

August 20, 2019

Concurrent Sessions

Updating the Evidence - Presentations and Conversation

Five concurrent sessions will be offered in thematic areas. Each session will feature three presenters who will have 15 minutes to share evidence that complements and adds to our understanding of supportive environments for child and youth mental health. Presentations will be followed by general discussion on the following questions:

- *How does this work fit into and advance the ASI Call to Action?*
- *What are the implications for upstream investment and a whole society approach to mental health promotion?*

Results of these discussions will be included in the final plenary session on August 21st.

Session 2: Family Crisis and Adjustment

a) Support Through the Impact of Crime

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. Focus will also be placed on how CFCN and partners are helping through our 'Strengthening Families Affected by Incarceration' events held across Canada (with our partner Sesame Street) which bring awareness to literacy levels, bullying, and the mental health of children affected by crime. We will offer our resources (eg. 'Jeffrey Goes to Jail' recognized by the United Nations, Ethnocultural comic book 'Dead Ball Specialist – Can He Make The Right Play?') and outline our Family Liaison, Visiting Resource Centre, and parenting Dad HERO (Helping Everyone Realize Opportunities) with our Movember Foundation partner) projects which all work to build family connections, increase resiliency and wellbeing, and strengthen the family unit which has been proven to assist with public safety.

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 presentation 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 research on the mental health of these adults and children shows challenging results and some surprises. Join us for an interactive session on what we've learned, what you need to know to work with this innocent target population, and what we can all do to help!

How does your presentation demonstrate implications for policy and practice in fostering supportive environments?

Our session will outline the necessity of:

- Awareness of families and the over 450,000 children affected by crime in Canada
- Consultation at all governments levels on sentencing, legislation, and correctional policies and their impact on family and youth
- Training for organizations, mental health workers, educators, etc.
- Validation/Respect for families through counseling, Support Groups, etc.
- Resource development (e.g. CFCN's Parole book)
- Connections/Partnerships across sectors (e.g. our recent meeting with the Minister of Health Ginnette Petitpas)

Presenter

Louise Leonardi
Executive Director, Canadian Families and Corrections Network
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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.

b) "I just hope this doesn't damage the kids too much" - Understanding the impacts of Mobile Labor on Children in Atlantic Canada

Presenters: Dr. Christina Murray, University of Prince Edward Island; Dr. Doug Lionais, Cape Breton University

Due to seasonal employment and limited employment options, labour migration from Atlantic Canada to the Alberta oil sands has become an increasingly important economic driver for seasonally dependent rural communities. While hundreds of millions of dollars are being generated for the Atlantic Canadian economy by mobile workers, little is known about how having a loved one travel for work impacts families who are left behind. The Tale of Two Islands project is a multi-faceted, multi-year, SSHRC funded, narrative inquiry research study striving to address this knowledge gap. Through statistical economic impact analysis, systematic interviews and multiple conversational and focus group interviews, this project has examined how labor mobility impacts families, professionals and communities across PEI and Cape Breton Island. Repeatedly we have heard how labor mobility is negatively impacting the emotional and psychological health of children. In this presentation we will share study findings specific to how mobile labor is impacting the mental health of children and youth. Through

analysis of 67 individual conversational and focus group interviews with family members and professional sectors, we will share how children are perceived to be affected by their parents' participation in mobile work.

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

This presentation will directly link with the theme of this year's ASI. Repeatedly, various intergenerational family members comprised of mobile workers, their partners, and extended family members who provide support have shared their concerns regarding how having a parent participate in mobile labor is impacting the mental health of children. This sentiment was also echoed by various professional sectors representing teachers, nurses, doctors, family counsellors and those working in mental health and addiction.

What will others learn from your project?

Those attending this presentation will leave with a heightened awareness of labor mobility in Atlantic Canada and how it is impacting families, and in particular, children. By increasing awareness and understanding, opportunities exist in the development of policies that are comprehensive and holistically address the needs of families impacted by labor mobility. Using the Circle of Health to guide policy recommendations, opportunities exist for multiple sectors to assess, plan and implement interventions that address the mental health of children impacted by labor mobility.

How does your presentation demonstrate implications for policy and practice in fostering supportive environments?

By increasing awareness and understanding regarding the impacts of labor mobility on families the Tale of Two Islands project has illuminated challenges facing families and various professionals who strive to provide supportive care. Through our research we have heard numerous concerns regarding how labor mobility has impacted children left behind. We have also learned from families and practitioner how the needs of these families could be addressed at both the policy and practice level. Fostering supportive environments through education and knowledge translation is essential to advancing family policy and decision-making at the local, provincial, and regional level. Also key is the recognition of systemic barriers that exist, which currently impact professionals and their ability to provide supportive care that addresses the unique needs of mobile families.

Presenters

Dr. Christina Murray
Associate Professor, Faculty of Nursing, University of Prince Edward Island
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Dr. Christina Murray is the PI for the Tale of Two Islands study. Christina Murray is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Prince Edward Island. As a community health nurse by practice, she has extensive experience in population health and community development. Her program of research focuses on mobile labor and how this impacts families living in rural Atlantic Canada. Dr. Murray was awarded the 2018 Vainer Institute of the Family's Mirabelli-Glossop Award in recognition of her significant contribution to advancing the understanding of families in Canada.

Dr. Doug Lionais
Associate Professor, MBA (CED), Shannon School of Business, Cape Breton University
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Dr. Doug Lionais is a co-investigator for the Tale of Two Islands study. Doug Lionais is an Associate Professor in the Shannon School of Business at Cape Breton University. He received his BBA from Cape Breton University, and his PhD (Economic Geography) from Durham University, UK. He teaches within Cape Breton University's MBA in Community Economic Development program. Dr. Lionais' research involves three interrelated themes: uneven development and depleted communities, entrepreneurship and business development in depleted communities, and social enterprise and place-based business.