

CANADIAN SCHOOL **Counsellor** MAGAZINE

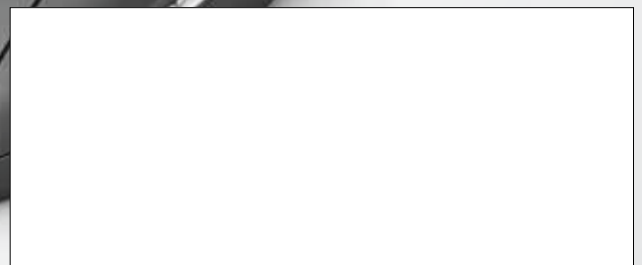


🎲 **Teen Gamblers Going All In and In Too Deep**

🎲 **Les ados joueurs y vont trop à fond**

♦ **Boundaries Blurred:**
Navigating Today's Teacher/Student Relationship Minefield

♦ **Des frontières floues :**
le terrain miné des relations enseignants-élèves





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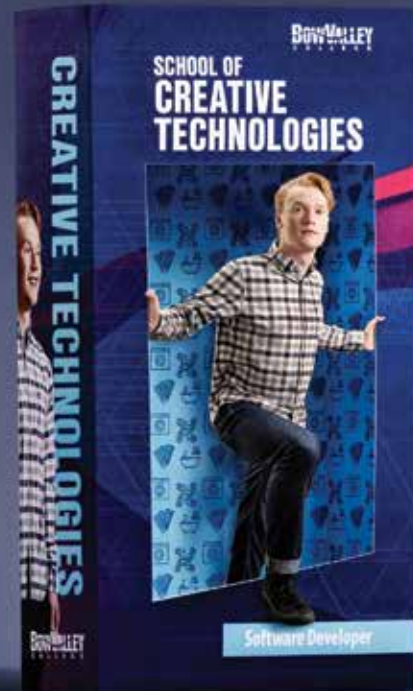
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CSC-Q0217 - SUMMER**

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Legal Marijuana Plan Needs Public Health Focus: Ottawa Psychiatrist

Dr. Gail Beck points to link between cannabis use and mental illness

By CBC Radio's Ottawa Morning, Courtesy of CBC News



With the federal government introducing its plans to make marijuana legal a psychiatrist with the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre hopes the legislation will have a meaningful public health component to address the potentially harmful effects of smoking pot.

Dr. Gail Beck treats patients between the ages 16 and 18 as the clinical director of the youth program at the Royal, and she's concerned about the impact marijuana has on the mental health of young people

"We see many young people who are daily users and multiple times a day users," she told host Hallie Cotnam on CBC Radio's Ottawa Morning.

"We also see many people who use it only on weekends, but who use it to excess on weekends. Cannabis can also be intoxicating, and so that's a concern, because that has some impacts. But regular daily use also has impacts on the developing brain."

Research has shown that cannabis use can cause cognitive dysfunction, memory loss, and problem-solving and decision-making difficulties, according to Beck.

"Research - very consistently repeated - has shown that when young people have those symptoms of cognitive dysfunction, unlike adults, for whom those symptoms may

resolve after a few weeks of discontinued use, that doesn't happen for young people," she said.

"We're certainly talking about the psychotic illnesses - so schizophrenia. But we're also talking about anxiety and depression. And I think most people are aware that acute intoxication with cannabis can cause anxiety, depression, paranoia, and psychosis," Beck added.

'Need to be very educational'

She said she will be watching the federal government's marijuana legalization plan closely for public health and awareness initiatives.

"A lot of people start by saying that they feel marijuana is harmless," she said. "We really need to be very educational about that. And that's why we hope that in this legislation there is embedded a plan for a very robust public health education program."

She said cannabis use among Canadian youth between the ages of 16 and 24 is twice as high compared to their counterparts in other countries, so awareness is crucial. Driving while high is also a concern for Beck.

While she acknowledges some parents and cannabis users may accuse her of "fearmongering" when she brings up mental health concerns, she points to the existence of evidence-based findings, and stresses that she isn't opposed to marijuana legalization.

"It makes sense for us to legalize and regulate," she said. 🍁 csc



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Unhealthy Teen Relationships May Still Need Room To Grow

By Kim Kaschor, Courtesy of CBC news

Emily Bernardin may only be 19 years old, but she knows a thing or two about love, and what it's like to be in an unhealthy relationship.

"I had some bad experiences, but I've grown from them," said Bernardin, who credits her mother for giving her room to grow. "My mom knew [about the bad relationship]. We talked about it a lot and she knew she couldn't make me do anything. She was just

there for me through the whole thing, and watched as it fell apart," said Bernardin.

Guidance counsellors at Kelvin High School watch things fall apart and get put back together on a daily basis. For counsellors such as Janus Bazan, it comes with an understanding of how formative and intense the high school years can be. "For some adults, it's a little difficult to imagine that somebody at 15 or 16 can actually love, but it's so strong. It's there," said Bazan.

There are often warning signs when that teen love goes wrong enough to give parents cause for concern. A teen might drastically change their physical appearance, begin isolating themselves or suddenly stop eating or sleeping, she said.

When a teen comes to Bazan about a troubled relationship, she encourages them to talk about what it means to be in a healthy one.

"We try to help the students who come to us identify the values that are really important to them — values in friendship and then even dating relationships — then work towards trying to make sure that's what happens to them," said Bazan.

Forbidding teens doesn't help

While students in Bazan's office are encouraged to think about values, parents may be more inclined to demand them and forbid their teen from continuing an unhealthy relationship.

Looking back, Bernardin said she would not have listened to her mother if she was told to stay away. "It wouldn't have worked. [The relationship] would have been secret and I would have just lied more," said Bernardin.

Regardless of how a parent responds to their teen's unhealthy relationship, Bazan outlines the importance of keeping an open dialogue. In her experience, teens often want to reach out but need a safe place to share their experiences.


"They really do want to talk about it. There's a reason why they're in an unhealthy relationship and, whatever that is, it's good to come to that first and understand it. It's really important to understand their perspective. Understanding that helps you move forward," said Bazan.

At Kelvin High School, counsellors have a case load of about 350 students; they see most of them at least one time during their high school years. Career counselling is the most typical reason for a visit to the guidance counsellor's office, but often students will linger in the doorway and ask if they can talk about other things in their lives.

Parents integral

In the last five years, Bazan said she has only dealt with a handful of students she would identify as being in very unhealthy relationships. Yet even in those, parents had an important role to play.

"I have found in the cases where I worked with really unhealthy relationships, the parent has been an integral member of that team to help support that child. They may not have been at the start of it, but at some point the parent was there," said Bazan.

As for Bernardin, the experience of an unhealthy relationship affirmed what she might have already known. "I learned that in the very beginning if there's some things you don't like about someone there are probably going to be more things you don't like about them, and they're probably just going to get worse. So listen to your gut," said Bernardin. 



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Nations child, covers the costs for health and social services and supports for First Nations children in situations when a First Nations child does not have access to a publicly-funded program that is usually available to other children, and facilitates access to health and social service and supports for all First Nations children without delay or disruption.

Roseau River Case Coordinator Joanne Lariviere says the need in the community for a program like this is high with over fifty kids being identified as having a special need, and it's been a long time coming.

"Any kids with special needs living on reserve qualify for the Jordan initiative no matter if it is short or long term that they need. We have about twenty kids already involved and they never miss an appointment," explained Lariviere.

Lariviere added that the program is currently up and running with some rehabilitative therapies. "We help with transportation to appointments, special education support, mental health, respite, and long-term care."

One of the new policy activities put in place to support Jordan's Principle is the Child-First Initiative. This initiative aims to meet the needs of all First Nations children when there are gaps in existing programs and immediately provide health and social services and supports.

As of February 23, 2017, a total of 3,305 requests for services and supports were approved for First Nations children. These have been funded by the commitment of up to \$382.5 million over three years for the Child-First Initiative.

Gosselin says until now there were no programs that compared to Jordan's Initiative until now.

"The funding comes from Health Canada after the federal government put in over \$380-million nationwide for the program. We submitted a proposal to be a part of the program and we were approved and now we are getting an entire year of funding."

Gosselin added Jordan's Principle is more than just a program and has opened many doors for the community.

"We are looking forward to working more with The Regional Health Authority now that jurisdictional barriers are coming down.

Youth With Special Needs Now Have The Same Opportunities Across Canada

By Rochelle Rawdon, Courtesy of Pembina Valley Online

Roseau River First Nation's youth now have access in their community to the same support and services as other children across Canada.

Roseau River recently adopted the Jordan's Principle Initiative and is running it out of the community's previous daycare facility at the Ginew Wellness Centre. The program is used to support children living on reserve with special needs.

The program was developed after a financial dispute between government and departments costing a young boy his life. Executive Director at Ginew Wellness Centre says Jordan was a boy with special needs.

Jordan's Principle resolves situations where governments and departments cannot agree about who should pay for services and supports to meet the needs of a First



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We also now have an agreement with Southern Health and their staff can now come on reserve to help for the first time. We've had palliative care, cancer care, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and mental health therapists things we have never had before Jordan's Principle is a change that will be marked in history," explained Gosselin.

Lariviere said the program is just getting started and will continue to grow. An open house, a website, and more programs are just a few of the things children from Roseau River First Nations can look forward to.

"The response has been amazing. We have lots of early years kids involved already we would like to see more youth between the ages of 12 and 18. Parents attending appointments have shown great appreciation for the programming not having to drive all over Manitoba to try and get their child the services they need," said Lariviere.

On December 12, 2007, the House of Commons unanimously supported a Private Member's motion. The motion focused on adopting an approach that addresses First Nations children's needs first. 

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Newfoundland Youth Group Painting Mural for Toronto Subway System

By Geoff Bartlett, Courtesy of CBC News

A group in St. John's that helps youth overcome social and economic obstacles is working on an art installation that will be displayed in the Toronto subway system as part of the Canada 150 celebrations.

Members of the For the Love of Learning program are painting a mural in its space above the Bridges to Hope food bank on Cookstown Road.

When finished, the mural will be just one part of a larger cross-country art installation which will be displayed in a subway station in Canada's largest city.

Digital copies of the mural will also be displayed on more than 300 outdoor billboards across the country, as well as in a number of airports.



Photo Submitted by For the Love of Learning program

"It's more of a stylized view of St. John's," said Susan Parsons, who is overseeing the project. "We're including codfish, icebergs, puffins, a whale, Cabot Tower, row housing and mummies. It's all going to be very, very bright."

Important work

One of the youth working on the mural is Matthew Walsh, a 19-year-old with autism who is working with the Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador's Transitions Program at the Elaine Dobbins Centre.


Transitions is designed to provide an opportunity for youth and adults on the autism spectrum to discover interests and make connections in the community.


While drawing two puffins on the mural, Walsh told CBC that the design they're going for is an "atmospheric" one. He said he's proud to be part of the project and is enjoying it so far.

"It's not only challenging, it's about having fun," he said. "They say Toronto is the most populated space in Canada, so it is really important to tell my friends and family that I worked on it."

Proud co-ordinator

Transitions Program co-ordinator Megan Marshall was holding back tears listening to Matthew's interview, saying he's come a long way since he first started the program.

"I'm welling up because I've almost spent a year working with Matthew and seeing him do so well and speak so eloquently and passionately means that I'm doing my job," she said. "I'm just so proud of him." 



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Navigating Disaster Season

By Sean Dolan

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It comes with the territory: day in and day out, we get to witness young people navigate through the turmoil of adolescence. At no time is this turmoil more apparent than in the spring. For some reason, once spring hits, we enter what I call disaster season.

Now, I know this makes me sound incredibly pessimistic. Certainly, I could be more upbeat and call this “opportunity season” but when a steady stream of confused adolescents come my way, I do not feel terribly upbeat. Why? Because a lot of the students who I am going to make yet another effort to help before summer comes are quite capable of finding solutions to their problems on their own.

Okay, okay, I hear you all saying, “They’re just kids, Mr. Cranky-pants. They are going to change their minds a million times. It’s your job to sit there and take it like a Guidance Counsellor when they flip-flop.” While this is true (and, trust me, I will do my level best to treat every disaster season request with the dignity it deserves) boy-oh-boy can it be frustrating. When you meet with a student five times to discuss the downward trajectory of his grades (and call his parents for reinforcement and support) only to have the boy sitting wide-eyed across from you after mid-term report cards come out wondering why he is failing three of four courses, that’s pretty darn frustrating.

When a young lady comes to see you about post-secondary plans and you proceed to review her grades, and give her a written account of what her next steps should be, only to have her return to you the following day because she has lost the plan you gave her, that's pretty frustrating. When a graduating student cannot remember the password they created to access their university application, that's pretty frustrating.

I guess I am ranting about the time spent on problems that have gone from minor to major because students have either neglected or dismissed things and are now expecting me to clean up their mess. I have to tell you: during disaster season, I have some pretty candid discussions with my students. They get to hear about the warnings that their teachers and I gave them prior to failing three out of four at mid-term. Students who seek my counsel agonizing over their future, only to return 24-hours later for a recap and re-write of the plan, are invited to sit down and write the plan out themselves. Potential graduates who lose the passwords are reminded that their relationship is with the universities now and that no one is really interested in speaking to a Guidance Counsellor advocating for someone who should be advocating for themselves. In my opinion, it is important that these students see and feel my frustration. They need to know that, when they don't do what their supposed to do, it has an effect on other people.

Now let's get to the thing that really puts the idea of disaster into disaster season. Time spent on silly things like neglect, absent-mindedness and lost passwords means time spent away from the kids who start to come undone in the spring. A friend of mine who works in the mental health community says that spring is the toughest time for the people in our society who are hurting the most. Why? Because

while everyone talks about how great they feel as the melting snow gives way to blooming flowers, people dealing with anxiety and depression wonder why they feel so lousy while everyone else feels so great. Tragically, suicides peak in the spring for this very reason. I turn into Mr. Cranky-pants because I am terrified that I am going to miss the opportunity to be there for a kid who could use my help because I am being distracted by drama kings and queens who are creating problems that they can easily solve without my involvement.

In the end, disaster season is the right name for spring in Guidance. We need to feel frustration with the silly distractions and be ever mindful of potential real life disasters that are likely to come our way. I am very lucky to work with colleagues that are able to walk the razor's edge of disaster season with a sense of balance that manages to discern between the kids who are just being kids and the ones who just might be heading for a perilous descent. Perhaps it is the combination of frustration and terror that keeps us on our toes. As long as neither the frustration nor the terror immobilizes us, we'll be able to successfully navigate disaster season with a sense of purpose and professionalism that will not only keep kids on task, but will also help kids find some solace in the friendly confines of the Guidance Department. 🌸 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.



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Cultural Responsiveness in Youth Mental Health

By Laura Hamilton, M.Ed



What is culture? It would take volumes to unpack this question comprehensively, or with any degree of effectiveness or accuracy. Cultural identity has formed the subject matter of art, research, social discourse, and even policy. Our understanding of culture and identity is evolving the more that we recognize its importance.

But for the purposes of this brief article, how can we understand what we mean when we refer to culture? Race, ethnicity and culture are sometimes mistakenly used synonymously. However, while race refers to identification based on physical characteristics, and ethnicity relates to ancestral heritage, culture can often be more intangible. Although clearly related to race and ethnicity, one's culture is more about how one perceives, experiences and engages with the world. Dr. Janet Walker, of the Research and Training Center on Family Support and Children's Mental Health, states that "culture is a set of ideas, behaviors, beliefs and values that are shared by a group of people. Children learn cultural values and beliefs from the people around them as they grow up — family members, community members, people from the same region or the same country of origin, people with a similar heritage, people who speak the same language" (2000).

For many youth, culture is a complex and dynamic issue. Adolescence is a time of identity formation, as youth explore who they are in terms of (among other things) age, sex, gender, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. For many first generation Canadian youth, there is a further layer of complexity, as they may adopt practices and values that are incongruent with those of their family, and find their cultural identity straddling two worlds.

The intersection of mental health and culture

In Canada (and the “western world” more generally) mental health is still largely approached through a medical model. We look at symptoms, we diagnose an illness, and we treat it. This can sometimes be an effective approach. Conceptualizing mental illness as a health issue - rather than as a result of laziness, defiance, or poor parenting – can help to decrease shame and stigma associated with mental health disorders. However many cultures have different understandings of wellness, and may have varying degrees of acceptance in their attitudes towards mental health. Increasingly, our schools are diverse, and we work with youth and families from a wide range of racial, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. Mental health can be a sensitive topic for many, and must be approached with respect and open dialogue, while also recognizing some barriers that exist in supporting diverse youth.

Different generations, different perspectives

Joshua Chin, MSW, a Child and Family Therapist working with Child and Youth Mental Health in Richmond, BC, identified differences in cultural practices between parents and youth as a significant issue in addressing mental health challenges among teenagers. We know that, when supporting youth in the area of mental health, it is important to collaborate as much as possible with the youth’s family. However, “often youth and parents are not on the same page, or following the same cultures and traditions”. This can lead to disagreement regarding what it means to be mentally healthy, different interpretations of symptoms, an unwillingness to acknowledge symptoms, a hesitancy in engaging supports and services, and different beliefs about how to respond (Ferris, Hane & Wager, 2014).

Stigma

The fear of stigma can act as a barrier to mental health work with youth. While this can be true for anyone, there are some cultures that do not acknowledge the existence of mental health issues, or that continue to see them as shameful. If a youth comes from a cultural background where they believe their parents will be ashamed of them for their mental health symptoms, or where their parents may simply deny the existence of a problem, it will be much harder for that youth to seek help. Likewise, it will be more difficult to engage the family in a therapeutic process.

Ability to relate

While the population of youth with which we work has become increasingly diverse, it is unfortunately still the case in many places that the majority of helping professionals are of the dominant culture (Caucasian/Western European). While it should be acknowledged that this is changing, we must nonetheless recognize the impact this dynamic can have on a youth (or family) from a minority culture, and on our ability as counsellors to adequately relate to, and engage with, youth and their families on a sensitive topic such as mental health. On a similar note, for many recent immigrants, language barriers may also lead to a hindered understanding of the mental health issues facing their child.

The impact of immigration itself

Finally, in the case of new or recent immigrants, we cannot ignore the impact of the migration and resettlement process itself on a youth’s mental health (Seah, E., et al., 2002). A youth and their family may be leaving a traumatic situation in their home country, may experience a traumatic migration, may experience shock and anxiety at arriving in a new and unknown culture, and may be mourning the loss of their home. All of these could manifest as mental health symptoms and must be taken into account as part of the holistic picture of a youth’s functioning.

How can we be culturally responsive?

In the past, when working with culturally diverse clients, efforts have been made to gear our responses or interventions to what we believe a given culture needs. This culturally-targeted approach is well-meaning, and certainly it can be helpful to understand in general terms how a given culture responds to mental health.



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However, “knowing about” a culture, is not the same as living it. Most of us have not lived the experiences of our diverse youth, and we cannot therefore presume to know how they – or their family – understand their mental health symptoms, based simply on their cultural background. A study by Sundar, et. al (2012) found that assumptions and close-mindedness were the most common barriers for youth in establishing safe and supportive relationships when seeking help for mental health issues. The belief that you already know what someone is going through can prevent you from actually getting to know what someone is going through.

The Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre, based in British Columbia, is one of many healthcare resources that encourage an approach of “cultural humility” when dealing with diversity. Specifically with regard to mental health, this means placing ourselves not as authorities when it comes to mental health, but as those who want to learn about the youth’s experience. “A cultural humility approach is interactive: we approach another person with openness to learn; we ask questions rather than make assumptions; and we strive to understand rather than to inform.” (Kelty Mental Health - Culturally Connected). Sundar, et. al. (2012) also found that the qualities of curiosity, flexibility, openness, mutual learning and empowerment were identified by youth as being helpful factors in establishing a positive and supportive relationship in a mental health context. In explaining his approach to working with diverse youth and families, Joshua Chin echoed this framework: “Spend the extra time to build trust with families... ask cultural questions and be curious... I want to understand how the youth and their family understand the mental health issues.”

Practical strategies

Starting from an approach of cultural humility, we can learn about the experiences and perspectives of diverse youth, gain insight into how culture is influencing their experience of mental health, and take a more collaborative approach to responding to the mental health symptoms. But beyond this framework, there are some practical strategies that school professionals can take to better engage culturally diverse youth and their families when it comes to mental health:

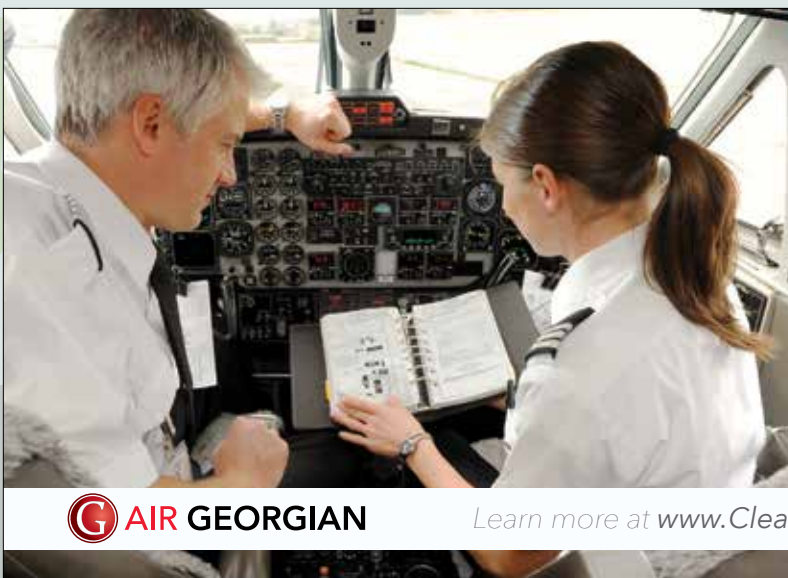
- Provide translated mental health information. Regional and provincial health/mental health bodies will often have handouts on mental health that have already been translated. Many of these are available online. While they may not be a substitute for dialogue and conversation, providing families with basic information about their child’s difficulties – in their own language – can show a degree of respect for their experience and a desire to engage.
- Draw on cultural supports that already exist, even if they are not mental health specific. If there are cross-cultural workers in your school or school district, these can be valuable supports in engaging families as they may more easily establish trust and alliance.
- Explore and show openness to alternative approaches to mental wellness, or alternative treatment/healing methods which may resonate more with a youth and their family.

Culture is complex and affects our work with youth on many levels. By adopting a stance of cultural humility and a willingness to learn, we can more effectively support youth from all backgrounds towards greater health and wellness. 🍁 CSC

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Errata: In the November issue of Canadian School Counsellor magazine we mistakenly referred to this writer as Dr. Laura Hamilton.



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Boundaries Blurred: Des frontières floues :

The Modern Classroom

Social media and the distortion of professional/personal boundary lines in the school environment

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The relationship between secondary teachers and their students is particularly vulnerable in this age where social media is generally embraced, where the casual and the cool reign, where sex sells, and the social cohesion of communities is fractured. The environment created by these dynamics is one where the boundaries are not clearly understood. For teachers, their careers and their families can be jeopardized by one misstep. For students enmeshed in an inappropriate relationship with a teacher, their innocence and trust in authority is undermined, sometimes irreparably. All the players in this unfortunate drama are hurt. These inappropriate relationships are far more common than the general public is aware of. Fortunately there are proactive measures and guidelines that can be introduced for the benefit and protection of all.

The crossing of professional and personal boundaries is always the cause for any inappropriate relationship between a teacher and student. No matter how innocent the initial intention, once the line is violated, it has the potential to create immeasurable heartache and loss. Presently there are few professional discussions addressing the boundaries which need to be maintained by classroom teachers. Practical concrete guidelines and examples are necessary to assist administrators, teachers, and coaches in assuring a safer educational environment for all concerned.

la classe moderne

Les médias sociaux et la distorsion des limites entre les relations professionnelles et personnelles en milieu scolaire

By/Par Alison Zenisek

La relation entre les enseignants du secondaire et leurs élèves est particulièrement vulnérable à notre époque marquée par l'adoption générale des médias sociaux, le règne de l'informel et du cool, la marchandisation du sexe et la fracture dans la cohésion sociale des collectivités. Dans le climat qu'engendre cette dynamique, les limites ne sont pas clairement comprises. Un seul faux pas suffit à mettre en péril la carrière et la famille d'un enseignant. Quant aux élèves qui s'embrouillent dans une relation inappropriée avec un de leurs enseignants, l'effet de sape sur leur innocence et leur confiance en l'autorité est parfois irréparable. Tous les acteurs de ce drame malheureux en souffrent. Le grand public ne soupçonne pas à quel point ces relations inappropriées sont courantes. Heureusement, il est possible de prendre des mesures proactives et d'adopter des lignes directrices pour assurer le bien-être et la protection de toutes les parties.

Toute relation inappropriée entre un membre du personnel enseignant et son élève a pour cause le dépassement des limites entre les relations professionnelles et personnelles. Même si l'intention initiale était tout à fait innocente, une fois que la limite est franchie, le potentiel de peine et de perte est incommensurable. À l'heure actuelle, les discussions professionnelles sur les limites à maintenir par les enseignants sont rares. Les administrateurs, les enseignants et les conseillers ont besoin de directives pratiques et d'exemples concrets pour assurer la sécurité du milieu éducatif à toutes les personnes concernées.

Consistent ethical behaviour in teachers garners the trust and respect of their students and fellow staff members. Before a teacher can cultivate this professional reputation, they must first be given clear guidelines during their training, and eventually in refresher courses by their administration. The essential character of the teacher is foundational, but having an awareness of the possible pitfalls and the proactive tools to respond appropriately are essential in today's fast paced culture and high pressure classrooms. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

On January 30th, 2012, the National Post published an article about Joanne Leger-Legault, an award winning Ottawa teacher who was accused of having sexual contact with several of her male students. Leger-Legault was eventually stripped of her teaching permit and fired by the city's school board. She pleaded no contest to the allegations filed against her of professional misconduct, nor did she dispute the facts that were presented to the discipline committee at the Ontario College of Teachers, where her case was heard last year. Leger-Legault admitted to violating student/teacher boundaries when she engaged in inappropriate sexual relationships with the male students whom she taught. This shocking story of the betrayal of a position of trust and authority by a teacher is extreme, but it serves as a warning of the dangers inherent in teaching adolescents without a clear understanding of professional and personal boundaries. That Leger-Legault failed to maintain the standards of her profession is an understatement.

Occasionally the teacher is also a sexual predator. According to Charol Shakeshaft, professor and co-author of a four-year study of school sexual abuse that appeared in Phi Delta Kappan, an education journal, "sex between teachers and students is much more common than

Les enseignants qui maintiennent en toute occasion un comportement conforme à l'éthique gagnent la confiance et le respect de leurs élèves et de leurs collègues. Pour pouvoir entretenir cette réputation, les enseignants doivent d'abord recevoir des consignes claires pendant leur formation, puis de nouveau dans les cours d'appoint offerts par leur administration. Le caractère intrinsèque de la personne est un facteur fondamental, mais la sensibilisation des enseignants aux écueils possibles et aux outils proactifs pour les éviter efficacement est également essentielle dans le monde d'aujourd'hui, où la culture avance à un rythme rapide et où les classes deviennent des zones de haute pression. Une once de prévention vaut un kilo de soins.

Le 30 janvier 2012, le National Post publie un article au sujet de Joanne Léger-Legault, une enseignante primée d'Ottawa, qui est accusée d'avoir eu des contacts sexuels avec plusieurs de ses élèves masculins. Léger-Legault finit par se voir retirer son brevet d'enseignement et est congédiée par son conseil scolaire. Elle ne nie pas les allégations d'inconduite professionnelle portées contre elle, non plus que les faits qui ont été exposés au comité de discipline de l'Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario, où l'audition de l'affaire a eu lieu l'an dernier. Léger-Legault a admis avoir outrepassé les limites des relations entre élèves et enseignants en s'engageant dans des relations sexuelles inappropriées avec des garçons à qui elle enseignait. Cette trahison choquante de la position de confiance et d'autorité d'une enseignante est un cas extrême, mais elle sert de mise en garde quant aux dangers inhérents au fait d'enseigner à des adolescents sans avoir une compréhension nette des limites entre les relations professionnelles et personnelles. C'est un euphémisme de dire que Joanne Léger-Legault n'a pas réussi à maintenir les normes de sa profession.

Il arrive parfois que la personne enseignante soit aussi un prédateur sexuel. D'après Charol Shakeshaft, professeure et coauteure d'une étude sur les abus sexuels en milieu scolaire réalisée pendant quatre ans et publiée dans la revue spécialisée en éducation Phi Delta Kappan, « les relations sexuelles entre enseignants et élèves sont beaucoup plus courantes que les gens sont prêts à le reconnaître ». D'après ses constatations, « les données les plus précises actuellement disponibles indiquent que près de 9,6% des élèves sont la cible d'inconduite sexuelle d'une éducatrice ou d'un éducateur au cours de leur parcours scolaire ». Cette étude a été menée aux États-Unis, mais rien ne permet de supposer que la situation soit différente au Canada. Ces résultats devraient servir d'avertissement à tous les administrateurs scolaires et enseignants et les appeler non seulement à faire preuve de vigilance, mais aussi à en faire régulièrement un sujet de discussions internes. Pour ces formations internes, Mme Shakeshaft recommande l'embauche d'un professionnel du domaine des abus sexuels, idéalement issu de l'extérieur de la communauté scolaire.

Les enseignants qui outrepassent si scandaleusement les limites ne comprennent pas les limites déontologiques qu'il est essentiel de respecter lorsqu'on guide des élèves dans le développement de leur plein potentiel. Le respect envers l'élève est multiforme; c'est notamment une question d'intégrité, d'équité et de fiabilité morale. En particulier, les enseignants doivent apprendre à exprimer adéquatement le souci



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people are willing to acknowledge.” She found that “the most accurate data available at this time indicates that nearly 9.6% of students are targets of educator sexual misconduct sometime during their school career.” Although this study took place in the United States, there is no reason to assume that this does not occur in Canada. It should be a wakeup call to all school administrators and teachers to not only be vigilant, but to also make it a regular in-service subject for discussion. Shakeshaft recommends that a professional in the field of sexual abuse be hired for such in-services. Ideally they would be drawn from outside the school community.

Teachers who violate boundaries in such an egregious manner fail to understand the ethical boundaries that are essential when guiding students through the process of developing their full potential. Respect for a student is multifaceted, and includes integrity, fairmindedness, and moral reliability. Student teachers in particular must learn how to appropriately express their concern for the students. An educator’s relationship with students, parents, colleagues, and the public in general are by necessity based on a foundation of trust.

Pitfalls such as engaging with students on social media can happen in a moment and ensnare the most caring of teachers. Secondary educators especially need professional development that will assist them in their decision making, and help them to avoid mistakes in their relationships with their students. Professional development that tackles these issues and includes examples, information, and strategies is essential for all teachers.

When communicating with students online, the boundary between the personal and the professional is easily blurred. Social media is often the flashpoint where teacher/student relationships can easily slip across professional boundaries. Inappropriate behaviour by teachers can range from comments about the administration to posting personal videos online. Experienced teachers avoid friending students on Facebook or handing out their personal e-mail address. They understand the dangers inherent in communicating with their students online and the difficulty it poses in maintaining clear boundaries. The moment their personal information or photos are posted online the teacher has lost control of the material. It can in turn be shared and copied by immature and thoughtless students. The damage is potentially irreparable.

Relationships develop faster when access to and communication between people is instantaneous. The internet and social media all contribute to a false and, many times, dangerous intimacy. Secrets are easily shared with virtual strangers and the media is saturated with cases of inappropriate relationships that have developed online. Stories of predators luring teens into destructive relationships online under the cloak of anonymity are commonplace and have occasionally led to youth suicide. In the context of social media, people routinely become ensnared. The establishment of boundaries regarding communication technologies is critical for success in today’s classroom and teachers are best served if they understand the danger of participating with students on social media.

Adolescent boys and girls sometimes develop crushes on their teachers and when this occurs they often try to connect with them through social media. These actions can catch a teacher unaware. An experienced and well trained teacher can grasp the intent of these messages and put a firm stop to their progression. Moving expeditiously to the establishment of clear and practical boundaries in every school environment protects students, families, and careers from the emotional and legal consequences of inappropriate relationships.

qu’ils ont de leurs élèves. La relation des éducateurs avec les élèves, les parents, les collègues et le public en général repose nécessairement sur un socle de confiance.

Les écueils tels que le dialogue avec des élèves dans les médias sociaux peuvent survenir subrepticement et piéger les enseignants les plus dévoués. Il faut tout particulièrement offrir aux éducateurs du secondaire un perfectionnement professionnel qui les aidera à prendre des décisions et à éviter les erreurs dans leurs relations avec leurs élèves. Les activités de perfectionnement professionnel qui traitent de ces enjeux en présentant des exemples, de l’information et des stratégies sont essentielles à tous les enseignants.

Quand on communique avec des élèves en ligne, la limite entre les relations personnelles et professionnelles s’estompe facilement. Les médias sociaux sont souvent le point chaud où les relations entre enseignants et élèves risquent le plus de glisser au-delà des limites professionnelles. Les comportements inappropriés pour les enseignants vont des commentaires sur l’administration à l’affichage de vidéos personnelles. Les enseignants d’expérience évitent de devenir « amis » avec des élèves sur Facebook ou de leur donner leur adresse de courriel personnelle. Ils comprennent les dangers inhérents aux communications en ligne avec leurs élèves et la difficulté d’y préserver des limites claires. Dès qu’on publie des renseignements personnels ou des photos en ligne, on perd le contrôle de ces documents. Des élèves immatures et irréfléchis pourront les partager et les copier. Les dommages risquent d’être irréparables.

Les relations se développent plus rapidement quand l’accès et la communication entre les personnes sont instantanés. Internet et les médias sociaux contribuent à créer une intimité factice et, souvent, dangereuse. Il est facile de raconter des secrets à de virtuels étrangers; les médias sont saturés de récits de relations inappropriées qui se sont développées en ligne. Les cas de prédateurs qui, sous le couvert de l’anonymat, ont attiré des adolescents dans des relations destructives en ligne sont monnaie courante et vont parfois jusqu’à pousser la jeune victime au suicide. Dans le contexte des médias sociaux, des gens se font régulièrement prendre au piège. La fixation de limites en matière de technologies des communications est essentielle à la réussite dans la classe d’aujourd’hui. Les enseignants seront servis au mieux s’ils comprennent le danger d’échanger avec des élèves dans les médias sociaux.

À l’adolescence, les garçons comme les filles ont parfois le coup de foudre pour leurs enseignants; lorsque cela se produit, l’élève essaie souvent de nouer des liens avec l’enseignant dans les médias sociaux. Ces gestes peuvent prendre les enseignants au dépourvu. Les enseignants chevronnés et bien formés arrivent à saisir l’intention de ces messages et à mettre fermement un frein à leur progression. L’établissement diligent de limites claires et concrètes dans chaque milieu scolaire protège les élèves, les familles et les carrières des conséquences affectives et juridiques des relations inappropriées.

La liberté dont jouissent beaucoup d’élèves avec leur téléphone, même en classe, a fait surgir des problèmes imprévus. Les

The freedom that many students enjoy with their smart phones, even in the classroom, has given rise to unforeseen problems. The more obvious consequences are inattention and unwanted communication between students during class. The ubiquitous cell phone has also led, for example, to embarrassing photos taken of a teacher bending over and of videos shot of students caught in awkward situations. These photos and videos are then shared online to the humiliation of many. School boards, parents, and administration are often politically constrained from restricting cell phone use in schools.

An interview with a Winnipeg school guidance counsellor whose career has spanned several decades, exposed the lack of preparation she received on the issue of maintaining clear boundaries.

1. Were professional and interpersonal sexual boundaries with adolescents and their teachers ever discussed in your training at university?

“...this was NEVER discussed. The system needs to be reviewed on this issue.”

2. Where these sensitive issues ever discussed during your practicum at your first school?

“Again, this was never addressed.”

3. As a guidance counsellor, have you ever encountered sexual violations between a student and teacher? Can you share a bit about the nature of the violation and the outcome for all concerned?

“...the teacher was eventually let go and moved on. It was only through the local newspaper that we as a staff became aware that this teacher was formally charged with sexual interference in a Winnipeg school....”

4. Are boundaries, including sexual boundaries, an issue that is regularly addressed at teacher in-services?

“Once again I cannot recall any specific training or a presentation in regards to this issue, and I have taught at the high school and elementary level.”

The Ontario College of Teachers Professional Advisory recommends that teachers refrain from exchanging personal notes, comments, or e-mails with students, as well as making phone calls to them. More crucially, teachers should never engage in flirtation or sexual dialogue with students either in school or on the internet. They also recommend declining “friend” requests from students. Electronic communication should only occur at appropriate times of the day and through established educational platforms such as a school program or project. As digital citizens, teachers are encouraged to model professional behaviour and language online. Securing personal online accounts is also considered advisable. These recommendations are not intended to promote fear, but rather to liberate educators to perform confidently in their classrooms, knowing that their relationships with their students are safely within professional boundaries.

conséquences les plus évidentes sont l’inattention et les communications indésirables entre les élèves pendant les cours. Le téléphone cellulaire omniprésent a également donné lieu, par exemple, à la prise de photos embarrassantes d’une enseignante penchée vers l’avant et de vidéos montrant des élèves dans des situations gênantes. Le partage en ligne de ces images est une source d’humiliation pour bien des victimes. Or, des contraintes politiques empêchent souvent les conseils scolaires, les parents et l’administration d’interdire l’usage du téléphone cellulaire à l’école.

Une entrevue avec une conseillère en orientation d’une école de Winnipeg dont la carrière couvre plusieurs décennies met en lumière son manque de préparation sur la question du maintien de limites claires.

1. Au cours de votre formation universitaire, a-t-il déjà été question des limites entre les relations professionnelles et les relations interpersonnelles à caractère sexuel entre les adolescents et leurs enseignants?

« [...] ce sujet n’a JAMAIS été abordé. Cet enjeu devrait faire l’objet d’une révision du système. »

2. Ces questions délicates ont-elles été abordées pendant votre premier stage en milieu scolaire?

« Là encore, il n’en a jamais été question. »

3. À titre de conseillère en orientation, avez-vous déjà eu connaissance d’infractions sexuelles entre un élève et un enseignant? Pourriez-vous nous parler de la nature de l’infraction et de ses conséquences pour les parties concernées?

« [...] l’enseignant a finalement été congédié et a changé d’emploi. C’est par le journal local que le personnel a su que cette personne était formellement accusée de contacts sexuels dans une école de Winnipeg [...] »

4. La question des limites, notamment sur le plan sexuel, est-elle régulièrement abordée dans le cadre des services internes aux enseignants?

« Encore une fois, je ne me rappelle aucune formation spécifique ni présentation sur ce sujet, et j’ai été enseignante au secondaire et à l’élémentaire. »

La Commission professionnelle consultative de l’Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l’Ontario recommande au personnel enseignant de s’abstenir d’échanger des notes, des commentaires ou des courriels personnels avec les élèves, ainsi que de leur téléphoner. Surtout, les enseignants ne devraient jamais flirter ou tenir des conversations d’ordre sexuel avec des élèves, que ce soit à l’école ou par Internet. La Commission leur recommande aussi de décliner les demandes d’« amitié » de la part d’élèves. Les communications électroniques doivent se faire uniquement à des moments appropriés de la journée et sur des plateformes éducatives telles qu’un programme ou un projet

“The most accurate data available at this time indicates that nearly 9.6% of students are targets of educator sexual misconduct sometime during their school career.”

«Les données les plus précises actuellement disponibles indiquent que près de 9,6% des élèves sont la cible d'inconduite sexuelle d'une éducatrice ou d'un éducateur au cours de leur parcours scolaire.»

Reflection and self-examination of one's own teaching style can go a long way to avoiding false allegations. Many of these allegations arise from a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of a teacher's intent. Those who teach youth are expected to maintain a higher standard of care and conduct than general members of society. These standards are expected year round. Even a teacher's after school behaviour is often scrutinized. The following are some guideposts that can help instructors maintain a healthy balance in their relationships with students: Avoid being particularly close to one student. Teachers are role models, not best friends. Never meet a student outside of school or drive them in your personal vehicle. Do not mix socially with teens, especially when alcohol is involved. Dating students, even adult students, is off limits. Avoid being alone with a student, as well as physical expressions of concern. Some students need more attention and are dealing with serious issues at home. Learn what resources are available for these students, such as a guidance or addiction counsellor. The student is likely to receive more help from a team of professionals. Reflect before giving a student a gift. The most valued gift you can give them is to be the best teacher you know how to be.

scolaire. À titre de citoyens numériques, les enseignants sont invités à modéliser un comportement professionnel et une bonne façon de s'exprimer en ligne. La sécurisation des comptes personnels en ligne est également à conseiller. Ces recommandations n'ont pas pour but de propager la crainte, bien au contraire : elles visent à donner aux éducateurs la liberté de travailler avec assurance dans leur classe, en sachant que leurs relations avec leurs élèves sont bien circonscrites par les limites professionnelles.

La réflexion et l'autoexamen sur notre propre style d'enseignement contribuent largement à éviter les fausses allégations. Beaucoup de celles-ci découlent d'un malentendu ou d'une interprétation erronée de l'intention des enseignants. Les personnes qui enseignent aux jeunes sont assujetties à des normes de précaution et de conduite plus strictes que les membres de la société en général. Le respect de ces normes est attendu toute l'année durant. Même après les heures de classe, le comportement des enseignants est souvent surveillé de près. Les quelques balises qui suivent aideront les éducateurs à maintenir un équilibre sain dans leurs relations avec les élèves.

Évitez tout rapprochement particulier avec une ou un élève. Les enseignants sont des modèles à suivre, pas les meilleurs amis des élèves. Ne rencontrez jamais des élèves à l'extérieur de l'école, et ne les faites jamais monter dans votre véhicule personnel. Évitez toute activité sociale avec des adolescents, surtout s'il y a de l'alcool dans les parages. La fréquentation des élèves, même s'ils sont adultes, dépasse les limites. Évitez de vous trouver sans témoin avec une ou un élève; évitez aussi toute expression physique de vos préoccupations. Certains élèves ont besoin d'une attention supplémentaire et font face à de graves problèmes à la maison. Informez-vous des ressources disponibles pour ces élèves, comme les conseillers en orientation ou les intervenants en toxicomanie. Il est probable que l'élève recevra davantage d'aide d'une équipe de professionnels. Réfléchissez avant de donner un cadeau à une ou un élève. Le cadeau le plus précieux que vous puissiez leur donner est d'avoir le comportement exemplaire qui définit votre profession.



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Many secondary teachers struggle with the “new chumminess,” between staff and students in schools.



Beaucoup d’enseignants du secondaire ont du mal à composer avec la « nouvelle camaraderie » entre le personnel scolaire et les élèves.

The general culture of informality was not present just a generation ago and it has contributed to the blurring of these all important boundaries. In the present culture of casual mores and greater accessibility, these essential boundaries are being eroded. Teachers must continually ask themselves, if a third party was observing me, would this behaviour be open to misinterpretation? It is the responsibility of the education departments at universities and school administrators to inoculate teachers against the potential pitfalls in these critical relationships. ♣csc

Cette culture générale de l’informel, qui existe depuis moins d’une génération, a contribué à estomper les limites relationnelles. Dans cette culture marquée par l’assouplissement des valeurs et l’accessibilité, ces limites essentielles s’érodent. Les enseignants doivent continuellement se poser la question : « Si un tiers m’observait, mon comportement ouvrirait-il la porte à un malentendu? » Les départements de l’éducation des universités et les administrateurs scolaires ont la responsabilité d’immuniser les enseignants contre les écueils potentiels de ces relations délicates. ♣csc

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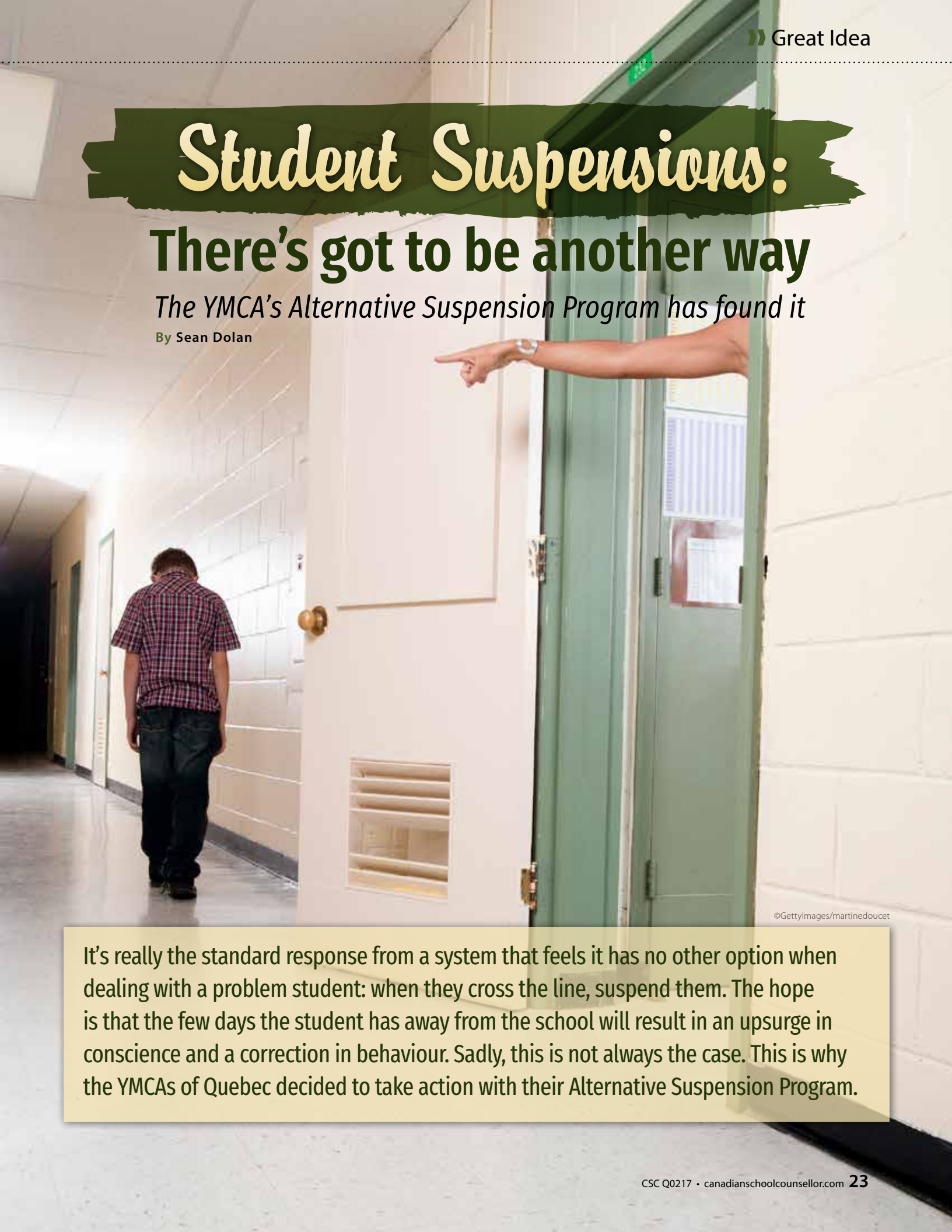
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Student Suspensions:

There's got to be another way

The YMCA's Alternative Suspension Program has found it

By Sean Dolan



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It's really the standard response from a system that feels it has no other option when dealing with a problem student: when they cross the line, suspend them. The hope is that the few days the student has away from the school will result in an upsurge in conscience and a correction in behaviour. Sadly, this is not always the case. This is why the YMCAs of Quebec decided to take action with their Alternative Suspension Program.

Impressive track record

Established in 1999 in partnership with a school in Montreal's Mile End neighbourhood, the program has since expanded to seven provinces serving 3 000 students (enough participants to fill 60 school buses!) at over 30 sites. Describing itself as a dropout prevention program, YMCA Alternative Suspension has boasted some impressive results over the years with 85% of participants managing to improve their behaviour in the short term and, for the most part, remaining engaged in school after taking part in the program.

This is significant considering the historic data relating to high school dropouts. Statistics over the past 30 years clearly demonstrates the correlation between the high school dropout rate and how life becomes much more difficult without an education. The data indicates that high school dropouts make 15% less than their graduating counterparts. They are also more likely to be unemployed, live shorter lives, experience depression and anxiety, and get into trouble with law enforcement. These are grim facts that have made keeping kids in school a priority since the graduation rate became a major concern in the 1990s.

Keeping kids in school

Back in those darker days, nearly 17% of students who entered high school did not earn a diploma by the time they entered adulthood. Many of those students went on to struggle through their early 20's – facing many of the social challenges mentioned above. That has changed quite a bit. Now the graduation rate is upwards of 85% across the country with less than 9% dropping out of school entirely. In other words, the trend is to find ways to keep kids engaged in the learning opportunities presented to them in high school.

There are many reasons for the upsurge in the graduation rate and, correspondingly, the decrease in the dropout rate. Innovative programs have been introduced at schools and enrichment activities are managing to inspire student engagement. However, high school is not for everybody and, occasionally, a few kids need to be challenged and disciplined by the system. These are the very kids that are at the greatest risk of quitting school and heading down a path that is not good for themselves and not good for society at large.

A proactive approach

Enter YMCA Alternative Suspension: a proactive approach to keeping kids engaged in school and the greater community. Students referred to the program are not necessarily taking part in high risk, high profile incidents involving things like theft, assault, bullying and substance abuse (though these students are certainly referred to the program). Students can be referred for absenteeism, poor punctuality, lack of motivation and disruptive behaviour. The program is versatile and is designed to meet kids "where they're at." YMCA staff approach each case with fresh eyes and endeavour to give each student the help they need. However, the program is not a walk in the park. According to George Kalimeris, the YMCA's national director of school perseverance, "This break from school is not a vacation. It forces students to reflect on their behaviours, examine their attitude toward school, and identify what empowers and motivates them."

Essential elements


So how do they do it? Well, the program considers several essential elements to be the key to winning the referred student over to their side.

- First, they need time. The program runs for a minimum of three days with longer stays in the program based on the needs of the student. This allows the staff to work with participants to keep up with their school work and to take part in program workshops and one-on-one counselling.
- Second, the fact that the suspension is being served off site means that students are on neutral turf at the YMCA. Consequently, they are not sitting idly at home or, in some cases, making mischief in the community.
- Third, the program relies on relationship building between staff and the student in both one-on-one interactions and group settings. In other words, the student isn't streamlined through a hypothetical Alternative Suspension assembly line. Instead they are offered tailored options that meet the specific issues that brought them to the program in the first place.
- Finally, the staff engages in ongoing communication with the school and the student's parents to review the participant's progress both academically and socially. This is reinforced by a program youth worker accompanying the student back to school at the end of the suspension and a follow up with the student, the school and the parents one month after participating in the program.

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“ A suspension from school can be an opportunity; we can take advantage of these moments of crisis to show youths that there are other alternatives and options that they may not have considered without this intervention in their academic journey. As such, the crisis becomes an opportunity to learn, grow and discover.”

And it works!

YMCA Alternative Suspension lets participating students know that a team of people – including program staff, school staff and parents – care about them. This is why 85% of participants improve their behaviour once they return to school. To test the validity of their program, the YMCA participated in a comparative study run by an external firm involving Alternative Suspension students and students not participating in the program. Here’s what they discovered:

Factors observed	Participants	Non-participants
Passed all their courses	73%	53%
Met or exceeded academic goals	44%	29%
Fewer disciplinary actions by school personnel	65%	40%
Dropped out of school	4%	14%

In other words, YMCA Alternative Suspension students consistently outperformed students who did not take part in the program. According to George Kalimeris, “A suspension from school can be an opportunity; we can take advantage of these moments of crisis to show youths that there are other alternatives and options that they may not have considered without this intervention in their academic journey. As such, the crisis becomes an opportunity to learn, grow and discover.” It is a philosophy like this that has allowed the program to continue to expand while inspiring community partners to seek affiliation with the program. Recently, the Cowan Foundation donated \$150 000 (\$50 000 over each of the next three years) to YMCA Alternative Suspension in an effort to boost the program’s efforts to help troubled youth stay in school.

Beyond community partners and innovative program delivery, YMCA Alternative Suspension gives a lot of the credit for their success to the schools and school boards that have bought into the program. It is not always easy for schools to partner with community agencies but a shared vision seems to naturally play out in the dynamic between YMCA Alternative Suspension and the school boards that have used their services. According to the Andrew Borrelli, the YMCA of Québec’s Director of Development - School Perseverance Sector, “School boards are essential partners and have been the cornerstone, not only to the program’s expansion, but also their consolidation across the country.”

In the end, it is YMCA Alternative Suspension’s ability to relate and engage in the lives of students that has allowed it to become a nationally recognized dropout prevention program. With a commitment to the self-worth and social development of each student, the program progresses relentlessly with one thing in mind: student success. This is why the thousands of students who take part in the program each year – whether in Moncton, Montreal, Edmonton or Surrey – are able to return to their schools with a fresh perspective and a renewed commitment to making the most of their education. 🌱 csc

YMCA Alternative Suspension *Fact Sheet*

- the program is offered in more than 30 service sites across Canada with partnerships involving over 25 school boards, 250 high schools and 150 community partners
- as of 2017, the program offers 150 000 hours of support for students taking part in the program
- the program serves more than 3 000 students each year
- since 1999, the program has served more than 25 000 students
- while Quebec leads the way in YMCA Alternative Suspension sites, the program is growing in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and New-Brunswick
- the program is currently expanding outside of Canada with two sites (Courcouronnes and Evry) currently running in France with one in development
- the United Kingdom is being evaluated for program implantation

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For more information on the program and to read some testimonials from participants, schools and parents, please visit:
www.alternativesuspension.ca



A Losing Bet

*The allure, the excitement
and the dire consequences of
a hard to identify addiction.*

Part one of a two part series

By/Par Laurie Nealin

*“Youth are learning
gambling behaviours
early on. Gambling is
entrenched in our society,
in our language.”*

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Let's be honest. Teen gambling isn't exactly a top-of-mind issue for educators and parents when it comes to keeping kids safe. Drugs, alcohol and sex are.

But addiction experts who work in the field of problem gambling believe young people need to know the risks involved with gambling, especially when you consider that around 40% of teens gamble. They point to research that indicates young people are at greater risk than adults for becoming problem gamblers and note that most adult problem gamblers began gambling as tweens.

“Youth are learning gambling behaviours early on. Gambling is entrenched in our society, in our language,” says David Horricks, executive director of the community support division at B.C.'s gaming policy and enforcement branch. “Gambling promotion is everywhere and it always shows people having a great time.”



Un pari perdu

L'attrait, les joies et les tristes conséquences d'une dépendance difficile à déceler

Première de deux parties

« Les jeunes apprennent très tôt les comportements du jeu. Les jeux de hasard sont ancrés dans notre société, dans notre »

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Soyons francs. Quand il est question de la sécurité des jeunes, le problème des jeux de hasard ne vient pas spontanément à l'esprit des éducateurs et des parents. On pense plutôt à la drogue, à l'alcool et au sexe.

Mais les experts en dépendances qui se spécialisent dans le jeu compulsif estiment nécessaire d'informer les jeunes des risques associés aux jeux de hasard, surtout si on considère que près de 40% des adolescents s'y adonnent. Comme nous le rappellent ces experts, selon certaines études, les jeunes courent davantage de risques que les adultes de devenir des joueurs à problèmes et la plupart des joueurs pathologiques adultes ont commencé à jouer à la préadolescence.

« Les jeunes apprennent très tôt les comportements du jeu. Les jeux de hasard sont ancrés dans notre société, dans notre langage », explique David Horricks, directeur général de la division des services d'aide communautaire à la direction générale des politiques sur le jeu de la Colombie-Britannique. « La promotion du jeu est omniprésente. Elle montre toujours des gens qui ont beaucoup de plaisir. »

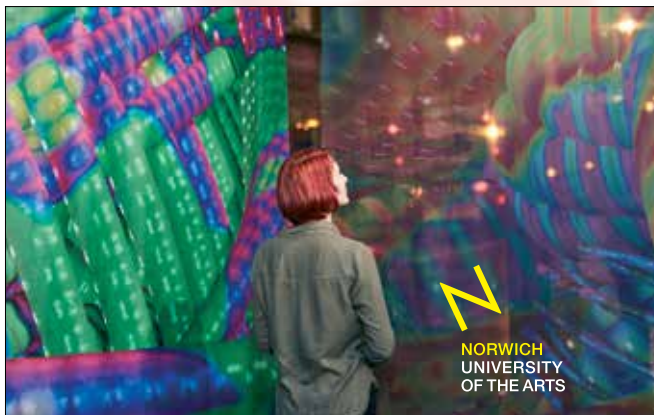
Teens who are problem gamblers

- are preoccupied with gambling
- do poorly in school
- often have criminal problems
- have difficulties with family relationships

While the vast majority of people -- young and old -- gamble recreationally without problems by setting limits on how much they spend, how long and how often they play, 4 to 8% of teens suffer from problem gambling. Another 10 to 15% are at risk of developing a problem. (By comparison, problem gambling affects 2 to 4% of adults.) Mental and physical health, relationships, financial security, education and employment can all be impacted negatively by problem gambling. "It's not just about the money. It's time away from family, the time spent gambling as opposed to doing other things. If you're spending your entire day in the casino, not doing anything healthy, not eating right, that's a problem," Horricks says.




Across Canada, teens report that they gamble -- with friends and family -- either at home, at friends' houses or at school. They gamble on dares, card games (poker and blackjack), games of skill (pool and darts), scratch tickets, lotteries, sports pools, online and even at casinos. Teens are adept at getting around the government-prescribed age minimums established to keep them from gambling.

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Les joueurs compulsifs adolescents...

- sont préoccupés par le jeu;
- ont des résultats scolaires médiocres;
- ont souvent des problèmes de criminalité;
- vivent des relations familiales difficiles.

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Si la majorité des gens – les jeunes comme les vieux – s'adonnent sans problèmes à des jeux de hasard de façon récréative, en limitant à l'avance le montant à dépenser, la durée de l'activité et sa fréquence, de 4 à 8% des ados souffrent de jeu pathologique, et de 10 à 15% de plus risquent de développer une dépendance. (Par comparaison, le jeu compulsif affecte de 2 à 4% des adultes.) Le jeu pathologique peut affecter la santé mentale et physique, les relations, la sécurité financière, l'éducation et l'emploi. « Ce n'est pas qu'une question d'argent. C'est le temps qu'on passe loin de sa famille, le temps qu'on passe à jouer plutôt qu'à faire autre chose. Quelqu'un qui passe toute sa journée au casino, sans rien faire de sain et sans s'alimenter adéquatement, a un problème », précise M. Horricks.

Partout au Canada, des ados disent qu'ils jouent, avec des amis ou des membres de leur famille, à la maison, chez des amis ou à l'école. Ils misent sur des défis, des jeux de cartes (le poker, le blackjack), des jeux d'adresse (le billard, les dards), des billets à gratter, des loteries, des paris sportifs; ils jouent en ligne et même au casino. Ces ados sont passés maîtres dans l'art de déjouer la réglementation sur l'âge minimum qui vise à les éloigner des jeux de hasard.

Un pari gagnant

Mina Hazard, directrice provinciale du Programme de sensibilisation au jeu pour les jeunes (PSJJ) au YMCA du Grand Toronto, insiste sur l'importance de parler aux jeunes des dangers du jeu afin qu'ils prennent les bonnes décisions et qu'ils restent en sécurité. « En général, quand nous parlons d'alcoolisme et de toxicomanie aux parents et aux éducateurs, le sujet est sur leur écran radar. Quand il est question de jeu compulsif, la détection des signes et des problèmes n'est pas une priorité pour les parents », explique-t-elle.

Mme Hazard souligne que le jeu compulsif n'est pas une dépendance visible comme la toxicomanie ou l'alcoolisme. Comme c'est une forme de dépendance cachée, les parents, les conseillers et les éducateurs doivent en connaître les symptômes : les changements de comportement, les troubles psychologiques telles que la dépression, la colère et même la violence qui se manifestent quand on empêche un joueur compulsif de s'adonner au jeu. Les principaux symptômes physiques sont la fatigue et le manque de concentration dus au manque de sommeil, l'omission de faire ses devoirs, les absences de l'école et la baisse des résultats scolaires. Pour ce qui est des signaux d'alarme financiers, Mme Hazard explique que les jeunes ados sont enclins à emprunter ou voler de l'argent pour parier, tandis que chez les ados plus mûrs et les jeunes adultes, les indices de jeu compulsif se trouvent plutôt sur les relevés de carte de crédit.

Editor's Tip: The website associated with the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems at McGill, headed by Dr. Derevensky, offers valuable information and insight into teen gambling.

<http://www.youthgambling.com/>

Conseil de l'éditeur : Le site Web associé au Centre international d'étude sur le jeu et les comportements à risque chez les jeunes de l'Université McGill, dirigé par le professeur Derevensky, contient de l'information et des conseils précieux sur le jeu chez les ados.

<http://www.youthgambling.com/>

A safe bet

Mina Hazar, provincial program director of the Youth Gambling Awareness Program (YGAP) at the YMCA of Greater Toronto, says it's important to talk to kids about the dangers of gambling so they can make good decisions and stay safe. "With parents and educators, in general, when we talk about alcohol and drug abuse it's on their radar. When we talk about gambling, it's not so much on the top of the list for parents to watch for signs and problems," Hazar says.

She notes that problem gambling is not a visible addiction like drugs and alcohol. It's a hidden addiction so parents, counsellors and educators need to know the signs -- changes in behaviour and psychological signs such as depression, anger and even violence if they are prevented from playing. Physical signs include fatigue and lack of focus due to lack of sleep, homework not being done, skipping school and grades slipping. As for financial warning signs, Hazar explains that younger teens might borrow or steal money to gamble, while evidence that older teens and young adults are gambling can be found on credit cards.

Under Horricks's purview is the Responsible and Problem Gambling Program which offers gambling awareness/prevention programs to schools in British Columbia.¹ The key messages that the program imparts to educators, parents and kids are to know the risks, signs and symptoms of problem gambling; and that help is available for someone in trouble. Across Canada, provincial resources are widely available, including curriculum-based modules that can be used to teach math, health, social studies and more.

The elusive jackpot

Gambling risk education is intended to normalize talking about the problem as has been done with smoking, drugs and alcohol. Gambling is more challenging, however, because the problem can be invisible for a long time.

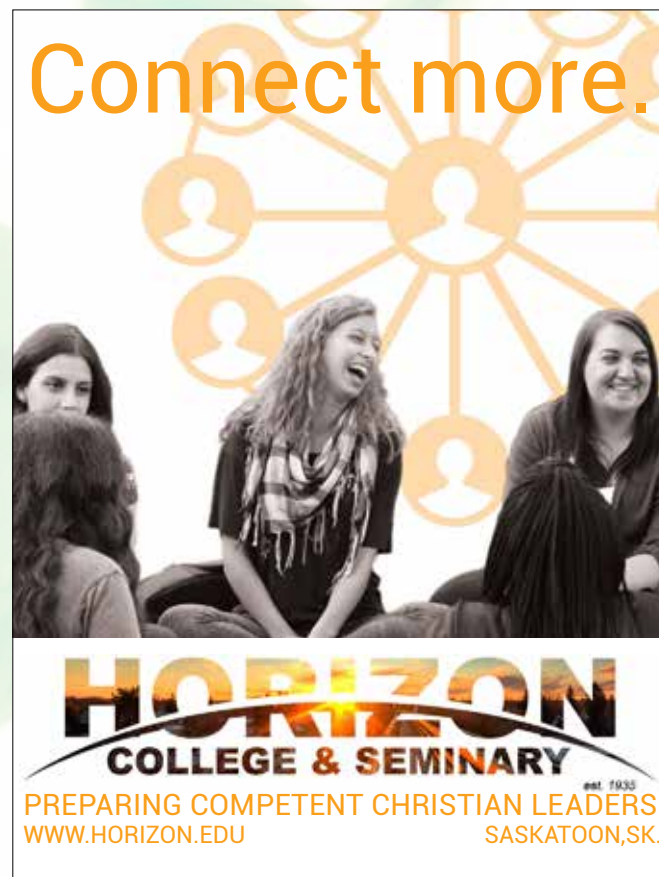
Horricks says, "Gambling has to get to a pretty acute stage for people not to be able to deny it anymore. If a young person is withdrawn, not engaging with parents, there could be many reasons, but we need to be inquisitive about what it is they are doing. "You need to have the conversation. Is there any gambling going on with your friends? Do you do it, talk about it? Is it in your (video) games? What do you think about it?"

While teens are at a higher risk of becoming problem gamblers than the adult population, young males represent the highest risk because as Horricks says, "They're risk-takers and bullet-proof." He adds, "There are kids who believe they can fund their education through gambling.

En Colombie-Britannique, le programme sur le jeu responsable et compulsif (Responsible and Problem Gambling Program), qui offre aux écoles de la province des outils de sensibilisation et de prévention en matière de jeu, relève de M. Horricks¹. Les messages clés que ce programme transmet aux éducateurs, aux parents et aux jeunes ont trait, d'une part, à la nécessité d'apprendre à connaître les risques, les signes et les symptômes du jeu compulsif, et, d'autre part, à l'aide offerte aux personnes qui ont des problèmes. D'un océan à l'autre, les provinces offrent un large éventail de ressources, dont des modules fondés sur le curriculum qui s'intègrent à l'enseignement de plusieurs matières, dont les mathématiques, la santé et les études sociales.

L'inaccessible gros lot

L'éducation aux risques du jeu vise à normaliser le dialogue sur ce problème comme on l'a fait pour le tabac, la drogue et l'alcool. Le jeu compulsif est toutefois un problème plus difficile à traiter, parce qu'il peut rester longtemps invisible.



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They think they can emulate the success of the high-profile gamblers who are winning huge amounts playing poker. "It's bravado, kind of cool, sexy, but the young male is at risk for all of the risk-taking behaviours. Gambling is just another one."

The risk-taking nature of teens and their emerging cognitive decision-making skills are key reasons why young people are at greater risk to become problem gamblers. "It's a developmental issue as to why they start and some individuals have a difficult time stopping," explains Dr. Jeffrey Derevensky, a professor and director of the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High Risk Behaviours at McGill University in Montreal.

Dangerous misconceptions

One of the risk factors for problem gambling is what's known as an early big win. "If you win a lot of money you keep coming back because you think you can replicate that. For a kid, \$100 is a big win," says Dr. Derevensky, a child psychologist. "Even though the gambling industry is based on knowing that the more a person gambles the more they will lose, young males think they're smarter than everybody else and can beat the system. When it comes to sports gambling they think they know all the statistics, they know who's injured, how players are playing, so it becomes a potentially risky time for them."

Although it's illegal for people under a certain age (differing from province to province) to place these wagers, Dr. Derevensky says his studies show young people do not have much difficulty purchasing tickets. "Teenagers begin by gambling amongst themselves and

Comme l'explique David Horricks : « Il faut que le joueur compulsif atteigne un stade très aigu pour que les gens ne puissent plus nier l'existence d'un problème. Une jeune personne peut avoir un comportement de retrait envers ses parents pour une foule de raisons; nous devons alors lui poser des questions au sujet de ses activités. « Cette conversation est nécessaire. Tes amis jouent-ils à des jeux d'argent? Joues-tu toi aussi, en parles-tu avec eux? Y a-t-il des jeux de hasard parmi tes jeux vidéo? Que penses-tu de tout cela? »

Les ados risquent davantage que la population adulte de devenir des joueurs pathologiques, mais parmi eux, les jeunes hommes sont les plus à risque. Comme le formule M. Horricks : « Ils prennent des risques et ils se croient à l'épreuve de tout. » Il ajoute : « Il y a des jeunes qui croient pouvoir financer leurs études par le jeu. Ils se pensent capables d'émuler le succès des joueurs de haut niveau qui gagnent de fortes sommes au poker. « C'est de la bravade, c'est plutôt cool et sexy, mais le jeune homme court un risque à chacun de ses comportements risqués. Le jeu n'est qu'un de ces comportements parmi d'autres. »

Ce sont surtout la disposition des ados à prendre des risques et le caractère émergent de leurs facultés cognitives à prendre des décisions qui expliquent le risque particulier qu'ils courent de développer une dépendance au jeu. « Le fait que certaines personnes qui commencent à jouer ont du mal à s'arrêter découle d'un problème développemental », explique le professeur Jeffrey Derevensky, directeur du Centre international d'étude sur le jeu et les comportements à risque chez les jeunes de l'Université McGill, à Montréal.

De dangereuses idées fausses

L'un des facteurs de risque du jeu compulsif est ce qu'on appelle le gros gain initial. « La personne qui gagne beaucoup d'argent d'un coup reviendra au jeu parce qu'elle croit pouvoir reproduire les conditions gagnantes. Pour un enfant, 100 \$, c'est un gros gain », indique le professeur Derevensky, qui est pédopsychologue. « Même si l'industrie du jeu repose sur le fait que plus une personne joue, plus elle perd, les jeunes hommes se sentent plus brillants que les autres et se croient capables de battre le système. En matière de paris sportifs, ils pensent connaître toutes les statistiques, la liste des blessés, le rendement des joueurs; tout cela présente un risque potentiel pour eux. »

Même s'il est illégal de parier avant d'avoir atteint un certain âge (qui varie d'une province à l'autre), M. Derevensky affirme que, d'après ses études, les jeunes n'ont pas beaucoup de difficulté à acheter des billets. « Les adolescents commencent par parier entre eux, puis ils passent aux loteries sportives administrées par l'État provincial. En vieillissant, plusieurs jeunes entrent en contact avec des preneurs aux livres. La situation devient alors encore plus problématique, car ces personnes font crédit aux jeunes. On peut trouver des preneurs de paris près de chez soi et en ligne. Souvent, les preneurs aux livres locaux affichent aussi leurs cotes en ligne. Leurs sites sont relativement secrets et protégés par des mots de passe, mais ce n'est pas si difficile [d'y accéder] », explique-t-il.

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The advertisement features a photograph of two smiling students, a young woman and a young man, both wearing backpacks and holding books. The background is a light blue and green gradient with a pattern of overlapping document icons.

then move to betting on provincial-run sports lotteries. When they get older, kids often get involved with bookmakers. That's even more problematic because they often give kids credit. Bookmakers can be found online and locally. Local bookmakers often post their odds online, too, although it's more secretive and passwords are required to access these sites, but it's not all that difficult [to access]," he advises.

Horricks, Hazar and Dr. Derevensky all emphasize that young people have to understand how gambling works. A common misconception -- based on what kids know to be true about video gaming -- is that if they practice enough they will increase their chances of winning when they gamble. Teens need to know that no amount of practicing will make you a winner when the outcome depends purely on chance as is the case with lotteries, roulette, VLTs and slot machines.

Dr. Derevensky points out that even when a casino tells you the last 20 numbers that came up on the roulette wheel it won't help you pick the next winner because you cannot control or deduce the outcome of random events -- in this case, where the little white ball will land next. That's where adolescent gambling awareness programs come in. "There are copious amounts of teaching materials, workshop offerings, website resources available in every province yet they are not being used to the extent they should be," notes Dr. Derevensky. ♣csc

Watch for Part II of Wanna Bet? in our Fall 2017 issue. We'll delve into online gambling, the convergence of video gaming and gambling and the potential ramifications for teens.

M. Horricks, Mme Hazar et le professeur Derevensky insistent tous sur la nécessité de faire comprendre aux jeunes le fonctionnement des jeux de hasard. Selon une idée fautive très courante, fondée sur ce que les jeunes connaissent des jeux vidéo, si on s'exerce assez, on augmente ses chances de gagner aux jeux de hasard. Il faut que les ados sachent qu'aucun entraînement ne peut les aider à gagner lorsque le résultat est purement aléatoire, comme à la loterie, à la roulette, ou avec les appareils de loterie vidéo et les machines à sous.

M. Derevensky souligne que même si le casino affiche les 20 derniers nombres sortis à la roulette, cela n'aide aucunement à choisir le prochain numéro gagnant, parce qu'il est impossible de contrôler ou de déduire le résultat d'un événement aléatoire, en l'occurrence, le prochain endroit où la bille blanche s'arrêtera. C'est là qu'interviennent les programmes de sensibilisation des adolescents au jeu. « Chaque province offre toute une panoplie de matériel d'enseignement, d'ateliers et de ressources en ligne, mais ces ressources ne sont pas utilisées autant qu'elles devraient l'être », note le professeur Derevensky. ♣csc

Ne manquez pas la seconde partie de la série « On parie? » dans notre numéro d'automne 2017. Il sera question du jeu en ligne, de la convergence des jeux vidéo et des jeux de hasard et de ses ramifications potentielles pour les ados.



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YGAP talks gambling across Ontario

Ontario's YMCA Youth Gambling Awareness Program (YGAP) educates young people and the adults involved in their lives about gambling, its risks and potential harm to health, social and financial well-being.

YGAP, which encourages informed, responsible decision-making, is currently offered in over 20 cities across Ontario -- from Kenora to Kingston and Toronto to Timmins.

Check out <https://ymcagta.org/youth-programs/youth-gambling-awareness-program> and <http://youthbet.com/>

Le PSJJ parle du jeu partout en Ontario

Le Programme de sensibilisation au jeu pour les jeunes (PSJJ) du YMCA de l'Ontario éduque les jeunes et les adultes qui interviennent dans leur vie au sujet des jeux de hasard, de leurs risques et de leurs effets potentiels sur la santé et sur le bien-être social et financier.

Le PSJJ, qui encourage la prise de décision éclairée et responsable, est actuellement offert dans plus de 20 villes ontariennes, de Kenora à Kingston et de Toronto à Timmins.

Consultez les sites <https://ymcagta.org/youth-programs/youth-gambling-awareness-program> et <http://youthbet.com/>

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» REFERENCES / RESSOURCES

¹ <https://www.bcreponsiblegambling.ca/prevention-education/high-school>

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Obsessive - Compulsive Disorder in Children and Youth

What it is and how it is treated

By Laura Hamilton, M.Ed



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Have you ever walked into a room and immediately noticed that a painting is crooked? Does it bother you? What about when the toilet paper roll is turned the “wrong” way around? Or when someone loads the dishwasher the “wrong” way? Do you carry a bottle of hand sanitizer when you take public transit? Or do you need your desk arranged in a very particular way?

Most of us have at least one or two such idiosyncrasies that we might casually or flippantly refer to as “being OCD”. In fact, some of these traits might actually be quite helpful to us in keeping us organized and healthy! But while we may be bothered or irritated by the crooked painting, or the disorganized desk, most of us will also be able to move on with the things we need to do and ultimately forget about the things that are “out of place”. Or perhaps we will wash our hands once after taking the bus or subway, and then be done with it. This is what distinguishes our personal idiosyncrasies from actual Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Those with clinical OCD are not able to “just move on”, and their compulsion to address that which is out of place can significantly impact their daily life and functioning. In the case of children and youth, it can lead to serious impairment in their social functioning or success at school.



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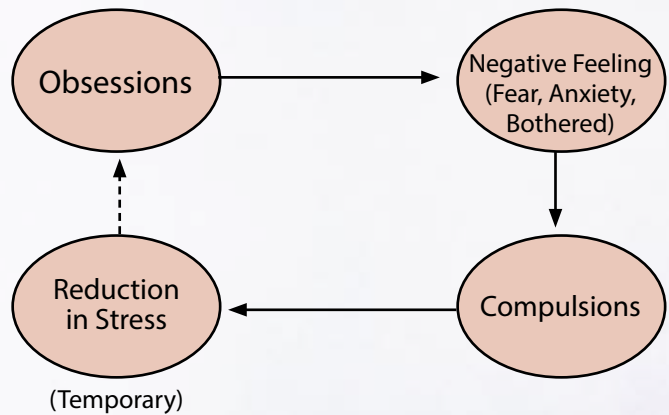
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While estimates vary, it is generally reported that between 1-3% of children and youth will display symptoms of OCD. While there is no clear age of onset, most people with OCD will develop the symptoms prior to the age of 25, generally in childhood or adolescence. As with most mental health disorders, OCD is understood to arise from a combination of biology and environment. Those with OCD typically have decreased levels of serotonin (a chemical in the brain). There is also believed to be a genetic link to OCD, with it being more common in children or youth who have another family member with the disorder. At the same time, OCD can also be triggered by something in a child's environment, like a stressful/traumatic event or even hearing negative or frightening messages on the news.

What is OCD?

OCD is considered an anxiety disorder. It is comprised of obsessive thought patterns, which lead to compulsive behaviours. Obsessive thought patterns are distressing or upsetting to the child, and will not go away (i.e., they cannot just distract themselves or "think of something else"). Known as the OCD Cycle, compulsive behaviours are things that the child feels they **MUST** do in order to give them some relief from the obsessive and distressing thoughts.

The Obsessive-Compulsive Cycle



Negreiros, J. "Identifying and Supporting Students with OCD in Schools"
Cited from: https://www.anxietybc.com/sites/default/files/ocdschools_0.pdf

Some types of obsessive thoughts experienced by children and youth with OCD may include:

- fears or contamination, or that any germs will lead to sickness or death
- persistent belief that a loved one will come to harm
- preoccupation with how their homework or handwriting looks
- obsessive need for symmetry or order
- perfectionism, a fixation on having something be exactly right
- a belief that things need to be done a certain number of times, or else something bad will happen. Sometimes children will have a "safe/good" or "unsafe/bad" number

As noted, these obsessive thoughts will lead to a high degree of distress in youth, and it will seem to a youth as though there is no way to make the thoughts or negative feelings stop. Compulsive behaviours are seen as the only way of stopping the thoughts, or of relieving their distress. Compulsive behaviours may include, but are certainly not limited to:

- constant hand-washing, sometimes even to the point of developing cracked and bleeding hands
- needing to shower multiple times per day
- avoiding public places (bathrooms, buses, malls, even school) out fear of being “contaminated”
- ritualized behaviour that they believe will keep their loved ones “safe” (e.g., repeating a sentence, persistent checking in with a parent)
- constantly erasing their work, or redoing their work to the point of never finishing
- constantly rearranging their desk, locker, bedroom, or other space until it is “just right”
- repeatedly checking that doors are locked, lights are turned off, windows are closed, etc.
- needing things to be done a certain number of times (e.g., a light needs to be turned on and off 3 times; needing to repeat an answer 3 times, etc.)

Often, the behaviour is initially successful (if only for a few minutes), which reinforces the false belief that they have to be done. However, this relief is fleeting, and often the youth feels they must do the behaviours more often, or with increasing intensity, in order for the relief to continue.

How is OCD treated?

The most effective treatment method for OCD involves the use of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT). CBT is a form of “talk” therapy where unhelpful thoughts (obsessions) are challenged, and youth are taught new ways of thinking. They are also taught new behaviours or ways of managing their distress. CBT is used with a variety of mental health concerns, and in the case of OCD it is typically accompanied by something called “Exposure/Response Prevention” (E/RP). In E/RP, a child would be exposed to the distressing situation (e.g., something unclean; a disorganized desk; a light switch turned off only once), and taught ways to decrease the distress that is triggered by this situation, sometimes through relaxation strategies, or by challenging the thoughts that arise. In some cases, medication (specifically an SSRI, or Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor) is also prescribed to help in treatment of OCD. 🌟csc

Resources for counsellors

Although typically OCD in youth will be treated by a mental health professional, there are many good resources for school professionals on how to support students with OCD, a few of which are listed below.

- Anxiety BC: <https://www.anxietybc.com/educators>
- The Child Mind Institute – A Teacher’s Guide to OCD in the Classroom: <https://childmind.org/guide/a-teachers-guide-to-ocd-in-the-classroom/>
- Paige, L. Z. (2007). Obsessive-compulsive disorder. *Principal Leadership*, 8(1), 12-15.
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America, OCD at School: <https://www.adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/obsessive-compulsive-disorder/ocd-at-school>

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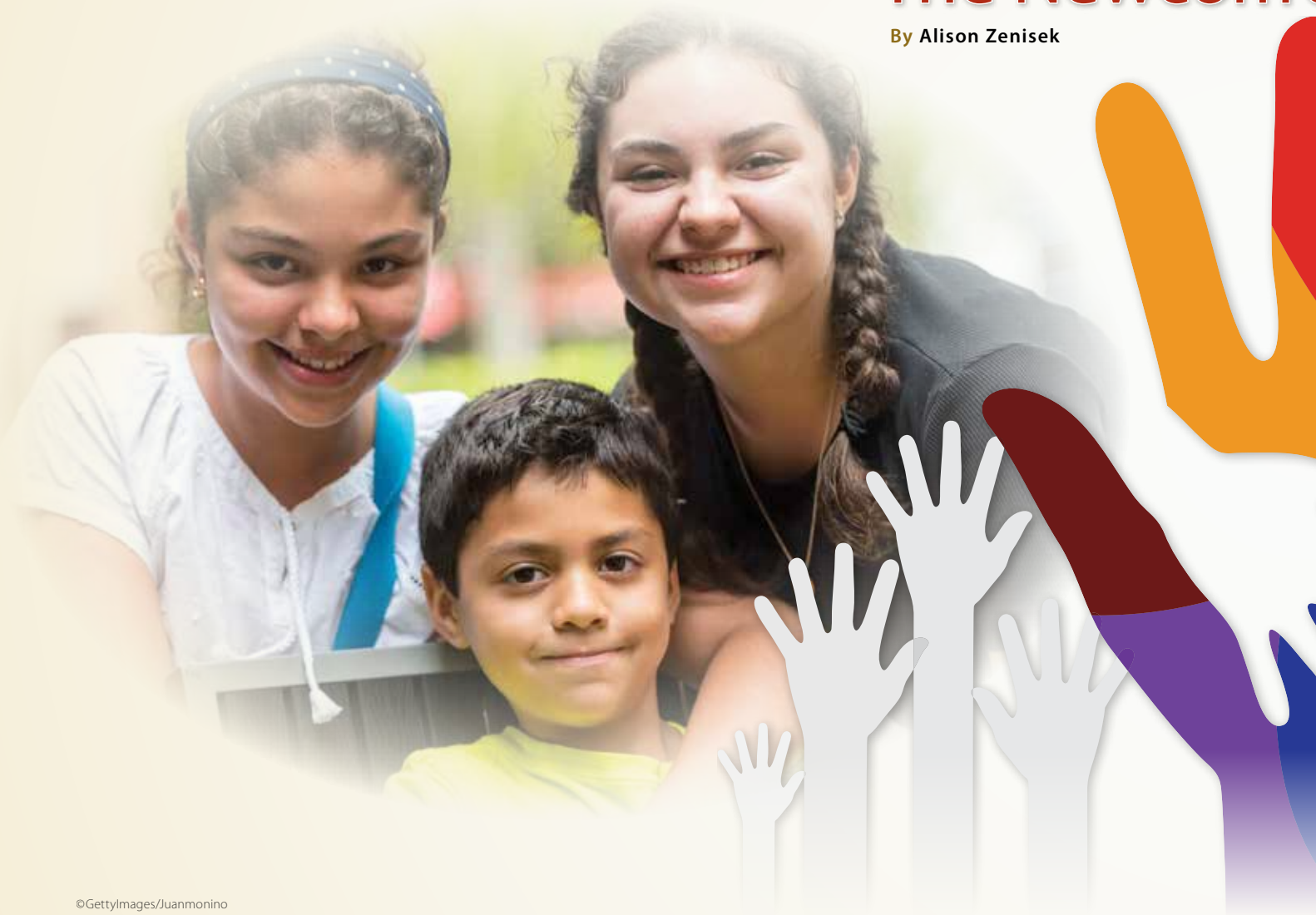
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Extending a Gu

The Newcomer

By Alison Zenisek



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On a chilly Saturday in early March a lively group of youth gathered at the Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services (N.E.E.D.S.) building on the edge of Winnipeg's historic Exchange District. Their energy, excitement, and friendliness were palpable as they took their seats at several round tables. The Newcomer Youth Engagement Program graduation and awards day had arrived. Thirty five students were about to be acknowledged for successfully completing an intensive course that has prepared them for their new life and opportunities in Canada.

aiding Hand

Newcomer Youth Civic Engagement Program



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The group consisted of young adults from African countries such as Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. One young man, Blaise Ruberangabo, spoke of the long journey to Canada his family had to undergo in order to escape the civil strife and lack of educational opportunity in his country of origin. His dream is to receive a good education and one day to become an RCMP officer. Blaise not only received his certificate of completion, but also two awards for leadership and attendance. He spoke candidly about his commitment to avoid negative peer associations and risky behaviours.

The Newcomer Youth Civic Engagement Program, which seeks to assist refugee youth to integrate in their community, is led by Matthew Fast. The program empowers these youth by developing their leadership skills, community connections, cultural savvy, and employment skills. The program targets new arrivals ages 16 to 21 with the intention of developing the skills needed to be successful in their new home. While in the program they learn about what Canadians expect of an employee, as well as about the cultural values Canadians hold dear, such as work ethics and gender equity.

The attendees are also taught communication skills and money management. One-on-one support is provided in the art of compiling a resume and writing a cover letter. The program also encourages community involvement, which in turn promotes a commitment to the well-being of their fellow citizens. The youth are encouraged to help each other push out of their comfort zones and get involved in their new community. This in turn forges friendships, promotes confidence, and improves social skills.

Across the country programs are springing up to meet the needs of vulnerable refugee youth who are new to Canada. The program in Winnipeg spearheaded sister programs in Toronto, Halifax, and Vancouver, and the students from those cities were able to connect and share learnings through a conference held in February. According to Matthew Fast, of the Newcomer Youth Civic Engagement Program, there are several reasons which contribute to the attraction the gang lifestyle has on young refugees. Youth can feel significantly isolated when landing in a new country and culture, with a new language to learn. Often their parents are struggling with their own issues, compounding the isolation. The developmental desire teens experience to connect and fit in is also a factor. When they are approached and asked to hang out with a gang of more experienced youth, they don't always recognize the dangers. Gradually they are drawn into the world of crime, drugs, and arrests. These dangers do not manifest themselves early on, as the youth are too busy orienting themselves in a new culture and school setting, but often come into play on or after their third year in the country.


Fast describes some of the other pressures that can contribute to sending these youth off track: difficulties at school, tensions at home created by the parents' own struggle to adjust, and the negative

influence of peers. While attempting to fit in these youth struggle with language barriers, a lack of social networks, and little community support. They often arrive already traumatized and vulnerable psychologically from experiences such as war, persecution, and inter-tribal strife in their countries of origin. Many have witnessed brutality perpetrated on family and friends. Gravitation to gangs is but a symptom of unresolved issues in their lives.

These newly arrived youth are like teens everywhere. They want to belong, fit in, be cool, and have friends. To be cool in our Western culture unfortunately means displaying material wealth. Access to disposable income, fashionable clothes, and the ubiquitous cell phone are necessary items in the minds of most youth. These pressures are very real for newcomer youth who are already feeling like outsiders. Risks identified by youth workers, and consistent with literature about gangs include disenfranchisement from school, society, and peers. This manifests itself in bullying, teasing, or simply being ignored, all very painful for young adults trying to fit in. Needing money to acquire the trappings that are necessary to fit in is a particular risk to gang involvement. Those who work with at risk refugee youth say that if their normal desires for connection, attention, and power are not met by peers, family, or schools, then they will turn to less desirable sources to meet their needs.

The value of the Newcomer Youth Civic Engagement Program can be seen as making a difference at this point of need. Through mentoring, friendship, support, and passing on valuable knowledge, these young people can better negotiate this new culture and so acquire the skills and resiliency to find employment and friends. Examples of the imaginative work that has been invested in the program by staff and community member are abundant. The graduates were engaged in a tour of the Human Rights Museum, attended workshops on job skills, and listened to presentations by the RCMP. Elder Dan Thomas and other members of the aboriginal community came and spoke about themselves and their own struggles with the dominant culture.

Guest speakers who had once been refugees themselves inspired the youth with their stories of success in the Canadian community. One such speaker was Devon Clunis, the first black police chief in both Winnipeg and in Canada. Clunis arrived in Canada from Jamaica as a boy and at first struggled in school. He was helped by a teacher and others who influenced him positively and put him on a productive life path. His struggle with his racial identity and racism was a point of connection with the African refugee youth who listened to him speak. Issues of racism, bullying and the reality of socio-economic differences are discussed openly in the Newcomer Youth Civic Engagement Program. Mentors come in 'all shapes and sizes' in the diverse community that is Canada. When this varied community rallies around youth, much potential can be achieved.

The young adults who commit to the program have access to computers where they can complete homework assignments, a small gym, and a game room. Snacks and meals are served on a regular basis and the food is collected from Winnipeg Harvest and purchased by N.E.E.D.S. Exposure to career opportunities, workplace education and experience, mentorship, and psycho-social support are also made available. The organization is non-profit and provides accessible services and support to immigrant and refugee children, youth, and their families. Their Newcomer Youth Civic Engagement Program reveals the best that is Canada. For more information about this program contact the Executive Director, Margaret von Lau at mvonlau@needsinc.ca 

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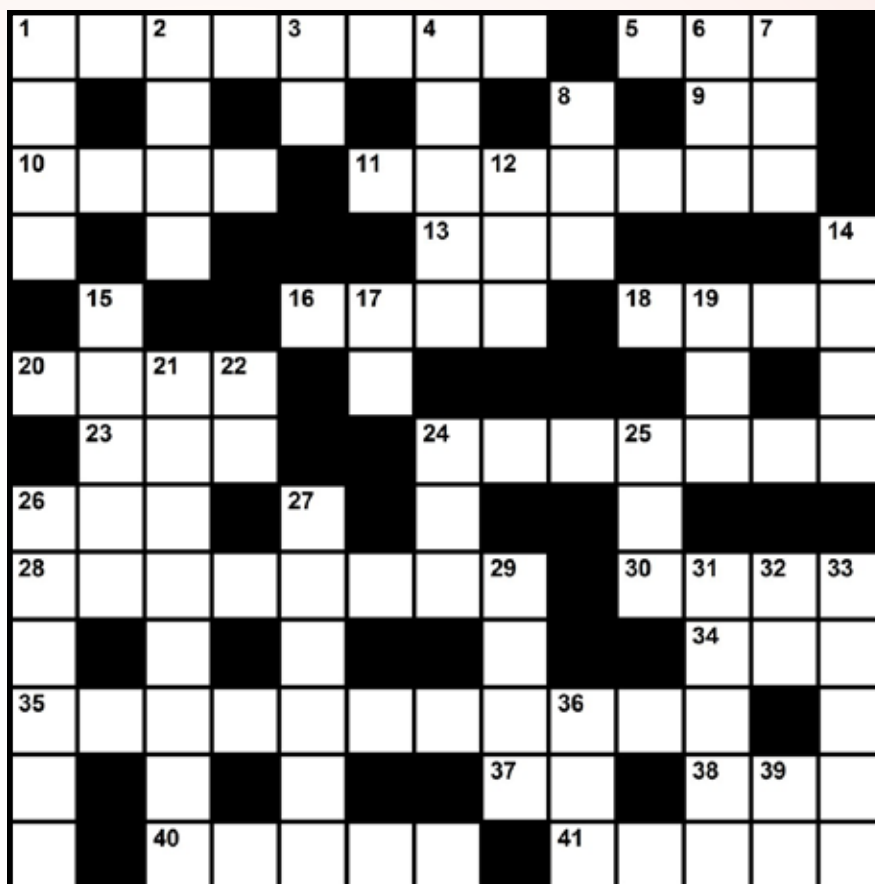


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Across


- 1 One of counsellor's roles
- 5 We're encouraged to think outside the _____
- 9 William, for short
- 10 What good leaders to make decisions on
- 11 Site of the University of Guelph's College of Business Economics, 2 words
- 13 Savings plan, down south
- 16 Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, Melanie _____
- 18 N.W.T. group that helps Northern youth learn about healthy relationships and sexuality
- 20 Beam
- 23 Coast Guard rank, abbr.
- 24 He's pushing a shopping cart across Canada to raise awareness and funds to prevent youth homelessness, Joe _____
- 26 Pale
- 28 Lonely, cut off from others
- 30 Have concern for
- 34 State on the east coast, neighbouring Pennsylvania, abbr.
- 35 Major national campaign marking Canada 150, 3 words
- 37 Yes, in Spanish
- 38 GPS abbreviation
- 40 Application
- 41 Someone who acts as an example



CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 50

Down


- 1 Assists
- 2 Civic duty
- 3 Firm, for short
- 4 Blaze your own _____
- 6 Bird that's a symbol of wisdom
- 7 Programming language
- 8 Sound made at the time of a eureka moment
- 12 Break down in an upset
- 14 Places for reps
- 15 Subjects
- 17 ___ tap, available
- 19 Rowing boat equipment
- 21 Develop new technology
- 22 Initials of a Canadian province
- 24 Regret
- 25 And the others, for short
- 26 Where both sides are happy with a way forward, 2 words
- 27 _____ Teacher night
- 29 Oxford professors
- 31 Honourable medal or trophy
- 32 Touring vehicle
- 33 Painter's stand
- 36 Goal
- 39 Power in a person in Confucianism



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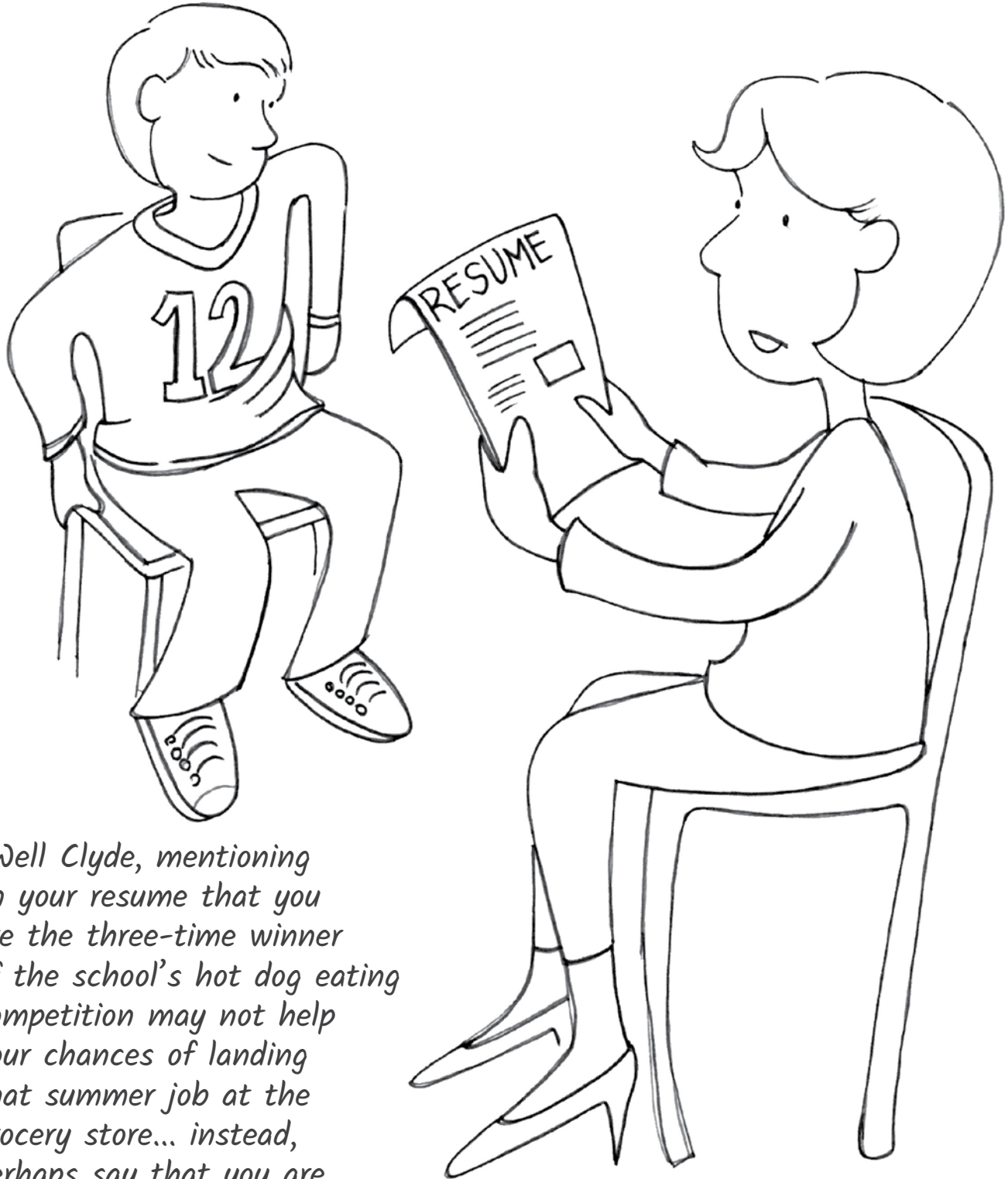
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