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RAJNIL PRASAD
Justice Studies, Class of 2014





Yik Yak app:

Why schools are concerned Anonymous social media smartphone app leads to trash talking, say students

An Ottawa school was in lockdown recently because of a gun reference posted on the social messaging service Yik Yak. And Charlottetown police said recently that some local students aren't attending school because they can't take reading the comments on Yik Yak.

The app has been linked to threats, pranks and cyberbullying at schools across North America, prompting many to block it.

But is that a good idea? Here's what you need to know about Yik Yak.

What is Yik Yak?

Yik Yak is a free mobile app that allows anyone to post public anonymous messages — not even a profile or password is required.

Unlike many similar apps, it's location-based, so the messages are targeted at those within 2.5 kilometres.

Yik Yak bills itself as an app that lets you "get a live feed of what everyone's saying around you."

Like many social messaging apps, it allows users to "upvote" or "downvote" messages they like or don't like.

What can it be used for?

Yik Yak has quickly grown popular in schools, where it can have positive uses such as sharing questions about homework.

Joel Westheimer, education columnist for CBC's Ottawa Morning, described one case in class where a student said he or she wasn't feeling well, asked if anyone had anti-nausea medication, and received a response from someone who was able to help.

The app has also been used in negative ways, however, raising serious concerns at some schools.

Why are schools concerned about Yik Yak?

In some cases, the app has been linked to problems such as threats, pranks and cyberbullying.

The lockdown at Hillcrest High School in Ottawa this week is among many across North America linked to Yik Yak. Similar incidents took place at two California high schools in November. In the U.S., charges were laid against 11 college students last fall for threats posted on Yik Yak in relation to eight different universities.

The app has also been used to encourage dangerous pranks at Ottawa schools such as pulling fire alarms.

Schools are also concerned about the app's use in cyberbullying. Recently, All Saints Catholic High School in Ottawa sent a note home to parents saying it and other schools "are experiencing an increased number of issues with respect to negative comments made on social media sites" such as Yik Yak.

Nima Naimi, who conducts cyberbullying research at McGill University in Montreal, says the anonymity offered by the app may lead to a lack of empathy and users saying things that they wouldn't normally say in person.

"That's the danger that causes cyberbullying to happen," he told CBC News in an interview last fall.

How have schools responded?

Some schools, such as Ottawa's All Saints Catholic High School, have sent notes home to parents about the app. That school and many others have also sought to block the app on school grounds.



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Because the app is location-based, it can be blocked by geofencing.

In the United States Yik Yak partnered with a company called Maonics, a company that has GPS data for about 85 per cent of middle and high schools, in order to block the app on school grounds.

Some schools in Canada, such as Chilliwack Secondary School in B.C., have also blocked the app.

What is the downside of blocking the app?

Jones said one student expressed disappointment because of the potential positive uses of the app.

Westheimer adds that, in a way, blocking the app is futile.

“We all know this is a game of whack-a-mole. Does it make sense to block one app? I mean, there will be 10 more where they were.”

What should parents and teachers be doing instead?

Westheimer says schools need to teach kids how to interact with each other in healthy ways, instead of just focusing on academics.

Rick Jones, principal of Chilliwack Secondary School, told CBC Radio’s Spark that his school, in addition to blocking the app, is trying to encourage students to engage in responsible behaviour. He wants them to report inappropriate comments to Yik Yak or to teachers and to have them deleted.

Naimi suggested parents should also talk to their children about the fact that Yik Yak may not be as anonymous as it looks — in the U.S., the company has worked with law enforcement to get a number of students arrested for posting threats.

CBC Technology columnist Dan Misener said that if parents want to have an informed and meaningful conversation with their kids about Yik Yak, they should use it themselves.

“Download it, try it, poke around, see how it works, see the kinds of things that are being posted,” he suggested. “And that’s just going to help you have a better understanding and open up a dialogue with kids.” 



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Government of Canada Supports a School-Run Rehabilitation and Reintegration Program for Young Offenders in a Northern Community

Funding for Deh Gah school to deliver Fort Providence youth wellness program

Ryan Leef, Member of Parliament for Yukon, on behalf of Justice Minister Peter MacKay, announced \$460,000 in funding to the Deh Gah Elementary and Secondary School in Fort Providence, to support a reintegration

and rehabilitative program for youth involved in the youth justice system. Programming will include in-class assistance, tutoring and mentoring, physical activities, employable skills training, career planning, and various counselling sessions and activities to help address the use of, and addiction to, illicit drugs.

This project is funded by the Youth Justice Fund, which supports a broad range of projects with youth involved in the criminal

justice system. The Youth Justice Fund provides grants and contributions to projects that encourage a more effective youth justice system, respond to emerging youth justice issues and enable greater citizen and community participation in the youth justice system.

Quick Facts

- » The Government of Canada supports community-based groups working with vulnerable youth to provide alternatives to the criminal justice system.
- » The Deh Gah program will use the funding to provide a youth support program to reconnect youth currently involved in the youth justice system with the school and community.
- » Programming will include in-class assistance, tutoring and mentoring, physical activities, employable skills training, career planning, and various counselling sessions.
- » Programming also will be offered during school breaks, i.e., summer vacation, and outside school hours.

Quotes

“Our Government is taking further action to help at-risk youth who have been in trouble with the law and increase the safety and security of our northern communities. I am proud that our Government is supporting the Deh Gah Elementary and Secondary School as they work to reintegrate youth into the community and school system. This funding shows our commitment to investing in Fort Providence’s youth, and demonstrates our dedication to making our communities safer.”

Peter MacKay, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

“Programs like the Fort Providence Youth Wellness Program encourage community involvement in the youth justice system through innovative approaches to dealing with young people in conflict with the law. With the right community support, these youth have a much better chance of success at reintegrating into Canadian society.”

Ryan Leef, Member of Parliament for Yukon

“Thanks to the Youth Justice Fund, the Fort Providence Youth Wellness Program will provide youth involved in the youth justice system with the support and the direction to develop their whole being (body, mind and spirit) in a positive, safe and caring environment. The Fort Providence Youth Wellness Program will help the youth to

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obtain the skills and the strategies needed to make productive choices in life and their community. Through the Youth Justice Fund, the Government of Canada shows their support to projects like the Fort Providence Youth Wellness Program that aims to prevent youth from re-entering the youth justice system."

Lois Philipp, Principal, Deh Gàh Elementary and Secondary School

The Youth Justice Fund was established in the 1990s as part of the Youth Justice Renewal Initiative, and provides grants and contributions funding for projects across Canada. The Youth Justice Fund has a budget of approximately \$4.5 million each year.

The Youth Justice Fund has multiple components:

The Main Fund supports a broad range of projects relating to youth involved in the justice system. Current funding priorities include youth with mental health issues and/or cognitive impairments. The Main Fund can also provide support to respond to emerging youth justice issues.

- » The Drug Treatment component supports drug treatment interventions for youth involved in the justice system who are dealing with drug abuse.
- » The Guns, Gangs and Drugs component responds to youth involved in the justice system who are involved in, or vulnerable to, gun-, gang- and drug-related activities.

The Youth Justice Initiative is a multi-faceted approach that includes a legislative framework (the Youth Criminal Justice Act) and programming resources that:

- » Encourage a more fair and effective youth justice system;
- » Respond to emerging youth justice issues; and
- » Enable greater citizen/community participation in the youth justice system by encouraging partnerships and innovations, and developing and sharing information and knowledge about youth justice.

Community organizations, Aboriginal organizations, and individuals are eligible for funding to help develop community-based programming options and partnerships that respond more effectively and in a more meaningful manner to youth in conflict with the law. Funding support is also used to advance changes in provincial/territorial

policies and programs that are consistent with the intent of federal policy objectives.

The Youth Justice Fund supports the development, implementation, and evaluation of pilot projects that provide programming and services for youth in conflict with the law. It supports professional development activities, such as training and conferences, for justice professionals and youth service providers. Additionally, it funds


research on the youth justice system and related issues.

Projects must target youth who are between the ages of 12 and 17 and currently in conflict with the law, or justice professionals and/or service providers who work with these youth.

To learn more about the Youth Justice Fund, please visit canada.justice.gc.ca/youth. ♣ csc

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Fighting fire with fire: New school-based program to fight radicalization;
School-based program hopes to fight extremism

By: Bill Graveland

A heartbreaking video featuring a mother's message to her son who died fighting for the Islamic State is part of a new program to fight the radicalization of Canadian youth.

Extreme Dialogue is believed to be Canada's first school-based initiative that tackles the issue.

It features films and educational resources using the stories of real people to help youth think for themselves and challenge extremist ideas.

Chris Boudreau, whose 22-year-old son Damian Clairmont was killed while fighting with Islamic extremists in Syria last winter, has continued to speak out against extremism.

"Here we are today. We have no body. No way of touching you one more time. No way to look at you and say goodbye," says the Calgary woman as she looks directly into the camera in the 10-minute video.

"Why couldn't you come home once you saw how it was? Why didn't you come home? How do we live our life knowing some of the things that you may have done?"

Boudreau said Tuesday that she hopes the message will get through to young people at risk.

"It just shows the raw emotion and how we're affected as victims," she said. "It opens up an opportunity for youth to see the effects and to engage in critical thinking so they can make some decisions for themselves."

The program is available to schools and community groups and is aimed at teens between 14 and 18.

Rachel Briggs from the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, which helped develop the program, said the Islamic State uses the Internet to recruit the young. Extreme Dialogue will at least make another point of view available.

"If we can't shield our young people from the content entirely, at least we can make sure that they have the skills to see that propaganda for what it is," she said.

A handful of Calgary youth have already reportedly gone to the Middle East to fight for Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

The federal government's annual national security report said that at the start of 2014 it knew of more than 130 individuals who were abroad and suspected of terror-related activities. About 30 people with Canadian connections were suspected of terror activities in Syria.

The new program has the support of law enforcement.

RCMP Supt. Yvon de Champlain said using the Internet to battle extremism is like fighting fire with fire.

"Having an Internet presence in today's world of social media is so important. That's how we reach our children," said de Champlain.

Canadian Muslim student activist Raheem Siddique cautioned that Extreme Dialogue is not going to be a cure-all.

"It's something counsellors and teachers can turn to if they see any type of extremism showing up in their classrooms, their environment, just like a textbook. It's a resource for them," he said. ♣ csc

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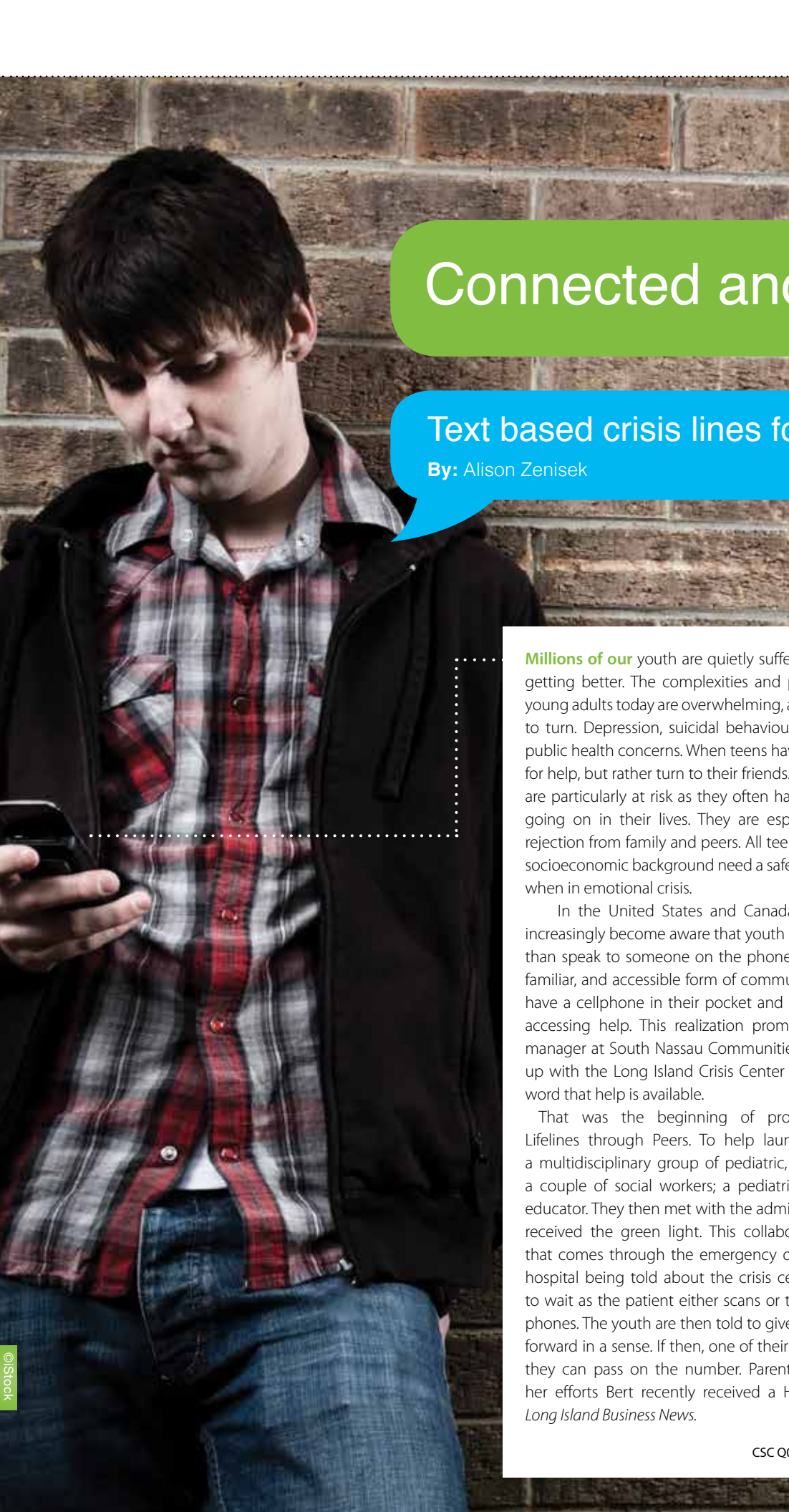
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Connected and Caring:

Text based crisis lines for youth

By: Alison Zenisek

Millions of our youth are quietly suffering every day with no hope of life getting better. The complexities and pressures in the lives of teens and young adults today are overwhelming, and many feel isolated with no place to turn. Depression, suicidal behaviours, and substance abuse are major public health concerns. When teens have problems they rarely go to adults for help, but rather turn to their friends. Transgender, gay, and bisexual kids are particularly at risk as they often have no one to talk to about what is going on in their lives. They are especially vulnerable to bullying and rejection from family and peers. All teens, whatever their race, gender, and socioeconomic background need a safe place to turn, people they can trust when in emotional crisis.

In the United States and Canada many healthcare providers have increasingly become aware that youth today are far more apt to text rather than speak to someone on the phone. Text messages provide a discreet, familiar, and accessible form of communication for teens. Almost all teens have a cellphone in their pocket and therefore a readily available way of accessing help. This realization prompted Lynn Bert, a pediatric nurse manager at South Nassau Communities Hospital on Long Island, to team up with the Long Island Crisis Center and use cell phones to spread the word that help is available.

That was the beginning of project HELP-Hospitals Empowering Lifelines through Peers. To help launch the project she put together a multidisciplinary group of pediatric, emergency, and maternity nurses; a couple of social workers; a pediatrician; a child life specialist; and an educator. They then met with the administration to propose their idea and received the green light. This collaboration has resulted in every teen that comes through the emergency department or pediatric unit of the hospital being told about the crisis center hotline. Nurses are instructed to wait as the patient either scans or types the hotline number into their phones. The youth are then told to give the number to three friends, pay it forward in a sense. If then, one of their friends is in crisis or has a problem; they can pass on the number. Parents are included in the process. For her efforts Bert recently received a Healthcare Heroes award from the *Long Island Business News*.



Not far away a non-profit organization called **DoSomething.org** is leading an effort to establish an around the clock text number in greater the New York area with the hope that it will become their emergency line. CEO Nancy Lublin is working to reach youth who wouldn't otherwise seek help using more established methods like speaking on the phone. The solution of making accessible a number for young people in crisis to text for help is beautifully simple. It gives youth the means by which they can access help in a manner they are comfortable with and it empowers them to be able to help a friend by passing on the number. Lublin is hoping that the Crisis Text Line will serve as a New York-based network shuttling texts for help to partner organizations across the country already providing hotlines on specific issues such as eating disorders, bullying, or cutting.

As more youth have gone mobile and use their phones as extensions of themselves, crisis lines across Canada have tried to keep up. Due to limiting budgets and time frames, as well as hotlines specializing in narrow areas of concern, they are falling short of the need youth have for mental health resources. Hospitals are struggling to keep up with mental health crisis among teens and young adults, placing a strain on resources. Across Canada hospitals are reporting increases in the number of youth seeking help for severe mental illness such as depression, suicidal risk, and behavioural issues. At the London Health Sciences Centre in London, Ontario, the number of urgent mental health pediatric cases has more than doubled over the last decade. Dr. Clare Gray, head of Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario has seen a surge in mental health patients as of a few years ago with the stats steadily increasing month by month.

The demand is taxing mental health services within communities and creating a dramatic rise in wait times, which now range from six months to a year. Help comes too late for some youth. Many communities in Canada lack specialized psychological care altogether. With few or no mental health programs available youth, and their families are referred by default to hospital emergency rooms. Dr. Gray sees a disconnect between parents and their children in her own pediatric psychiatry practice. She attributes it to people spending more time on their technology and less time in each other's company. Children need to feel valued and important through the quality of their interactions with their parents. When this is lacking the result is that children become less resilient in their ability to handle stressors that come up in everyday life.

The availability of well-funded crisis lines with experienced staff that are able to offer effective counsel to youth, through the limitations that texting can often impose, would make a difference in Canadian communities, especially where other resources are lacking. In Ontario a number of medical communities are looking at putting crisis support online, as well as additional community and mobile clinics. Many youth crisis line services in Canada and elsewhere have noticed a shift away from using the phone to access help. Several crisis services have responded to this by adding texting



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It gives youth the means by which they can access help in a manner they are comfortable with and it empowers them to be able to help a friend by passing on the number. ”

as an alternative to phoning. Some have also added live chat/messaging and e-mail. Youth primarily choose texting as a means to reach out for help because it's mobile, it's private, and it's immediate. Teens often just want someone to listen rather than focussing only on their crises. They want to be heard by someone they have built a relationship with, someone they can trust.

Canadian examples of a service that employs texting as a means of reaching youth are Youthspace.ca, YouthinBC.com, and Tel-jeuns. Youthspace.ca is a crisis line for Canadian youth under 30 years of age. Professionally trained volunteers are available to chat every night from 6-11pm PST. YouthinBC.com is a text based crisis line for youth in British Columbia. Tel-jeuns is a confidential bilingual crisis-line for youth throughout Quebec. It is staffed by professional counsellors and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These services are funded through a combination of private, corporate, provincial, and federal donations.

Text base crisis lines are an effective and inexpensive way to help de-escalate individual youth in crisis and can often direct them to the resources they need. Studies have

shown that these services can significantly reduce a youth's feelings of hopelessness and isolation. Another reason for the popularity of texting is that it is affordable. Many text based cell phone plans allow unlimited texting for minimal costs. Another unique feature of a text based platform is the accessibility to a full transcript of previous conversations, as well as notes that other staff members have written. Youth seeking help should have the prerogative of opting out of a record of their conversation if they should so choose. Studies conducted in the United States reveal that text-based crisis lines do increase help seeking behaviours in youth.

Many youth text the systems when they are bored, just want to talk to someone, or discuss an issue that they are uncomfortable discussing with friends, parents, or other support networks. Interpersonal conflicts, particularly with a romantic partner, emerge as the primary issue youth want to discuss with counsellors, and are the greatest source of stress in their lives. Finally, text based crisis lines appear to offer a number of advantages, particularly in their ability to provide a safe, confidential, convenient, and cost-effective way for youth to reach out for help and support. Text based hotlines have the potential to emerge as a central component of community crisis services. 🌱 CSC



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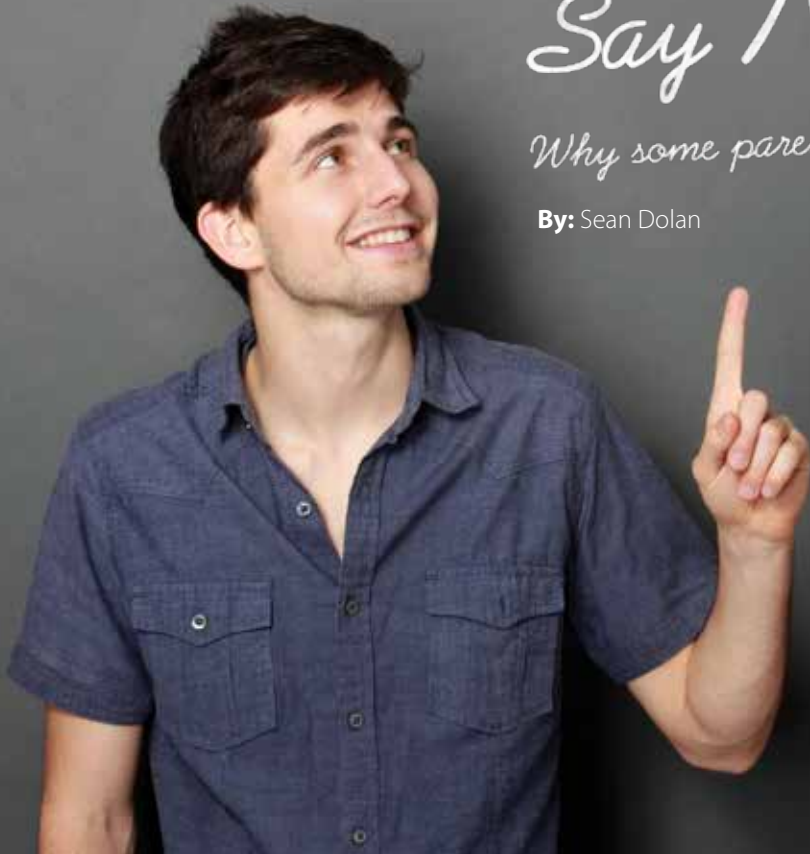
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Hey High School Counsellors! Say NO to parents!

Why some parent meetings need to be dodged

By: Sean Dolan



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It may seem counter-intuitive but it's time for high school counsellors to put the kibosh on gratuitous parent meetings. How many times have you received a call from a parent willing to cut work to rush over to the school to discuss their kid's elective choices for the following year? Or what about the 'I'd like to come in to discuss my child's post-secondary options' request?' I would contend that these kinds of meetings are not good for kids and that conscientious counsellors should greet these requests with an emphatic no --- and here's why.

First of all, the student is the client. We can say that the parent is also the client but that really isn't true. We have a responsibility to communicate with parents, and even educate them about the school system, however, the

student is ultimately the person that we need to focus on. When a parent calls and asks for an appointment, counsellors need to ask themselves, 'Is the appointment in the best interests of the student or the parent?' If the appointment will help the student, certainly agree to see the parent. However, if the appointment is a vain attempt by a parent to micro-manage their child's education, politely decline the meeting.

When I first started in our school's Student Services department, I used to say yes whenever a parent wanted to meet - without so much as a question. The parent would come in and we'd have a great discussion about their son or daughter, about the school and the courses we offer, about post-secondary opportunities - the list goes

on. It was a delightful little chat. I always included the student in the meeting and what I noticed was that, while mom or dad and I had our conversation, the kid was staring out the window. Why? Because their parent had swooped in to take control of the situation so they could just sit back and watch mom or dad do the heavy lifting. Eventually I noticed that these meetings were not in the best interests of the student and were only serving to feed the over-arching sense of responsibility held by the parents.

And God bless parents for caring so much. Studies show that the more caring adults involved in a child's life, the better the kid turns out. However, parents need to make sure they don't cross the line and become control freaks that unwittingly turn their kids into their puppets.

» PARENT



» COUNSELLOR



So here's what happens now when a parent calls and asks for an appointment. First I ask them why they want an appointment. Nine times out of ten it is a minor issue that can be handled over the phone. Here are a few examples – along with the 'over the phone' solutions:

- PROBLEM -	- SOLUTION -
I'd like to review my child's grades	That's great. You should really be calling the teacher directly. In the meantime, I'll call your son/daughter down and discuss their performance with them. I'll also e-mail the teachers and tell them to give you a call.
I want to come in and discuss which courses my child should be taking next year	There's no need for you to come in because your son/daughter needs to take control of this situation. I'll call them down and review their course options with them.
I have a complaint about a teacher.	That's unfortunate. You need to call the vice principal to discuss any concerns you might have about a teacher.
I want to know how to apply to college or university.	Besides the many presentations we do on college and university options, we also show your son/daughter how to apply. I'll review this with them and they can show you how its done when they see you this evening.

Two things need to be put forward before wrapping up:

-Many times a parent meeting is urgently needed. For example, if a student is struggling with a mental health crisis, parents need a face-to-face meeting with the support team at the school. This is a no brainer and is certainly not a meeting that should ever be deflected.

-Parents are grateful for the opportunity to NOT attend a meeting. Since I started employing strategies to dissuade non-urgent

parent meetings, the overwhelming response I have received from parents has been positive. They often feel relieved that someone is empowering their child to take responsibility for their education. I usually wrap up my conversation with the parent by saying, "I'll work on the issue with your son/daughter and they'll discuss the meeting we had with you. If the information they share with you needs clarification, please give me a call." And, you know what: they almost never call.

High school counsellors are busy enough (even if their classroom colleagues believe that they are on a year-long coffee break). Student concerns are the priority and counsellors cannot provide the level of service necessary if they are taking unnecessary, time-consuming parent meetings. The bottom line: I can get a lot more done in ten minutes with a kid who I am empowering to take control of their future than I can in a 30 minute parent meeting where the kid is totally disengaged. That's why I am encouraging counsellors to (sometimes) SAY NO TO PARENTS. 🍁 CSC

» BIO



Sean Dolan taught for 20 years before moving into Guidance and Career Education six years ago. He is currently working as a high school guidance counsellor at St. Marcellinus Secondary School in Mississauga, Ontario.



With monikers that evoke images of princesses, Cinderella and fairy godmothers, it would be easy to assume that organizations dedicated to outfitting disadvantaged students for their high school grad festivities are all about the glitz and the glamour.

But look beyond the sequins and chiffon and you'll discover that these volunteer-driven non-profits are about so much more; they're about life-altering things like self-esteem, hope, sense of community and the power of perseverance.

Each year in Canada, hundreds of high school students are outfitted head-to-toe for their graduation celebrations by people who believe every graduate -- particularly those who succeed against the odds -- deserves to celebrate this milestone achievement in style.

Endeavours such as the Cinderella Project (thecinderellaproject.com) in Vancouver and Corsage Project (corsageproject.ca) in Toronto, launched respectively in 1999 and 2000, have inspired like-minded people to establish similar projects throughout

British Columbia, in Ontario and elsewhere in Canada. Most organizations serve girls exclusively, but a few also outfit boys.

Vancouver human rights lawyer Heather MacKenzie co-founded The Cinderella Project -- thought to be the first of its kind in Canada -- as an incentive that counsellors could use to help keep at-risk kids in school.

"It's like a carrot, a tool, so the counsellor can say 'I know of this reward that is out there for you, for your courage, your



MORE THAN GLITZ AND GLAMOUR

Making dreams come true for deserving graduates.

Part one of a two-part series

By: Laurie Nealin

perseverance. I know you can do it; stick with it," says MacKenzie whose organization dresses some 200 graduates each year -- about 150 Cinderellas and 50 Cinderfellas. This year, they welcomed their 3,000th student into the fold.

The majority of referrals to these organizations come from guidance counsellors and social workers through a simple application process. (The forms are

generally available on each organization's website.) Qualifying students attend a gala event, such as The Cinderella Project's Boutique Day or the Corsage Project's Boutique Ball, where a personal shopper helps them find the perfect outfit, including shoes and accessories. With most programs, it's all theirs to keep.

"We work on pumping students up, giving them a real boost, a big light in what could

be a pretty dark life layered with difficult things," MacKenzie says. "We try to give them a feeling of magic and love in a room where they see 400 volunteers -- perfect strangers -- who tell them, 'You are amazing. You inspire us. We think you're incredible.'"

"Truly, on that day, they see themselves differently. The physical transformation can be mistaken as being very superficial, but what's really happening goes so much deeper than that."

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Most of the gowns available through the various programs are donated by individuals, frequently recent grads, although retailers are increasingly coming on board. The Corsage Project, which serves Toronto's core area schools in partnership with the Children's Aid Foundation, now offers only new clothing to some 300 graduates annually thanks to retail sponsors.

Due to the scarcity of stylish, like-new used suits and dress shirts, projects that include boys rely primarily on retail sponsors to outfit them.

As "shopping" day unfolds, the volunteers serve as mentors come cheerleaders who celebrate each student's academic achievement. "It's not meant to feel like charity. It's meant to be a beautiful experience," says Corsage Project co-chair Joanne Sallay, by day the director of an in-home tutorial service.

"We're really about self-confidence and self-esteem. This is an opportunity for the students to feel good about themselves, to feel special, and to celebrate this milestone with their friends," adds Sallay, whose mother Rhona co-founded the project 15 years ago. Since then, they have outfitted over 3,000 Corsage girls.



In Saskatoon, The Princess Shop (theprincessshop.ca), founded in 2007, operates its program a little differently, scheduling individual shopping appointments. The donated dresses are loaned -- not given -- to the students who must leave a \$40 deposit that is refunded when the dress is returned. Last year, the Shop served 89 students who had 2,000 dresses to choose from. Complimentary hair and make-up services are part of the package.

"Every girl has a personal appointment and two volunteers help her find the perfect dress, shoes, purse, jewelry, shawl. We tell her about the other programs we have and begin to establish a relationship with her," says Karen Robson, The Princess Shop's executive director.

"Our philosophy is when someone celebrates success, it sets them up for further success reaching goals in life. Graduation might seem like just a big party, but it really is a lot more than that. Ensuring that every student has the chance to celebrate equivalent to their peers is incredibly important. That sense of pride and accomplishment when they stand next to their peers can go a long way in how they make decisions for the next part of their life," Robson adds.

MacKenzie, the longest serving fairy godmother, concludes, "The ultimate gift is not the dress or the suit, but being left with the feeling that 'I can. I matter. I'm valued.'" ❁ CSC

» NEXT ISSUE

Part 2 of this series in our May issue will outline the additional assistance, including financial, offered by these organizations, and share stories of their remarkable alumni.

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the **cinderella project**
making dreams come true for deserving graduates

To find out if a “Cinderella” project exists in your community, first check the Similar Projects page on The Cinderella Project website thecinderellaproject.com/similar-projects/

If you don't find one there, try a general internet search or search on your local news media websites. (Media often cover “Cinderella” events.)

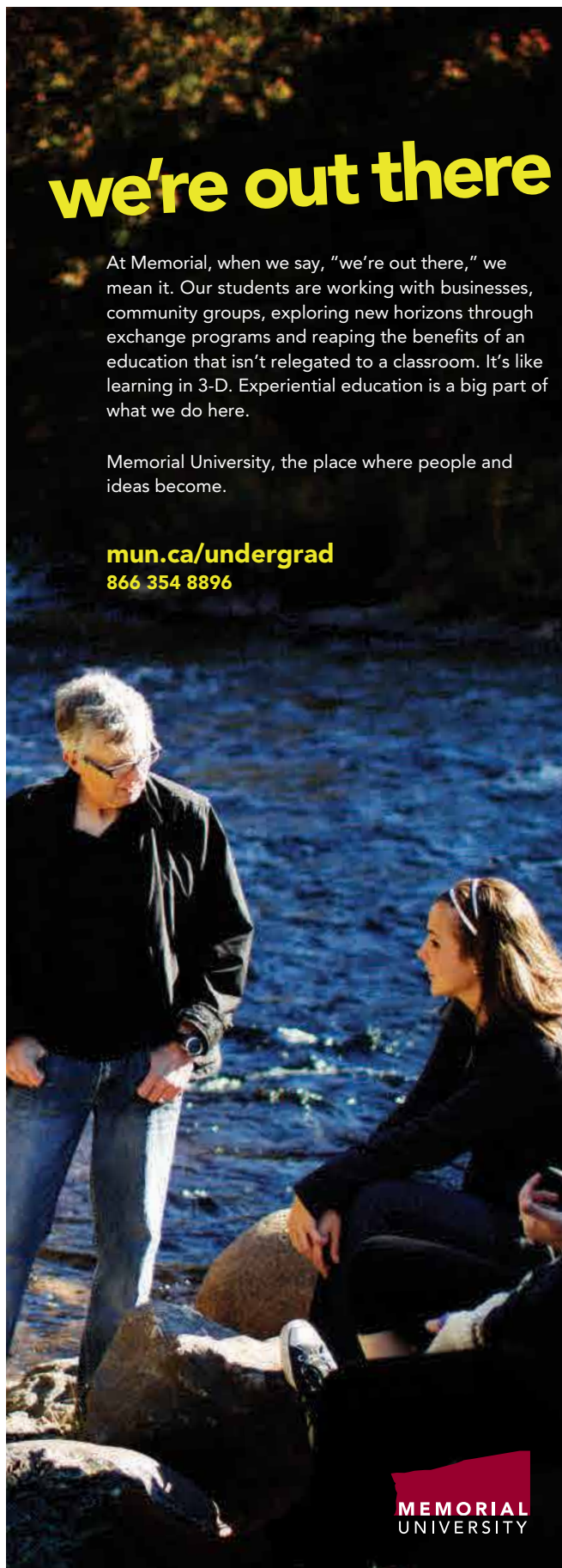
If no project exists in your community, The Cinderella Project offers an excellent primer on how to start one thecinderellaproject.com/Starting_Your_Own_Project.pdf. As well, the women quoted in our story are happy to provide advice. Their contact information is on their program websites.

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Counsellors

Q&A

From Coast to Coast, Counsellors Practice Empathy and Understanding

By: Amanda Thomas

We had the unique opportunity to interview three counsellors from schools across Canada with differing population sizes, but one thing remained constant in each school - the use of empathy and open mindedness.

Conseillers

Q&R

D'un océan à l'autre, les conseillers déploient empathie et compréhension

Par Amanda Thomas

Nous avons eu la chance d'interviewer trois conseillers d'écoles canadiennes avec des populations de taille différente, mais avec un facteur constant à chaque école - l'utilisation de l'empathie et de l'ouverture d'esprit.





Joanne Williams

Fredericton, New Brunswick
High School Population: 2000 students

Q. What would a guidance counsellor of an urban school with 2000 students share in common with a rural counsellor with less than 100 students?

A. Counsellors are an integral part of the school fabric and bring a unique skill set and comprehensive knowledge of youth to individual schools. Regardless of schools size, guidance counsellors care deeply about the students they serve and strive to support youth in their personal, social, emotional, career and educational development. Counsellors serving all schools share similar professional responsibilities; find their daily calendar reconfigured when presented with a crisis situation; recognize the importance of respecting confidentiality and support youth by collaborating with staff, parents and professional associates.

Q. What has been the biggest change you have seen in the way you do your job in the ever changing school system?

A. Technology was virtually non-existent when I entered the field of guidance in 1990. It has had profound impact on practice by influencing communication, access to resources and documentation. As technology has evolved it has also become an integral part of the youth culture; issues related to communication via technology frequently surface which, in turn, has prompted counsellors to become more web savvy.

Q. What is the greatest tool or technique for a guidance counsellor in an inner city school in today's times?

A. Larger school populations can create a level of student unanimity so it is important to work from a team perspective when monitoring and serving youth. Students and staff are often the first to notice behavioral

changes and be cognizant of events within the school community. Effective communication is essential in creating an open school environment and strengthening guidance programs, especially in large high schools. Through the use of effective listening skills counsellors build relationships; foster trust; encourage timely referrals; gain comprehensive understandings; facilitate conflict resolution and help develop and secure appropriate supports for youth. Additionally, counsellors with strong speaking and writing skills can help educate staff on social and emotional development, communicate required student supports, build networks of support, and effectively advocate for youth.

Q. With all of your experience as a guidance counsellor what has been your greatest learning experience that could help other counsellors?

A. I would have to say, recognizing the need to meet people "where they are". At times, it can be tempting to move into problem solving mode without a comprehensive understanding of the individuals' perspective and the interpersonal dynamics at play. Not surprisingly, such plans often fall short when

implemented, as they do not reflect the individuals' reality. In building relationships and opening communication pathways, individuals often gain personal insight, and assume ownership in developing action plans.

Q. What is the biggest hurdle facing your students in Fredericton specifically?

A. It is challenging to identify a singular hurdle that is unique to the Fredericton area. As with many high school communities, the biggest hurdle facing our students is the struggle to understand one's self and find their place in the world. It can be a turbulent time and adolescents often feel the pressure conform, achieve autonomy and chart a career pathway in an ever-changing world.

Q. What tools does a counsellor have to help immigrant students settle in to life in a Canadian high school?

A. In conducting a thorough intake interview, evaluating prior school documentation, and examining EAL assessment results, counsellors gather pertinent information to guide in the development of the student's programs of study and required supports. As counsellors we have a solid understanding of the Canadian education system and are in a unique position to communicate graduation and post-secondary entrance requirements with immigrant families that might be feeling overwhelmed as they enter a foreign credential system. Counsellors can help students develop successful transition plans and access community programs/bridging programs to help youth reach their educational goals.

During orientation sessions, counsellors communicate school expectations, provide a school tour, outline academic targets, assign a student buddy, and inform students of supports within the school community. Academic monitoring, individual planning sessions and counselling support are also provided throughout the school year.

“ In building relationships and opening communication pathways, individuals often gain personal insight, and assume ownership in developing action plans. ”

Joanne Williams

Frédéricton, Nouveau-Brunswick

Population du secondaire : 2 000 étudiants

Q. Qu'est-ce qu'un conseiller en orientation d'une école urbaine avec 2 000 étudiants a en commun avec un conseiller dans une école rurale avec moins de 100 étudiants ?

R. Les conseillers sont une partie intégrale du tissu scolaire et font bénéficier les écoles d'un ensemble unique de compétences et de connaissances détaillées à propos des jeunes. Peu importe la dimension des écoles, les conseillers en orientation se soucient grandement des étudiants et ils servent et visent à supporter la jeunesse pendant son développement personnel, social, émotionnel, éducatif et professionnel. Les conseillers dans toutes les écoles partagent des responsabilités professionnelles similaires, leur agenda est refait en fonction des situations de crise, ils reconnaissent l'importance du respect de la confidentialité et ils supportent les jeunes en collaborant avec le personnel, les parents et des professionnels associés.

Q. Quel a été le plus grand changement que vous avez connu dans la façon de faire votre travail dans un système scolaire en perpétuel changement ?

R. La technologie était, tout compte fait, inexistante quand j'ai commencé dans le domaine de l'orientation en 1990. Elle a eu un impact majeur sur la pratique en influençant la communication, l'accès aux ressources et à la documentation. Au fur à mesure de son évolution, la technologie est devenue une partie intégrale de la culture de la jeunesse, des problèmes associés à la communication via la technologie font fréquemment surface ce qui, à son tour, incite les conseillers à devenir plus connaisseurs du web.

Q. Quel est, de nos jours, le meilleur outil ou la meilleure technique pour un conseiller en orientation d'une école du centre-ville ?

R. Les plus grandes populations scolaires peuvent créer un niveau d'unanimité d'étudiant, il est donc important de travailler en équipe quand on suit et sert la jeunesse. Les étudiants et le personnel sont souvent les premiers à découvrir les changements de comportements et avoir connaissance d'événements dans la communauté scolaire. Une communication efficace est essentielle pour créer un environnement scolaire ouvert et pour renforcer les programmes d'orientation, spécialement dans les grandes écoles du secondaire. En utilisant des compétences d'écoute efficace, les conseillers établissent des relations, favorisent la confiance, encouragent l'aiguillage en temps opportun, ils acquièrent une compréhension en profondeur, facilitent la résolution de conflits et aident à développer et asseoir l'aide adéquate pour la jeunesse. De plus, les conseillers ayant de bonnes compétences orales et écrites peuvent former le personnel sur le développement social et émotionnel, ils peuvent communiquer l'aide dont les étudiants ont besoin, ils peuvent bâtir un réseau d'aide et défendre efficacement la jeunesse.

Q. Fort de toute votre expérience comme conseiller en orientation qu'elle fût votre meilleure expérience d'apprentissage qui pourrait aider d'autres conseillers ?

R. Je dois dire que c'est de reconnaître le besoin de rencontrer les gens "où ils sont". Parfois, il est tentant de passer au mode solution de problème sans une compréhension globale de la perspective des individus et des dynamiques interpersonnelles en jeu. Comme on peut s'y attendre, ces approches sont souvent loin de fonctionner quand elles sont utilisées, car elles ne reflètent pas la réalité des individus. En établissant des relations et en ouvrant les chemins de communication, souvent les gens appréhendent mieux la situation et en prennent possession en développant des plans d'action.

Q. Quel est l'obstacle le plus important, spécifiquement pour vos étudiants de Frédéricton ?

R. C'est un défi d'identifier un obstacle unique à la région de Frédéricton. Comme pour la plupart des communautés du secondaire, l'obstacle le plus important de nos étudiants est le combat pour comprendre leur soi et trouver leur place dans le monde. Ce peut être un temps turbulent et les adolescents ressentent souvent la pression pour se conformer, atteindre l'autonomie et planifier un cheminement de carrière dans un monde en perpétuel changement.

Q. Quels sont les outils à la disposition d'un conseiller pour aider les étudiants immigrants à s'adapter à la vie dans une école secondaire canadienne ?

R. En exécutant une première entrevue approfondie, en évaluant la documentation scolaire antérieure et en examinant les résultats de l'évaluation de l'ALA, les conseillers obtiennent de l'information pertinente pour guider le développement des programmes d'étude des étudiants et l'aide requise. Comme conseillers, nous avons une solide compréhension du système canadien d'éducation et nous sommes en position unique pour communiquer les exigences d'obtention du diplôme et celles pour l'accès aux études postsecondaires auprès des familles immigrantes qui peuvent se sentir dépassées en accédant à un système étranger de reconnaissance des titres de compétences. Les conseillers peuvent aider les étudiants à développer des plans de transition qui auront du succès et à accéder à des programmes communautaires / des programmes ponts pour aider les jeunes à atteindre leurs objectifs d'apprentissage.

Pendant les sessions d'orientation, les conseillers communiquent les attentes de l'école, font visiter l'école, présentent les cibles académiques, assignent un compagnon à l'étudiant et informent les étudiants de l'aide disponible dans la communauté scolaire. Un suivi académique, des sessions de planification individuelle et l'aide d'un conseiller sont également fournis pendant toute l'année scolaire.



Darrelle Delorme

Ministiwán, Saskatchewan
High School Population: 60 students

“ I have an acronym that I always try to share and remember when working as a counsellor: **H.O.P.E= Helping Others Practice Empathy.** ”

Q. What are the main issues facing your student body in rural Saskatchewan?

A. There are many hurdles that our students strive to overcome including a sense of belonging, boredom, low self-esteem, communication in the household, and unplanned pregnancies.

Q. How do you deal with students with low self esteem as a guidance counsellor?

A. I try to use empathic strategies and understanding. We also try to incorporate music and art as much as possible. For example, I've been involved with teaching guitar and art painting, and having something that a young individual can take pride in helps overcome some of their self esteem issues.

Q. How important are hobbies in a rural or remote setting for students?

A. Giving students the chance to develop new talents by opening up their realm of insight is paramount. This enables more positive self achievements and a sense of pride while giving the student a chance to enjoy hands on experiences.

Q. What do you think a counsellor in a remote setting with only 100 students would have in common with a counsellor in an inner city setting with 2000 students?

A. Empathetic diversity. Guidance counsellors in each setting would have to be both empathetic and respectful of diversity within their particular student body.

Q. What is the main focus of your role in the school in such a rural setting?

A. Making sure every student gets the opportunity to develop their own way of understanding resilience, by learning to use

their own strengths in solving difficulties, and finding solutions that enable the student to achieve their individual goals.

Q. What is the greatest lesson your position as a guidance counsellor has taught you?

I have an acronym that I always try to share and remember when working as a counsellor: H.O.P.E= Helping Others Practice Empathy.

Without this, hope is hard to accomplish. Resilience is overcome by the diverse involvement of strong leadership of support, and with all peer groups, and community involvement. It's important to remember that students tend to hide a side of themselves that parents sometimes overlook. Often trusting someone who uses empathy helps to show students how to relate to others when issues become difficult to talk about.

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Darrelle Delorme

Ministiwán, Saskatchewan

Population du secondaire : 60 étudiants

Q. Quels sont les principaux problèmes de vos étudiants de la Saskatchewan rurale ?

R. Il y a plusieurs obstacles que nos étudiants essaient de franchir incluant un sentiment d'appartenance, l'ennui, une faible estime de soi, la communication au foyer familial ainsi que des grossesses non prévues.

Q. Comme conseiller en orientation, comment abordez-vous les étudiants avec une faible estime de soi ?

R. J'essaie d'utiliser des stratégies d'empathie et la compréhension. Nous essayons également d'inclure la musique et l'art autant que possible. Par exemple, je me suis impliquée dans l'enseignement de la guitare et de la peinture artistique et le fait d'avoir quelque chose dont un jeune individu peut être fier aide à surmonter certains de leurs problèmes d'estime de soi.

Q. Quelle importance pour les étudiants revêtent les passe-temps dans un milieu rural ou éloigné ?

R. Il est primordial de donner aux étudiants une chance de développer de nouveaux talents en élargissant leur horizon. Cela permet plus de réalisations de soi positives et un sentiment de fierté tout en donnant à l'étudiant l'occasion de profiter d'expériences pratiques.

Q. Que pensez-vous qu'un conseiller en région éloignée avec seulement 100 étudiants a en commun avec un conseiller dans un milieu urbain avec 2 000 étudiants ?

R. La diversité empathique. Les conseillers en orientation des deux milieux doivent être empathiques et respectueux de la diversité caractérisant chacune de leur population étudiante.

Q. Quel est l'objectif principal de votre rôle à l'école dans un tel milieu rural ?

R. M'assurer que chaque étudiant a l'opportunité de développer ses propres moyens de comprendre la résilience en

apprenant à se servir de ses forces pour la résolution de problèmes et trouver des solutions qui lui permettent d'atteindre ses buts individuels.

Q. Quelle est la leçon la plus importante que votre poste de conseiller en orientation vous a enseignée ?

R. J'ai un acronyme que j'essaie toujours de me rappeler et de partager quand je travaille comme conseiller : "H.O.P.E= Helping Others Practice Empathy", aider les autres à pratiquer l'empathie. (N. d. T., HOPE, en anglais, se traduit par ESPOIR.)

R. Sans cela, il est difficile d'avoir de l'espoir. La résilience se surmonte par différents degrés possibles de l'implication d'un solide leadership de l'aide ainsi que la participation de tous les groupes de pairs et de la communauté. Il est important de se rappeler que les étudiants ont tendance à cacher un côté d'eux-mêmes que les parents parfois ne remarquent pas. Souvent le fait d'avoir confiance en quelqu'un qui pratique l'empathie aide à montrer aux étudiants comment interagir avec les autres quand il devient difficile de discuter des problèmes.

Étudiants : Caroline Lalonde et Élie Bagula

Photographe : Étienne Ranger

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Kim McFadden

Inner-City, Toronto, Ontario
High School Population: 1600

Q. What is the role, and perhaps the boundary, for a counsellor to address a students mental health concern?

A. At our school, guidance counsellors are referred to as the “gatekeepers”. We are the initial contact point for students with mental health concerns. After an informal assessment of the situation and any necessary consultation(s), we then decide the type of referral that may be necessary (Doctor, Psychologist, Social Worker, Child & Youth Counsellor, Special Education etc.). If a student’s mental health is impacting their school life then teachers may be contacted regarding providing accommodations, and/or parents may be requested to come in for a meeting. Overall, we like to provide “wrap around” support and this means finding out how the student

feels they would like to be supported and how we can facilitate that at school (and in the community if needed).

Q. What do you think would be the main difference in your position compared to a counsellor in a remote rural setting?

A. I have never worked in a rural setting but I am guessing that in a smaller school of 100 or so, the department would only be comprised of a single counsellor. At our school we have six full-time counsellors so we are able to consult and support each other as part of a team. I would think that working in a large city with a very diverse population would provide some different situations as well for guidance counsellors such as a variety of cultural issues etcetera. At our school we are also not a neighbourhood school, so students come here from across the city and suburbs far away. Transportation and community

issues can impact student attendance and achievement. Another difference may be that we have many resources at our fingertips such as other secondary schools, alternative schools, section 23 programs (schools in community facilities), alternative attendance programs etc. within a 2-3 km radius.

Q. What is the biggest hurdle facing your students in downtown Toronto?

A. I would have to say that poverty and mental health issues are a couple of the biggest hurdles facing our students today.

Q. Have there been changes in techniques or therapies that counsellors use, since the rise of technology and social media in schools?

A. I wouldn’t say that my techniques have changed but my awareness, usage and consideration of technology when dealing with situations definitely has. If we see particular issues arising from technology and social media we try to address them with students, staff and parents as needed (i.e. workshops, assemblies, presentations etc.).

“ Overall, we like to provide “wrap around” support and this means finding out how the student feels they would like to be supported and how we can facilitate that at school (and in the community if needed). ”



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Kim McFadden

Centre-ville, Toronto, Ontario

Population du secondaire : 1600

Q. Quels sont le rôle et peut-être les frontières d'un conseiller qui aborde un problème de santé mentale d'un étudiant ?

R. Dans notre école, les conseillers en orientation sont appelés des "gardiens". Nous sommes le point de contact initial pour les étudiants avec des problèmes de santé mentale. Après une évaluation informelle de la situation et toutes consultations nécessaires, nous décidons alors du type d'aiguillage qui peut être requis (médecin, psychologue, travailleur social, conseiller auprès des enfants et des adolescents, éducation spécialisée, etc.). Si la santé mentale d'un étudiant a un impact sur sa vie scolaire, alors on peut demander aux enseignants de faire des compromis et/ou on peut demander aux parents de venir nous rencontrer. Dans l'ensemble, nous aimons fournir une aide "enveloppante" qui signifie de trouver comment l'étudiant estime qu'il aimerait être aidé et comment nous pouvons le faciliter à l'école (et dans la communauté si requis).

Q. Quelle serait selon vous la principale différence entre votre position et celle d'un conseiller dans un milieu rural ?

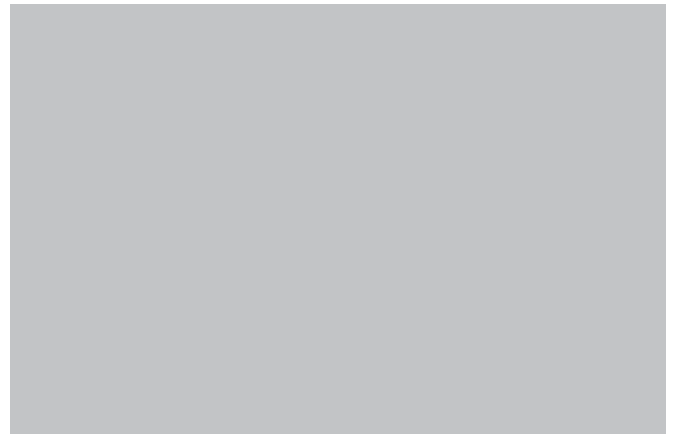
R. Je n'ai jamais travaillé en milieu rural, mais je suppose que dans une école plus petite avec environ une centaine d'étudiants, le département ne serait composé en fait que d'un seul conseiller. Dans notre école, il y a six conseillers à temps plein et nous pouvons donc nous consulter et nous aider les uns les autres en tant qu'équipe. Je crois que le travail dans une grande ville avec une population très diversifiée amène aussi des situations différentes pour les conseillers en orientation comme une variété de problèmes culturels, et cetera. Notre école n'est pas une école de quartier et donc les étudiants y viennent de partout dans la ville et des banlieues éloignées. Des problèmes de transport et de communauté peuvent avoir un impact sur la présence et la performance des étudiants. Une autre différence peut être que nous avons plusieurs ressources à portée de main comme d'autres écoles secondaires, des écoles alternatives, des programmes en application de l'article 23 (des écoles dans des installations communautaires), des programmes alternatifs d'assiduité, etc., le tout dans un rayon de 2 à 3 km.

Q. Quel est l'obstacle le plus important pour vos étudiants du centre-ville de Toronto ?

R. Je devrais dire que la pauvreté et les problèmes de santé mentale sont deux des plus importants obstacles pour nos étudiants d'aujourd'hui.

Q. Des changements ont-ils été apportés aux techniques ou aux thérapies que les conseillers utilisent depuis l'avènement de la technologie et des médias sociaux dans les écoles ?

R. Je ne dirais pas que mes techniques ont changé, mais ma conscience, mon utilisation et ma considération de la technologie, quand je traite des situations, ont définitivement changé. Quand nous voyons des problèmes particuliers découlant de la technologie et des médias sociaux, nous tentons d'y faire face avec les étudiants, le personnel et les parents au besoin (c.-à-d. des ateliers, des assemblées, des présentations, etc.).





The coming (out) of trans youth

Sortie du placard pour les jeunes trans

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When a transgender student knocks on your door

PART TWO OF A TWO-PART SERIES

By: Laurie Nealin

One to two people among every 200 are transgender according to current research. That means trans boys and trans girls are attending almost every school in Canada, whether they are visible or not. Recent high school grads Theo and Lou personify that fact. Both teens registered for high school as girls -- their gender assigned at birth. Each graduated expressing a different gender identity. Theo and Lou agreed to share their personal stories, hoping to help prepare educators for the day when a trans student knocks on your door.

Theo's story

As a kid, when Theo went shopping with his mom, sometimes he wanted Barbies. Most days, he wanted Hot Wheels.

"Gender wasn't a huge deal in my household. My mom didn't buy me gender-specific toys. There was no big scene made if some days I wanted -- quote, unquote -- a boy's toy.

"As I was growing up, I would turn to my mom and say, 'I wish I was a boy. I wish I was a boy.' She thought it was a tom-boy phase

that would fizzle out. Back then, even I didn't put much thought into it."

Today, Theo is an 18-year-old trans man who transitioned in 2013 ahead of his senior year in high school. He came to the conclusion he was transgender in grade 11.

It was a friend in the U.S. -- an advocate for LGBT rights -- who first suggested Theo check into what being transgender means and assured him there is nothing wrong with being trans.

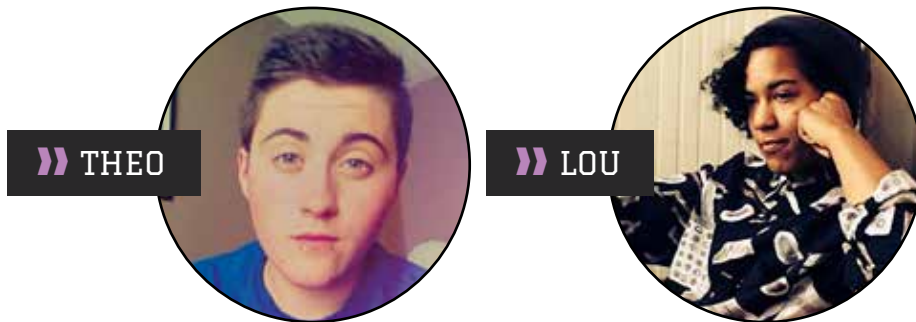
"I was not happy as female, didn't like my chest or the way my voice sounded. I had started to wonder if there was something wrong with me, but then I realized what I felt was actually a thing that exists, that there wasn't anything wrong with me.

"That sparked, more or less, a trial-and-error with my friend's help, trying male pronouns and finding a 'male' name that I was comfortable with."

Quand un étudiant transgenre frappe à votre porte

DEUXIÈME PARTIE D'UNE SÉRIE DE DEUX

Par: Laurie Nealin



Une à deux personnes parmi 200 sont des transgenres selon les récentes recherches. Cela signifie que dans presque toutes les écoles du Canada, il y a des filles et des garçons transgenres, qu'ils soient visibles ou non. Theo et Lou, récemment gradués du secondaire, personnifient ce fait. Les deux adolescents se sont inscrits au secondaire comme des filles, soit le genre qui leur était assigné à la naissance. Les deux ont gradué en affichant une identité de genre différente. Theo et Lou ont accepté de partager leur histoire personnelle avec l'espoir d'aider à préparer les éducateurs pour le jour où un étudiant trans frappera à leur porte.

Photos courtesy Theo + Lou

Enfant, quand Theo magasinait avec sa mère, parfois il voulait des Barbies. La plupart du temps, il voulait des Hot Wheels.

"Le genre n'était pas une chose très importante chez moi. Ma mère ne m'achetait pas des jouets spécifiques pour les filles ou les garçons. Il n'y avait pas toute une histoire si certains jours je voulais « un jouet pour garçon ».

"En grandissant, je me tournais vers ma mère et disais « je souhaiterais être un garçon. Je souhaiterais être un garçon. » Elle pensait que c'était les dires d'un garçon manqué qui finiraient par disparaître. À cette époque, même moi je n'y pensais pas vraiment."

Aujourd'hui, Theo est un homme trans de 18 ans qui a fait la transition en 2013 avant sa dernière année du secondaire. Il a conclu qu'il était transgenre en 11e année.

Ce fut un ami aux États-Unis, un défenseur des droits des GLBT, qui le premier a suggéré à Theo de s'informer à propos de ce que signifiait être transgenre et lui a assuré qu'il n'y avait rien de mal à être trans.

"Je n'étais pas heureux en tant que femme, je n'aimais pas ma poitrine ni le son de ma voix. Je commençais à me demander s'il n'y avait pas quelque chose qui n'allait pas

avec moi, mais alors j'ai réalisé que ce que je ressentais était en fait quelque chose qui existait, qu'il n'y avait rien qui n'allait pas avec moi.

"Cela a plus ou moins amorcé des recherches à tâtons avec l'aide de mon ami pour essayer des pronoms masculins et trouver un nom « mâle » avec lequel j'étais confortable."

La première personne à qui Theo s'est révélé était sa meilleure amie. Elle était totalement à l'aise avec cette révélation. Il a attendu quelques mois avant de l'annoncer à sa mère.

"Je fréquentais quelqu'un à cette époque et quand je lui ai dit (que j'étais trans), elle a paniqué et m'a laissé. Ma mère m'a demandé ce qui était advenu de cette relation, alors je lui ai dit."

(En demandant à Theo de clarifier, il explique qu'avant sa transition il se considérait comme une lesbienne.)

La mère de Theo acceptait même si elle ne comprenait pas totalement. Donc, pendant quelques mois, Theo a continué d'utiliser son nom de fille à la maison et a retardé sa transition formelle.

À l'école, il avait demandé à ses amis de

l'appeler Theo, mais il ne s'offusquait pas s'ils oubliaient et l'appelaient par son nom de naissance, Talia.

"J'utilisais toujours les toilettes pour les filles à l'école, car je ne savais pas comment approcher les toilettes universelles et je soupesais toujours le pour et le contre d'une transition.

"Je pensais aussi que je ne trouverais jamais une autre fille qui m'aimerait. J'étais hésitant à propos de la transition."

L'été avant sa 12e année, Theo et sa mère se sont rendus en Californie pour assister à la « Transgender Spectrum Conference » où des professionnels et de jeunes présentateurs enseignaient aux participants ce que signifiait d'être transgenre et les options pour la transition.

Pour la première fois, la mère de Theo a totalement compris les différences entre sexe et genre.

Avec son aide, Theo a décidé de rendre sa transition officielle. Elle lui a donné sa permission -- requise, car Theo n'avait pas encore 18 ans -- de prendre des hormones de testostérone qui favorisent, entre autres, la croissance de la barbe, la gravité de la voix



The first person Theo came out to was his best friend. She was totally fine with his revelation. He didn't tell his mom until a few months later.

"I had been seeing someone at the time and when I told her (I was trans), she freaked out and left me. My mom asked what happened with that relationship, so then I told my mom."

(Asked to clarify, Theo explains that before he transitioned he considered himself a lesbian.)

Theo's mother was accepting even though she didn't completely understand. So, for several more months, Theo continued to go by his female birth name at home and postponed his formal transition.

At school, he had asked his friends to call him Theo, but didn't get upset if they forgot and called him by his birth name, Talia.

"I was still using the female washroom at school because I didn't know how to go about looking into a gender neutral washroom,

and I was still weighing the pros and cons of transitioning.

"I also felt like I would never find another girl who would like me. I was on the fence about transitioning."

The summer before grade 12, Theo and his mother went to California to attend the Transgender Spectrum Conference where professionals and youth presenters educate attendees about what it means to be transgender and options for transitioning.

For the first time, Theo's mother fully understood the differences between sex and gender.

With her support, Theo decided to make his transition official. She gave him permission -- required since Theo was not yet 18 -- to take the hormone testosterone which promotes beard growth, deepens the voice and inhibits weight gain on hips and thighs, among other things.

Theo immediately made the social transition. He contacted his vice principal and guidance counsellor, who also led the school's Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), to help ease the way for him when school resumed.



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Theo a immédiatement fait la transition sociale. Il a communiqué avec son directeur adjoint et son conseiller en orientation qui dirigeait également l'alliance gaie-hétéro de l'école (AGH) pour qu'ils facilitent son intégration quand les cours reprendraient.

En fait, leur a-t-il dit : je suis transgenre. J'utilise ce prénom, ces pronoms et si vous pouviez en informer mes professeurs, ce serait épatant.

"Cela leur convenait très bien. J'ai obtenu l'accès aux toilettes universelles dans les bureaux, ce qui était quelque peu bizarre, mais était tout de même neutre.

Theo mentionne qu'il se serait senti inquiet d'utiliser les toilettes pour les garçons à cause de sa petite taille, mais il pense que l'option devrait être offerte pour utiliser des toilettes à l'intention d'étudiants de genre spécifique ainsi que des toilettes pour étudiants de genre neutre.

Ce ne fut pas aussi facile cependant quand Theo a demandé que son nom soit changé sur la fiche des présences. D'abord ce fut « non » bien qu'existait l'option d'y ajouter le nom préféré d'un étudiant. Éventuellement, Theo a remporté le point.

"J'ai également réussi à faire changer mon genre sur le formulaire après avoir souligné que le mot sexe n'était pas mentionné et que j'ai expliqué qu'il y a une différence entre genre et sexe. J'essayais d'ouvrir le chemin pour d'autres étudiants, car il y avait un jeune trans dans cette école.

Ce que les gens doivent comprendre c'est que l'identité de genre et l'orientation sexuelle n'ont rien à voir une avec l'autre. Il peut y avoir des hommes trans gais -- femme à homme attiré par les hommes. Avant, je me considérais comme lesbienne, mais maintenant je me considère comme mâle pansexuel.

"Cela signifie que je suis sexuellement attiré par des gens de multiples identités ou expressions sexuelles sans que le sexe assigné à la naissance soit important. D'abord vous aimez la personne puis vous vous accommodez de sa sexualité."

Theo rapporte qu'il a été intimidé à l'école primaire et pendant ses premières années au secondaire, mais cela a changé quand il est

sorti du placard comme trans et qu'il s'est fait le défenseur des jeunes lesbiennes, gais, bisexuels et trans de l'école.

Il rit de l'ironie de la situation.

"Je ne comprends vraiment pas pourquoi l'intimidation a cessé quand je suis sorti du placard, mais je ne lancerai pas de débat à ce sujet."

Bien que ce ne soit pas sa priorité, Theo est sur une liste d'attente pour subir une mastectomie et il aimerait subir une hystérectomie dans le futur. À ce moment, il n'envisage pas d'avoir une reconstruction du pénis, ce qui, au Canada, n'est possible qu'à Montréal.

Quand il est décontracté, Theo se désigne comme un « gars trans » ou un « mec trans ». Il croit que ces termes résonnent de façon moins intimidante pour les gens.

Récemment, Theo est devenu un

présentateur d'école et d'ateliers pour un programme qui éduque les gens à propos de sujets GLBTT et il fait campagne contre l'homophobie et la transphobie.

Il a une petite amie.

Les conseils de Theo pour les enseignants

- » Demeurez informés. Découvrez les centres de ressources dans votre ville et votre province.
- » Offrez aux jeunes trans des liens Web vers des ressources et même un numéro de téléphone à composer.
- » Fournissez du support quand un étudiant cherche ce qu'il veut et qui il est réellement.
- » Appuyez-les, promettez que l'école et vous les supporterez, peu importe leur décision.
- » Demandez ce que l'école peut faire pour les rendre plus confortables, incluant l'option de toilettes universelles.

L'histoire de Lou

Lou a grandi dans une communauté rurale essentiellement chrétienne. Comme adolescent fréquentant l'école secondaire locale, sortir du placard comme intersexué était hors de question.

"Ce n'était pas un endroit où vous pouviez vous exprimer, mais j'ai consulté la conseillère scolaire et elle fut réellement extraordinaire. Je ne comprenais pas vraiment mon identité

de genre à ce moment. Je savais simplement que j'étais allosexuel. Je me sentais seul et j'avais besoin d'un endroit sûr dans l'école.

"Elle m'a bien supporté, mais je crois qu'elle ne comprenait pas très bien ma *dysphorie* de genre et peut-être qu'elle ne possédait pas la formation à cet effet, mais elle m'a réellement aidé.



Matter-of-factly, he told them: I am transgender. I go by this name, these pronouns and if you could let my teachers know, that would be great.

"They were fine with that. I got access to a gender neutral washroom inside the office, which was kind of weird, but was neutral nonetheless."

Theo said he would have felt a little unsafe using the male washroom due to his smaller size, but thinks the option should be offered to use facilities designated for a student's authentic gender as well as a gender neutral facility.

The sailing wasn't as smooth, however, when Theo asked that his name be changed on the attendance record. At first the answer was 'no' even though there was the option to enter a student's preferred name. Eventually, Theo won out.

"I also got my gender changed on the form after I pointed out it didn't say sex and explained that there is a difference between gender and sex. I was trying to pave the way for other students because there was a younger trans youth in that school.

"The thing people need to understand is that gender identity and sexual orientation have nothing to do with each other. There can be a gay trans man -- a female-to-male who is attracted to men. I did consider myself a lesbian before, but now I consider myself to be a pansexual male.

"What that means is I am sexually attracted to people of multiple gender identities or expressions with little to no focus on the assigned birth sex. You fall for the person first and whatever they have going on sexually you deal with that after."

Theo reports he was bullied in middle school and as a high school freshman, but that changed when he came out as trans and became an advocate for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans youth in the school.

He chuckles at the irony of the situation.

"I totally do not understand why the bullying stopped when I came out, but I'm not going to argue it"

Although not a priority for him, Theo is on a waiting list for a mastectomy and would also like to have a hysterectomy in the future. At this time, he is not considering penis construction which, in Canada, is available only in Montreal.

When speaking casually, Theo refers to himself as a 'trans guy' or a 'trans dude'. He feels those terms sound less intimidating to people.

Recently, Theo became a school and workshop presenter for a program that educates people about LGBTQ topics and agitates against homophobia and transphobia.

He has a girlfriend.

Theo's advice for educators:

- » Stay informed. Find out about the resource centres in your city and province.
- » Offer the trans youth website links to resources, maybe even a phone number to call.
- » Provide support while the student figures out what they want to do and who they really are.
- » Stand behind them, promising that you and the school will support them whatever their decision.
- » Ask what the school could do to make them more comfortable, including the option of a gender neutral washroom.

Lou's story

Lou grew up in a rural, predominantly Christian community. As a teen attending the local high school, coming out as genderqueer was out of the question.

"It wasn't a place you could express yourself, but I did go to the school counsellor and she was really awesome. I didn't really understand my gender identity at that time. I just knew I was queer. I felt alone and needed a safe place within the school.

"She was really supportive but I feel she didn't quite understand my gender dysphoria and maybe didn't have the sensitivity training to that, but she did really help me.

"I use the term *dysphoria* to describe how I feel when I am uncomfortable, like going into a dressing room at a store to try on clothes. Whether the clothes are for women or men, I just feel really uncomfortable."

Now 19, Lou self-identifies as a trans person who is non-binary.

"I like to explain gender on a spectrum -- one side being female identified, one side male identified. I feel most comfortable with not identifying within the spectrum where I visually don't match my assigned sex. When referring to me, I prefer people use gender neutral pronouns -- they, their and them."

At 17, Lou moved to a large city to attend a "pretty liberal private school" which they describe as "queer friendly."

"At the beginning of the school year, I had the chance to write my preferred name on a form and I thought, 'Wow, this is really awesome. I don't have to be called by my birth name.' I had a lot of queer friends there. Having that support group makes you feel a lot more confident.

"There was a gender neutral washroom which I did not have in my other high school. It was great for me. I felt respected, safer. I had always felt uncomfortable using gender-specific washrooms because I don't look female, my assigned sex."

Despite the culture shock of being at a school downtown in a big city, Lou gradually became more comfortable expressing their gender identity and understanding it.

"I am androgynous looking and a person of colour of French-Canadian and Jamaican heritage, and I am hearing impaired. Now that I am aware of oppression, I have been reflecting on the fact that I am first a person of colour and, second, a person with a disability. On top of that, I'm an obvious queer looking person. I am quite the minority."

Lou laughs as they share that thought.

"When I was growing up in a small town, now I think maybe I was treated differently because of the colour of my skin, my visual essence. It's been kind of a roller coaster of self-realization and understanding the experiences, but I've learned to embrace being different."

Still, they report never having experienced bullying face-to-face.

"J'utilise le terme dysphorie pour décrire comment je me sens quand je suis inconfortable, comme d'aller dans une salle d'habillage au magasin pour essayer des vêtements. Que les vêtements soient pour femme ou pour homme, je me sens réellement inconfortable."

Maintenant âgé de 19 ans, Lou s'identifie comme une personne trans qui est non binaire.

"J'aime expliquer le genre par un éventail -- un côté étant l'identification féminine et l'autre l'identification mâle. Je me sens le plus confortable quand je ne m'identifie pas sur cet éventail où je ne peux visuellement y associer mon sexe assigné. Quand les gens s'adressent à moi, je préfère qu'ils utilisent des pronoms de genre neutre, on, leur et eux."

À 17 ans, Lou a déménagé dans une grande ville pour fréquenter une « école privée plutôt libérale » qu'on décrit comme « ayant un climat accueillant pour les allosexuels ».

"Au début de l'année scolaire, j'ai eu la chance de pouvoir écrire mon nom préféré sur un formulaire et j'ai pensé « wow, c'est vraiment formidable. Je n'ai pas à être

appelé par mon nom de naissance. » J'ai eu beaucoup d'amis allosexuels à cet endroit. Avoir un tel groupe de support vous fait sentir bien plus confiant.

"Il y avait des toilettes universelles que mon école secondaire précédente n'avait pas. C'était super pour moi. Je me sentais respecté, plus en sécurité. Je m'étais toujours senti inconfortable dans des toilettes pour genre spécifique, car je ne ressemble pas à une femme, le sexe qui m'a été assigné.

Malgré le choc de culture d'être dans une école au centre-ville d'une grande cité, Lou s'est senti graduellement plus confortable en exprimant son identité de genre et en la comprenant.

"J'ai un aspect androgène et je suis une personne de couleur avec un héritage canadien-français et jamaïcain en plus d'être malentendant. Maintenant que je suis conscient de l'oppression, j'ai réfléchi au fait que je suis d'abord une personne de couleur puis une personne avec un handicap. Par-dessus tout, je suis une personne avec un aspect allosexuel évident. Je suis vraiment une minorité."

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Lou is grateful that their drama teacher, also the Gay Straight Alliance leader at the new school, gave them the opportunity to become a leader through the GSA.

"I recognized I could take action. It was a great environment. I do take every opportunity to educate people, even my family. If they make some comment that I don't think is right, I'll say, 'Hey guys, that's not funny and I'm going to tell you why.'"

"My mom is very supportive and open-minded. I came out to her a couple of years ago. She calls me Lou which was a childhood nickname. My twin sister is super supportive, and they try to use gender neutral pronouns.

"I work as a cook in a restaurant and my boss is super accepting and respectful and working on using gender neutral pronouns for me. It's so great to have a safe working environment."

This year, Lou will apply to the University of Toronto with a long-term goal to be a human rights lawyer.

"I want to help people. I have an eye to recognize when someone's being treated differently or disrespected. I can understand how they feel and I just want to be able to help. I want to help change the world."

Lou's advice for educators:

- » Attend LGBTQ Ally training.
- » Become more informed about trans people and their rights.
- » Offer a more in-depth health class about sex and gender.
- » Make pamphlets on queer identities available.
- » Stop segregating sexes for gym class and when playing any games, avoid boys vs girls.
- » Use student's preferred name and pronouns.

The best intentions

Taking a neutral stance may be the go-to position in counselling, but it is not the recommended approach with a student who discloses they are transgender.

When a student comes out -- saying something like 'I don't feel comfortable in my body' and asking, 'Am I normal?' -- a neutral stand can reinforce stereotypes, negativity or phobia associated with being trans, explains Reece Malone, education program coordinator at Winnipeg's Rainbow Resource Centre and a sexologist in private practice.

In transgender awareness seminars that Malone conducts throughout Manitoba and in Northwestern Ontario, he advises educators to respond with words that affirm the student's courage in walking through the door and disclosing their authentic gender identity.

A possible response could be:

Of course you're normal. Thank you for sharing with me that you are trans. That takes a lot of courage. Do you have a name you prefer to go by, or specific pronouns you want me to use? You're a normal person, just as normal as someone who's not trans. Trans identities have existed throughout history; there are many variations of gender.

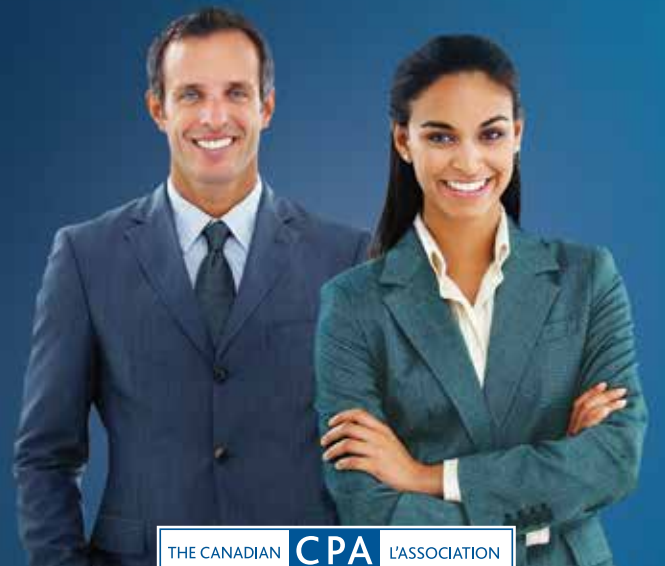
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Lou rit en partageant cette pensée.

"Quand je grandissais dans une petite ville, je crois maintenant que j'étais sans doute traité différemment à cause de la couleur de ma peau, mon essence visuelle. Ce fut une sorte de montage russe de réalisation du soi et de comprendre les expériences, mais j'ai appris à embrasser le fait d'être différent."

Quand même, Lou ne rapporte pas avoir connu l'intimidation face à face.

Lou est reconnaissant que son professeur de théâtre, aussi le chef de l'alliance gaie-hétéro dans sa nouvelle école, leur a fourni l'opportunité de devenir un leader par l'AGH.

"J'ai reconnu que je pouvais agir. C'était un environnement extraordinaire. Je profite effectivement de toutes les opportunités pour éduquer les gens, même ma famille. S'ils font des commentaires que je ne trouve pas corrects, je dirai "hé les gars, ce n'est pas drôle et je vous dis pourquoi."

"Ma mère me supporte beaucoup et elle a l'esprit ouvert. Je lui ai dévoilé ma condition il y a quelques années déjà. Elle m'appelle Lou qui était mon surnom d'enfance. Ma soeur


“ Adopter une attitude neutre peut être la position à prendre lors du counselling, mais ce n’est pas l’approche recommandée avec un étudiant qui révèle qu’il est transgenre. ”

jumelle me supporte également de façon super et elles essaient d'utiliser des pronoms neutres.

"Je travaille comme cuisinier dans un restaurant et mon patron m'accepte et me respecte grandement en plus de travailler à utiliser des pronoms de genre neutre pour moi. C'est tellement bien d'avoir un environnement de travail sécuritaire."

Cette année, Lou demandera d'être accepté à l'université de Toronto avec l'objectif à long terme de devenir un avocat spécialisé dans la défense des droits de l'homme.

"Je veux aider les gens. J'ai l'oeil pour voir quand quelqu'un est traité différemment ou non respecté. Je peux comprendre comment ils se sentent et je veux simplement être capable d'aider. Je veux aider à changer le monde."




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"Because these individuals are exposed all the time to phobias -- transphobia, homophobia -- and not feeling safe, educators need to come from the place that the student's unique identity is a strength," says Malone, who holds a masters degree in public health and a doctorate in human sexuality.

"Some individuals want their new name recognized, as well as their authentic gender identity. For example, if a trans girl who was assigned a male identity at birth is identifying as a girl, we strongly advocate that transition be respected. This can be difficult for some parents of other children at the school who take issue with that," Malone cautions.

Aaron Devor, an internationally recognized expert on transgender issues, recommends counsellors take a matter-of-fact approach to the student's disclosure, normalize it as much as possible and figure out what help the student needs.

"Treat them like any other kid who comes in to talk about an issue or problem. Make them feel confident and self-assured," he says.

Devor, who has studied, taught and spoken about transgender-related matters for 30 years, believes the approaches that can have the greatest benefit to trans youth are:

- » respecting their choices
- » allowing them to live in the gender they need to be
- » helping them be fully involved in school life
- » making life as comfortable as possible for them among their peers

Washroom use a hot-button topic

Malone recently worked with a parent whose trans daughter lives as a girl and uses the girls' washroom at school. When another parent objected, the altercation made news.

"The parent literally pulled this young girl out of the bathroom. It created a scene and was humiliating for the girl," Malone relates.

"We empathize with the parents' concerns, but we empathize more with the child who just wants to pee with dignity. We also need to be realistic. Are we going to check everyone's underwear to see what genitals they have before they access the bathroom?"


A gender neutral washroom has been a common solution for dealing with this issue in schools, but Devor feels it is not always the best solution. "It marks the trans kids," says the PhD and professor of sociology at the University of Victoria (B.C.).

"Their use of the single-person facility is a constant reminder that they're different, making the trans kids vulnerable to all manner of abuse from other kids. Rather than having just one, gender neutral facility, my recommendation is to have several one-person washrooms and change rooms that can benefit anyone who feels more comfortable with that."

Devor adds, "If a trans girl wants to use the girls' washroom, then education is needed with the parents of other students so they understand there is no danger that this girl being in the washroom will translate into a sexual assault or voyeurism of their girls. That concern comes from parents just wanting to protect their kids, and from ignorance of what a trans girl is about.

"They have to understand that there is nothing the other girls need to be protected from because this is not a boy masquerading

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Les conseils de Lou pour les enseignants

- » Participez à la formation des amis des GLBTT.
- » Soyez plus informés à propos des gens trans et de leurs droits.
- » Offrez des cours plus approfondis sur la santé à propos du sexe et du genre.
- » Rédigez des pamphlets à propos des identités des allosexuels.
- » Arrêtez la ségrégation des sexes dans les cours d'éducation physique et pour les jeux d'équipe, évitez les garçons vs les filles.
- » Utilisez les noms et pronoms préférés des étudiants.

Les meilleures intentions

Adopter une attitude neutre peut être la position à prendre lors du counselling, mais ce n'est pas l'approche recommandée avec un étudiant qui révèle qu'il est transgenre.

Quand un étudiant sort du placard -- disant quelque chose comme "je ne me sens pas confortable dans mon corps" et qu'il demande "suis-je normal?" -- une attitude neutre peut renforcer les stéréotypes, la négativité ou les phobies associées avec le fait d'être trans, nous explique Reece Malone, coordonnateur du programme d'éducation au Rainbow Resource Centre de Winnipeg et sexologue en pratique privée.

Dans les séminaires de prise de conscience du transgenre que Malone donne au Manitoba et dans le nord-ouest de l'Ontario, il conseille aux enseignants de répondre avec des mots qui affirment le courage de l'étudiant à traverser la porte et dévoiler son identité de genre authentique.

Une réponse possible pourrait être :

Bien sûr tu es normal. Merci de partager avec moi que tu sois trans. Cela prend beaucoup de courage. As-tu un nom que tu préfères qu'on utilise ou des pronoms spécifiques que tu aimerais que j'utilise ? Tu es une personne normale, aussi normale qu'une personne qui n'est pas trans. Historiquement, les identités trans existent depuis longtemps, il y a plusieurs variations de genre.

"Parce que ces individus sont toujours exposés à des phobies -- transphobie, homophobie -- et qu'ils ne se sentent pas en sécurité, les enseignants doivent venir de l'endroit où l'identité unique de l'étudiant est une force", selon Malone qui détient une maîtrise en santé publique et un doctorat en sexualité humaine.

"Certains individus veulent que leur nouveau nom soit reconnu autant que leur identité de genre authentique. Par exemple, si une fille trans qui a eu une identité mâle assignée à la naissance s'identifie comme une fille, nous encourageons vivement que la transition soit respectée. Cela peut être difficile pour les parents d'autres enfants de l'école qui en font un problème", souligne Malone.

Aaron Devor, expert en problèmes transgenres reconnu mondialement recommande que les conseillers utilisent une approche factuelle lors de la sortie du placard d'un étudiant, qu'ils la normalisent autant que possible et trouvent l'aide dont l'étudiant a besoin.

"Traitez-les comme n'importe quel autre enfant qui vient vous parler de soucis ou de problèmes. Faites-les se sentir confiant et sûr d'eux", dit-il.

Devor qui a étudié, enseigné et discoursé à propos d'affaires associées au transgenre depuis 30 années croit que les approches qui porteront les meilleurs fruits pour les jeunes transgenres sont :

- » le respect de leurs choix
- » leur permettre de vivre avec le genre qu'ils ont besoin
- » les aider à participer pleinement à la vie scolaire
- » leur rendre la vie aussi confortable que possible parmi leurs pairs

L'utilisation des toilettes, un sujet chaud

Malone a récemment travaillé avec un parent dont la fille trans vit comme une fille et utilise les toilettes pour les filles à l'école. Quand un autre parent s'en est plaint, l'altercation a fait les manchettes.

"Le parent a littéralement sorti cette jeune fille des toilettes. Cela a engendré une scène qui fut humiliante pour la fille", rapporte Malone.

"Nous sommes emphatiques aux soucis des parents, mais nous avons plus sympathie pour l'enfant qui ne veut qu'uriner avec dignité. Nous devons également être réalistes. Allons-nous vérifier les sous-vêtements de tout le monde pour voir leurs organes génitaux avant qu'ils ne pénètrent dans les toilettes?"

Les toilettes universelles ont été une solution commune pour gérer ce genre de problème dans les écoles, mais Devor croit que ce n'est pas toujours la meilleure solution. "Cela marque les enfants trans",

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as a girl, not a boy that has some kind of wild male sexuality. This is a girl. In the reverse situation, it is more likely the parents of a trans boy using the boys' washroom will be concerned about his vulnerability to bullying from other boys," Devor suggests.

Other conversations

Malone says schools also need to have pro-active conversations about trans boys trying out for the boys' sports teams or joining boys' clubs and vice versa, as well as accommodating genderqueer youth.

"There are already trans youth playing on teams that align with their gender identity. For them, using congruent change rooms is important. For youth who identify as neither male nor female or as genderqueer, it's all the more important to discuss what would feel most safe for them.

"Rather than reacting to a perceived crisis, accommodation for participation in various activities should be pre-negotiated and the student asked about confidentiality, disclosure and whether they want additional staff to be their ally," Malone advises.

"It's paramount for educators to publically support the trans student. That sends a clear message to students and colleagues." 

A LEXICON

LGBTQ/LGBTQQ - inclusive acronym for people who self-identify as sexual or gender minorities -- lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, Two-Spirit, queer, questioning

gender variant/gender non-conforming - a person whose expression of gender does not conform to conventional expectations in terms of their assigned sex

genderqueer - people who feel that consistently aligning themselves as either man or woman is not the answer for them, that their gender may be a fluid mixture or beyond the binary of just male or just female

pansexual - people who are emotionally and sexually attracted to individuals of diverse gender expressions or identities or assigned sexes (Egale Canada)

social transition - changes trans people make in transitioning socially to their authentic gender identity can include name/pronouns, clothing and the gender-specific facilities they use

medical transition - physical changes that a trans person chooses to make using hormones or hormone blockers, sex-reassignment or gender-affirming surgeries

top surgery - procedures performed for sex reassignment can include breast augmentation for male-to-female transitions. Female-to-male procedures can include mastectomy and male breast contouring

bottom surgery - sex reassignment procedures that alter genitalia and reproductive organs. Male-to-female transitions can include removal of the penis and scrotum and creation of female genitalia. Female-to-male transitions can include removal of female reproductive organs and creation of male genitalia

transphobia - fear and/or hatred of anyone who is transgender (or assumed to be) and their perceived transgressions of gender norms. Transphobia can result in discrimination, bullying, harassment and violence



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Resources

Public Health Agency of Canada offers suggestions for making schools safe and supportive for transgender youth and answers the question: What do I do if a student discloses a gender variant identity? phac-aspc.gc.ca/std-mts/rp/gi-is/gi-eng.php

Toronto District School Board provides best practices for accommodating students and staff based on gender identity and gender expression tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/aboutus/innovation/docs/tdsb%20transgender%20accommodation%20final_1_.pdf

Egale Canada, LGBT human rights organization, offers information on making schools safer and more inclusive egale.ca.

Egale Canada Human Rights Trust reports on the first national survey on homophobia and transphobia in Canadian schools egale.ca/youth-and-safer-schools/every-class/

Gender Creative Kids provides resources for supporting gender creative kids at home, school and in the community. gendercreativekids.ca.

comme le mentionne le docteur et professeur de sociologie à l'université de Victoria (Colombie-Britannique).

"Leur utilisation des toilettes universelles est un rappel constant qu'ils sont différents rendant les enfants trans vulnérables à l'abus par d'autres enfants. Plutôt que d'avoir seulement une toilette universelle, ma recommandation est d'avoir plusieurs toilettes et salles d'habillage à utiliser par une seule personne à la fois ce qui pourra satisfaire tous ceux qui sont plus à l'aise de cette façon."

Devor ajoute, "si une fille trans veut utiliser les toilettes pour les filles, il faut alors éduquer les parents des autres étudiants pour qu'ils comprennent qu'il n'y a pas de danger que la présence de cette fille dans les toilettes ne se traduise par un assaut sexuel ou du voyeurisme envers leurs filles. Cette peur provient de parents qui ne veulent que protéger leurs enfants et de l'ignorance de ce qu'est une fille trans.

"Ils doivent comprendre qu'il n'y a rien dont il faut protéger les autres filles, car ce n'est pas un garçon qui se fait passer pour une fille, ce n'est pas un garçon qui possède une sorte de sexualité mâle sauvage. C'est une fille. Par ailleurs, il est plus vraisemblable que les parents d'un garçon trans qui utilise les toilettes pour les garçons seront soucieux à propos de sa vulnérabilité à l'intimidation de la part des autres garçons", souligne Devor.

Autres conversations

Malone dit que les écoles doivent aussi avoir des conversations proactives à propos des garçons trans qui veulent joindre des équipes sportives ou des clubs de garçons et vice versa ainsi qu'à propos des accommodations pour la jeunesse intersexuée.

"Il y a déjà des jeunes trans qui jouent dans des équipes qui s'alignent sur leur identité de genre. Pour eux, utiliser des salles de déshabillage en harmonie est important. Pour les jeunes qui ne s'identifient pas comme mâle, femelle ou intersexué, il est d'autant plus important de discuter ce qui les ferait se sentir le plus en sécurité.

"Plutôt que de réagir à la perception d'une crise, les accommodations pour leur participation à diverses activités devraient être prénégociées et on devrait s'enquérir auprès des étudiants de la confidentialité, de la divulgation et s'ils souhaitent plus de personnel comme allié", selon Malone.

"Il est primordial pour les enseignants d'appuyer publiquement les étudiants trans. Cela transmet un message clair aux étudiants et aux collègues." **csc**

LEXIQUE

GLBT/GLBTT - acronyme inclusif pour les gens qui s'identifient à des minorités sexuelles ou de genre – lesbienne, gai, bisexuel, transsexuel, transgenre, bispirituel, allosexuel, questionnant

variance de genre / genre non conforme - une personne dont l'expression du genre ne se conforme pas aux attentes conventionnelles en fonction de leur sexe assigné

intersexué - les personnes qui ressentent que de constamment s'aligner sur un homme ou une femme n'est pas leur solution, que leur genre peut être un mélange fluide ou au-delà de la notion binaire juste homme ou juste femme

pansexuel - les gens qui sont émotionnellement et sexuellement attirés par des individus de diverses expressions de genre, d'identité ou de sexe assigné (Egale Canada)

transition sociale - les changements que font les gens trans lors de leur transition sociale vers leur identité de genre authentique et qui peuvent inclure le nom, les pronoms, les vêtements et les installations en fonction du genre qu'ils utilisent

transition médicale - les changements physiques qu'une personne trans choisit d'effectuer par l'utilisation d'hormones ou d'inhibiteurs d'hormones, par des chirurgies de changement de sexe ou d'affirmation du genre

chirurgie du haut - les procédures de changement de sexe qui peuvent inclure l'augmentation mammaire pour les transitions de mâle à femelle. Les procédures de femelle à mâle peuvent inclure la mastectomie et le contour de poitrine mâle

chirurgie du bas - procédures de changement de sexe qui modifient les organes génitaux et reproductifs. Les transitions de mâle à femelle peuvent inclure l'ablation du pénis et du scrotum ainsi que la création d'organes génitaux féminins. Les transitions de femelle à mâle peuvent inclure l'ablation des organes reproducteurs féminins et la création d'organes génitaux masculins.

transphobie - la peur et/ou la haine de toute personne transgenre (ou présumée tel) et leurs transgressions perçues des normes de genre. La transphobie peut mener à la discrimination, l'intimidation, le harcèlement et la violence

Ressources

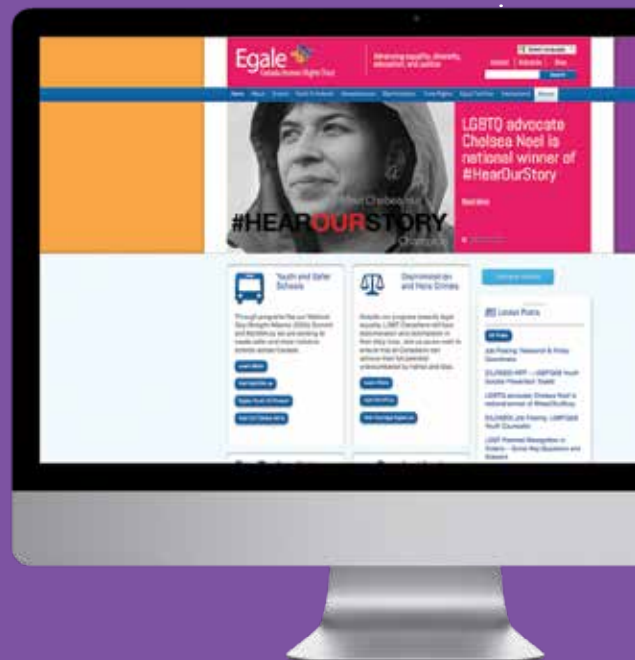
L'Agence de la santé publique du Canada fait des suggestions pour rendre les écoles sécuritaires et qui soutiennent les jeunes transgenres et pour répondre à la question : que dois-je faire si un étudiant révèle son identité transgenre ? **phac-asp.gc.ca/std-mts/rp/gi-is/gi-eng.php**

Le Conseil scolaire du district de Toronto fournit les meilleures pratiques pour accommoder les étudiants et le personnel sur la base de l'identité et de l'expression du genre **tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/aboutus/innovation/docs/tdsb%20transgender%20accommodation%20final_1_.pdf**

Egale Canada, organisation GLBT des droits de la personne qui offre de l'information pour rendre les écoles plus sécuritaires et plus inclusives **egale.ca**.

Egale Canada Human Rights Trust enquête nationale sur l'homophobie et la transphobie dans les écoles canadiennes **egale.ca/youth-and-safer-schools/every-class**.

Enfants transgenres Canada offre des ressources pour soutenir les enfants créatifs dans le genre et leur famille, à l'école et dans la communauté. **gendercreativekids.ca**.





GROWING A CAREER IN FORESTRY

Where plaid fashion, crew-cabs, and more sprout from forest fibre.

By: Monica Bailey, Director of Communications, Forest Products Association of Canada

Let's see if I can change your perception about Canada's forest products industry. People tend to think of the sector as plaid-wearing lumberjacks with axes toiling in the woods; the reality is that the forest products industry is actually comprised of intelligent, environmentally conscientious, world-changing men and women who span the workforce from silviculturalists to engineers, to innovators.

Canada's forest sector has received some pretty cool accolades from all around the world, based on its science-first approach to eco-based forest management practices, and the world has also recognized the sector's leadership in doing more with less by seeking innovative ways to maximize the industry's waste stream. The industry is constantly seeking ways to maximize renewable wood fibre. Canada's forest products sector is leading in world-changing innovative

bio-technologies such as creating bio-plastics from wood fibre, and inventing fibre-based bone replacement therapies, and so much more! In fact, the car you drive, the plaid you wear, the ice-cream you eat, the pharmaceuticals you take and the high-definition television you are watching could all contain wood fibre.

"The future of the forest products industry will be all about the likes of nano-technology and the bio-economy. Along with traditional wood, pulp and paper, renewable wood fibre is being used in a wide variety of bio-products including green energy and bio-chemicals."

David Lindsay, President and CEO, FPAC.

What's even better is that these new bio-products can be considered clean and "green". That's because they are made from trees, a renewable and infinite resource unlike finite fossil fuels. These wood-based bio-products are replacing materials that have a more intensive carbon footprint. Forest fibre is helping automotive, clothing, pharmaceutical, cosmetic companies and others find more environmentally friendly ways to create their products.

"I often point to the forest products industry as a leading example of the potential of clean technology to create new opportunities and open up new revenue streams within established sectors. Seizing the cleantech opportunity is good for the forest sector, and for the country as a whole. Clean technology represents a \$1.1 trillion global market. Countries everywhere are looking for solutions that will allow them to re-use waste, generate economically viable renewable energy, and bring greater sustainability to existing industries." Vicky J. Sharpe, Strategic Advisor, Sustainable Development Technology Canada

And you should know that Canada is being recognized for its environmental leadership in this regard. A 2014 Leger Marketing survey of international customers found that the Canadian forest products industry has the best environmental reputation in the world.

The innovators developing these bio-based solutions might have an affinity for plaid, but the truth is they are all wearing lab coats and might have an advanced degree in engineering or chemistry.

The forest products industry has developed a new confidence that is captured in its forward looking Vision2020. The Vision2020 has set ambitious goals in the areas of economic development, the environment and employment. The sector is aiming to generate an additional \$20 billion dollars in economic activity by the end of the decade based on new products and new markets. The forest products industry already exports to more than 180 countries and is Canada's largest exporter to China. We've already talked about the industry's strong environmental credentials but it is aiming to improve that by an additional 35%. Finally, students should know that the Vision2020 foresees the need to refresh the industry workforce with at least 60,000 workers in various roles – from skilled trades, to administration, to science and engineering, woodlands management, and mill operations.



"Having learned about how much the people at DMI care about the future of our forests made me pleased to be working for them because as an environmental scientist it's important to me that our forests are protected and managed sustainably. As I got closer to graduating I realized that I definitely wanted to pursue a future career in forestry, so when I heard that DMI was looking for a Forester in-training I was quick to apply and ended up getting the job."

Andre Knight-Lira (former Green Dream Intern), Forester In-Training, at Daishowa Marubeni International.

"I've had the opportunity to brainstorm and design a trial for a particular enzyme, which has the potential to treat the effluent going into the Millar Western bioenergy project. The idea is that the enzyme would increase bioavailability in effluent, which would increase biogas production, thus making the system more efficient.

Forestry production is a long-term commitment to produce sustainably and provide products from a natural resource that is replenished year after year. This fosters responsible management, ensuring the resource and the industry are maintained for the future, a concept everyone is looking to achieve in the coming years."

Elizabeth Tice, Green Dream Intern, Chemical Engineer at Millar Western 2014.

Students across Canada should be made aware that working in Canada's oldest natural resource industry comes with great pride, leadership and innovative-ingenuity. The forest products industry needs people who want to make a difference; who care about the environment; who want to live a balanced life, where work and play are offered in equal measure; and more importantly want to work in an industry constantly striving to do better.

"I really feel that young workers, entering into the industry right now will have an amazing variety of career choices".

Shayna Mason, Forestry Student.

The forest products industry is Canada's GreenestWorkforce, and I encourage you to learn more about the leadership of the industry, and the career opportunities on offer across the country from coast to coast by visiting TheGreenestWorkforce.ca. There you can find the hundreds of jobs available in the industry on any one day.

The web site is full of information for anyone considering a career in the forest industry. There are more than 40 different videos from real people working in the forest sector explaining what they do. When watching these short videos, you will feel the enthusiasm of the workers and understand why they find their job interesting and rewarding. There are also career fact sheets explaining the skills and education required for many of the in-demand careers along with estimates of salary ranges for the various types of positions.

"For me, dreaming big means finding an employer that has real opportunities for me to challenge myself and grow my career in business. It's about finding something that I can be proud of doing each day and enjoy it. It's about being close to family and friends at home. It's about purchasing my own house with a white picket fence, and commuting home in 10 minutes. I can dream like this when I'm in the GreenestWorkforce, Canada's forest products industry – and I am".

Jeremy Woo, University of Calgary student, Green Dream Intern, Human Resources at Tolko Forest products 2013/2014. ♣csc

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Lifeline of Hope

YFC CENTRE, HELPING YOUTH REALISE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

By Alison Zenisek

The corner of Higgins and Main. For residents of Winnipeg it conjures up images of gangs, poverty, prostitution, and pervasive substance abuse. What doesn't come to mind is hope. "Hope" is the thing with feathers "Hope" is the thing with feathers If "hope is a thing with feathers," as Emily Dickinson wrote, then it had flown away from the infamous corner. At least that is what many residents of Winnipeg had come to believe. Enter Youth for Christ with an ambitious dream of building a centre for youth on an empty lot that no one else wanted. Add a dash of political controversy and a team of dedicated people who are willing to work in the neighborhood and with every youth that come through the doors and you have the YFC Centre for Youth Excellence. Here the goal is to combine healthy relationships with creative programming that will help young people make good choices and have the opportunity to investigate the Christian walk.

The history of the YFC organization began in the early 1940's. Several young men, mostly ministers and evangelists, held large rallies in Canada, England, and the United States. By the end of World II it became evident that the movement needed someone who would provide leadership as well as coordinate speakers, musicians, and

locations. Billy Graham stepped into the position and became Youth for Christ's first full time staff member. The Winnipeg chapter of YFC was established in 1954 and has over time evolved and matured in its mandate to meet the needs of youth intellectually, physically, socially, and spiritually. The goal of Youth for Christ, not only in Winnipeg but around the world, is to reach young people through socially and developmentally appropriate activities with a message of hope for the entire person, and to lay a foundation for a functional and productive life. In Winnipeg one of the reasons for choosing the Higgins and Main location was to address the needs of low-income, high risk, and aboriginal youth.

Solid relationships built through mentoring and creative programming help youth realize their full potential. One Youth for Christ program in Winnipeg that has already made a difference is an indoor skate park called The Edge. For Jasmine Bohemier, a lover of extreme sports, the difference meant finally meeting a group of like-minded women who enjoyed skate boarding. While in university a friend told her about the park and that it offered an evening session each week for girls only. She quickly became a regular. Now a home



Photos courtesy of Youth for Christ

economics teacher at Louis Riel College, she says that she appreciated the support of other girls when she was young in a community that is often male dominated. She has been volunteering at the park for 10 years now and enjoys helping the skaters develop their abilities. Building relationships with young people and talking to them about Jesus Christ is close to her heart because she is a Christian. "I like seeing the next generations of girls coming in and being a part of this community..."

The new Youth for Christ centre has tripled its skate park capacity, and their climbing wall has multiplied the number of youth that can participate by four. An interview with John Courtney, the director of the Centre for Youth Excellence, revealed what is at the heart of this ambitious program. Originally located in Elmwood, the Youth for Christ leadership asked themselves how they could better serve the youth of Winnipeg. Courtney realized that the organization needed to be perceived as city-wide. In order to accomplish this he believed that a downtown location was best. If the YFC Centre for Excellence were positioned there, then youth from every community around the city would feel welcome. The goal was

to eventually serve 10,000 youth from the greater Winnipeg area. Today the stunningly modern and well equipped facility serves 7,000 youth and is still growing.

One of the challenges of being a Christian organization in today's culture and society, according to Courtney, is to be too quickly misunderstood. He believes that if people could see how much they invest in and care for youth, regardless of the Christian component, that the centre would garner more respect. "The assumption is that all we do is proselytise... we are very respectful and seek permission to invite kids into those [spiritual] opportunities." Courtney believes that it is harder for the secular community to understand and support an organization that has both "youth" and "Christ" in its name. He asserts that the difference between what YFC has to offer and what secular youth organizations offer is the mentorship and the Christian faith perspective.

The YFC Centre for Excellence was not met with open arms by all. Many community groups opposed the acquisition of the Higgins and Main site for the centre. According to Courtney there is a pervasive attitude that if Christians work with one Aboriginal youth, it is one



too many. He said that representatives of the YFC organization were side-swiped and unprepared for the politics when they initially brought their proposal to the city council meeting. He questions whether the groups opposed to building the youth centre at Higgins and Main really had the welfare of the city's youth in mind. In truth YFC was very well funded for this project, so some resentment was inevitable. It is also true that Canadian municipalities are often cash strapped and take in very little of the revenues generated by taxation, yet are expected to shoulder the burden of significant service delivery. When the opportunity presents itself to receive money from the private sector and two levels of government for an organization that benefits the city, then the fiscal advantage is often too good to refuse.

The Youth for Christ Centre for Excellence does provide recreation and specialized programs to all of Winnipeg's youth and this keeps many youth off the streets. "If all faith based organizations like Siloam Mission pulled away from the city who would serve the poor? We need to be clear about who we are," says Courtney. He believes that the added humanitarian and

social benefits are good reasons for governments to contribute financially to faith based organizations. Youth for Christ raised \$7 million through private donations and the city and federal government contributed \$6.4million. "My passion and vision is to see this place humming and buzzing with hundreds of kids six days a week," says Courtney.

His biggest challenge is youth engagement. He and his staff strive to make the youth of Winnipeg aware that this place is there for all. When asked what strategies were in place to draw more youth from known areas of poverty in the city, Courtney spoke of a bus and several vans used to provide transportation for these youth to the centre. Staff and volunteers have also gone door to door with flyers in the North End, Point Douglas, and the core area of Winnipeg. Last summer radio time was purchased on CJOB aimed primarily at parents and promoting their summer programs.

Youth for Christ also provides counselling services at the centre, primarily for teens and their parents. Others are welcome, but only if the space is available. Their focus is to strengthen families through



Photos courtesy of Youth for Christ

innovative, relational counselling and their services are offered at an affordable, sliding scale rate. Dr. Melanie Thiessen heads the program and the counsellors employed there have at minimum a Master's degree in counselling. The youth that come through the doors do not have to embrace Christianity to access any of the programs. There are no high pressure tactics, but the young people are aware that the organization is faith based.

Other programs offered at the centre include dance classes, sewing, visual arts, a soccer league, ball hockey, summer camp, and wilderness adventures. There is also a fully equipped fitness centre, a gym, and a climbing wall. Employment training and job experience are provided for interested youth living in the North End. No young person is turned away from any activities or programs solely on the basis of finances. One of the methods employed to make the centre accessible to all is that the youth and their families can volunteer time in exchange for activities. As one 17 year old girl put it, "It is not a typical place. Here I was able to connect with other teenagers who shared my struggles and pressures." Hope is a thing with feathers. 🍁 CSC

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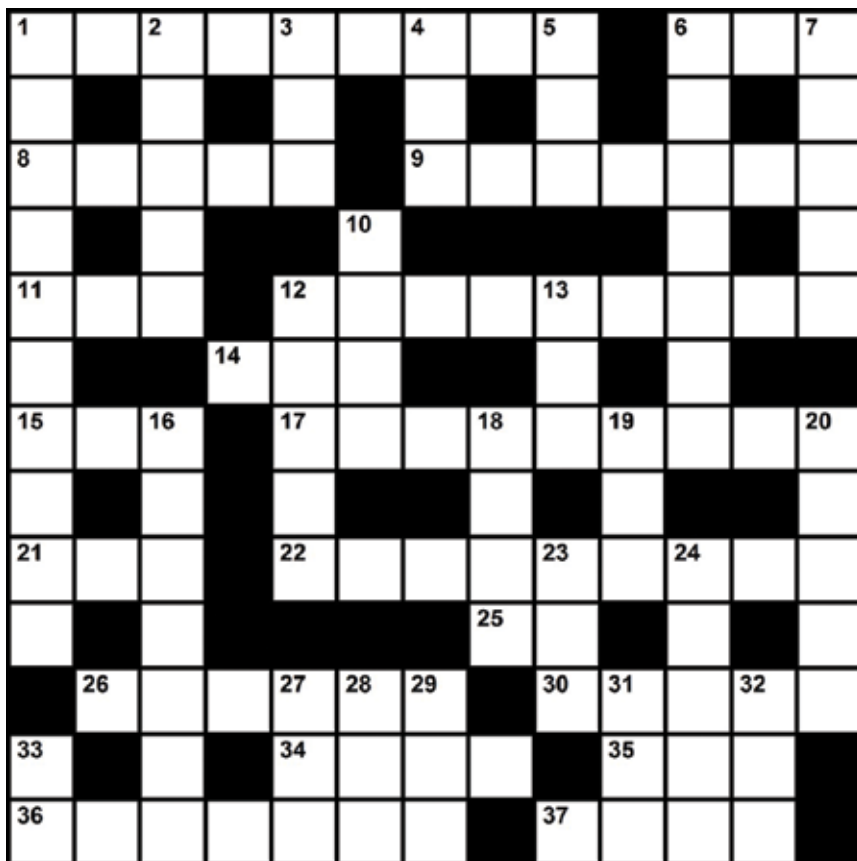
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Crossword answers on page 50

Across

1. Author of "Help at Any Cost: How the Troubled-Teen Industry Cons Parents and Hurts Kids," Maia ____
6. Friendly welcomes
8. Counsellor's responsibility
9. Minor details
11. Not professional
12. The "boot camp" approach to troubled teen problems (2 words)
14. Counsellors often have to "pour ____ on troubled waters"
15. Too easy-going
17. Largest youth-run organization in North America, encouraging community involvement (3 words)
21. Basketball association
22. App that turns class notes into flash cards
25. Compass direction
26. Anti-bullying app
30. People working together with a common purpose
34. Sticking point on a project
35. The sun for example
36. Caring profession
37. Tolstoy heroine

Down

1. Program for schools launched by the Canadian War Museum to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the First World War (2 words)
2. Request to enter a university
3. Suffer
4. Belief system
5. Spiritual path
6. Strike a chord (2 words)
7. First name of the kid who founded 17 across
10. Alone
12. Checks made in boxes
13. Popular item
16. Unknown element (2 words)
18. Approves silently
19. What a school group can become when led by evil elements
20. Requires
23. Up to now
24. Acquire knowledge
27. Twenty-third letter of the Greek alphabet
28. Place to stay
29. Label
31. Many, many years
32. Business degree
33. Cool

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