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Index to Advertisers

Dear Colleagues, This message signals the approaching end of another school year and the conclusion of my tenure as CAP President. I continue to recognize the privilege of working alongside such incredible leaders and I am grateful to remain with the Board for one more year in the advisory role of Past President.



Tina Estabrooks
President, Canadian Association
of Principals



Thank you, Jameel Aziz (current Past President) and members of the executive, Holly Godson, Jim Jordon and Michael Landry. Your expertise, advice and continued commitment to CAP ascertained that our direction this past year was strategic and visionary. Executive Assistant, Jill Sooley-Perley, your support was invaluable. So much of what CAP accomplishes occurs as a result of the background work you complete. I graciously speak for the CAP Board and welcome President Elect, KJ White, to his new role. We foresee continued growth and enhancement under his direction and leadership.

This year saw the development of an exciting partnerships with the Jiangsu Education Services for International Exchange (JESIE). Jameel Aziz, Maxine Gellar (COSL) and I joined other Canadian educational leaders and attended the 10th annual Jiangsu International Forum for School Principals. Meeting with the members of the Jiangsu Provincial Department of Education and networking with many other countries will undoubtedly facilitate additional international opportunities that CAP can bring to its membership.

The National Study on the Role of the Principal led to many meaningful and deep conversations across the country. It continues to serve as a valued tool for those embarking upon leadership reform and lies a foundation for additional studies that can directly influence the challenges confronting our leaders. CAP continues to converse with affiliations and associations to determine our next steps in the area of research.

Regardless of school level or location, all educators frequently encounter maladaptive student behaviour. Dr. Ross W. Greene, in his latest work *Lost at School* introduces his approach to challenging behaviours by saying “The wasted human potential is tragic”. I had opportunity to spend a day with Dr. Greene learning his model for assessing lagging skills and unsolved problems that impede a child’s ability to succeed. Afterwards I reflected upon our pyramid of interventions and approaches to address social impediments. I was reminded of the challenge face by leaders and teachers who attempt to balance inclusive schools with a safe and healthy learning environment. Enjoy this edition of the CAP journal. As always it will help us fine-tune or confirm our knowledge and methodologies. I thank all contributing authors for acknowledging our journal as a worthy place to share your work.

In closing, I would like to congratulate you and your staff on the many accomplishments I am certain were achieved this year. Thanks to so many of you who somehow found time to send me a note of thanks. Although it was unnecessary it warmed my heart and confirmed how much I love my profession. As this school year reaches its end, be certain to take time to celebrate and set your sights on future growth and development for your school community. So many of us “do-what-we-do” because we share the belief of Frederick Douglass who reminds us that “It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men”. Educational leadership requires the fortitude to stand toe-to-toe with the obstacles that prevent student success. Be strong.

My kindest regards and respect,
Tina Estabrooks

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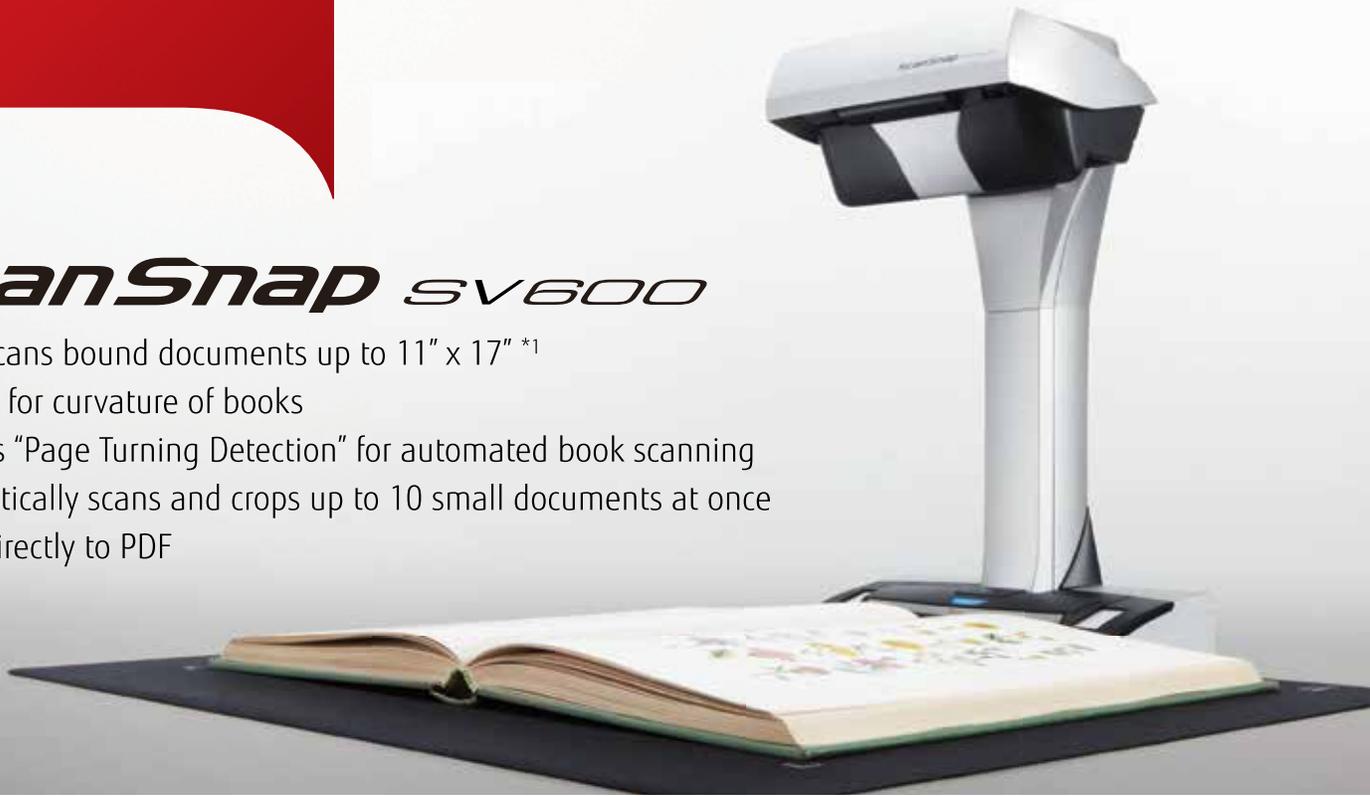
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The landscape across Canada continues to change as we move from the depths of winter into, what those of us in the East who have been buried by snow, hope will be a sunny, bright and “green” spring. With the change of seasons comes a new set of tasks as we enter the next phase of our school year. Our ability to stay current with the new tasks that lay before us can be supported by taking advantage of local, regional and national conferences that offer current relevant sessions in support of our pursuit of enhancing instructional practice and school culture that we collectively work within.

Our CAP National Conference “**Connecting Leaders: Inspiring Learning**” took place this year in beautiful Whistler, BC. It is a prime example of an extraordinary professional development opportunity organized by a talented group of educational leaders. I want to thank the conference committee for giving the time that they have over the past year to organize keynote speakers, presenters, facilities, meals and related events. This is no small task and it has been accomplished with great success. The diverse keynote presenters included Simon Breakspear, Frederick Brown, Jesse Miller, Wab Kinew and Stephanie Hamilton among others. Keynotes and presenters successfully engaged participants from across Canada prompting a great deal of thought and discussion as educational leaders looked for new innovative ways to enhance their school or organization.

Prior to each journal being published, we send out a request for articles to be submitted by educational professionals based on an identified area of focus. I want to thank those who have submitted articles for review. Your efforts to share work and have it appear in our journal is greatly appreciated. If you have an interest in submitting an article we ask that you forward to me michael.landry@avrsb.ca along with your name, position and e-mail address so that we can add it to our list serve when a call for article submissions is made. This edition centers on “**Responding to Student Behaviour**” through the description of various programs and approaches submitted from across Canada. We all know that successfully engaging our students in the daily instruction and interactions within our schools is a challenge. It is our hope that the information shared within this edition of the CAP Journal will provide you with valuable tools and information.

In the coming year, we see Principals, Vice Principals and other educational leaders facing the growing academic and social challenges that go far beyond the four walls of a school or school system. The information, training and networking that are involved in successfully navigating these challenges are as diverse as the needs of the students we serve. In recognizing the talents of colleagues around us and communicating with professional associations within our provinces and territories, we have built a network of support. I encourage you to continue to build that network of colleagues with whom you can communicate, share ideas and knowledge, and who will bring you a sense of being part of a team. Reach out to the provincial affiliates that serve to support the needs of school administrators for support or to become active participants. Attend meetings or conferences and

experience the personal and professional growth that comes from being part of such a large and informative group such as CAP. And remember, when you see something that you feel is of value that you would like to share with fellow educational leaders, contact me as the editor of the CAP Journal and we can see where the information best fits for all.

Sincerely,
Mike Landry – CAP Editor

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The Building of the Eagles' Nest



From 2007-2011, I had the opportunity to be a principal at an elementary school with a high population of Aboriginal students (82% at the time). About half of the students were from the two local reserves, and the remainder were from up island or elsewhere. Although a challenge, I felt this would be an opportunity of a lifetime for me as an educator, and as an Aboriginal woman about to undertake her first official principalship. As a Mohawk woman, I was profoundly aware that I was a guest in Coast Salish territory and needed to be respectful and open to the protocols and culture of the territories in which I was living and working.

This small school of under 150 students had numerous challenges. It was considered a high needs, low performing school, with most students living in poverty, 20% of students with special needs designations, 60% of students requiring learning assistance, and low parental involvement. Low performing schools have been described as having a culture of defeatism and low expectations from educators (Duke et.al, 2007). I was optimistic that I could make a difference for the students, but knew I needed time to build positive relationships with both the staff and community in order to see success (Goleman, 2002; Nicolaidou & Ainscow, 2005). Having been raised in poverty myself, I was profoundly aware that social issues can affect children's learning and their viewpoint of school itself. Furthermore, the families in this school were dealing with the intergenerational effects of residential schooling, and this made many parents hesitant to come into the school and be active in their child's education. It was my mission to demonstrate to parents that, unlike their past history in schools, this school would be a welcoming, safe, nurturing, fun place to learn for their child. Fortunately, the school had a very dedicated, caring, and committed staff. Many of the teachers and educational assistants had been there for years, and about one third of the staff was of Aboriginal descent.

In my first few months at school, I realized that some of the students were coming to school in crisis mode. Many would arrive late, or not at all, and a majority of impoverished families relied on the school to nourish their children. Children would arrive tired and hungry, but eager to learn and be cared for. It became evident that students needed a separate space within the school that provided emotional safety, nutrition, guidance, a place to self-regulate, learn, reflect, debrief, and most importantly, connect with an adult. If a school is to serve the legitimate needs of its community, then efforts need to be made to review and shape the structure and culture within the school so that it is aligned with the needs of the community (Goddard & Foster, 2001).

In the second year, I worked with staff to develop a unique place for students that met their emotional and learning needs as well as respected their cultural backgrounds. Acknowledging, celebrating, and including Indigenous culture was necessary if positive changes were to be made. My mandate was to make school the best place it could be for Aboriginal students who have been treated inequitably in the school system for decades. I knew I could not close the gap in outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students overnight, but there needed to be an immediate focus on healing and safety, building a culture of high expectations, and continuous improvement (Dolstra, 2010; Kelley et.al, 2005). This safe place we built together as a school learning community came to be known as the "Eagles' Nest." The name was significant because the eagle represents focus, great strength, peace and prestige in Coast Salish culture. Trena Sutton was the Cultural Support Teacher in the Eagles' Nest and from the

T'Sou-ke First Nation. She followed and celebrated Coast Salish protocols as part of her culture and those families in the school community.

Many students felt at peace when they came to this quiet room which was rich with Coast Salish pictures, books, and artifacts. If a child wasn't coping in the classroom, he could get a "pass" to work in the Nest that was always monitored by either an educational assistant or a teacher. Sometimes students checked in and checked out with the Nest staff to make needed connections throughout the day. The expectation was that the Nest was a place to self-regulate, but also to do school work. Our school counsellor, Laurie Bayly, provided inservice to our staff on self-regulation and then worked with students on strategies. When a student was able to refocus and calm herself, she would go back to her classroom. This converted classroom became the "hub" of the school, and as Renee Klassen (Educational Assistant) pointed out, a place to "heal and keep moving forward." Over my four years at the school, the "Nest" (as it was fondly referred to by the students) became a safe haven for students from kindergarten to grade five.

The Nest was developed as part of a targeted intervention for students with at-risk behaviours. Our school was one of

small number of pilot schools in the Greater Victoria School District that embraced the School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) system. In order for this system to be successful, the majority of staff needed to be supportive of the interventions, and be willing to commit to at least three years. Our school had 100% buy-in, and you could feel the staff morale increase as we increased momentum with the project. With staff and parent input, we created and refined the expectations of behaviour for our school. We adopted the 3-Ts: Take Care of Yourself, Take Care of Others, and Take Care of the Community. Teachers and support staff explicitly taught and practiced the expectations that were developed through our matrix. Staff monitored and acknowledged prosocial behaviours. Students received verbal praise, tangible rewards on the huge paper Eagle at assemblies, and earned extra recess time as a whole school. Students and parents were aware of the consequences for problem behaviours. I went from handing out numerous suspensions in my first year to none by the fourth year. Parents worked with me to help determine what



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the appropriate consequence would be for breaches of the school's code of conduct. Lastly, and importantly, was the collection of data on the problem behaviours so that we could make decisions around providing support for our students. In one example, we noticed that there were many incidents occurring in the hallways between 12-12:15 p.m. This was a time when the students were lined up to receive their hot lunches. Part of our strategy to address the issue was to put tape on the floor so that students were aware of where to stand once in the food line, and

I provided more supervision in the hallways at this busy time. Students could understand the visual cues, and staff would practice the procedures before lunchtime so that they could receive their lunches in a more safe and orderly fashion. We would meet regularly as a school team to analyze the data, and aimed to change the environment for what worked best for the students in crisis, and those most vulnerable (McIntosh et.al, 2011).

As educators, we know the value of addressing the needs of the whole child, and this room supported all children in the

school. The Nest space provided a sense of connectedness and belonging for the students, and a place to learn, refocus, and reflect. The Nest evolved in the time I was there, and was an integral part of the support network that was offered for the students. The Nest was the hub of the school, and was made possible by the collaboration, vision, and trust of my staff who knew that we needed to go above and beyond to make a difference for Aboriginal students. **CJ**

By Cammy Coughlin, PhD

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AUTHOR

Dr. Cammy Coughlin is a principal in the Greater Victoria School District No. 61. She is Mohawk and a member of the Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation. She is a curriculum developer, author, and has been an advocate for Aboriginal education for over 20 years.

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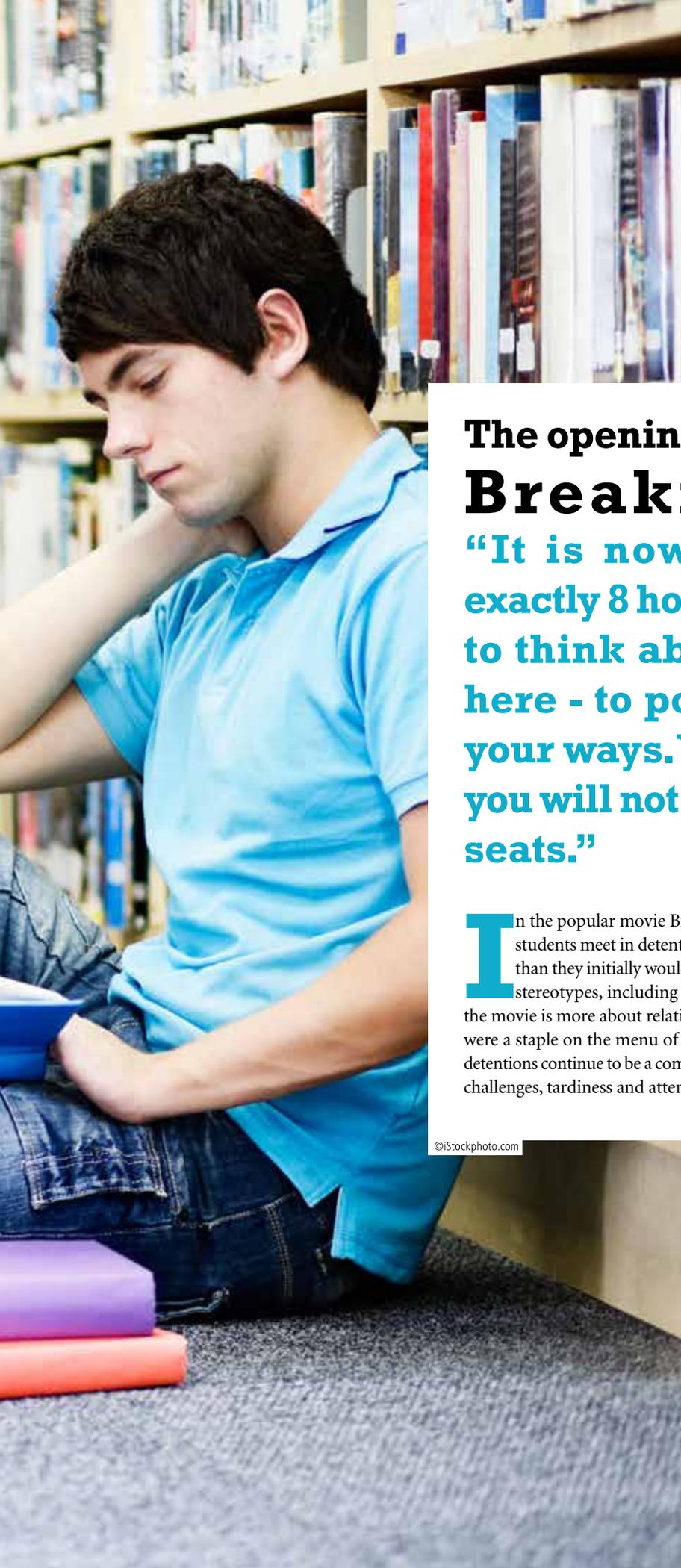
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Rethinking Breakfast Club





The opening line in the movie *Breakfast Club*: “It is now 7:06. You have exactly 8 hours and 54 minutes to think about WHY you are here - to ponder the error of your ways. You will not talk... you will not move... from these seats.”

In the popular movie *Breakfast Club* produced in 1984, five high school students meet in detention hall and discover they have more in common than they initially would have imagined. While the movie is fraught with stereotypes, including the harsh tactics of authoritarian style teachers, the movie is more about relationships than detentions. Set in 1984 detentions were a staple on the menu of disciplinarian tactics. Today, over 25 years later, detentions continue to be a commonly utilized strategy for addressing behavioural challenges, tardiness and attendance issues in secondary schools.

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Detentions are used as a consequence for fairly minor negative school conduct. It is an easily administered practice assigned by teachers and administrators who dispense them in class or in supervised detention rooms. Detentions may provide an opportunity to engage in quiet school work but often students are asked to sit quietly for the duration of detention. The practice is based on an underlying assumption that detentions serve as a deterrent and communicate a strong message that certain behaviour will not be tolerated. There are some educators who use detention as time for productive conferences, but not necessarily so.

All detentions are not created equal. There often are no guidelines for assigning detentions. Certain behaviour in some classes may result in the requirement to attend detention hall where the same behaviour in another class could result in different consequences and responses (DiLullo, 2004). Detentions are often applied in the same way zero tolerance policies have been utilized. A student who is late, disruptive or truant is assigned a detention regardless of circumstances surrounding the offence.

“Detentions may provide an opportunity to engage in quiet school work but often students are asked to sit quietly for the duration of detention. The practice is based on an underlying assumption that detentions serve as a deterrent and communicate a strong message that certain behaviour will not be tolerated.”

In some cases detentions are added for skipped detentions, sometimes escalating to suspensions. Some detentions may include a problem solving approach where others would not.

In their study of detentions, Atkins, et. al found that detentions and suspensions were ineffective methods for changing disruptive behaviour. Tobin and Sugai (1996) suggest that suspension and detentions may exacerbate students’ school-related problems. While some students in the study did not reoffend, there was a group of students who were ‘frequent flyers’. This is consistent with another study (Brown et al., 1996) in which reactive aggression was uniquely correlated with detentions. It is likely that the reinforcing properties of punishment and behaviour skill deficits interacts to create an escalating cycle of negative and challenging school behaviour (Moffat, 1993; Moffit and Caspi, 2001) .

Detention policies are similar to zero tolerance policies in that they usually are premised on the belief that students will not misbehave if they know there are certain consequences. Researchers note that because of the age and maturity levels, some student may act without foreseeing the consequences

of their behaviour. There are multiple factors and stressors in children’s lives that interact with their ability to always dictate their behaviour with reason (Daniel and Bond, 2008, Cassidy, 2005) and that it is simplistic to believe that a punishment model teaches respectful behaviour.

Some researchers believe that a school detention approach is a punitive and ineffective way to change behaviour (Skiba and Peterson, 2000). It also does not support positive school climate and is contrary to core values of school systems. Teachers may also learn to rely on the use of detentions in place of other approaches that require more time and effort (Atkins et. al, 2000). Studies have found that over reliance on detentions or suspension would not be expected to decrease rates of disruptive behaviour (Atkins et. al) and even contribute to increases (Lipsey, 1992). Finally, such methods of discipline can trigger counter-aggressive behaviours in students when used in the absence of reinforcement (Mayer & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1991). Furthermore, detentions lose any effectiveness when they fail to motivate or change behaviour. Simply assigning another detention has no effect on motivation or behaviour.



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In his book “Lost in School” Dr. Ross Greene argues that children already know how we want them to behave but lack important thinking skills. He argues that children may have a delay in regulating one’s emotions, considering outcomes of an action, poor communication skills and/or inflexible thinking. Dr. Greene asserts that there is a need to assess these factors and provide skill instruction. Deficits in skills instruction may contribute to even greater deficits and escalation of behavioural problems if fundamental lacking skills deficits are not directly addressed (Green,2009).

Restorative Justice has been suggested as a more effective and positive alternative. Restorative justice systems seek to understand behaviour to have insight into what transpired to find a positive solution (Long, Wood and Fecser, 2001). Restorative practices place responsibility on students using collaborative problem solving. The International Institute for Restorative Practices report numerous summary reports on the value of restorative practices including The Waterloo Region District School Board, in Ontario, Canada. The board implemented restorative conferencing in 2005 to manage violence, particularly bullying. The district’s elementary suspensions dropped 80 percent in under three years; its secondary school suspensions decreased by 65 percent; and secondary and elementary expulsions dropped by a third (Porter, 2007).

Other schools are using positive behavioural support programs. Positive behaviour support approaches use a variety of proactive approaches to prevent and change problem behaviour (Sugai, Horner, et al., 2000, Turnbull et al., 2002). The approach utilizes a three-tier model at school-wide, classroom based and prevention levels. They can include bully prevention programs, conflict resolution training, self-management strategies, collaborative problem solving and functional behaviour analysis. The approach makes a shift from reactive and aversive approaches for managing challenging and negative behaviour to one that is preventive and positive.

The commonality in these approaches is the understanding that misbehaviour does not occur in a vacuum. There is a broader perspective that shifts focus from assigning blame to teaching necessary skills and utilizing a problem solving process. Dr Greene suggests that we need to view challenging behaviour in the same way we might view lagging academic skills, “*challenging kids are having difficulty mastering the skills required for becoming proficient in handling life’s social, emotional, and behavioral challenge*” (Greene, 2009).

Punitive practices, such as the use of detentions for misbehaviour, are based on the premise that students will not misbehave if they know there will be consequences (Daniel

and Bondy, 2008). There is an underlying assumption that students know what to do and are choosing to be oppositional. Problems occur when children lack skills for behaviour, lack the ability to read social situations and/or have poor problem solving skills, to name only a few factors. These students will continue to exhibit challenging behaviour if the core issues are not identified.

Revisiting the use of detention as a practice is not intended to criticize schools or teachers. We are all aware of the demands placed on educators and the escalating challenges in the classrooms of today. Educators are asked to perform many roles, including addressing those children with ongoing challenging behaviour. Using practices that offer immediate consequences may seem intuitive but research is demonstrating that such practices do not have long lasting results. In addition, such approaches are proving to be ineffective, leading to frustrations for teachers, parents, students and administrators. Perhaps it is time to revisit our perspective and look at practices which may have more long lasting and satisfying results for all concerned. It doesn’t mean that we need to do something extra, just something different.

The intention here is to examine our view of detention, how it used and for whom it may be an effective or ineffective tool. If the same students are assigned detentions time after time, then the practice is not serving as a deterrent or an agent of positive behavioural change. We need to challenge the education system and teaching profession to find ways to address the negative behaviour. By using detentions as a practice there may be negative effects, particularly for a subset of students who represent the majority of occurrences of challenging and negative behaviour. We may be contributing to the escalation of some behaviour and not providing teaching opportunities to help students improve their behaviour. It’s time to rethink Breakfast Club. CJ

By: Karen Morrison, M.Ed., Special Education

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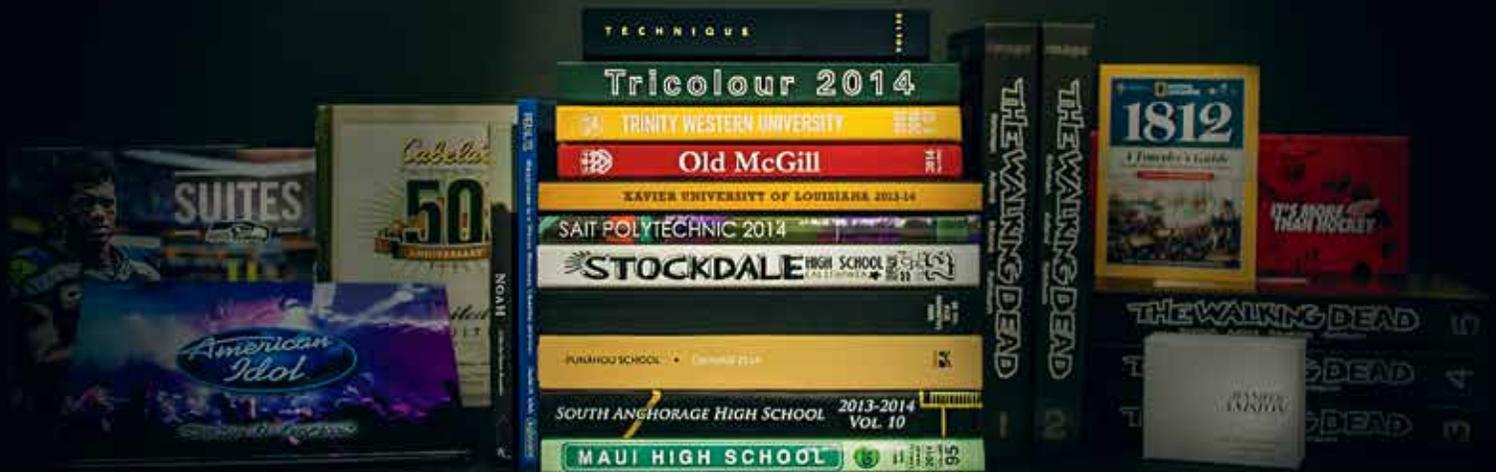
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From Compliance to Self-Discipline:

My Journey with Restitution Abstract





Restitution is an approach developed by Diane Gossen, based on William Glasser's Reality Therapy and Control Theory, and incorporating the principles of Aboriginal Restorative Justice. Traditional discipline practices focus on consequences: either positive ones such as rewards, or negative ones such as the removal of privileges. Restitution focuses instead on internal motivation, and teaching youth independence, critical thinking, and acceptance of personal responsibility. This paper follows the personal journey of one practitioner as she sought to find a more effective approach to managing challenging behaviour, and found the Restitution approach to be the answer for which she had been searching.

In my undergraduate training, I was well-educated in theories of child development and how to effectively discipline children. I learned all about stimulus-response behaviour, and how children learn appropriate behaviour if they experience a consistent negative reinforcement each time that they engage in a particular action. I learned about how important it was to respond immediately to misbehaviour, or risk the child not connecting the consequence to their behaviour. It all seemed quite sensible, and I felt ready to begin a career in working with children.

My first job was working as a child-care worker in a level four professional foster care program. The staff in this program were all on the same page; as a team, we put into action all those principles that I had learned in school. I was pleasantly surprised to find that working with such challenging kids was not overwhelmingly stressful; we adults had a plan, knew what to do, and simply followed through when infractions occurred.

But all was not perfect. There were some kids who were prepared to accept negative consequences, and did not change their behaviour. There were some children who loved the power struggle; they seemed to get a rush out of finding a loop-hole in our plans. On those occasions where we did get caught up in a power struggle, the resulting “war” inflicted serious damage to the relationships we worked hard to build with the kids. Some youth behaved well when we supervised them and they knew that they would get a reward, or that a consequence would result if they behaved inappropriately, but all that went out the window if they thought no one was looking. And of greatest concern to me, when these children turned eighteen and ventured out on their own, they struggled. They were unprepared for independence.

I moved to a new position, working as a school social worker. A different setting; a similar result. There were children that we simply weren't reaching. Teachers lamented that their students behaved well when under their watchful eye, but behaved terribly the moment the teacher left the classroom or when a substitute teacher was in for the day. Again, I worried that we were somehow not preparing these children for the future.

Those of us who work with children talk a great deal about building responsible and internally motivated people. Yet, our actions are often focused on teaching children to be compliant. We say that we want kids to be respectful, but we are not having conversations about respect; we are having conversations about rules and consequences.

It was a stroke of fate that I found Restitution. I had to use up my professional development money for the year. It seemed odd

to me that it required two days of training to learn to pay back the money it cost to replace the window that had been broken, which was my idea of what Restitution meant, but the brochure that came across my desk talked about exactly the issues I was struggling with: how to build responsible, internally motivated students.

I found that Restitution was so much more than a pay-back of damages. Restitution taught me that all behaviour exists to meet a need. Sometimes people don't have a repertoire of behaviours to effectively meet their needs, but when you consider behaviour through this lens, there really is no such thing as bad behaviour: only effective and ineffective behaviour. Instead of telling children that they are wrong, we can help them to consider what need they were trying to meet, and help them to find ways to meet their needs in a better way.

The most amazing shift occurred when I implemented a Restitution approach. Instead of going “toe to toe” with students, I was standing “shoulder to shoulder” with them. My role became that of a coach. Our relationships grew stronger, instead of being harmed as they were when I was in the role of the authority over them. And most importantly, I witnessed students who were being challenged to think and make decisions for themselves. They were not being motivated by consequences and rewards; they were being motivated by meeting their own needs. They were learning independence.

I have witnessed some magical moments since using this approach. I'll never forget the child who, when I validated that he must have had a really good reason for fighting, responded that he was trying to stick up for a friend, but knew that hadn't been the right way to do it. Or the young lady who, instead of defending her



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actions, sobbed that she did not want to be a violent person when reassured that we would figure this situation out together. Or the girl who was ready to walk away from an important relationship until I asked her if it would be better for her if she was able to find a way that she could stand up for her own beliefs and still maintain a friendship. These kids didn't need someone to lecture them. They needed support to find a better way.

As my skills in using Restitution improved, I discovered that these principles were really not about disciplining children; they were about resolving conflict. They equally applied to understanding my mother, my husband, my colleagues at work, and my own internal conflicts. Instead of judging others, or myself, when I recognized that every behaviour exists for a reason, and remembered that we are all doing the best we can in the moment, my frustration would dissipate and I was able to find solutions.

Restitution is more than someone's opinion or philosophy; it is consistent with what science tells us as well. We know that when people are feeling threatened, their capacity to learn and problem-solve is compromised. We know that internal motivation is much stronger than external. We know that rewards can decrease internal motivation. We know that strong relationships improve academic achievement and decrease the potential for violent behaviour. Yet, so many discipline practices continue to inflict guilt and shame on children, and segregate them from the group when they do wrong instead of helping them to learn, become stronger, and to repair relationships.

I believe that part of the problem is that this approach is radically different from the way that many of us were raised as children. It feels like we are somehow "letting kids away" with poor behaviour if we do not treat them harshly. If the only thing you know how to do is punish and reward, it's difficult to take a different approach. And even when you do try, society tends to judge you as being "soft" when you move away from using punishment as a tool. It can take a lot of courage and a big leap of faith to give it a shot.

But its a leap that is very much worth taking. I'm so thankful that I stumbled upon a brochure when I had money that had to be spent. That one day of training set me upon a course that truly changed the person that I have become, not only in my work, but in how I approach all of the relationships in my life. **CJ**

By: Rebecca Gray

Readers who wish to know more about Restitution may consult the following sources:

Gossen, D. (2004). *It's all about we: Rethinking discipline using restitution*. Saskatoon, SK: Chelsom Consultants.
Rebecca's blog: www.rebeccagrayblog.wordpress.com

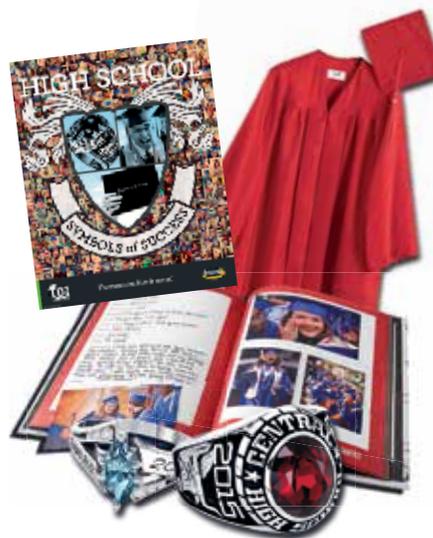
AUTHOR

Rebecca Gray is a student advisor and certified Restitution trainer. She is past-president of the Canadian Association of School Social Workers and Attendance Counsellors and Westman School Clinicians Association. She has a B.S.W. and is currently completing her M. Ed.

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Partnering to Make A Difference



Photo courtesy of PALS

PALS (Partners Assisting Local Schools) is a program that facilitates mutually beneficial partnerships between a school and local businesses, service agencies and/or community groups. The founding partners of PALS were Mr. James K. Irving, Chairman of J.D. Irving, Limited (a local business) and Prince Charles School in the Saint John Education Centre of the Anglophone School District - South, New Brunswick.

Established to help break the cycle of poverty for students living in identified priority neighbourhoods in Saint John, New Brunswick, PALS combines initiatives that focus on academic achievement and a positive school environment. By working together, the school and its partners make a positive impact on the life of a child and the future of the community.

Priority neighbourhoods are identified by high poverty rates, high percentage of single parents, and low levels of education and labour force participation. These areas benefit from additional social and community services.

Although poverty reduction remains the central focus of the PALS initiative in Saint John, partnerships are developed for a variety of reasons, a testament to its adoptability and adaptability as a model in the province and beyond.

School staff and administration, along with community partners, develop strategies to meet the identified needs of students living in poverty. On a continual basis the partnerships' strategies are developed, implemented and evaluated for their effectiveness in meeting these needs. It has been important from the beginning that the initiatives and goals of each PALS partnership align with school, district and provincial education plans.

Contributions of partners take the form of **time** - for the employee volunteers involved in the endeavour; **financial support** - with respect to things such as uniforms, band instruments, transportation, books, etc.; and **exposure to new experiences** - in the opportunities that have been arranged to broaden the general knowledge base and outlook for the students who have very limited exposure to the world outside of their neighbourhood.

PALS partnerships have opened new doors for students, helped support the school staff as they work with students to shape new standards of behaviour and encouraged students to think and explore the broad spectrum of possibilities available upon completion of high school.

Many students from this population had not contemplated completing high school just a few short years ago, much less continuing their education at the post-secondary level. This has changed.

“If I graduate.” has been replaced with “When I graduate!”- a small but significant change.

Where it Began - An Idea, Commitment and Caring People!

For many children attending the schools serving priority neighbourhoods in Saint John, poverty is a way life. Without intervention, they will have a lower standard of living, poorer health, and live with higher rates of crime than the average Canadian.

Poverty remains one of society's greatest costs, dramatically increasing government health and social expenditures. It will continue to remove almost all of those without a high school education from any workplace requiring skilled employees.

For most, these conditions will not change unless something intervenes to help break the cycle of poverty. This is the backdrop for the beginning of the PALS program.

The first PALS partnership began at Prince Charles School. Before classes began in September 2001, all employees at the school (teachers, office staff, maintenance people, education assistants and support staff, and administration) with some District personnel and two people from J.D. Irving, Limited went on a day-long planning session..

The group discussed the students' needs, their concerns for the students, and their experiences with the students at the school. As they began their search for change they developed a vision defined through consensus.

The vision has a simple rationale. If students want to be at Prince Charles, they will come to school, stay in school and learn. If teachers and staff want to be at Prince Charles, they will commit to the school as they help students build self-esteem, learn and thrive. If community members help at the school, a sense of community pride will develop and grow.

With students, staff and teachers wanting to be at Prince Charles, the school staff was confident they could create the positive school environment essential for learning. Academic success would follow.

This partnership continued quietly for five years. The hope was to develop a plan, a blue-print for further partnerships that then spread to six other schools serving

PALS does not work in isolation. It is one of many initiatives in Greater Saint John, New Brunswick that work together to address poverty by helping to close the achievement gap for children living in poverty.

The Anglophone South School District is a crucial partner and stakeholder in these initiatives. PALS works closely to support its Community Schools program.

From the Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative (BCAPI) to Community Schools, Living Saint John, Achieve Literacy Greater Saint John, the Promise Partnership and so many more, Greater Saint John has mobilized to change the future not only for our most vulnerable citizens, but for us all.

“In fact, more than a decade of concentrated community effort has reaped many successes. The poverty level in the City of Saint John has dropped from 27% to 20.8% and child poverty has been reduced from 35% to 28.3%. These levels are still higher than provincial and national levels so this good work must continue.” BCAPI



Photo courtesy of PALS

priority neighbourhoods in Saint John. It also became the model for the establishment of the Community Schools program in New Brunswick.

People Support

Employees of the various businesses and community groups are the volunteer PALS who help make the school environment a warm and caring community. Employers free

up employee time to volunteer in a variety of ways at their partner school. Their activities, one-on-one or in groups, contribute to significant changes in the lives of the students.

These activities include but are not limited to:

- literacy support
- breakfast and lunch programs
- numeracy support
- mentoring
- coaching
- enrichment activities
- in-class support
- work placement mentoring
- extra-curricular activities (chess, music, clubs, etc.)
- supervision of field trips, school-based events, etc.

Financial Support

Some partners are not able to spare employee time during the work week, but still want to be involved. Assisting a school financially is sometimes an option, as, due to a variety of factors, many schools do not have the means to provide for additional enriching educational experiences for their students. Any financial assistance from partners does not in any way replace the public funding for schools.

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In response to a needs assessment undertaken by the school staff, partners may choose to help by providing funds to:

- support initiatives in the following areas: academics, physical space improvements, extra-curricular enrichment, and basic necessities such as food, clothing etc.
- augment or create opportunities to ensure all children are able to access events or activities associated with going to school.
- assist school parent groups in their efforts to provide such extras as library enhancements, development of playgrounds, team uniforms, etc.
- create opportunities for schools to provide field trip experiences beyond what the school budget accommodates.

PALS partnerships are true partnerships. Schools have traditionally received sponsorships from various sources, and this is very important support for a school.

PALS partnerships take it a step further – they are all about relationship-building. Partnerships are still in place that started 15 years ago.

The PALS Success

What began 15 years ago with one school and one business partner has grown to more than 30 schools and over 140 partners and continues to expand! Hundreds of volunteers are now working with students and schools to make a positive impact in their lives.

The schools and communities where many of our educators work present challenges. However these challenges also provide opportunities to look at new ways for the community to help. Students often come to school without their basic needs being met. In addition to the host of challenges present when a lack of finances does not permit adequate shelter, clothing or food, these students live in areas where the intergenerational nature of this strife impedes their ability to see life beyond the streets in which they live.

This contributes to many obstacles in an educational setting.



Photo courtesy of PALS

Teachers and support staff work very hard to give students the necessary skills to become:

- *Self-sufficient* – capable of securing not only their own personal needs but also able to contribute to the sustainability of the province.
- *Innovative* - pioneering with creative ideas to move forward in new directions.
- *Critical thinkers* - able to use strategies and processes to solve problems, be creative, understand deeply and conduct meaningful reflection.
- *Global citizens* - able to assess social cultural economic and environmental interdependence locally, nationally and globally.

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Photo courtesy of PALS

“Making a difference in the life of a child can have a powerful impact, not only on that young person, but also on the future of our community. If our work together for young people serves as a model to make a difference in other schools in our community - that would be the best reward of all.”

James K. Irving

Our schools cannot do it alone.

This is where our community comes in. Partnerships (the schools working with their partners) are having a positive impact on virtually every facet of school life for our children – academic achievement, school spirit, student behaviour and social skills, student motivation, sports activity, cultural awareness, and pride in being part of the school and community.

For our community and business leaders, partnering with a neighbourhood school is one of the most efficient and effective ways to contribute to real community change - making a significant and direct impact on inner city poverty.

The PALS initiative proves that a dedicated school staff and parent group, together with community partners, volunteers and financial support, can make a positive change in the lives of children.

Have we reached them all? Not yet! But we are making significant gains in so many respects. It takes us all, and in New Brunswick, we are having fun in the process! **CJ**

By: Deborah E. Fisher, PALS Coordinator

AUTHOR

Deborah E. Fisher began her teaching career in 1974 and has taught in Perth Andover, Fredericton and in the former School District 02, Moncton, primarily at upper Elementary and Middle School levels.

In 1994 Deborah was seconded for 3 years by the NB Department of Education and J. D. Irving, Limited to help develop materials on forestry for use in schools in the Maritimes and parts of Maine.

Seconded by Mr. J. K. Irving in 2001 to coordinate PALS (Partners Assisting Local Schools) she is in the 15th year of this project. What began with one partner and one school has grown to more than 120 partners and approximately 30 schools in the province and has spread to the west coast of Canada. Abbotsford, BC is currently initiating its own version of the PALS program.

Deborah loves working with young people and currently serves on the Board of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Saint John. She lives in Grand Bay-Westfield and has two sons, Christopher and Gregory.

HOW PARTNERSHIPS BENEFIT:

Students:

- Improved literacy rates
- Improved attendance
- Overall rise in academic achievement
- Students being exposed to possibilities beyond what they knew pre-partnership
- Increased pride in school, school spirit
- Sense of ownership and involvement
- Increase in feelings of self-esteem
- Sense of belonging in the community

Staff:

- Access to more resources – people, volunteers, materials,
- Sense of team – they don't feel they are in it alone
- Trust – it took time to build trust and really believe that the community cared and cared enough to stick around – they couldn't quit and it meant so much when partners and volunteers decided they wouldn't quit!

Community:

- Parents more involved in their child's education
- Decrease in community problems : Example -calls re family disputes, vandalism, etc.
- Pride in their community school
- Improved attitudes of both children and their families

Business:

- For business leaders, a PALS partnership is one of the most efficient and effective ways to contribute to real community change. These partnerships are making a significant and direct impact on the inner city poverty around them, and they have engaged the community to be part of that change.
- Employees return to work feeling positive and satisfied with their contribution.
- Employees enjoy sharing in the children's lives and appreciate the children's successes.
- Contributes to a sense of pride in the workplace.
- Aligns with corporate philanthropic mandates.

For more information please contact:

Deborah Fisher, PALS Coordinator Fisher.deborah@jd Irving.com



Beyond Compliance and Control:

A Standard of Behaviour for All in the Pembina Trails School Division

In 2002, the Manitoba provincial government undertook a major amalgamation of school divisions. The Province also passed legislation requiring all school divisions and schools to develop Codes of Conduct for dealing with student misbehaviour. Fortuitously, the conditions were right for the new Pembina Trails School Division, an amalgamation of two suburban Winnipeg school divisions, to embark on a reflective journey to create a new vision for working with students, one focused on teaching and learning rather than codifying behaviours and weighting out punishments.

In response to the provincial directive, the Division struck a broad committee of trustees, educators, students and parents. The committee's mandate seemed simple; create a list of inappropriate behaviours and an accompanying list of consequences. To the surprise of all involved, the task would prove not to be that simple. Deeply held beliefs needed to be challenged and discussion of purpose had to be tackled in order to allow a new vision to arise.

Was the purpose of the Code of Conduct to codify behaviours and prescribe punishments or was the school division involved in the people making process of forming citizens? Beliefs on the committee varied and a number of educators trained in Diane Gossen's work on Restitution, with its basis in restorative justice, shared their perspectives. At the same time, committee members were becoming familiar with the work of Jane Bluestein, Barbara Coloroso, and Pembina Trails was being introduced to the Attachment Theory work of Gordon Neufeld. All of these philosophical perspectives led the committee to seek something more than just a simple code of conduct.



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In January of 2006, the Division began implementation of its new “Standard of Behaviour” which was fashioned as a guide for the entire school division. It was a standard meant to create safe, caring learning communities for all. The standard sets an expectation for what all students should experience and identifies student, staff, family and divisional responsibilities. It states that the goal of discipline is to change inappropriate behavior, to restore safety and to promote the learning of self-control. Two categories of behaviour, “disruptive” and “severely disruptive”, are identified and suggested responses are offered.

The Division’s Standard of Behaviour states that:

In addressing any misbehaviours, responses shall:

- *be logical, realistic and timely*
- *be appropriate for the student’s stage of development and considerate of the student’s special needs*
- *reflect the severity of misbehaviour and take into account the frequency, duration and intent of the behavior*
- *be chosen initially to restore safety and order*
- *makes sense to students as much as possible*
- *enable students to generate appropriate responses and solutions*

The Division’s Standard of Behaviour also lays out some examples of appropriate responses that can be considered in responding to inappropriate student behaviours. Schools are afforded flexibility and creativity in responding to each individual behavioural situation.

As a long time school administrator who began teaching when the formal use of the strap was coming to an end, the Standard of Behaviour was a welcomed seminal document that enabled my practice to match my core values and beliefs. As educators we are called to model appropriate behaviour, teach appropriate behaviour, help students understand where they have erred and support them in repairing the situation.

The Division’s Standard of Behaviour states that “To Discipline is to Teach” and it highlights five (5) Key Behaviours that must guide adults when they are dealing with students:

1. **Establishing a Climate Conductive to Learning** – *Creating a climate that supports learning is the first step to effectively teaching anything.*
2. **Modeling** – *The modeling of conduct we desire students to emulate is an ongoing responsibility for all adults in a child’s life – at school, at play and at home.*
3. **Teaching** – *Telling isn’t teaching and expectations don’t teach. Students must be specifically taught skills and attitudes embedded in the Standard of Behaviour.*
4. **Responding Professionally** – *Pembina Trails staff members will always respond to behaviours that threaten or violate the physical and emotional safety of those in our care. Behaviour is always situational and any and every response to behaviour must always be informed by the circumstances of the situation.*
5. **Restoring Students to the Community** – *Disciplining must be conceived in terms of strategies like relationship building, success orientation, and developing dynamics that are more positive and cooperative than authoritarian and dis-empowering.*

Since its inception, the Standard of Behaviour has proven to be a useful guide in dealing with student inappropriate behaviour as well as an effective tool in responding to parental concerns. Parents can initially begin seeking a punitive response and the Standard of Behaviour enables educators to enlighten parents on the importance of teaching appropriate behaviours, helping students repair situations and never giving up on students.

The work of the Standard of Behaviour committee created a document that continues to guide practice within the school division. It also has supported and guided division-wide work focused on creating respectful school communities. It currently is supporting work aimed at addressing student mental health issues. Recently, the document was revised to ensure that it not only speaks to creating “safe and caring schools” but also schools that are truly “inclusive” learning communities.

It would have been a relatively easy endeavour for the Division to have established a divisional Code of Conduct and direct each school to establish their own codes. As a result of collaborative planning and visionary leadership, Pembina Trails received ministerial permission to implement a Standard of Behaviour in place of a Code of Conduct. A standard rooted in restorative justice and flexible enough to guide educators in teaching appropriate behaviours and aiding students to fix situations so learning and success can continue.

As a preamble, the document states that:

A Standard of Behaviour is a teaching model rather than a mandate for behaviour. The emphasis is on teaching rather than telling, nurturing rather than sanctioning and including rather than excluding.

While not perfect, the Standard of Behaviour is a valuable tool for teachers and school administrators as they respond to student behavioural infractions. More importantly, it provides a philosophical basis focused on restoring students to community and teaching appropriate behaviours. As a former colleague and co-chair of the Standard of Behaviour Committee used to say, “Where else in our society but at school can you mess up, be forgiven, be taught the correct behaviour and learn from the experience?” The Standard of Behaviour is all about teaching, learning and restoring students to community. It is a valuable guide for adults and children alike and one that invites partnership with the parent community. It truly is a Standard of Behaviour for all involved in the Pembina Trails School Division.

The Pembina Trails School Division Standard of Behaviour can be viewed on line at http://www.pembinatrails.ca/community/docs/Standard%20of%20Behaviour%20Brochure_WEB_2014.pdf

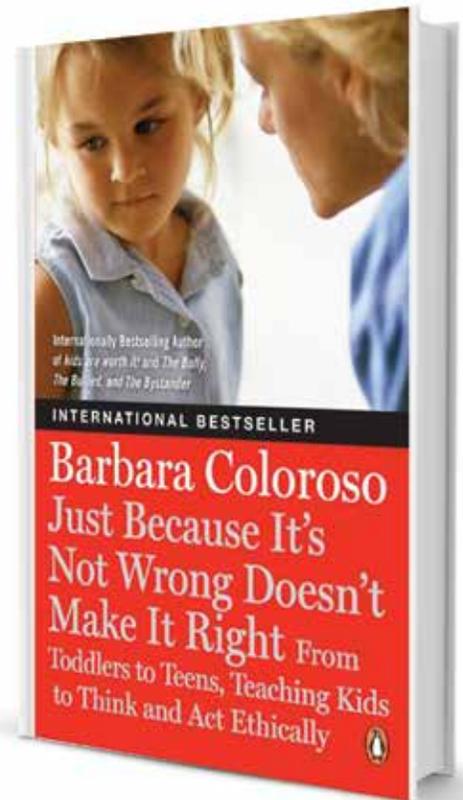
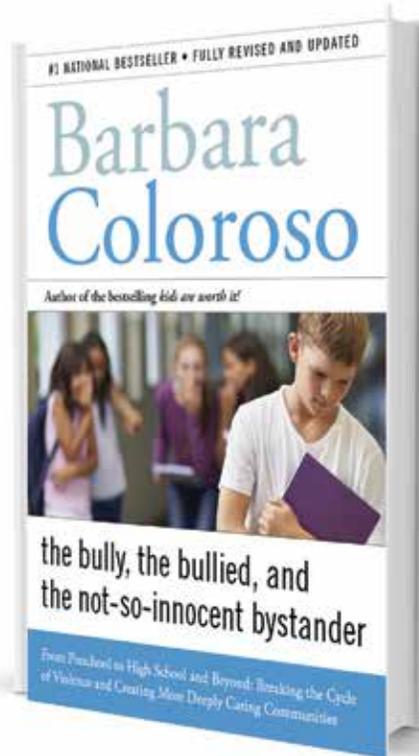
Bill Burns is a long time school administrator with a Master’s Degree in Educational Administration from the University of Manitoba. He currently is principal of River West Park School, a K to 9 school in the Pembina Trails School Division. He is past president of MB ASCD and currently sits as a provincial director on the Manitoba Council of School Leaders (COSL). 



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Health Corner

Anaphylaxis: Preparing for the Unexpected

Anaphylaxis, the most serious type of allergic reaction, is a key health issue affecting schools across the country. Within a school community, there may be students and staff with potentially life-threatening allergies. While the exact prevalence is unknown, it has been estimated that up to 2% of Canadians (approximately 700,000 people) are at risk of anaphylaxis from food and insect stings.¹

Symptoms

Symptoms of anaphylaxis generally include two or more of these body systems: skin, respiratory, gastrointestinal and/or cardiovascular. It can help to “Think F.A.S.T.”² to remember the potential symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction:

Face – hives, itching, redness, swelling of face, lips or tongue

Airway – trouble breathing, swallowing or speaking, nasal congestion, sneezing

Stomach – stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea

Total Body – hives, itching, swelling, weakness, dizziness, sense of doom, loss of consciousness

Symptoms can appear within minutes of exposure to an allergen; or longer in some cases. Keep in mind that symptoms can vary from one person to the next; and even from one reaction to another in the same person.¹

Common Allergens

In Canada, the most common food allergens that cause anaphylaxis are peanut, tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, walnuts), milk, egg, sesame, soy, wheat, seafood, including fish (such as trout and salmon) and shellfish (crustaceans such as lobster and shrimp as well as molluscs such as scallops and clams), and mustard.

For those with food allergy, avoidance of the allergen(s) is the only way to prevent an anaphylactic reaction.¹ This can be challenging when one considers how many times food is eaten during a typical school day. In addition to food, some people are allergic to the venom of stinging insects (more of an issue during the warmer months), medication, or other substances.

Emergency Steps

Despite best efforts, anaphylactic reactions do occur and it's best to be prepared for the unexpected. It's important to note that anaphylaxis is unpredictable, and should always be treated as an emergency situation. The first line medication used to treat anaphylactic reactions is known as epinephrine; and the EpiPen® and Allerject® brands of epinephrine auto-injectors are available in Canada.

According to the consensus guidelines, Anaphylaxis in Schools & Other Settings, individuals should follow these five steps in the event of a life-threatening allergic reaction:

1. Give epinephrine (e.g. EpiPen® or Allerject®) at the first sign of a reaction.
2. Call 9-1-1 or local emergency medical services.
3. Give a second dose in 5-15 minutes if the reaction continues or gets worse.
4. Go to the nearest hospital right away (ideally by ambulance) and stay for possible treatment and observation.
5. Call the emergency contact person (e.g. parent/guardian).

Note: The second dose can be given as early as 5 minutes after the first dose if there is no improvement in symptoms.

Epinephrine

It is recommended that individuals with potentially life-threatening allergies carry epinephrine with them at all times when age appropriate. In the case of younger children, school staff may have to carry the auto-injector or have it available in the classroom.¹



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Epinephrine auto-injectors are devices that contain a needle and a pre-measured dose of epinephrine. The EpiPen® and Allerject® auto-injectors both come in 0.30 mg and 0.15 mg dosages which are prescribed based on an individual's weight. There are also training devices available for hands-on practice.

Back-up Auto-injectors

It is suggested that a back-up dose of epinephrine (auto-injector) be available as a precautionary measure. Sometimes, a second injection may be required to treat an anaphylactic reaction.¹ Schools have taken different measures regarding back-up doses:

- Some schools ask parents/guardians to provide a back-up device for the school.
- Other schools purchase stock auto-injectors (i.e. not prescribed for a specific person) for use in an emergency.

Stock Epinephrine

In the US, national and local policies have been developed to encourage the stocking of epinephrine in schools; and many states have policies in place. This medication may be used if the person experiencing an anaphylactic reaction, does not have his/her own epinephrine available, or if he/she has no history of allergic reactions and has their first reaction at school. There has been a lot of conversation around the topic of "stock" or undesignated epinephrine. Some US and Canadian advocates support the idea of stocking epinephrine if regular training is provided for school staff. Others are concerned about the management of devices which requires budgetary support and policies for ongoing replacement and maintenance. It will be interesting to see how the conversation continues on this topic.

Anaphylaxis Policies

Some Canadian provinces have laws in place to protect students at risk of anaphylaxis while others have voluntary guidelines or policies. Detailed policy information, along with a sample school anaphylaxis plan and other sample documents, is available in the *Anaphylaxis in Schools & Other Settings* resource.

Resources and Links

In the school setting, the management of anaphylaxis requires the cooperation of many, including school staff, students with life-threatening allergies, and their parents/guardians. There are different online resources regarding anaphylaxis and the school environment which can be accessed for free (also available in French):

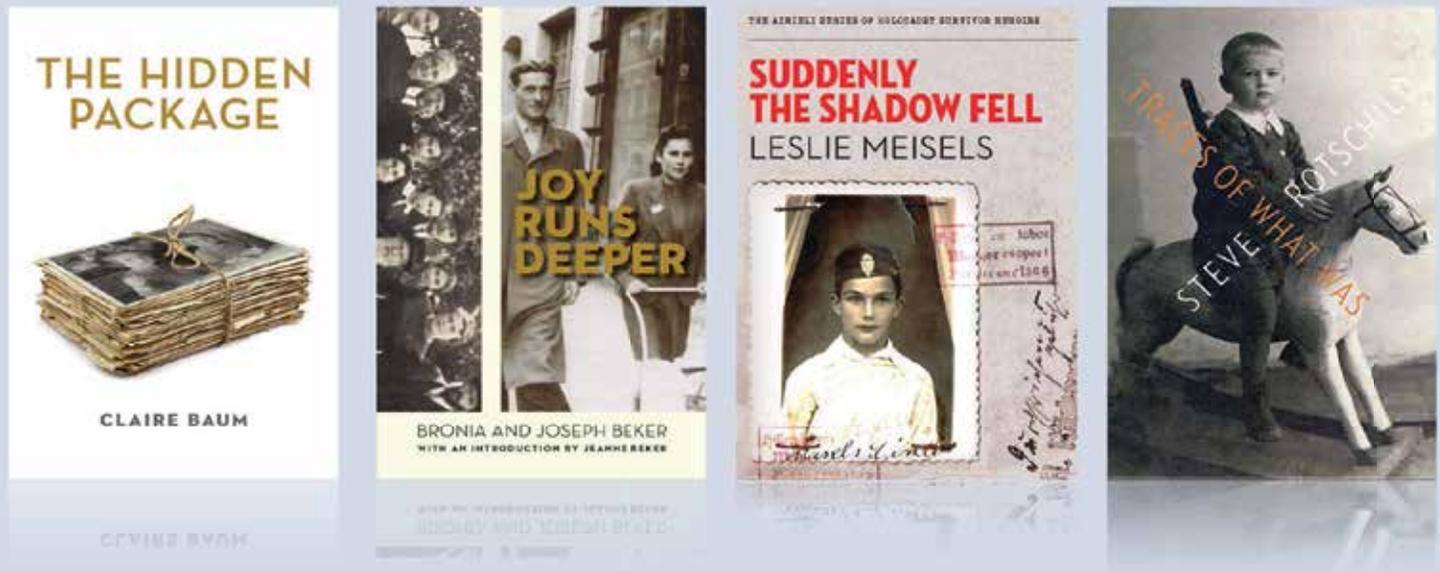
- **Anaphylaxis in Schools: What Educators Need to Know**

An interactive online course which includes a personalized certificate of completion.

Available at www.allergyaware.ca

Developed by *Anaphylaxis Canada* in collaboration with *Leap Learning Technologies Inc.* and the *Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*.

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www.azrielifoundation.org/memoirs

• Anaphylaxis in Schools & Other Settings, 3rd Edition

This latest edition provides key recommendations on the management and treatment of anaphylaxis; and also forms the basis of the content in the “Anaphylaxis in Schools” course.

Available at www.csaci.ca

Developed by the Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology in collaboration with Anaphylaxis Canada, the Allergy/Asthma Information Association, the Association québécoise des allergies alimentaires, and the Canadian Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Foundation.

• Think F.A.S.T. poster

A downloadable poster which describes the symptoms of anaphylaxis and the recommended emergency response.

Available at www.anaphylaxis.ca

Think F.A.S.T. concept developed by Anaphylaxis Canada and supported by the Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, Allergy/Asthma Information Association, the Association québécoise des allergies alimentaires, and the Canadian Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Foundation.

There are also helpful websites which provide information about life-threatening allergies:

- www.allergyaware.ca
- www.anaphylaxis.ca
- www.csaci.ca
- www.epipen.ca
- www.allerject.ca

It is hoped that these resources and links will be accessed by many. An anaphylactic reaction can be quick and unexpected, therefore, it is critical that school personnel and others are taught how to recognize symptoms, reduce risks, and know when and how to give epinephrine. Being prepared through the latest in educational resources can help save someone’s life. **CJ**

References:

1. Anaphylaxis in Schools & Other Settings, 3rd Edition.
 2. Think F.A.S.T. concept developed by Anaphylaxis Canada.
- Word count: 1,106

By **Joni Huang**

Joni Huang has been involved with the development of anaphylaxis-related educational resources for nine years. She has interfaced with Ministries/Departments of Education across Canada and has worked with different national organizations, including Anaphylaxis Canada and the Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology.

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¹ Bock SA and Atkins FM. The natural history of peanut allergy. *J Allergy Clin Immunol* 1989;83:900-4.

² Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology Annual Scientific Meeting 2012, Anaphylaxis deaths in Ontario: a retrospective review of cases from 1986 to 2011, Ya S Xu, Susan Waserman, Laura Harada and Monika Kastner. <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/780414>

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