blood pressure.

Healthy Eating: Growing your fruits and vegetables means you are more likely to eat healthy.

Restoring Dexterity and Strength: Working in the garden helps improve hand strength and coordination.

Mental Health Benefits: Combining physical activity, social interaction, and exposure to nature can significantly improve mental health and may even help delay dementia symptoms.

So, whether it is a small backyard plot or a community garden, spending time gardening can do wonders for your health. Get outside, plant something, and enjoy the many benefits that gardening can bring! Please share your gardening tips with the Canadian Burn Survivors Community on our social media platform.

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What's New in Burn Therapy? Advances in Burn Technology

Submitted by Retaj Ramadan



Advances in burn therapy have contributed significantly to decreased mortality and morbidity from burn injuries. Large surface area burns, which were at one point virtually always fatal, are now treatable. Thanks in part to advances in burn treatment and care, burn survivors today are better equipped to lead functional, healthy, and comfortable lives. Exciting advances in burn therapy continue to surface. While some are in early stages of implementation or may not be available for use at every burn treatment center, the field is rife with new technology. Below is a primer on some new advances in burn care technology.

Ablative CO2 Laser Therapy

Ablative CO2 laser therapy for the treatment of burn scars is a new, cutting-edge technology for burn scar appearance and texture. The laser works by emitting high-energy light into the skin. The skin cells absorb this energy and damaged cells are “ablated” thereby removing the scarred tissue. New, healthy skin cells replace the ablated tissue. The heat from the laser can also promote healing by stimulating the deeper layers of the skin. Overall, ablative CO2 laser contributes to reduction in scar thickness, as well as better texture and flexibility as it relates to burn scars. Several laser sessions are typically required to see results.



Stem Cells

Stem cells have been an exciting tool in multiple fields, including burn therapy and treatment. Stem cells are your own, undifferentiated cells, usually collected from bone marrow, fat, or blood. Undifferentiated means that they are “blank slate” cells that have the potential to turn into various types of cells, including those in the skin. After harvesting, stem cells are processed and can then be applied to the burn area through various techniques. For example, injection, topical application, or as part of a dressing that covers the burn. In this way, new tissue can be generated for quicker and more effective healing, using your own cells.



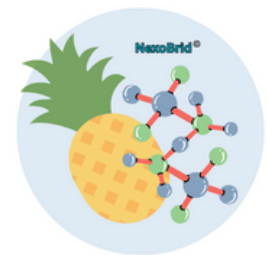
Intra Lesional Corticosteroid Injections

Intra lesional corticosteroid injections are injections of corticosteroids directly into the scar tissue. Corticosteroid works to reduce inflammation, soften scar tissue, contribute to increased flexibility, and reduce inflammation. Often, burn scars are accompanied by itching, pain, and tightness, which affects both comfort and function (joint contractures limiting motion). Intra lesional corticosteroid injections can work to alleviate some of these concerns, and don't require large, involved surgical operations. Large, thick, raised scars such as hypertrophic scars and keloid scars are an especially good target for steroid injections.



Nexobrid

NexoBrid is an enzymatic debridement agent that significantly enhances the treatment of severe burn wounds. Following significant burn injury, dead and dying tissue must often be debrided (removed and cleaned) to prevent infection and promote healing of viable, remaining tissue. Traditionally, debridement is a surgical procedure, sometimes requiring multiple sessions. Debridement can also contribute to scarring. NexoBrid is a mixture of enzymes derived from the pineapple plant, which selectively removes damaged tissue. Surrounding healthy tissue is not harmed. NexoBrid is applied to the wound and works within a few hours to remove necrotic (or dead) tissue. Since it is selective, quick, and less invasive than traditional methods of debridement, NexoBrid is a major advance in burn care technology.



ReCell (“Spray On Skin”)

ReCell is another exciting advancement in burn therapy. A sample of your own skin cells are used to create a spray-on suspension. This product is called a regenerative epithelial suspension (or RES) and is applied directly to the burn area. ReCell differs from stem cells because the harvesting of cells come from your own skin (rather than the bone marrow, fat, or blood), and the cells are mature keratinocytes. ReCell is an option for covering large surface area burns, which would traditionally be covered using extensive skin grafting. Because of the reduced need for extensive skin grafting through surgery, ReCell is an excellent option for less invasive treatment of burns.



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Canadian Burn Camps

Burn camps offer a supportive and understanding environment where individuals who have experienced burn injuries can come together to share their experiences, build connections, and be a part of a community that understands their challenges. These camps provide a space where participants can engage in activities that promote healing, both physically and emotionally, while also creating a sense of belonging and empowerment. Through activities such as peer support sessions, recreational activities, and therapeutic exercises, burn camps help individuals rebuild their confidence, learn coping strategies, and develop resilience.

British Columbia:

BC Professional Firefighters Burn Camp

July 21-26, 2024 - BC and Yukon-based ages 6 to 18

www.burnfund.org/survivor-support/burn-camp/



Alberta:

Alberta's Fire Fighter Burn Camp

August 11-17, 2024 - Ages of 7 to 17

www.efbts.ca/CAMP



Manitoba:

Camp Phoenix

July 8-12, 2024 - Ages 6 to 16

Contact Hon: honha@mamingwey.ca



CAMP PHOENIX
MANITOBA FIREFIGHTERS BURN FUND

Ontario:

Camp BUCKO

August 11-17, 2024 - Ages 7 to 17

www.campbucko.ca



Nova Scotia:

Atlantic Burn Camp

August 18-25, 2024 - Ages 6 to 17

www.cbfburncare.ca



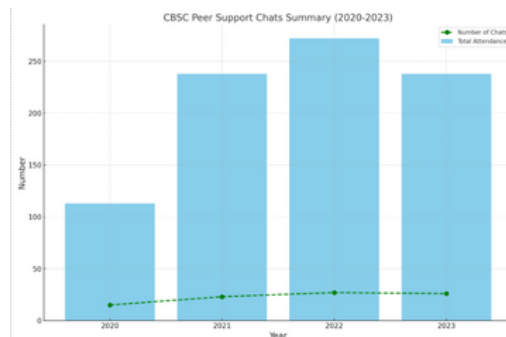
ATLANTIC

BURN

CAMP

CBSC Peer Support Chats Recap (2020-2023)

The Canadian Burn Survivors Community (CBSC) has been hosting bi-weekly online peer support chats since 2020. These sessions have provided a valuable platform for burn survivors to connect, share experiences, and seek support. Below is a statistical overview of the sessions from 2020 to 2023, highlighting attendance, topics discussed, and guest speakers.



Attendance Overview

The following table summarizes the number of chats and total attendees for each year from 2020 to 2023.

# of Chats	Total Attendees	Year
15	113	2020
23	238	2021
27	272	2022
26	238	2023

Support Chat Topics:

- Discrimination
- Healed Burns & Skin Conditions
- Sun Care & Burns
- Dealing with Staring and Responses
- Pain Management Techniques
- Aging Grafts & Skin Breakdown
- PTSD
- Holiday Stress
- Anxiety Around Flames: Grounding Exercises
- Ask the Doctor
- Burns During Incarceration
- Peer Support
- Sexuality Post Burn
- Coping with Triggers and Flashbacks
- Body Image and Self-Esteem
- Letters of Wisdom to Newly Burned Selves
- Celebrating Small Wins

Virtual Conference: May 25, 2024

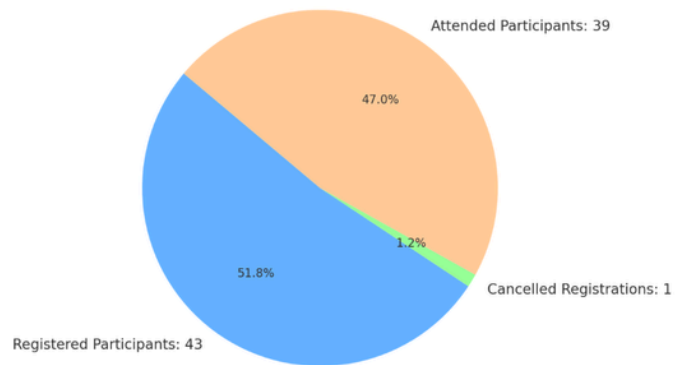
We recently hosted “My Body, Your Thoughts,” an enriching virtual conference designed to explore the intersections of mental health, community support, and personal growth. This event brought together voices from diverse backgrounds to share experiences, insights, and strategies for emotional and psychological well-being.



Highlights:

- Hakiem K. Alier discussed themes central to our experiences of resilience and recovery.
- Kelly Elaine Boudreau discussed EYEidentity.
- James Bosch Sharing Circle

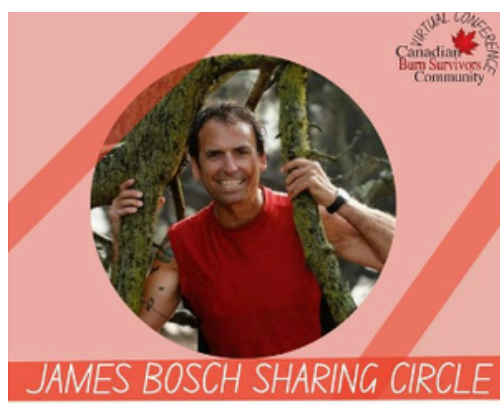
Virtual Conference Statistics for "My Body, Your Thoughts"



We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our incredible speakers, Hakiem K. Alier (in his first appearance) and Kelly Elaine Boudreau, as well as our dedicated planning team—Heather Beveridge, Victoria Vass, Sandy Cook, Debbie Ward, and Kyle Hynes—for their hard work and commitment. Your efforts made the "My Body, Your Thoughts" virtual conference a remarkable success. We also honour James Bosch through the Sharing Circle named in his memory.



CHILD OF A BROKEN WOMB, HOW MY FAITH IN THE LORD AND LIFE EXPERIENCES LEAD ME TO BE A HOPEFUL BURN SURVIVOR. — HAKIEM



Sharing Circle is an opportunity for attendees to share their trials and triumphs, and to offer insights and perspectives that can help others on their own healing journeys. By sharing our stories, we can build connections, provide support, and inspire one another to move forward with renewed strength and purpose of life.



OUR SCARS TELL STORIES OF SURVIVAL. JOIN ME TO DISCOVER HOW WE CAN TURN ADVERSITY INTO IDENTITY. — KELLY, PRESENTING "EYEDENTITY" 18

CONTACT US



(902)830-1822



www.canadianburnsurvivors.ca



v.vass@mycbssc.ca



[@canadianburnsurvivorscommunity](https://www.instagram.com/canadianburnsurvivorscommunity)

Burn Survivor Survey (Not affiliated with the CBSC)

An engineering student is working on a project to improve donor-site wound management. She's interested in learning from the patient perspective and experience about the challenges faced with skin grafting surgery, especially around donor-site care . Should you be willing to share your insights and experiences with her, please fill in the survey below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeMhTR1qHn48L7ZN6zfwLtHrnDR3_tWS01MT8nE92xLgaGW_Jg/viewform?usp=sf_link