

August 19, 2019

Atlantic Community Showcase

Ten projects have been selected for the Atlantic Community Showcase. Each presenter will have 2 minutes to promote her/his presentation to participants as part of the Forum Opening. Forum participants will mingle and visit each Showcase exhibit during the reception that follows the Opening. Exhibits will remain available for viewing and discussion during the Forum.

1) Preparing Youth and Families for Tomorrow, While Engaging them Today!

Presenters: Andrew Culberson and Tricia Berry, New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Finding ways for young people to achieve their full potential is a universally shared objective for teachers, families and communities. This presentation will be an opportunity to explore new and innovative ways to engage youth as they pursue their preferred futures. With a focus on best practices, participants will be provided with a variety of tools and resources that can be used by all teachers, families and community members. This presentation will provide a foundational understanding of career development, why it is important and how career education can be viewed as a way of bolstering mental wellness.

How does your workshop make a connection with the theme *Supportive Environments for Child and Youth Mental Health – Our Shared Responsibility!?*

Empowering youth to pursue their passions, develop potential and find their purpose allows our education system to create supportive learning environments that value the individual. Career development and planning are clearly connected to increased mental health and wellness. This presentation will discuss the fact that everyone has a shared responsibility in career development.

What will others learn from your presentation?

Learning will focus on universal design for career development principles, why these are important and how this can be done naturally and intentionally. Discussion focused on the roles of social emotional learning (SEL), experiential learning, global competencies and labour market information (LMI) in preparing youth to be future ready.

New Brunswick has been developing policy and programming that recognizes the importance of career development within the education system. This presentation is an opportunity to share results and newly created best practices from our jurisdictional scan and literature review.

Presenters

Andrew Culberson
Learning Specialist, New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
andrew.culberson@gnb.ca

Tricia Berry
Learning Specialist, New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
tricia.berry@gnb.ca

Andrew Culberson and Tricia Berry have been working in the New Brunswick education system for over 15 years. Both Andrew and Tricia have been seconded to begin leading work focused on Universal Design Career Development K-12 at the New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

2) Using your WITS in Canadian Schools

Presenter: Andy Telfer, WITS Programs Foundation

Now used in over 1,200 schools across the country, this will be the first time that WITS will present in the Maritimes since researchers at Dalhousie University identified it as the best program of its kind in Canada. Proven-effective to reduce peer victimization and bullying, WITS stands for Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, and Seek help. This workshop will demonstrate how WITS is used successfully for K-3 in elementary schools. "Using your WITS" easily becomes a code word with school-wide visibility and parent and community support. The follow-up to WITS is LEADS (-Look and listen, Explore points of view, Act, Did it work? Seek help) for children in grades 4 to 7. Designed for remote implementation, WITS utilizes online and hard resources to provide communities and schools with access to this award-winning program.

The programs aim to:

- Reduce levels of peer victimization and bullying in elementary school children.
- Make seeking help normative for children experiencing victimization. When young children report violence they learn that their school, parents, and community can help.
- Reduce peer victimization and aggression later in life through early intervention.
- Create responsive communities to enhance safety, prevent peer victimization and domestic violence.

How does your workshop make a connection with the theme *Supportive Environments for Child and Youth Mental Health – Our Shared Responsibility?*

Bullying at school can have significant and lasting impacts. We believe it takes a community to raise, protect and heal a child. Offered via the charitable WITS Foundation, WITS Programs involve school personnel, children and their caregivers, and community volunteers to share in dealing with the widespread effects of bullying. WITS has extensive resources including lesson plans written for over 70 popular (and vetted) children's books, and aligns with provincial curriculum guidelines for social responsibility.

What will others learn from your presentation?

Attendees will learn:

- How to incorporate the WITS and LEADS programs in their communities by involving schools and community leaders.
- Lessons to scale similar programs.
- How to articulate the functionality of WITS' suite of programs.
- How the WITS Programs are proven effective and used Canada-wide.

The presentation will be conducted in English; however, the WITS and LEADS Programs have counterparts in French as DIRE and MENTOR for schools with French-speaking students.

How will your workshop help participants prepare for scaling up or delivering policies and programs?

We will present:

1. How WITS works

2. Recommendations for inclusion of Indigenous peoples
3. Lessons from a cross-Canada questionnaire of 50 schools using WITS

The 2020 renewal of the WITS Programs includes: updated teacher training using the latest learning-oriented software; program modifications for inclusion of Canada's diverse Indigenous communities; over 20 new children's books and lesson plans; sponsored programs for many Canadian communities; new cyber-bullying resources specifically for parents of elementary-school-aged children.

Presenter

Andy Telfer
Executive Director, WITS Programs Foundation
exec@witsprogram.ca

Andy is Executive Director of the WITS Programs Foundation. He has worked in the nonprofit sector for 25 years, with volunteer teams large and small, and helped start 4 nonprofits and 2 social enterprises. Andy has served on municipal & provincial advisory committees & boards, and is currently Vice President of Volunteer BC and past Co-Chair of the National Advisory Committee for Canada's Volunteer Awards.

3) 211 for Prince Edward Island – Connecting need and help

Presenter: David Webster, United Way of Prince Edward Island

This presentation gives introduces 211 PEI: a multi-channel information and referral service that will be a new form of social infrastructure for PEI, that when launched in January 2020 will enable Islanders to connect by phone, text and website to the broad range of social services, community resources and non-clinical/non-emergency health supports. The vision is to create a single point of access for people in PEI to get information and navigational support and services, referrals to important programs and services they need to improve their lives. The need for an integrated resource to access services has been voiced by grassroots organizations for many years. 211 PEI demonstrates the impact of evidence and timing in impacting public policy.

Leadership to create a national 211 infrastructure has been provided by United Way Canada over the past several years. Once launched on PEI, 211 will be offered 10/13 provinces and territories, positioning 211 PEI to build on the success of other provinces such as 211 Nova Scotia, which is a key operational partner in the 211 PEI initiative.

United Way PEI is partnering with the government of Prince Edward Island to bring 211 to PEI as a key action item in the province's Poverty Action Plan. Since announced in February 2019, a team of Information Specialists has been hired by United Way PEI to build and launch a comprehensive database of community resources that conforms with prevailing 211 standards. (Inform Canada and Alliance of Information and Referral Systems [AIRS]) and classified using AIRS/211 taxonomy. While the responsibility for building and managing the database will be a responsibility of 211 PEI, the contact centre where trained Information and Referral Specialists will respond to calls is provided by 211 Nova Scotia. 211 Nova Scotia is a true operational partner and will also provide training, mentoring and quality assurance for 211 PEI.

The focus of this presentation will be highlighting the benefits of 211 for vulnerable populations, caregivers, service providers, government and the community as a whole, and inviting contribution to the database.

How does your presentation make a connection with the theme *Supportive Environments for Child and Youth Mental Health – Our Shared Responsibility!*?

Experience of other jurisdictions, we anticipate that 211 PEI will contribute to a supportive environment for children, youth, families and caregivers. We will have stronger, more resilient communities on PEI because people feel better supported, have improved social participation, reduced isolation for vulnerable population such as the elderly and those with disabilities, and supported newcomer integration. This addresses one of the key determinants of mental health - having social support networks. Currently a person requiring a service on behalf of themselves, a client or a loved one struggles to access the correct service. The effort frequently involves being referred elsewhere and often involves several phone calls before finding the right service. With 211, these multiple calls will be eliminated. A person in need, their caregiver, or service provider can call 211 and the Information and Referral Specialist will find the service you need and make the connection as required. 211 helps to navigate the complex network of human services quickly and easily, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in over 100 languages.

What will others learn from your presentation?

- The process of collaboration in working across provinces to address a need on PEI
- The benefits of 211 for children, youth and their families, caregivers; Service Providers and Governments
- The evidence of impact of 211 on poverty reduction
- How to contribute to the success of 211 PEI

What is a challenge you would like some help with?

We need to engage over 1000 non-profit and government agencies in contributing to the 211 PEI database and need your help and ideas of Forum Participants as to how we reach this goal.

Presenter

David Webster
Director, Community Impact / 211 PEI, United Way of Prince Edward Island
dwebster@peiunitedway.com
www.peiunitedway.com

David has been working in the non-profit sector for his complete career in management and executive-level positions. He has worked for a variety of organizations in children and family services, seniors and other social services. In his current role as the Director of Community Impact for the United Way of PEI, David is responsible for overseeing the organization's community investment strategy that has been recently updated to focus on ending poverty for Islanders. More recently, tied to the province's Poverty Action Plan, David and his team are focused on bringing the 211 Information and Referral Service to PEI.

4) The Blue Door: Working with youth to exit the sex trade including sexual exploitation and sex trafficking

Presenter: Kerri Rowe and Kaley Hogan, Thrive

This presentation gives an overview of the Blue Door program: a program designed to support youth, inclusive of gender or sexual orientation who are primarily between the ages of 14-29, as they exit sex trade activities including sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. Since the program started in 2017 we have served 27 people offering intensive individualized services to address barriers to the exiting process. We strive to meet

participants where they are and offer flexible services that are rooted in the principles of self-determination, respect and harm reduction. The term Sex Trade is inclusive and respectful of everyone's experiences and represents the whole continuum. Experiences do not always fit into specific categories and the participants can define experiences in whatever way they wish. The focus of this presentation will be on lessons learned since we started the program in 2017. We will discuss: the continuum of sex trade involvement for youth; social determinants of health on personal wellness; adverse childhood experiences and brain development; complexity of choice (ie. sleeping on the street or exchanging sex for a warm space) and informed decision-making. We will also highlight the outcomes and some success stories of our program.

How does your presentation make a connection with the theme *Supportive Environments for Child and Youth Mental Health – Our Shared Responsibility!*?

This program was developed in response to "It's Nobody's Mandate and Everyone's Responsibility: Sexual Exploitation and The Sex Trade in Newfoundland and Labrador." One recommendation in the report was to develop a comprehensive exiting program. The report recognizes that youth are at higher risk of being exploited or trafficked. The program works to address social determinants of health including homelessness, poverty, and other environmental indicators putting youth at higher risk of mental health and addiction issues and works in partnership with other agencies to broaden the network of supports.

What will others learn from your presentation?

- Key learnings of working with youth in the sex trade through facilitating the Blue Door program
- A greater understanding of the sex trade from survival sex, sexual exploitation to sex work
- The importance of engaging from a trauma informed, harm reduction perspective when working with youth who have been exploited
- Understanding the impact of adverse childhood experiences and social environments on individuals wellness
- How to engage the voice of lived experience and peer support

What is a challenge you would like some help with?

Understanding how the internet and social media are impacting the sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. Working to ensure we do not get caught up in the political crossfire of the pro-sex verses abolitionist ideology and are able to keep focused on supporting people however they define their experiences. Creating opportunities to exchange knowledge regarding other provincial responds to the sexual exploitation of youth.

Presenters

Kerri Rowe
Support Coordinator, Thrive
krowe@thrivecyn.ca

Kaley Hogan
Support Coordinator, Thrive
khogan@thrivecyn.ca

5) Children Affected by Crime – How can you help?

Presenter: Louise Leonardi, Canadian Families and Corrections Network

Families and children of offenders are an overlooked population who suffer great trauma. Canadian Families and Corrections Network's recent 'Mental Health Effects of Crime on the Family' shows that this hidden group experience mental health distress far exceeding levels found in the general population as they struggle to find support and resources. The emotional, social, educational, and physical issues that affect children/youth, especially as they are 2-4 times more likely to follow their parent's footsteps into crime, will be outlined.

Our Showcase presentation will outline the work CFCN has done for children and youth and how it dovetails with the Atlantic Summer Institute's Call to Action - our research on children, direct service (toll-free phone line, Family Liaison Worker, Visiting Resource Centers), our resources (storybooks, comic, How to Talk to Children information, etc.), our work at national policy tables, and our outreach with our Dad HERO parenting program and our 'Strengthening Families Affected by Incarceration' events held across Canada (partner Sesame Street). Each of these items acknowledges the plight of children affected by crime and will allow us to create awareness for CFCN and offer participants the possibility of knowledge, partnership, and collaboration to increase sustainable communities in Atlantic Canada.

How does your presentation make a connection with the theme *Supportive Environments for Child and Youth Mental Health – Our Shared Responsibility!*?

CFCN is the only national organization in Canada with a mandate to assist this vulnerable population. Our Showcase will focus on how our collaborative approach to research, resources, policy development, and direct service with government, non-profits, corporations, and families across Canada help us create awareness and support. Families should be viewed as key partners in the correctional journey and every effort should be made to ease the path of children affected by crime.

What will others learn from your presentation?

Families and children of those in our prisons across Canada are not often spoken of yet have high needs and few supports. Canadian Families and Corrections Network's work is all about strengthening families and fostering resiliency. We need to advance this shared agenda for this innocent target population!

What is a challenge you would like some help with?

CFCN's biggest challenge is awareness about our organization and how we can help families and children. Due to the fact that crime knows no social, economic, or racial bounds, we don't know who the next family will be. We would like to make people aware of the over 450,000 children affected by crime in Canada and that our organization can help. To do this we need to connect and collaborate with leaders in government, businesses, and communities across Canada.

Presenter

Louise Leonardi
Executive Director, Canadian Families and Corrections Network
national@cfcn-rcafd.org

Louise Leonardi is the Executive Director of Canadian Families and Corrections Network charity organization whose mission is to build stronger and safer communities by assisting families affected by crime. Louise has an extensive background in presentations, training, and Restorative Justice facilitation in prisons, schools, and

communities across Canada. She has received Public Safety, Crime Prevention and community awards for her work with vulnerable populations and addressing issues related to incarceration, homelessness, poverty, sex trade, justice, and youth; and has authored articles and research on families and crime.

6) Engaging Youth with Global Issues through the Sustainable Development Goals

Presenter: Rachel Morgan, Atlantic Council for International Cooperation

This presentation will highlight the ongoing youth programs taking place through the Atlantic Council for International Cooperation (ACIC). A membership-based organization, ACIC brings together leading international development organizations and individuals who are working to address global issues.

The presentation will focus on ACIC's suite of youth programs called Act 4 Global Change, which engage young people on global issues and encourage them to take action in their own communities. The intention is to build active global citizens who are equipped to champion human rights, and support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Act for Global Change programs include an annual youth conference, bringing together over 40 youth from across the Atlantic. The conference not only engages youth on global issues, but helps to foster a sense of belonging and social support. In the fall of 2019, ACIC will also launch a Global Citizenship Certificate program for high school aged youth. This aims to help improve long-term health outcomes by increasing the opportunity for employment through skill development.

The above are just two examples of the impactful programs being offered through ACIC. This presentation will emphasize the importance of citizenship and international development education for Atlantic youth, and the broader effect it has on communities.

How does your presentation make a connection with the theme *Supportive Environments for Child and Youth Mental Health – Our Shared Responsibility!*?

ACIC's work addresses several of the primary social determinants of health as defined by the Government of Canada. These include education, childhood experiences, and social supports. By providing youth with chances to advance their skills, ACIC's programs create spaces for young people to thrive and feel empowered to impact their environments. In this way we promote both healthy youth and healthy communities.

What will others learn from your presentation?

Conference attendees will learn about some of the ways Atlantic youth are being engaged around global issues, and specifically the available tools on the Sustainable Development Goals. They will hear about the link between global citizenship education and improved overall health.

What is a challenge you would like some help with?

This year ACIC is launching an exciting Global Citizenship Certificate program for youth ages 15-18. In order for the certificate to be successful, ACIC is building a network of stakeholders and partners from relevant disciplines, who can promote and support the certificate.

Presenter

Rachel Morgan
Youth Program Manager, Atlantic Council for International Cooperation
rachel@acic-caci.org

Rachel Morgan works at the Atlantic Council for International Cooperation as the Youth Program Manager. She is an experienced international development practitioner, youth educator and facilitator. Her work has ranged from kickstarting leadership development programs for over 1000 youth in Kosovo, to creating a nursing and midwifery HR assessment framework for the WHO Collaborating Center in Jamaica. She has designed curriculum in collaboration with Indigenous communities for schools across the country, and has worked with over 100 immigrants in Nova Scotia to help them build job skills and find employment. She holds a Masters of Science in Global Health from McMaster University, and a combined honours degree in Political Science and International Development Studies from Dalhousie University.

7) Making the Shift: Youth Homelessness Social Innovation Lab

Presenters: Stephen Gaetz, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness; Melanie Redman, A Way Home Canada

Making the Shift is a Youth Homelessness Social Innovation Lab with a mandate to contribute to the transformation of how we respond to youth homelessness through research and knowledge mobilization specific to youth homelessness prevention and housing stabilization. Making the Shift is co-led by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness at York University and A Way Home Canada. Launched in April, 2019, Making the Shift is a “Network of Centres of Excellence.” As a federally funded initiative, the NCE program funds partnerships between universities, industry, government and not-for-profit organizations to create large-scale research networks focusing on developing and expanding knowledge in strategic areas in order to enable the creation of “multifaceted solutions to specific social and economic challenges, with the goal of helping build a more advanced, healthy, competitive and prosperous country”. Making the Shift is the first social science NCE in the 30-year history of the program. The initial grant is \$17.9 million over five years.

How does your presentation make a connection with the theme *Supportive Environments for Child and Youth Mental Health – Our Shared Responsibility!*?

The Making the Shift Youth program of research has been developed based on the belief that there are realistic and practical solutions to youth homelessness, and that communities can achieve this end when informed by credible evidence and supported by appropriate policy and funding frameworks.

The overarching goal of Making the Shift is to develop and mobilize research that will contribute to the best possible outcomes for young people and their families - outcomes beyond a sole focus on housing, such as well-being, social inclusion, and attachment to education, training and employment.

What will others learn from your presentation?

- Overview of Making the Shift
- How Making the Shift will positively impact Atlantic Canada
- How the work of Making the Shift translates to other sectors focused on healthy communities.

What is a challenge you would like some help with?

Sharing the word about this initiative!

Presenters

Dr. Stephen Gaetz, CM

Professor, York University, Toronto Canada; President, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness/Homeless Hub; Scientific Director, Making the Shift – Youth Homelessness Social Innovation Lab

Dr. Stephen Gaetz is a Professor in the Faculty of Education at York University, in Toronto Canada. He is a leading scholar on homelessness, and is director of the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness at York University as well as the Scientific Director of the newly established Making the Shift – Youth Homelessness Social Innovation Lab. He focuses his efforts on working in collaboration with partners in order to conduct research and mobilize this knowledge so as to have a greater impact on solutions to homelessness. Stephen has played a leading international role in knowledge mobilization and homelessness research through the Homeless Hub. In 2017 he was awarded the Member of the Order of Canada.

Melanie Redman

President and CEO, A Way Home: Working Together to End Youth Homelessness; Partnership and Implementation Director, Making the Shift Youth Homelessness Social Innovation Lab

Melanie Redman is the co-founder, President and CEO of A Way Home Canada, a national coalition reimagining solutions to youth homelessness through transformations in policy, planning and practice. A Way Home Canada has inspired communities and countries around the world to adopt the A Way Home brand as a way to participate in a growing international movement for change. Melanie also leads the National Learning Community on Youth Homelessness in Canada, which is a pan-Canadian community of practice for youth homelessness service providers.

8) Climate Diary: An Online App to Track Climate Change in PEI

Presenter: Xander Wang, School of Climate Change and Adaptation, University of Prince Edward Island

Climate Diary App is a web- and GIS-based tool which helps the observers to familiarize themselves with a number of environmental changes on Prince Edward Island (PEI), while providing an easy way to record these events as they occur year-to-year. It is developed to identify and record observations of naturally-occurring plant and animal life cycle events over time. As the years roll on, this tool will provide a long-term record of changes in the environment as they occur year-to-year. These small changes can be insidious over time, creeping up with an element of surprise unless we have them recorded. These records will be a testament to the effects of global climate change and help scientists understand the changes in PEI's climate. This app is developed with the latest advances in geographical information systems and web-based techniques and is available to the public at: <https://diary.peiclimate.ca>. Users can use this app with any Internet-enabled devices, such as desktop computers, laptops, tablets, and smartphones. The app was developed in consultation with the Mi'kmaq Confederacy.

How does your presentation make a connection with the theme *Supportive Environments for Child and Youth Mental Health – Our Shared Responsibility!*?

Climate change is a big issue impacting mental health amongst people who are experiencing climate change events. This app will help us collect information about the climate on PEI so we can share it locally with government and the public (children, youth and adults) to collectively prepare for climate change – the

opportunities and challenges. Working together with real data contributes to creating a network and strategies for a sustainable environment.

What will others learn from your presentation?

The app is available at no cost and provides a platform for users to share what they have learned and create a collective knowledge base. The app allows users to report changes in animal behavior, plants, growing season. The presentation at our table will include a demonstration of the app and a hard copy diary.

What is a challenge you would like some help with?

Getting more people to use the app is a challenge with which we can use some help. We have visited schools and there is interest but we need more people to use it so we can collect more data on climate change.

Presenter

Contact info

Xander Wang, Ph.D., P.Eng.

Assistant Professor, School of Climate Change and Adaptation, University of Prince Edward Island

xxwang@upei.ca

Dr. Xander Wang has a multidisciplinary background in climate science, environmental science and engineering, GIS and remote sensing, water resources, computer science, statistics, and data science. He has published more than 50 peer-reviewed journal papers in climate research. Dr. Wang is the developer and maintainer of Climate Change Data Portal (CCDP) which includes Canada CCDP (<http://canadaccdp.ca>), China CCDP (<http://chinaccdp.org>), Ontario CCDP (<http://ontarioccdp.ca>), and Prairie CCDP (<http://prairieccdp.ca>). CCDP has received more than 50,000 downloads from over 600 registered users around the world, including academia, municipal and provincial agencies, non-government agencies, private sectors, and so on.

9) PATHS® to SEL in Atlantic Canada

Presenter: Anna-Lisa Mackey, PATHS Program

Atlantic Canada has been a leader in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) inclusion in schools across 4 provinces through the early initiatives of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) in Nova Scotia, followed by the SEAK project and scale up in other sites such as First Nations Education Initiative (FNEI) in three First Nations communities in New Brunswick. The SEAK project itself, had 3 phases and, in all phases, included school based SEL implementation of the PATHS® program. My role at that time was as trainer for all sites across the Atlantic provinces. The PATHS® program is the most well researched SEL program available to date and been available to schools across Canada, the United States and around the world for over 35 years – It is the gold standard in SEL implementation! The PATHS® program has curriculum for children 3-12 years of age to promote emotional understanding, self-control, social awareness, relationship skills and problem-solving skills.

In clinical studies, the PATHS® Program has been shown to:

- Reduce teachers' reports of students exhibiting aggressive behavior by 32%
- Increase teachers' reports of students exhibiting self-control by 36%
- Improve performance on state achievement tests in reading, math, and writing
- Increase students' vocabulary for emotions by 68%
- Increase students' scores on cognitive skills tests by 20%.

As an SEL trainer with experience in Atlantic Canada over the past 10 years, and now as the publisher and distributor of the PATHS® program, I will discuss lessons learned through our experience of meaningful SEL implementation. Opportunity for participants to view and explore the PATHS curriculum will also be available at our PATHS® display.

How does your presentation make a connection with the theme *Supportive Environments for Child and Youth Mental Health – Our Shared Responsibility?*

Social Emotional Learning provides the necessary, foundational skills for children to be successful in life. This has been well documented in the research. Schools today are recognizing the importance of SEL programming for students and the impact of SEL on school culture, which in turn fosters supportive environments for the whole school.

What will others learn from your presentation?

Participants will learn what SEL really IS. When they say, “evidence based”, what should that mean? Why is training so important? AND why are external supports so necessary? They will learn how to identify what a well-rounded SEL program IS. How to discern whether a program is evidence-based and what evidence is important. Why training is so crucial. And, finally what is foundational to keep the program alive in your school.

What is a challenge you would like some help with?

Although high quality SEL programming is occurring across Canada, how do we engage policy makers and get supportive entities like the Canadian Mental Health Association involved across all implementation sites, to ensure the solid foundation of support? How do we build on the SEL scale up work of the SEAK Project?

Presenter

Anna-Lisa Mackey
CEO, PATHS Program, LLC
Arizona, United States
amackey@pathsprogram.com

Anna-Lisa Mackey holds bachelor’s degrees in both English and Education (with a focus on First Nations Education) and a Master’s in Education. For close to 20 years, Anna-Lisa has worked specifically with children at risk through training/implementing the PATHS® program. She has trained and presented to school staff and mental health professionals across Canada, United States and several countries worldwide. Most recently, Anna-Lisa’s company, LearningSEL, LLC has become the publisher and distributor of the PATHS® program.

10) Multi-level approach to strengthening protective factors: the key to developing resilience during early childhood

Presenters: Renée Smith and Cynthia Ferguson, Vitalité Health Network

Given concerning statistics resulting from the Student Wellness Survey, New Brunswick Public Health nurses undertook a literature search to better understand how to foster the development of resilience in New Brunswick children. Research quickly indicated that targeting the early childhood period was the most cost-effective and efficient way to foster the development of resilience that would last a lifetime. Early childhood is a crucial period of brain development and is largely influenced by the secure and stable relationships provided by adults and their environment.

Now that the information has been collected, Public Health has been working to share this information with partners and implement several of the identified best practice initiatives. Broadly this includes the adoption of equitable policies, as well as the development of healthy social, natural and built environments.

Several of the initiatives currently underway include:

- Stimulating discussion, knowledge exchange and partnerships related to strengthening resilience during early childhood (member of the Steering Committee for Mental Health Promotion Community of Practice, leading discussion forums on lack of resilience among children and youth)
- Implementation of the Handle with Care program in Early Learning Centers as well as Family Resource Centres across New Brunswick;

How does your presentation make a connection with the theme *Supportive Environments for Child and Youth Mental Health – Our Shared Responsibility!*?

Both the social and physical environments influence the development of resilience during early childhood. For infants and toddlers, their social worlds revolve around their parents, therefore their attachment to these people plays a key role in the development of their resilience. Further, social and physical environments can either foster or hamper parents' opportunities to strengthen their attachment with their children.

What will others learn from your presentation?

The presentation will cover the key protective factors for the early childhood period, as well as best practice initiatives that can be used to foster those protective factors. Participants will also have the opportunity to engage with presenters on how they could play a role in promoting resilience during early childhood.

What is a challenge you would like some help with?

A challenge we face is how support partners in implementing a truly universal program. Offering great programs or tools will help the families that access those services, but how can we help the families that don't or are unable to access those services. How can we best reach traditionally hard to reach populations?

Presenters

Renée Smith, Vitalité Health Network

Renee.smith@gnb.ca

(506) 856-3088

Cynthia Ferguson

Cynthia.ferguson@gnb.ca

(506) 394-3888

Renée Smith is a health promoter for Vitalité Health Network. She earned her master's degree in Health Promotion from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia. Renée has worked in public health, mental health and addiction services in western Nova Scotia. She played a catalyst role with municipalities for defending and promoting the implementation of healthy public policies. Her main files were alcohol and the legalization of cannabis. Renée is currently working on advancing health promotion work using a population approach and on developing strategic partnerships.