

Alternate Newsletter

The BC Alternate Education Association: A PSA of the BCTF

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Juan de Fuca Trekkers

Kristi Kallip

Inside:

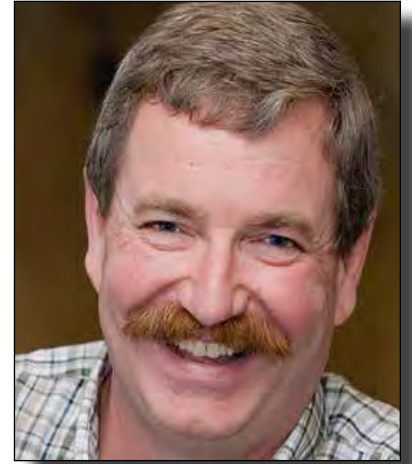
- 2 President's message
- 4 Let me introduce myself
- 5 Pushing back anxiety
- 8 Thinking with them
- 10 Have you seen...
- 13 Stop drug overdoses
- 14 Mental illness fast facts
- 18 Financial Statement
- 18 Budget
- 19 Goals & Objectives
- 20 The Last Word

A yellow mini-bus full of Phoenix Place students from Gulf Islands Secondary School set off on the morning ferry: the final destination was the start of the Juan de Fuca trail at China Beach near Sooke. The goal was to hike the spectacularly rugged and beautiful trail. The day promised to be sunny, and sunny it was. In fact, the entire trip was blessed with ideal weather, which as you know is a bit of an anomaly out on the wild, wet coast of the Pacific Northwest.

A group of eight teenage girls had been training for the hike since January, and their day of reckoning had arrived. Their packs weighted with only the essentials to survive in the wilderness for four days, they set off down the trail while laughter and excitement filled the air. Big smiles were visible on everyone as they reached Mystic Beach, only a short 2 kilometers from the start of the trail. Boots off, two girls ran straight into the ocean and held hands while they frolicked in three foot waves. ...continued on page 3

President's Message

Mike Shaw



One of the distinct pleasures I've had over my twenty-five years in alternate is watching my students find better ways of dealing with the myriad of stresses faced by kids today. To be accepted, to be successful in school, and to be more at peace with themselves and the world around them. Often that process of learning how to cope, and to better manage themselves begins in an alternate classroom. There is something about alternate education, in all its many flavours and incarnations, that says to kids, "It's okay to be who you are. We can handle it."

Recently, I was having problems with a Grade 9 kid acting up in my morning class, and his behaviour was escalating, drawing others in to his chaos. So I invited him to have a chat with me. We went outside and sat on the concrete retaining wall and enjoyed the incredibly warm, sunny, late fall day while we talked about what was going on in his life and in the classroom. He was kicked out of the middle school for being defiant, and this idea of going outside with his teacher for a low-key chat was new territory for him. In the past, he would just get boot-ed from the classroom and told to report to the Pass Room. The conversation didn't take more than 6 or 7 minutes, but in that time,

I learned more about him and his situation than I would have in several weeks of interaction in the classroom setting.

He is a hockey player, and today he had an early morning practice. As a result, he was still pumped from the nearly two hours at the rink, yet at the same time tired because he didn't get to bed until nearly midnight and was up at 5:00 for hockey. We talked about how he was having an off day, and that that was okay.

As this short but meaningful conversation continued, we came to an agreement on how such situations could be better handled in the future. His relief was almost palpable. You could see a physical difference in him as he went back inside. He had come out prepared to be in trouble and to fight back, and went back inside having not experienced that at all. Instead, two guys sat side by side on a concrete wall and came up with alternatives to what had been his behaviour in the past, all the while enjoying the fresh air and sunshine.

Does it always go this smoothly? Of course not! But it happens frequently enough that I use the technique several times each school year. I am sure you use similar methods in your own practice. ♦

Juan de Fuca Trekkers

(continued from page 1)

Another group of girls were pulled in by a giant rope swing on the beach, where they flew through the air like trapeze artists. One girl wandered down the beach a ways and discovered a waterfall; she stood just close enough to feel the mist sprinkle down on her skin. It was obvious that these girls were living in the moment, something that can be challenging to achieve in our complex and chaotic world. They were playing like kids, and it was most excellent to watch.

Once the boots were back on, the seven kilometer hike to Bear Beach began and ended with enthusiasm. The scenery was stunning, and I heard several girls say how good it felt to be out in the nature. They had left their cell phones and makeup behind, committed to only the hike and to each other for the next four days. It was really refreshing to spend time with teenagers who weren't attached to their phones like a lifeline. Instead, they had each other to be their lifelines. Team building began immediately as they helped their buddies overcome difficult obstacles on the trail. Everyone was lending and accepting a helping hand.

Arrival at the first camp was welcomed by all hikers. Quickly and efficiently, the group split off into their respective pairs and set up camp. Tents and cooking areas popped up in smart places, blocked from the strong onshore wind. Even though many of the students hadn't camped quite like this before, it was surprising to see how quick-

ly they learned the skills of taking care of themselves out in the wilderness.

The second day hike from Bear Beach to China Beach was absolutely gruelling, and it was twelve kilometers of absolutely punishing trail. Sweat and tears were shed, but thankfully no blood. Climbing up and down endless creek valleys dominated the day. 'Up to the skies and back down to the depths of despair' was language used to describe the ordeal. The girls were pushed to their mental and physical limits, yet they all remained amazingly positive, which allowed them to succeed in *...continued on page 16*



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Let Me Introduce Myself

Will Richardson

My work around modern learning and schooling is driven by the intersection of three powerful experiences in my life. First, I'm a parent, currently the owner of two teenagers. My daughter Tess is 18; my son Tucker is 16 and is a junior in high school. Without question, I think harder about the world of learning and the future of work and education through my lens as a parent more than anything else.

Second, I also bring 22-years as a public school teacher and technology administrator to the conversation. Even though it's been a decade since I was employed in a school, I understand the realities of change for teachers and leaders at every level.

Finally, I've been learning in online networks for the better part of two decades now, starting as a blogger way back in 2001. Back then, only a handful of us were thinking and writing about the new "Web 2.0" tools that have come to be called "social media" and their impacts on learning and classrooms. It's been this lens that's led me to rethink almost everything about schooling and education.

In these last 10 years, I've met thousands of educators, kids, parents, policy makers, board members, business people and many others during visits to over 15 countries around the world. I've written six books, and published in numerous newspapers, journals, and magazines, all of which continues to amaze both

me and the 17-year old aspiring writer self that still lives within me. I've made countless friends, and been fortunate enough to have learned with some of the smartest most passionate people in the world.

We are at an inflection point for schools, and this moment generates a bevy of interesting questions: What is an education now that school is everywhere? Why don't we do in schools what we know makes learning happen in real life? What is the role of a school in a child's life? What is the role of a teacher? What new skills, literacies, and dispositions are required to succeed in the networked, connected world of learning that our kids will live in? [See more about what I believe about schools and the modern world.]

What I feel I can offer right now is to help schools and educators make sense of what's happening in terms of technology and learning, and to help them forge a path forward. It's a fascinating, complex, powerful moment, and I feel really privileged to have worked and learned with so many others to try to make sense of it.

Here's to the ongoing journey!

Will Richardson is an internationally known educational innovator who integrates technology into his curricula. He is also our 2017 Keynote speaker.

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**What
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Pushing Back Anxiety

Cathy Preibisch

It all started with a conversation. I was on the phone with Judith Law, executive director with Anxiety BC. “How can we get those presenters out to Chilliwack to talk with our staff?” The presenters in question were Dr. Kristin Buhr, a registered psychologist, and Stephenie Gold, a clinical counsellor.

I had heard their presentation on anxiety at the BC School Counsellors Conference in the fall of 2014 and desperately wanted them to come to Chilliwack. Judith wanted to know more about our program and our students’ needs. And so the conversation continued.

CHANCE Shxwetetilthet is an alternate school in Chilliwack for grade 7-9 students, who have been referred to the program for a variety of reasons. We are a small school, with under 50 students, 1 administrator, 1 counsellor, 1 LA teacher, 2 classroom teachers, and 5.5 educational assistants out in the middle of a corn field and across from a sheep farm. But how was anxiety presenting in our students?

Anxiety presents in our students in many ways. Some examples are: not attending school, refusal to ride the bus, difficulty being in a full classroom, afraid to leave their parent each day, anxious about working on academics that they struggle with, and more. As a staff, we needed to know more about anxiety and how we could best help our students cope with their anxieties and be successful in school.

After that initial conversation with Judith, she engaged Dr. Kristin Buhr, a social anxiety expert. Dr. Buhr conducted a general presentation on anxiety to our staff as well as our partner high school, The Education Center. Kristin also pointed us toward evidence-based resources such as the AnxietyBC website, and their Mindshift app. As our staff enjoyed and greatly benefitted from the presentation, we started to think bigger and into the future. If our staff was learning more about anxiety, shouldn’t our students learn the same information? What about our parent community?

Following several meaningful meetings, AnxietyBC and CHANCE Shxwetetilthet began a pilot anxiety management program for the 2015-16 school year. The partnership included: further skill building and support so teachers could apply their new learning and adapt their instructional approaches and strategies to scaffold learning for students; case specific support for high risk students who present with multiple barriers that impact learning; and intervention including anxiety skills development provided to all students, (including a curriculum guide for morning activities and lessons designed to mentally/emotionally prepare students for the day’s learning), caregivers (members of the Parents Advisory Council and greater community) and community members (health professionals, band members, outreach workers).

...continued on page 6



We are a small school... out in the middle of a corn field and across from a sheep farm



Anxiety

[continued from page 5]

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anxiety”

Here is how it all played out:



Student Workshops

Throughout the school year, Kristin and Stephenie visited our school six times and held a series of workshops for the students. The focus of these workshops was understanding anxiety, normalizing it, developing strategies to manage it, and linking to resources. The workshops were fun, informative, and interactive!

Staff Training

Our Alt Ed staff received three workshops during the year on anxiety information and management strategies. Our community partners were invited to these sessions (including our yoga teacher, Aboriginal Mentors, our Drug and Alcohol counsellor, etc).



Together we learned general information on anxiety, how it presents, anxiety problems, and risk and protective factors. The focus was on challenges such as transitions, school refusal, panic attacks and test and performance anxiety. We received intensive training on ways to talk about anxiety that are personally relevant and developmentally appropriate for our students; and strategies for coping with ‘in the moment’ anxiety and anxiety-management over the long term.

Our Parent Community

Once our PAC heard about the student and staff workshops, they wanted to work with AnxietyBC too! We collaborated with our

PAC to host two parent information evenings to increase understanding of anxiety-related issues and offer opportunities for dialogue among parents and caregivers. At both workshops, parents and caregivers met over a light dinner to hear Dr. Buhr talk about anxiety, anxiety management, and share the learning that was offered to the students and staff. Both times, the parent nights were well attended. At the end of the first evening, a parent admitted to the group she thought she was the only one dealing with a youth with anxiety. Instantly, the whole room broke out into supportive applause!

As a staff, we wanted to do everything possible to create an environment that was comfortable and relaxing for our students, so we made some physical changes in our school to decrease anxiety. Soft music can be heard playing inside, our hallway now contains plants, the ceiling is lined with soft little white icicle lights (instead of harsh fluorescent lights), the walls have posters on mindful breathing, self-regulation, and mindful quotes. Classroom teachers restructured their classrooms to create a “café style” classroom – with comfortable chairs, a variety of tables, soft lighting, artwork and plants. Classroom iPads are programmed with the MindShift App for student use. Each table has coloured pencils, markers and colouring sheets available each morning for mindful colouring as the students arrive.

Also available to students are Lego, board games, cards, and puzzles. After breakfast, students and staff gather for the morning circle where each individual shares on a scale of 1-10 how they are doing that day and, if they choose, why. Classroom teachers use circle time to teach the morning activities designed by AnxietyBC (that include; Calming Strategies, Mindful Breathing, Soothing/Distracting, Self-Reflecting, Wake-Me-Up/Energy Boosters & Stress Reliever activities. These morning activities were designed to: reduce difficult emotional states and excessive anxious arousal and/or stress; increase energy, stimulate the mind, and improve mood; and give students the opportunity to learn and practice coping skills that will be helpful for life.

It's been an amazing year of learning for everyone at CHANCE Shxwetilthet Alternate School. And we have seen mixed reactions. Some students who were reluctant to share their number at circle time, took several weeks and even months, to feel safe sharing. Some students used mindful breathing to help them self-regulate, while a few others did not want to try the breathing techniques. But we feel we have created a school culture where emotional health is an open topic. We have seen students successfully set goals relating to their anxiety and achieve them. We have students openly talking about their anxiety and working with staff to find coping strategies. Our common school language includes words

like “self-regulation”, “mindfulness”, “brain breaks”, and “grounding”.

Thanks to Judith Law and her team at AnxietyBC, our staff is more prepared to support our youth living with anxiety, our students understand themselves in a new way, and our parent community is more aware of how to best support their children. And as for this school year? Well, we look forward to continuing our partnership with AnxietyBC! ♦

Cathy Preibisch is a District Counsellor at CHANCE Shxwetilthet Alternate School in Chilliwack School District #33.

AnxietyBC is a nonprofit organization working to increase awareness about anxiety disorders, promote education, and increase access to evidence-based resources and treatments.

www.anxietybc.com.

The morning activities referenced in this article can be found on the AnxietyBC website under Educators at:

www.anxietybc.com/resources/downloadable-documents.

Note also that Judith Law from AnxietyBC is one of our session presenters at the 2017 conference.



We have students openly talking about their anxiety and working with staff to find coping strategies



Thinking With Them

Will Richardson

In our Changeleader Facebook group (which is nearing 600 people and hosting some intense conversations... join us) I tagged a few people including Ryan McClintock of the Mosaic Collective at Castle Rock [CO] High School to talk about the difference between work that's focused on making schools "better" vs. making them "different."

For those of you that don't know the Mosaic story, it's a school within a school for about 100 students that Ryan and 10 of his colleagues started two years ago. It's pretty bold: no grades, no bell schedules, no set classes and asks students to "invent your education." You can get the entire rundown here.

In response, Ryan left a quite remarkable post that pushes hard against the "better" mindset, and I want to quote just one piece of it here that really stuck with me:

'Different' is powerful. Thinking differently is invigorating and courageous. Thinking 'better' ... well, I can see how that hangs some heads. Modern instructional design must be run through a filter that asks "Why?", that takes what would traditionally end the experience (e.g., application) and instead begins with it; that adds sincere student perspective (first thinking of them, then thinking with them, then thinking because of them); and that follows a philosophy of "less is more" that never over-explains and therefore lets students communi-

cate their needs and "gaps" to target and explore. Different asks 'What if...?' and then takes action.

I love that, especially "first thinking of them, then thinking with them, then thinking because of them." To me, that's a profound way to summing up the role of a teacher, not as a funnel for the delivery of an education, but as one who helps kids "invent their own education." It echoes the best thinking of progressive educators who have always argued that our work begins by figuring out how we can begin where our students are, not by asking them to start where we are. That learning is a collaborative and social experience that can be the foundation of a powerful relationship between adults and kids. And that education and learning are never static, in constant flux, and in need of perpetual rethinking and iteration.

It's sad on some level that Ryan's words would strike anyone as profound. After all, it's just common sense. If we leave the learner out of our thinking, if we make it about what we teach rather than how we and our students learn, we're missing the greatest affordance that comes along with bringing kids and adults together in schools on a regular basis: the potential to learn from and with one another. That should be the rule, not the exception.

And that's been one of the most interesting understandings I've come to over the last couple of years, the idea that "differ-

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Thinking
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and
courageous”

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ent” equates to “common sense.” I know I’ve written about this before, but I can’t emphasize this enough. As Russell Ackoff says, we’re still focusing on doing the wrong thing right in schools. And the important part is that we know it. And owning that is the first step to doing it “differently.”

As Bruce hinted at last week, we wouldn’t likely build the schools we have today given the chance to start from scratch. But because that rebuild seems so difficult [and it is,] most don’t make a serious attempt to do it. [Starting from scratch is much easier.] Yet, as my friend Gary Stager says, “Public schools are where the kids are.” And that means that’s where we must engage in this work first and foremost.

Ryan articulates the first step, and more:

We must question each and every meth-

od and reason involved in education.

Rigid school schedules [despite whatever magic happens inside a class and classroom] and a concept of “core” subjects are dated and completely unnatural to the ways of our modern connected world.

Instead of students asking which language they should learn, they should learn how to learn languages.

Learning how to learn, techno-literacy, community involvement as a pathway not a capstone, changing the world, and thriving within uncertainty need to be our new “curriculum.”

“Speciation” is an evolutionary term that describes when such significant change has taken place that two groups no longer mate with each other. It’s a branching event in the “tree of life” – something new has been born.

EduSpeciation, anyone?

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We wouldn’t likely build the schools we have today given the chance to start from scratch



Have you seen...

Liz Louwersheimer

The documentary film *Paper Tigers*? I did recently, and it is wonderful. The following is reprinted courtesy of the maker, KPJR Films in San Francisco.

More than two decades ago, two respected researchers, clinical physician Dr. Vincent Felitti and CDC epidemiologist Robert Anda, published the game-changing Adverse Childhood Experiences Study. It revealed a troubling but irrefutable phenomenon: the more traumatic experiences the respondents had as children (such as physical and emotional abuse and neglect), the more likely they were to develop health problems later in life—problems such as cancer, heart disease, and high blood pressure.



**Children
are
paying for
growing
up in
unsafe
environments**

To complicate matters, there was also troubling correlation between adverse childhood experiences and prevalence of drug and alcohol abuse, unprotected sex, and poor diet. Combined, the results of the study painted a staggering portrait of the price out children are paying for growing up in unsafe environments, all the while adding fuel to the fire of some of society's greatest challenges.

However, this very same study contains the seed of hope: all of the above-mentioned risk factors—behavioral as well as physiological—can be offset by the presence of one dependable and caring adult. It doesn't need to be the mother or the father. It doesn't even need to be a close or distant relative.



More often than not, that stable, caring adult is a teacher.

It is here, at the crossroads of at-risk teens and trauma-informed care, that *Paper Tigers* takes root. Set within and around the campus of Lincoln Alternative High School in the rural community of Walla Walla, Washington, *Paper Tigers* asks the following questions: What does it mean to be a trauma-informed school? And how do you educate teens whose childhood experiences have left them with a brain and body ill-suited to learn?

In search of clear and honest answers, *Paper Tigers* hinges on a remarkable collaboration between subject and filmmaker. Armed with their own cameras and their own voices, the teens of *Paper Tigers* offer raw but valuable insight into the hearts and minds of teens pushing back against the specter of a hard childhood.

Against the harsh reality of truancy, poor grades, emotional pain, and physical violence, answers begin to emerge. The answers do not come easily. Nor can one simply deduce a one-size-fits-all solution to a trauma-informed education. But there is no denying something both subtle and powerful at work between teacher and student alike: the quiet persistence of love.

Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Childhood experiences, both positive and negative, have a tremendous impact on future violence victimization and perpetration, and lifelong health and opportunity. As such, early experiences are an important public health issue. Much of the foundation-

STRESS & EARLY BRAIN GROWTH Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

What are ACEs?
ACEs are serious childhood traumas -- a list is shown below -- that result in toxic stress that can harm a child's brain. This toxic stress may prevent child from learning, from playing in a healthy way with other children, and can result in long-term health problems.

Adverse Childhood Experiences can include:

1. Emotional abuse
2. Physical abuse
3. Sexual abuse
4. Emotional neglect
5. Physical neglect
6. Mother treated violently
7. Household substance abuse
8. Household mental illness
9. Parental separation or divorce
10. Incarcerated household member
11. Bullying (by another child or adult)
12. Witnessing violence outside the home
13. Witness a brother or sister being abused
14. Racism, sexism, or any other form of discrimination
15. Being homeless
16. Natural disasters and war

Exposure to childhood ACEs can increase the risk of:

- Adolescent pregnancy
- Alcoholism and alcohol abuse
- Depression
- Illicit drug use
- Heart disease
- Liver disease
- Multiple sexual partners
- Intimate partner violence
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- Smoking
- Suicide attempts
- Unintended pregnancies

How do ACEs affect health?
Through stress. Frequent or prolonged exposure to ACEs can create toxic stress which can damage the developing brain of a child and affect overall health.

A Survival Mode Response to toxic stress increases a child's heart rate, blood pressure, breathing and muscle tension. Their thinking brain is knocked off line. Self-protection is their priority. In other words: "I can't hear you! I can't respond to you! I am just trying to be safe!"

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The answers do not come easily

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al research in this area has been referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). These experiences happen in children in the first 18 years of life.


- Risky health behaviors,
- Chronic health conditions,
- Low life potential, and
- Early death.

Adverse Childhood Experiences have been linked to:

As the number of ACEs increases, so does the risk for these outcomes. *...continued on page 12*

Have you seen...?

(continued from page 11)



The good news is resilience can bring back health and hope!

What is Resilience?
Resilience is the ability to return to being healthy and hopeful after bad things happen. Research shows that if parents provide a safe environment for their children and teach them how to be resilient, that helps reduce the effects of ACEs.

Resilience trumps ACEs!

Parents, teachers and caregivers can help children by:

- Getting an understanding of ACEs
- Helping children identify feelings and manage emotions
- Creating safe physical and emotional environments at home, in school, and in neighborhoods

What does resilience look like?

- 1. Having resilient parents**
Parents who know how to solve problems, who have healthy relationships with other adults, and who build healthy relationships with their children.
- 2. Building attachment and nurturing relationships**
Adults who listen and respond patiently to a child in a supportive way, and pay attention to a child's physical and emotional needs.
- 3. Building social connections**
Having family, friends and/or neighbors who support, help and listen to children.
- 4. Meeting basic needs**
Providing children with safe housing, nutritious food, appropriate clothing, and access to health care and good education.
- 5. Learning about parenting and how children grow**
Understanding how parents can help their children grow in a healthy way, and what to expect from children as they grow.
- 6. Building social and emotional skills**
Helping children interact in a healthy way with others, manage their emotions and communicate their feelings and needs.

Resources:

- ACES 101**
<http://acesbookhigh.com/aces-101/>
- Triple-P Parenting**
www.triple-p-parenting.net/
(800-54HOME)
- Resilience Trumps ACEs**
www.resiliencetrumpsACEs.com
- CDC-Kaiser Adverse Childhood Experiences Study**
www.cdc.gov/ violenceprevention/aces-study/
- Zero to Three Guides for Parents**
<http://www.zerotothree.org/about-us/areas-of-expertise/parent-brochures-and-guides/>

Thanks to the people in the Community & Family Services Division of the Spokane (WA) Regional Health District for developing this handbook for parents in Washington State, and sharing it with others around the world.

The wide-ranging health and social consequences of ACEs underscore the importance of preventing them before they happen. CDC promotes lifelong health and well-being through Essentials for Childhood - Assuring safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for all children. Essentials for Childhood can have a positive impact on a broad

range of health problems and on the development of skills that will help children reach their full potential. ♦

Liz Louwersheimer has served the BCAEA in many positions over the years. She is the current Newsletter Editor and works in Abbotsford.

Stop Drug Overdoses

Andy Libbiter

Between January and July 2016, there have been 433 illicit drug overdose deaths in BC - nearly a 75 percent increase from 2015. And youth have not been immune from the epidemic.

These overdoses are increasingly linked with fentanyl, a synthetic opioid 50 to 100 times more toxic than morphine. All sectors of society have been affected: from people who use daily to those casually experimenting. While the majority of fentanyl victims have been between the ages of 20 and 39, teenagers are being struck down too. Eleven youth aged 10 to 19 died of illicit drug overdoses in the first seven months of 2016, according to the BC Coroners Service.

We want to help parents keep their children safe from overdose. As one piece of our comprehensive opioid overdose strategy, we have created an information kit for educators, parents and youth. Inside are fentanyl facts, tips for talking to your child about the issue, multimedia links and resources,

and information on how to support youth experiencing trauma as a result of exposure to overdoses.

We've distributed the kits to school districts in our health region to support them in educating students heading back to class this month. The kit is also available to you to download and share with your own children or family members, as needed.

We all have a part to play in keeping our loved ones and communities safe from overdoses. Download Fraser Health's Stop Overdose Kit for Schools and Parents via the link at the bottom of this page. ♦

Andy Libbiter is Executive Director, Mental Health and Substance Use Services, Fraser Health.



Visit: http://www.fraserhealth.ca/media/Overdose_SchoolToolkit_FINAL.pdf

Mental Illness: Fast Facts

Canadian Mental Health Association

Who is affected?

- Mental illness indirectly affects all Canadians at some time through a family member, friend or colleague.
- 20% of Canadians will personally experience a mental illness in their lifetime.
- Mental illness affects people of all ages, educational and income levels, and cultures.
- Approximately 8% of adults will experience major depression at some time in their lives.
- About 1% of Canadians will experience bipolar disorder (or “manic depression”).

How common is it?

- Schizophrenia affects 1% of the Canadian population.
- Anxiety disorders affect 5% of the household population, causing mild to severe impairment.
- Suicide accounts for 24% of all deaths among 15-24 year olds and 16% among 25-44 year olds.
- Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in both men and women from adolescence to middle age.
- The mortality rate due to suicide among men is four times the rate among women.

What causes it?

- A complex interplay of genetic, biological, personality and environmental factors causes mental illnesses.

- Almost one half (49%) of those who feel they have suffered from depression or anxiety have never gone to see a doctor about this problem.
- Stigma or discrimination attached to mental illnesses presents a serious barrier, not only to diagnosis and treatment but also to acceptance in the community.
- Mental illnesses can be treated effectively.

What is the economic cost?

- The economic cost of mental illnesses in Canada for the health care system was estimated to be at least \$7.9 billion in 1998 – \$4.7 billion in care, and \$3.2 billion in disability and early death.
- An additional \$6.3 billion was spent on uninsured mental health services and time off work for depression and distress that was not treated by the health care system.
- In 1999, 3.8% of all admissions in general hospitals (1.5 million hospital days) were due to anxiety disorders, bipolar disorders, schizophrenia, major depression, personality disorders, eating disorders and suicidal behavior. (Sources: The Report on Mental Illness in Canada, October 2002. EBIC 1998 (Health Canada 2002), Stephens et al., 2001')



*Mental
illness
indirectly
affects all
Canadians*



How does it impact youth?

- It is estimated that 10-20% of Canadian youth are affected by a mental illness or disorder – the single most disabling group of disorders worldwide.
- Today, approximately 5% of male youth and 12% of female youth, age 12 to 19, have experienced a major depressive episode.
- The total number of 12-19 year olds in Canada at risk for developing depression is a staggering 3.2 million.
- Once depression is recognized, help can make a difference for 80% of people who are affected, allowing them to get back to their regular activities.
- Mental illness is increasingly threatening the lives of our children; with Canada's youth suicide rate the

third highest in the industrialized world.

- Suicide is among the leading causes of death in 15-24 year old Canadians, second only to accidents; 4,000 people die prematurely each year by suicide.
- Schizophrenia is youth's greatest disabler as it strikes most often in the 16 to 30 year age group, affecting an estimated one person in 100.
- Surpassed only by injuries, mental disorders in youth are ranked as the second highest hospital care expenditure in Canada.
- In Canada, only 1 out of 5 children who need mental health services receives them. ♦



Only 1 out of 5 children who need mental health services receives them



Canadian Mental Health Association
Mental health for all

Juan de Fuca Trekkers

(continued from page 3)



“
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this relentlessly torturous part of the journey. In retrospect, the girls said that it was the hardest physical challenge they had ever been up against, and you could see the pride in their tired eyes as they chilled around the camp that evening.

Day three of the trek seemed a little less arduous compared to the previous day, as the distance to be covered was only eight kilometers; still, up hill and down dale they went. Students had more time and energy to expend on exploring the natural surroundings as field guides were brought to identify marine life, shorebirds, edible mushrooms and the night sky. It was rewarding to see the students discovering interesting species and researching about them on their own accord. They were initiating their own learning process. By mid-afternoon, the

group had reached East Sombrio Beach, and the hike over to West Sombrio Beach lulled them all into a spellbound state of absolute appreciation for the natural beauty of this stunning beach.

The group had some time to relax that afternoon on Sombrio beach: some girls explored, some played beach games, some chatted, and some just soaked up the sun. Regardless of which activity they chose to indulge in, a sense of peace and contentment pervaded the camp. Camaraderie could be felt like a thick, sweet fog, and it was evident that these girls had just strengthened friendship bonds that would likely last a long time. They had embarked upon a strenuous challenge, and had been victorious in their efforts. Self-confidence levels had been raised, as well as maturity

levels. They would forevermore be a little bit more mature, capable, and confident as a result of their accomplishments.

The following day brought with it a return to civilization, and the yellow mini-bus picked the group up and carried them back to their normal lives. During the ride back

to the ferry, the girls all had the glow of health and wellness emanating from their faces. Their eyes were clear and sparkly, their skin fresh and flushed, and their smiles attested to the fact that they were shiny, happy people at that moment.

Priceless.



The outdoor education program at Phoenix will continue next year, and the hike, hopefully, will become an annual tradition which will help to foster a sense of belonging and community in the alternative high school. There are already three students who have asked to come next spring!! In addition to the spring hike, there is hope to start an annual kayaking expedition through the Gulf Islands for the Phoenix students. Learning out in nature is a most meaningful way to engage the learner spiritually, physically, and mentally. ♦

Kristi Kallip is a teacher in the Phoenix Secondary Program on Saltspring Island. Her program was a recipient of a Student Activity Grant, one of up to four awarded annually by the BCAEA. Application forms can be found on our website.

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Learning out in nature is a most meaningful way to engage the learner

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2016 Financial Statement

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements¹ for the Year Ended June 30, 2016

Balance, July 1, 2015 209,169.06

Receipts

BCTF grant	5,780.00
Membership/subscription fees	19,107.00
Interest	1,671.63
Exhibits/Sponsorships	2,495.00
Conference fees	81,077.50

110,131.13

Disbursements

Meeting - Executive	15,979.12
Meeting - Subcommittee	2,005.21
Meeting - AGM	1,823.30
Meeting - TTOC costs	6,041.24
Publication - Newsletter	2,439.09
Operating	467.63
Scholarships	8,100.00
Miscellaneous	40.00
Conference-operating	3,684.36
Conference-facilities	3,745.00
Conference-catering	15,364.86
Conference-printing	1,901.76
Conference-promotions	1,360.16
Conference-committee costs	4,864.22
Conference-entertainment	9,879.48
Conference-equipment rental	4,308.15
Conference-speakers	20,801.89
Hold for Future Conference	3,400.00

[99,405.47]

Balance, June 30, 2016 \$219,894.72

¹ Note: This statement reflects only funds held by the BC Teachers' Federation on behalf of the BC Teachers of Alternate Education.

2016-17 Budget

Income

99921	Income surplus	219,894.72
99923	Conference surplus	6,433.80
99930	Membership	17,080.00
99931	BCTF Grant @ 20.00 each	5,250.00
99932	Back Issues	0.00
99934	Interest	1,100.00
99940	Conference fees	75,000.00
99943	Conference Exhibitors	2,000.00

Total Income 326,758.52

Expenses

99950	Meeting - Executive	20,000.00
99953	Meeting - Subcommittee	3,000.00
99954	Meeting - AGM	3,000.00
99958	Meeting - TOC	12,000.00
99961	Publications - Newsletter	5,000.00
99962	Publications - Other	100.00
99970	Operating	1,000.00
99972	Chapter support	1,000.00
99973	Affiliation fees and meetings	0.00
99978	Scholarships	20,000.00
99979	Miscellaneous	1,000.00
99980	Conference - operating	8,000.00
99981	Conference - facilities	5,000.00
99982	Conference - catering	20,000.00
99983	Conference - printing	3,500.00
99984	Conference - promotions	2,500.00
99985	Conference - committee	6,000.00
99986	Conference - entertainment	20,000.00
99987	Conference - equipment rental	6,000.00
99988	Conference - speakers	50,000.00
99989	Conference - start-up costs	13,288.00
99998	Conference - hold	125,370.52
99999	Conference - misc	1,000.00

Total Expenditures 326,758.52

2016-17 Goals and Objectives

Goal	Objectives	Activities	Evaluation
To promote alternative education programming and services provincially.	Network with other PSA's and programs that support the Association's goals.	Free conference registration for PSA presidents. Send Newsletter to interest groups. Maintain website.	PSA Presidents attend conference. PSAC receives newsletter. Website updated on BCTF server.
	Network with organizations that deal with alternative education programs and students.	Respond to Ministry and BCTF re: policy and program direction. Liase with MCFD.	Network with members via membership listserv. Network with MCFD maintained.
	Promote local chapters of BCAEA.	Provide local chapter start-up grant. Provide maintenance grant for LSA's based on membership.	LSA information provided to interested groups. LSA's established and maintained.
To support and promote professional growth and networking for alternative education teachers.	Support professional growth.	Hold annual conference. Provide information about exemplary programming and services.	Conferences held. Exemplary program and services workshops in conference program.
	Promote membership.	Include membership fee in conference registration.	Membership increased or maintained.
	Support regional development.	Provide expertise and financial support for regional conferences and activities.	Representatives at regional conferences and other conferences.
To advocate for appropriate programming and services for alternative education students.	Advocate for students in alternative education programs.	Provide student awards. Publish 1-2 newsletters.	Student Achievement Award(s) and Bursaries given. Newsletter published and distributed.
	Enhance programming and services for alternative students.	Provide Student Activity Awards. Provide Innovative Programming Award.	Student Activity Award(s) given. Kathi Hughes Innovative Programming Award given.
	Promote observable opportunities for students in alternate programs.	Provide opportunities for alternate students to prepare food, cater, bus, and bartend at conference.	Students are visible working at the alternate conference reception.
To engage new members and communicate with existing members.	Engage new members.	Send welcome letter to new members. Invite to join ListServ.	Welcome letters sent to new members. New members invited to ListServ.
	Communicate with members.	Respond to ListServ comments/questions. Invite comments/questions in newsletter.	ListServ actively used. Comments about newsletter noted.

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The Last Word

Liz Louwersheimer



Welcome to the fall edition of the BCAEA newsletter! Is it me, or does it feel like summer was ages ago? This is my first attempt at Newsletter Editor, taking over from the very capable Leanne Hagglund.

My career started in 1985 in Special Education in the Abbotsford School district and I have had several amazing jobs over the years including a primary skills development class (students grades 1-4), learning assistance grades k-7, self-paced after school program with grades 10-12, Continuing Education, alternate school behaviour class grades 8-10, and school counsellor at an alternate program. Currently, I teach youth grades 8-12 from 4 districts who are working on their mental wellness at the Adolescent Day Treatment Program at the Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre. I think I am a typical alternate teacher, we come to the job via many routes, but when we land in alternate, we find our true calling, and we stick around.

I hope you enjoy the small change to the newsletter format. As my passion is for mental health, I hope to include articles meant to educate and illuminate. I like to

continually upgrade my practice with research into what is working, what someone has discovered, something that may help me become a better, more thoughtful, more compassionate teacher.

I just watched the documentary, *Paper Tigers*—check out the trailer on line—and I think you will be inspired by what one alternate school did for its students based on the research into Adverse Childhood Experiences. It is superb trauma-informed research. What the study reports is what most of us already know. That the presence of one dependable and caring adult can offset the impact of many risk factors. It doesn't need to be the mother or the father. It doesn't even need to be a close or distant relative. More often than not, that stable, caring adult is a teacher.

Lastly, I would like you to send me some of your favorite links, research, program ideas, or stories about students who have inspired you. Do you keep in touch with former students who won awards via the BCAEA? Please send me some updates about what they are doing now. And photos are always welcome!

See you at the conference in February! ♦