

# CANADIAN SCHOOL Counsellor<sup>®</sup> MAGAZINE

## A Matter of Faith

In Canada religion and education comprise an interesting mix

## Une question de foi

Au Canada, la religion et l'éducation constituent un intéressant mélange

- Autism numbers are growing and advocates speak out
- Making a case for Peer Tutoring in the classroom / Un plaidoyé en faveur de l'enseignement par les pairs dans la classe
- Labeling Behaviours not Children
- Self Care for Counsellors

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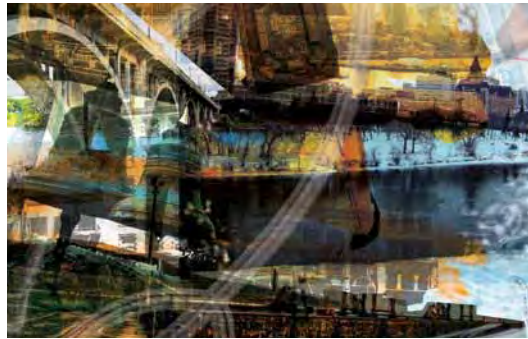
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# Good Data *Essential*



Its pretty hard to run a business, a household, or a school for that matter without access to good information. This need for quality data really hit home during preparation for this issue when I was collecting information on faith-based schools. What I found was that our Federal government has little information on non-secular institutions and many provinces simply refuse to collect basic stats on religious academies. Fortunately, there are areas beyond government that are interested in this topic and we were able to obtain many facts from these sources.

It was at this same time that the issue of the Canada Census long form came to the public's attention. From my standpoint I can not see how our government can function effectively for us if they are blind to things like household educational attainment, personal expenses for children's extracurricular programs, or even religious affiliation. Scrapping the Statistics Canada long form and weakening the short form will not enable government to better understand its citizens and provide the necessary inputs to help develop our society.

Without the best information decisions become mired in supposition and emotion. Funding to important projects are suddenly halted because, without statistical data, there is no firm basis for decision making. Simply, good statistical information is the highway on which governments run their fleet of programs. Without this highway, programming is in the ditch.

When bad advice and data are given to government, bad things happen. Consider Iraq and recent revelations by Lady Manningham-Buller, head of Britain's MI5 intelligence agency during the period, that there was no reliable information to support the claim the Iraqis were harbouring 'weapons of mass destruction'. The result was bad intelligence that caused governments to rush in to fight a war where hundreds of thousands of people have died, billions of dollars have been lost, and the world has been made less secure.

There is little doubt that to continue in our role as social and economic world leaders Canadians and our government require the very best data, information and analysis available. Whether it's on the number of faith-based schools, the amount of soft drinks our students consume, or how many wash basins occupy Peterborough its essential we have the numbers to open our eyes and to help us make the hard decisions in a society under rapid and continual change.

**Kelly Gray**  
Editor-in-Chief



**Global Approach at UofM** – Each year, the University of Manitoba offers a group of students the opportunity to travel to Bangladesh for five weeks to experience local culture and work with area Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The El Salvador Alternative Spring Break program allows students to make the most of their time away from classes each February to live and work in a developing country. “This experience has challenged me on every imaginable level,” says Celia Buchok, 2010 Bangladesh participant. “The people I’ve met here will stay with me forever and the stories I’ve heard have changed my views on humanity.”

On campus, the Office of Student Life also offers a Leadership seminar series including workshops and volunteer opportunities aimed at helping students identify and nurture the leader within. Other opportunities include acting as reading buddies for inner-city kids or as mentors to young people from a small Aboriginal community in Manitoba. Whether students wish to give back on an international scale or right here at home, the U of M offers more choices and opportunities for leadership development and volunteerism.

**Travel and Exchange Programs** – Through exchange programs, students in a number of faculties including the Asper School of Business, Arts, Medicine and Engineering, can study for one or two terms at a partner university in places like Germany, Mexico and Finland. Other travel study courses allow students to take what they’re learning in the classroom and laboratory and put it into practice. Opportunities include learning about Catholic culture in Rome, experiencing the art scene in New York and understanding Arctic life on Baffin Island. Each year, U of M students also participate in research activities, competitions and study groups around the world.



**Quebec to Offer Fast-Tracked Citizenship to International Students** – In a move designed to take advantage of Australia’s and Britain’s recent problems in the Indian-student market, Quebec is offering Canadian citizenship to international students who graduate from any university in the province. ➤

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Beginning this past Valentine's Day international students who graduate from universities in Quebec would get "a certificate of selection" that would put them on a fast track to Canadian citizenship.

The Quebec Premier stated in a speech to students in Mumbai that any student who secures a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree from any university in Quebec will obtain a certificate of selection to become a citizen of Canada. Once foreign students had the certificate, the federal government would then carry out security and health checks before awarding citizenship.



**UCN in the Pas to Receive Reno** – The Manitoba government is investing \$15 million in the University College of the North (UCN) campus in The Pas including renovations to the existing campus and a new library and childcare facility.

The schematic design includes a 24-unit, on-campus housing development for students and their families, as well as enhanced new facilities that will meet the long-term needs of key academic programs.

*The expansion includes:*

- A 13,500-square-foot library expansion to be named in honour of long-time member of the legislative assembly Oscar Lathlin. It will meet university accreditation levels as a resource and teaching library to serve the two main campuses and 12 regional centres across the north.
- A new 6,500-square-foot child-care facility to accommodate up to 75 children.

- A 4,500-square-foot redeveloped student service centre to provide a one-stop shop for student services such as enrolment, program information, counselling and guidance.
- An Aboriginal centre offering culturally appropriate assistance.
- A student lounge.
- Centralized administrative offices.

The new campus will incorporate natural materials and shapes that are representative of Aboriginal culture. Construction and renovations are scheduled to begin this fall with completion expected in September 2012.



**High school Students Make Improvements to the Standard Wheelchair** – A team of high school students attending the Shad Valley summer enrichment camp at the University of British Columbia have used their summer vacation to invent a better wheelchair.

The national group of students, under the company name INH Technologies, developed a new braking system for wheelchairs. They commented that one of their number had worked in a seniors' home and saw the need to create a wheelchair that locks before people attempt to stand.

In response to this need, the group designed a "passive brake" mechanism. For example, a person who attempts to rise in the chair and uses the armrests for support will engage the brake by compressing springs in the arm.

Students are seeking a patent and trying to build a business around delivering the braking system to the marketplace.

**Fredericton Student Wins 2010 Opti-Math contest** – Antonio Molina, a student at École Saint-Anne, is the Grade 8 winner of Opti-Math 2010 national contest.

The annual Opti-Math contest, open to students aged 12 to 18, is an opportunity for nearly 100,000 francophones across Canada to demonstrate their problem-solving ability.

"In 32 years of teaching, I have rarely seen a student who excels in math like Antonio," says Paul Fournier, a retired >

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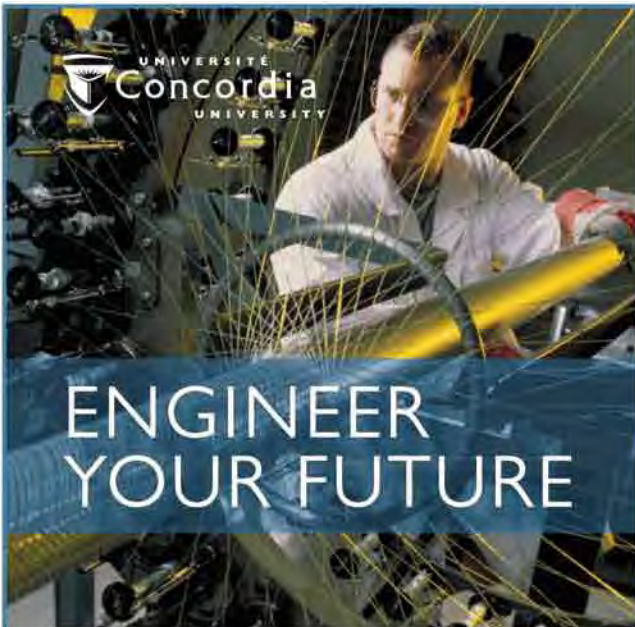
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teacher in charge of the math club at École Sainte-Anne. "His problem-solving ability is exceptional."

"I really like mathematics, and this contest allowed me to learn even more on the subject," says Molina. "I was able to go even further and this will help me better understand my mathematics courses at school. I'll also be better able to explain it to students who have difficulties with the subject."

Molina won a number of other mathematics contests this year. He came first in the New Brunswick Math Competition held at the University of New Brunswick and first in the University of Waterloo's Gauss Contest. Molina also distinguished himself at two contests run by the University of Waterloo for Grade 9 students, the Pascal and the Fryer.



**University of Regina Offers Firsts** - A new program, which the University unveiled last September - the UR Guarantee - is the first of its kind in Canada. Built on the strength of the University's Co-operative Education Program and commitment to experiential learning, the UR Guarantee ensures that students who do not find employment in a career-related opportunity within six months of completing their degree, will receive tuition and course fees for an additional 30 credit hours of undergraduate courses in the following year. Detailed information is available at <http://www.urconnected.ca/>.

The University of Regina was also the first university in Western Canada to start a Co-operative Education Program, which is now available in nearly 50 disciplines and boasts more job placements than all other post-secondary institutions in the province combined.

The University of Regina provides a dynamic, innovative and supportive learning experience with a growing national reputation for excellence in teaching and research. The University's comprehensive programs and services prepare students to excel in local and global communities and its research opportunities attract the best and brightest minds.

Located in Regina, Saskatchewan, the University of Regina is situated on Wascana Park, one of the largest urban parks in North America. The University of Regina is home to nine undergraduate faculties, including arts, business administration, education, engineering and applied science, fine arts, kinesiology and health studies, nursing, science and social work. It is also home to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research. The University offers more than 70 programs including specialized courses such as journalism, media production and studies, actuarial science, petroleum engineering, police studies and informatics.

**Camps Positive for Cadets** – It is the time of year when Canada’s Cadets are returning home from their Cadet Camp experience to take on the upcoming school year. While at camp, amongst their peers, these young individuals have learnt to apply and to overcome challenges while continuously developing the various advantageous skills they earn while in Cadets. The Cadet organization, as a whole has several camp locations in Canada, where Cadets across the country converge to further enhance their development within their element (Navy, Army or Air) of the program.

As a cadet attending these camps, they have the benefits of developing their chosen skills such as, leadership, music, gliding, sailing, and ceremonial drill, abseiling and many more. This additional training allows them to fulfil the requirements for their promotions within the ranks of the Cadet organization. Cadets, at all levels, attending camp have the opportunity to earn a monetary bonus.

The three Cadet Leagues provide the civilian oversight in supervising and assisting the Department of National Defence in the delivery of this federal youth program. Each League was formed to oversee their own element of the cadet program. You are invited to visit the following websites:

[www.navyleague.ca](http://www.navyleague.ca); [www.armycadetleague.ca](http://www.armycadetleague.ca);  
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- Travel opportunities to Cadet camps across Canada and through International and Domestic Exchange programs, however selection is partially based on academic achievement.
- Provides life skills.
- Opportunity to potentially earn a monetary bonus for summer training or summer employment.
- There is absolutely no military service requirement.

Canada



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Local dignitaries join Central Peel Secondary staff at the ribbon cutting for the school's new Academic Hall of Fame



# Standard Bearers

The high achievements of this school's grads are making a positive statement to the current student body and the community at large about academic standards and the value of hard work in a world gone mad for pop idols

**At Brampton, Ontario's Central Peel Secondary School,** Special Ed teacher Ai Zhen Tatelman (grades 9-12) wanted to use the school's 50th anniversary to showcase the institution's academic movers and shakers. She came up with the idea to create a Hall of Fame to show both teachers and children positive examples of what can be done even in the midst of some daunting societal and community challenges.

Central Peel Secondary School is located west of Toronto in an ethnically diverse neighbourhood that faces considerable economic and social hurdles. The school is home to more than 1400 students and roughly 105 staff. It was into this melting pot that Tatelman brought her considerable skills several years ago.

"I came with the intention of making a difference and helping the students achieve in a setting that sometimes seems to work against them. The idea behind the Academic Hall of Fame was to create a way to show that despite the challenges many of the students face, success is still

possible and even inevitable if the right steps are taken," she says.

Tatelman is a teacher with wide international experience and a take-no-prisoners approach. In fact, her philosophy is one that is counter to the current drive to social promotion and declining standards. "There is real value in working hard to achieve genuine success. I am opposed to the entitlement mentality, which causes some capable students to do less, yet expect to obtain the same level as others who put in the effort. I saw this Academic Hall of Fame as a way to show the students what can be done if you put in the work."

The Hall includes 18 recipients this year following a lengthy process of selection. The members include prominent scientists, engineers, physicians, dentists, lawyers, a member of the Ontario judiciary, a professor and two pastors. According to Ai Zhen, each year when she asked her students to prepare a special research project on prominent people, for the most part, her students selected popular culture figures.

"Each year it was always pop stars and entertainment figures. I wanted to see this imbalance change to offer more respect to great minds. It was to help us achieve this thinking that we got started on the project."

What makes the project different from other schools' efforts at lauding the student body, is the academic requirement. "In other schools there are places of honour for those who have experienced and overcome illness or misfortune. There is also the standard award case for sporting excellence. At Central Peel Secondary we wanted to recognize academic achievement that has led to a career where both the student and society has benefited."

The 18 plaques representing this year's inductees are placed outside the school counselling office on a wall that has garnered a lot of attention since June 12 when the awards were first announced. She reports that the area is a high traffic zone and since the 12-inch by 16-inch plaques went up, traffic has been somewhat congested with students craning necks and eagerly reading the bios and achievements of the graduates.

The roll call for the honour wall was impressive with many of Central Peel's lustrous grads attaining PhD's and MD's. This year the first inductees include: **Dr. Minna Alibhai Allarakhia**, class of '90, biotech entrepreneur and professor



Ai Zhen Tatelman

- Dr. Neville Anathan,**  
class of '75, dentist
- Dr. Noel Anathan,**  
class of '81, dentist
- Mr. Colin Darcel,**  
class of '79, engineer and entrepreneur
- Dr. Ian Darcel,**  
class of '75, cardiologist
- Dr. Keith Darcel,**  
class of '86, obstetrician, emergency physician and medical examiner
- Dr. Mark Evans,**  
class of '70, teacher and professor
- Elizabeth Fulton-Breathat,**  
class of '88, nurse, midwife and educator
- Dr. Xin Huang,**  
class of '98, author and consultant
- Mr. Carman McClelland,**  
class of '71, lawyer and former MPP
- Dr. Robert McInerney,**  
class of '92, neuropsychologist
- Mr. Joe Rainsberger,**  
class of '92, author, public speaker and software developer

- Dr. Amandeep Singh,**  
class of '93, family doctor and entrepreneur
- Dr. Simarjot Singh,**  
class of '97, family doctor
- Rev. Fred Tham,**  
class of '85, pastor and engineer
- Dr. Ted Tham,**  
class of '85, pastor and engineer
- Hon. Dr. Justice Michael Tulloch,**  
class of '81, lawyer and Superior Court judge
- Dr. Antonio Valdevit,**  
class of '82, physicist, professor and biomedical engineer.

Tatelman puts the whole process into perspective. She quotes a student, Michelle Nguyen, who said, "I'm very inspired. I wanted to go into medicine, but didn't think I could. I saw these students who might once have had similar doubts but overcame them to succeed. Maybe I can overcome them, too."

A further benefit has been the gains in public perception about the school. Regrettably, the hard facts of life have beaten down some members of the community. According to Tatelman, the school is used by a number of community organizations on a daily basis. "People who come in regularly have been amazed at the achievements of some of our students. Not only does this Academic Hall of Fame inspire our students, but it brings the message home to families and other members of our community. Our school is situated in an area consisting largely of immigrants and those of lower socioeconomic status. This Hall of Fame dispels the many myths regarding what can be accomplished by students who do not have a privileged background."

She reports that the process involved hard work by a small committee of like-minded teachers such as Nick Nolfi and Leola Sullivan along with the support of Principal Joy Squire. There was the call for nominations, the selection process, the finding of the inductees and the creation of the display. "All took a lot of work and, from conception to completion, we spent more than a year on the project. For example, our decision to award academic excellence involved a definition of what exactly this excellence is. We spent a lot of time to standardize the approach and stood firm on the idea of only academic excellence."

Another benefit of the Academic Hall of Fame is the thanks it delivers to teachers who helped train the inductees. Consider the case of Dr. Xin Huang, a grad from 1998 who went on to study computer science and electrical engineering at MIT earning a doctorate in the process, all on full scholarships. Dr. Huang came to Canada from China and knew very little English language when he joined the student body at Central Peel Secondary. To a large extent, the hard work of his teachers at the school gave Xin the confidence and motivation to achieve at the highest level.

Concludes Tatelman, "We have all heard that when a student is ready, the teacher appears. Lao Tzu says, 'When a student surpasses his master, the master knows he has done his job well.' I believe this Academic Hall of Fame delivers a message that reminds us why we are educators and offers hope to students, many of whom face struggles to succeed in a world where pop culture seems to rise above more serious and significant achievements." ♣ CSC

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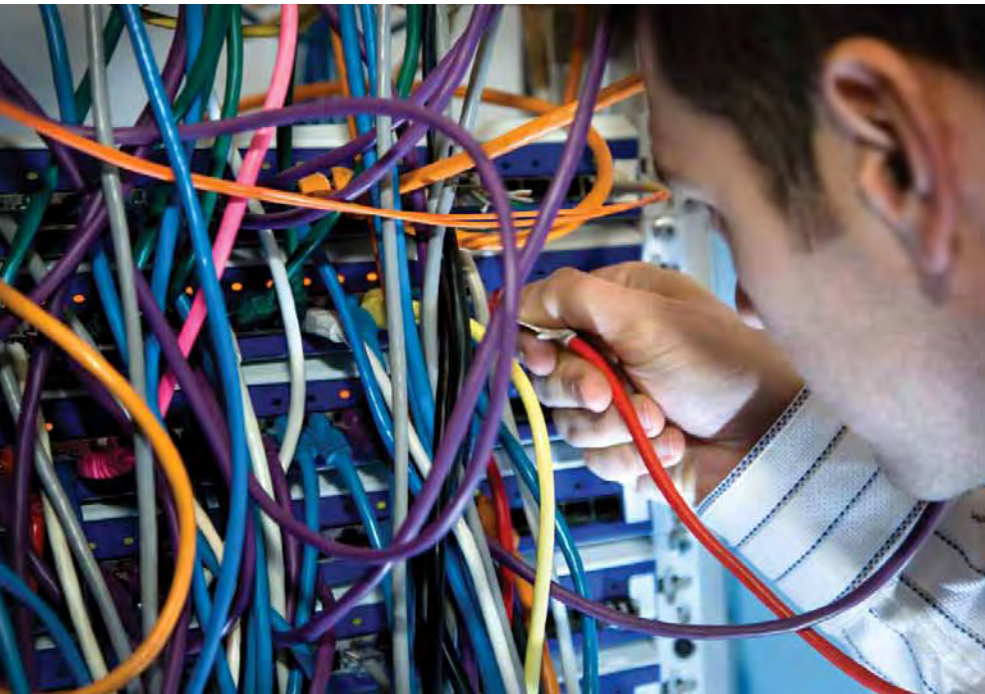
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# Working IT

As high school grad was coming along, Albertan Ryan Groten got to work looking for a career training program. He found his calling at a local community college where their IT program has greatly expanded his employment horizons



St. Albert, Alberta native Ryan Groten is a recent graduate of Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) (2010) who entered the workforce this past April with a Bachelor of Technology in Technology Management (BTech). The BTech program is a “2 + 2” offering that gives graduates of engineering technology and applied science diploma programs the ability to earn a baccalaureate degree with two more years of study. That has enabled Groten, who previously earned a diploma in Computer Engineering Technology, to also earn a degree – all in a relatively short time. Mr. Groten is now employed as a Systems Support Analyst with Alberta Blue Cross.

He reports that it all started at his St.

Albert high school (École Secondaire Sainte Marguerite d’Youville) with a desire to find a solid career option.

“I chose to get a Diploma in Computer Engineering Technology (CNT) at NAIT because I thought that the IT (information technology) field would prove interesting,” he says. “Seeing all of the advancements in the industry at the time and all the interesting things that could be done through computers was what got me started. For example, I would see websites that I thought were exciting and cool, and decided I wanted to know how to do that.”

He comments that he didn’t know much about computers before applying for the program, so making the decision

was difficult. “I didn’t know what to expect,” he says, remarking that during high school he visited his guidance counsellor and the two made several trips to facilities such as NAIT to see what was available for graduating students.

Applying to BTech was a very simple process for Groten. He reports that he was able to apply online, and because he had already taken his CNT Diploma at NAIT he had experience with the process making it even faster and easier.

“Being that BTech is a degree program, the workload for the courses was more difficult than my Diploma. While the schedule was actually quite light, the amount of work done outside class is high. And because most course assignments involve group work, there is a need to co-ordinate time well so students don’t fall behind on their work. Group work has a way of quickly showing who in the program is excelling and who is falling behind or coasting through,” he says.



Ryan Groten

“I saw a lot of opportunity in the IT field. As the business world focused more on the technology side of things there was a growing need for people to do the work. In fact there is so much work that everyone in my NAIT program was able to find a job in the field without much trouble.”

According to Groten he was able to find a job immediately after graduating from his CNT diploma as a Technical Support Representative. “After working this position for a year I was given the

opportunity to go back to school and take the BTech program while working part-time for the same company. Upon completion of my program I was hired on a permanent full time basis at the company as a Systems Support Analyst on both their Linux and UNIX servers.


Ryan was surprised at how much follow-up training was required after completing his initial schooling. "Because the IT industry moves so quickly I am constantly in need of training to keep up with what's current in order to be effective at my work. Fortunately, I enjoy the field very much. And, while I enjoyed that the program was generalized enough for students from many different fields to take it, in the future I'd like to see specialized streams of the BTech program so that students with knowledge in fields like IT, mechanical, and civil are able to get more specialized training," he says, adding that a leading reason for him to continue his education with the degree program was to advance his career in the industry where he saw he needed a broader education especially in regard to management.

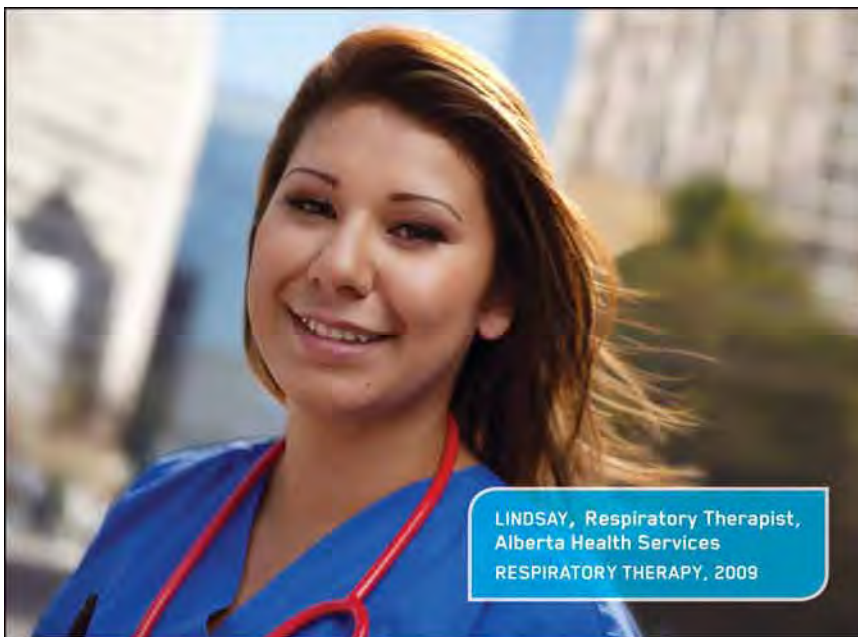
"With my limited work experience since finishing BTech I have already seen that a greater knowledge of management of projects and interpersonal skills have greatly improved how I do my job. I now feel more confident co-ordinating larger projects. I learned about a number of essential skills involved in managing projects, including creating project proposals, action plans, timelines (Gantt Charts), organizing meetings, project staffing, communication skills, business ethics, and conflict management."

As well, Groten is benefiting thanks to his understanding of related disciplines.

"Having some knowledge about other fields like civil and mechanical engineering helps me, because as an IT worker, I may have to work indirectly with people in other fields for certain projects," he says, pointing to the recent Capstone project where a student team had to be multi-disciplinary. "The Capstone project was a year long final group project. My team and I were tasked with researching a solution to noise pollution from an iron ore mine that is under construction in the Amazon rainforest. Our team had to research a

number of methods for reducing industrial noise and present our recommended solution in a competition with the other Capstone groups. My group and I made it into the finals of the competition and presented our recommendation at the Capstone Symposium in front of a large number of industry professionals, as well as our clients."

Concluding Groten says, "The NAIT program has opened doors to future job advancement in not only the IT field, because I now have the tools and knowledge to manage projects effectively in a number of areas. Looking back, I'm not sure that I would have thought the programs would have taken me this far so quickly." 



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# A Growing Community: *Autism advocates speak out*

By Melanie Franner

With the incidence of autism on the rise – many industry experts peg it at one child in every 110 – there’s a growing need for our educational school system to provide specialized services and support. Research and experience has shown that the earlier the child gains access to these services, the better he or she will be able to learn in the years to come. True, increased government funding is making its way to these students in need. But, many industry pundits feel that there needs to be yet more funding made available or, at the very least, a re-evaluation of how to put these monies to better use.





## Families in conflict

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a range of neuro-developmental disorders that affects communication, social interaction skills and behaviour. It usually becomes apparent within the first three years of life.

Ten years ago, the incidence of ASD was generally accepted to be about four to five in every 10,000. Today, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) states that autism affects one in every 110 American children, including one in every 70 boys. This represents a whopping 57 per cent increase from 2002 to 2006 and a 600 per cent increase in the past 20 years.

Canadian experts on autism epidemiology have confirmed that prevalence rates in Canada match those of the United States.

"We are certainly better at diagnosing kids now but this doesn't explain the huge explosion in the rates of diagnosis," says Suzanne Lanthier, Executive Director, Autism Speaks Canada.

"While we do not have definitive explanations as to the causes of autism, current research tells us that there are a multitude of genetic factors at play with, in some cases, environmental triggers. Finding out what causes autism will lead us to finding the most appropriate and effective treatments."

Of course, having a child diagnosed with autism is the first step of what eventually becomes a very long and often arduous road. Many families have to wait years before their child can even be diagnosed. Once that hurdle is overcome, it often becomes a waiting game to see if the child qualifies for special government services and support.

"In Ontario, once a diagnosis of autism is given, the child has to go through additional testing by one of the regional government agencies that has been contracted to provide services to see if the child qualifies for the programs or available funding," says Lanthier. "If the child is deemed too high functioning or too low functioning, then he or she

often doesn't qualify. What you end up with is a select group of families who qualify to sit on a waiting list for a couple of years. There is a whole group of kids who receive absolutely nothing before they enter the school system. It's absolutely tragic."

Lanthier goes on to say that it is not only the child who suffers from the lack of services and support, but the families as well.

"The families of these kids know that there are services out there that will help their children but they have to accept the reality that they can't have access to them or can't afford them," she says.

In fact, up until recently, the divorce rate of parents with children with autism was believed to be as high as 80 per cent. New research debunks that figure and puts it around 64 per cent, a number comparable to the 65 per cent divorce rate of parents without children with autism.

"There really weren't any significant differences in terms of family structure when you consider children with autism and those without," says Brian Freedman, Clinical Director of the Center for Autism and Related Disorders at the Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore and author of the new study. Freedman admits that there are stressors in parenting a child with autism. He hopes that the new findings will help eliminate any stress stemming from the misconception about divorce rates.

Regardless of the new findings, there's no doubt that parents of children with autism have the additional stress of seeking out and gaining access to the right services and support for their children.

"Unfortunately, parents often have to fight every step of the way to get the limited number of services currently available," says Lanthier. "True, there are pockets of schools that do a tremendous job and that work very hard to incorporate a child's needs and the child's parents' needs as much as they can. But those cases are few and far between. And with blogs and social networking that are apparent today, what often happens is



Laurie Mawlam

that families hear of a public school and administration that are open, receptive and really working well with families and you get many families moving to a particular area, city or province to access those schools and services, and you end up overburdening the system."

## The here and now

According to Jan Fukumoto, Central Co-ordinator of Autism Services for the Toronto District School Board, the school board's manner of working with children with autism has changed significantly over the years.

"For the last seven to eight years, we've used a multi-disciplinary team approach," she explains. "It started out small and now includes up to 31 people. There is a mix of people from different professions. The most recent addition has been ABA Facilitators."

ABA Facilitators teach social, motor and verbal behaviours, as well as reasoning skills. They use careful observation and positive reinforcement or prompting to teach a child each step of behaviour and to determine triggers to unwanted behaviours.

"We've had ABA Facilitators on board for a year now as a result of a partnership between the Ministry of Children and Youth and the Ministry of Education," adds Fukumoto. "I think that they have provided a new depth to our team."

Having been involved in the autism or developmentally delayed community for some 30 years, Fukumoto marvels at how the service and support from the educational world has changed and how this has affected parents. >

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» Back to School Issue

"Parents today are so much more in tune with what programs can be accessed," she says. "There is a very high level of advocacy on the part of parents and families."

At the same time, Fukumoto realizes that there is still so much more that needs to be done, that the treatment of autism is as individual as the child himself.

"The challenge with autism is that what works today won't necessarily work tomorrow," she says. "And a teacher who works really well with one child with autism may not have that same rapport with another child."

According to Laurie Mawlam, Executive Director of the Autism Canada Foundation, not only is the child with autism as individual as the child himself, but the

funding and support provided to children with autism and their families also differs from province to province.

"Right now, we are operating in silos," she says. "And what we do have isn't necessarily working."

For example, Mawlam states that in Ontario, there is a one-year waiting list for children to be diagnosed with autism. And once that diagnosis is attained, families are limited in what they can do and often wait several years before getting treatment.

"The B.C. government used to provide select families with children with autism up to \$70,000 a year to access the services and support they decided were best for their children," explains Mawlam. "The province eventually

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reduced it to \$20,000 a year for all families. In Saskatchewan, there is no money provided to families. In Alberta, families get access to some money but they have more freedom in their choice of how to spend it. Canadians with autism and their families desperately need federal leadership to ensure all persons with autism are getting the services they need regardless of where they live in Canada. Families across the country are floundering.”

### In an ideal world

Autism Speaks Canada’s Lanthier speaks of an ideal world where diagnosis takes place at a very early stage of a child’s development. Immediately following diagnosis, the child then gains access to the specialized group of treatments and therapies that would work best for him or her. The child then enters the school system more prepared, with years of therapy and treatment already in place, and is supplied with a fully trained Educational Assistant (EA) trained specifically to work with kids with autism. Parents would also be permitted to allow private therapists who have worked with their children and know how they learn into the classrooms. “The goal is to maximize the school day for all children and teachers in the classroom,” she says. “There is such apprehension right now to walk into a school and say ‘My child has autism. Let’s work together and make this work for everyone.’ We need to see a shift in those attitudes and we need to see it very soon. Parents with children with autism are no different from any others. They want what is best for their kids. When you see a wall go up before you even start a conversation, it’s hard to develop and maintain a productive relationship with your school.”


According to Lanthier, this ideal world isn’t too much of a stretch from reality.

“I think it has to happen because autism not going away,” she says. “The autism community is a very passionate community. For a while, people were looking at autism as the ‘cause of the moment. There was some money being put towards it in the hopes that it would appease some parents, who would then take a back-seat approach and let the

system sort itself out. The high prevalence of autism has also increased its visibility. I think the pressure is going to come from every angle – from the families, the teachers and the school administrators.”

Lanthier goes on to speak of a time when these autistic kids will be getting out of the school system.

“I am in contact with a lot of families

whose kids are 21 and are phased out of the school system,” she says. “There is absolutely nothing available to this population. In the end, the one in 110 population is going to be a huge financial burden on society if we can’t start helping them at a young age, which is the time when we know it will really make a difference.” 



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# A Matter of Faith

## Une question de foi

by/par Kelly Gray

As Canada becomes more non-sectarian in its approaches to society, those with religious values are finding more opportunities to study in settings that cherish and nurture their beliefs.

À mesure que le Canada devient non sectaire dans ses approches de la société, ceux possédant des valeurs religieuses trouvent plus d'occasions d'étudier dans des environnements qui entretiennent et nourrissent leurs croyances.

**Canada's education systems today are the result of a legacy** of historical pressures that pitted liberal thought against conservative community values during the 1800's. On the one hand there was seen to be a need for the crown to offer its citizens access to a non-sectarian education, while communities sought to protect spiritual values and inculcate religious dogmas at schools. To achieve Confederation the federal government created a compromise with an education system where the responsibilities for teaching youth were passed off to the provinces and their various constituencies with certain guarantees offered to religious minorities (E.g. Catholics in Ontario and Protestants in Quebec).

What resulted were four models that offered the compromise solutions that sought to please the various religious groups that were powerhouses of social and political support during the country's pioneer era. Model one was a concept that worked to separate church and state, and offered a non-sectarian public school approach that was protestant in its scope and became ever more secular over time. Model two, run in Ontario (then Upper Canada), was a non-sectarian system with minority denominational districts. Here Catholic schools were permitted, but under the authority of the majority controlled government run education department all texts, curriculum, testing, training and inspections were approved by a system that was largely protestant and liberal. In the Atlantic region there was a model where Catholic schools were permitted in geographically isolated areas where they could practice their faith in schools during class hours. In the towns and cities, however, the Atlantic education departments frowned on denominational teaching. In the fourth type, ecclesiastical authorities had primacy over administration and curriculum. This was practised in Quebec through a dual system of Catholic and Protestant separate education councils and in Newfoundland where there was a multi-denominational model supported by Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Salvation Army, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Pentecostals.

Since the early days of Confederation (1949 in Newfoundland), provinces have made changes to these models. For example, Quebec's education system today is moved more by linguistic needs than religious ones and Newfoundland's system is now fully non-denominational. Alberta has altered its non-sectarian public schools with a minority denominational district model and developed new systems where the public model no longer assumes a common school system and single ideology that must be imposed to unify society.

Canada has an odd assortment of 13 jurisdictions with each province and territory offering its own unique blend of programs, says Penny Milton, CEO of the Canadian Education Association, a 120-year-old national organization dedicated to creating dialogue and assisting in the formation of public policy regarding schools.

"What we are seeing today is a growing group of parents that are seeking out schools rather than just taking their children to the one closest to their homes. There is simply more choice in both the public and private independent schools and parents and students are taking advantage," she says.

What Milton observes is an educational fabric where each >

**De nos jours, les systèmes d'éducation du Canada sont le** fruit des pressions d'un patrimoine historique qui ont dressé une pensée libérale contre les valeurs de la communauté conservatrice pendant les années 1800. D'un côté, il semblait y avoir un besoin de la couronne d'offrir à ses citoyens un accès à une éducation non sectaire alors que les communautés cherchaient à protéger les valeurs spirituelles et inclure les dogmes religieux dans les écoles. Pour obtenir la Confédération, le gouvernement fédéral a créé un compromis par un système d'éducation où les responsabilités de l'enseignement à la jeunesse furent transférées aux provinces et à leurs différentes circonscriptions avec certaines garanties offertes à des minorités religieuses (par ex. les catholiques en Ontario et les protestants au Québec).

Ce qui en résulta fut quatre modèles qui offraient les solutions de compromis qui cherchaient à plaire aux différents groupes religieux qui étaient les dynamos du support social et politique pendant l'ère de pionnier du pays. Le premier modèle était un concept qui s'efforçait de séparer l'église de l'état et offrait une approche non sectaire à l'école publique de type protestant dans son ensemble et qui devint encore plus laïque dans le temps. Le deuxième modèle, appliqué en Ontario (alors le Haut-Canada), était un système non sectaire avec des districts confessionnels minoritaires. Ici, des écoles catholiques étaient permises, mais sous l'autorité du ministère de l'Éducation contrôlé par un gouvernement majoritaire, tous les textes, les programmes, les examens, la formation et les inspections étaient approuvés par un système largement protestant et libéral. Dans la région atlantique, il y avait un modèle où les écoles catholiques étaient permises dans des régions géographiquement isolées où les gens pouvaient pratiquer leur foi dans des écoles pendant les heures de cours. Dans les villages et les cités cependant, les ministères de l'Éducation atlantique désapprouvaient l'enseignement confessionnel. Dans le quatrième modèle, les autorités ecclésiastiques avaient la main mise sur l'administration et les programmes. Ce fut pratiqué au Québec par un système dualiste de commissions scolaires séparées catholiques et protestantes et à Terre-Neuve où il y avait un modèle multi confessionnel supporté par les catholiques, anglicans, méthodistes, l'armée du salut, adventistes du septième jour et les pentecôtistes.

Depuis les premiers jours de la Confédération (1949 à Terre-Neuve), les provinces ont apporté des changements à ces modèles. Par exemple, le système d'éducation du Québec d'aujourd'hui est conduit plus par des besoins linguistiques que religieux et le système de Terre-Neuve est maintenant complètement non confessionnel. L'Alberta a modifié ses écoles publiques non sectaires avec un modèle de districts confessionnels minoritaires et elle a développé de nouveaux systèmes où le modèle public n'assume plus un système commun d'école ni une idéologie unique qui doit être imposée pour unifier la société.

Le Canada possède un étrange assortiment de 13 juridictions avec chaque province et territoire qui offre son propre mélange de programmes, comme le mentionne Penny Milton, DG de l'Association canadienne de l'éducation, une organisation de >

province has different requirements for the registration of schools such as those within the faith-based framework. "In many areas these private schools may operate as they wish, as long as the basic requirements are reached. It's really up to the clients of these schools to determine if their needs are met. If they [the clients] are satisfied with the level of education and the programming, then there is often no major issue for the departments of education."

She suggests that at the elementary level, there appears to be less public supervision of the private sector schools. "Once you get into the higher grades independent schools really conform more to the general needs of students who must be prepared to meet entrance requirements for post secondary study or entrance to the workplace."

Largely, this is the experience of students at southern Saskatchewan's Caronport High School, a facility located west of Moose Jaw. A 150-desk Christian school that is attached to Briercrest College and Seminary, Principal Deborah Ike states that faith-based schools really deliver for students as they move into the workforce. "Job markets are shifting and students need an edge. Attendance at faith-based schools demonstrate a lot of positive attributes to employers who are looking for workers with strong personal values. At Caronport High School we offer a character-based multiple intelligence program that seeks to address heart, soul, body and mind," she says.

Ike comments that unlike provinces such as BC where religious instruction must be outside the school day, Saskatchewan's

120 années dédiée à la création du dialogue et à l'assistance à la formation de la politique publique concernant les écoles.

« Ce que nous voyons aujourd'hui c'est un groupe grandissant de parents qui recherchent des écoles plutôt que d'inscrire leurs enfants à celle qui est le plus près de la maison. Il y a simplement plus de choix tant au public qu'aux écoles indépendantes privées et les parents et les étudiants en tirent avantage », nous dit-elle.

Ce que Milton observe est une structure éducationnelle où chaque province possède des exigences différentes pour l'inscription des écoles comme celles faisant partie du cadre confessionnel. « Dans plusieurs secteurs, ces écoles privées peuvent fonctionner comme elles l'entendent pour autant que les exigences de bases sont rencontrées. Il appartient en fait aux clients de ces écoles de déterminer si elles répondent à leurs besoins. S'ils [les clients] sont satisfaits avec le niveau d'éducation et la programmation, il n'y a alors pas de problème important pour les ministères de l'Éducation ».

Elle suggère que pour le primaire, il semble y avoir moins de supervision publique des écoles du secteur privé. « Une fois que vous atteignez les années plus élevées, les écoles indépendantes se conforment réellement plus aux besoins généraux des étudiants qui doivent être préparés à faire face aux exigences d'admission aux études post secondaires ou à l'accès au marché du travail. »

De façon générale, ceci est l'expérience des étudiants au Caronport Highschool du sud de la Saskatchewan, une



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independent faith-based schools can offer chapel and Christian education throughout the day. As well, there is a flexibility for programming that is more difficult to attain in the public sector. For example, at Caronport they have lengthened school hours, a move that has allowed them to offer six periods rather than the standard four. Students may also mix and match programs such as sports and fine arts, reports the principal.

“We also offer linkages to Briercrest College and Seminary, a facility that shares the campus. This means that Caronport High School students may use the facilities and do things such as take first year university courses in their final high school year or seek out peer mentoring from a college age student. In fact there are 19 college level courses available to high school students. These could include Greek, or English Lit or Divinity courses,” she says, noting that this type of study is ideal for students looking for an alternative to the public sector schools where choices can be fewer.

“There is also an opportunity for service. This might include broadening a student’s world view through Christian outreach, or assisting at a Regina street mission.

It is programming such as Caronport’s that have more parents and students looking hard at faith-based schools. To be sure, the fortunes of these schools could well be described by a battle ongoing in Niagara-on-the-Lake. There the local public high school has just closed its doors due to declining enrollment. Where did the students go? They packed up and registered to attend a nearby Mennonite school that is fully funded from the public sector, even though Ontario sent a definite ‘no’ message to faith-based schooling last year during the provincial election. All that the Minister needed for him to OK funding was a promise from the school that the provincial curriculum would be taught. Employees (teachers) would also have to become members of the public school board with certification from the Ontario College and religion would be taught outside of school hours.

True, some parents and students are not pleased with this arrangement because of bussing and the appearance of religious elements amid a non-sectarian approach to education in the province. However, the community has largely embraced the

institution située à l’ouest de Moose Jaw. Une école chrétienne de 150 places qui est rattachée au collège et séminaire Briercrest dont le principal, Deborah Ike, proclame que les écoles confessionnelles répondent réellement aux besoins des étudiants qui accèdent au marché du travail. « Les marchés du travail changent et les étudiants ont besoin d’un avantage. La fréquentation d’écoles confessionnelles démontre beaucoup de qualités positives aux employeurs qui recherchent des travailleurs avec de fortes valeurs personnelles. Au Caronport Highschool, nous offrons un programme d’intelligence multiple basé sur le caractère qui cherche à tenir compte du cœur, de l’âme et du cerveau », nous dit-elle.

Ike commente que contrairement aux provinces comme la Colombie Britannique où l’instruction religieuse doit se faire à l’extérieur d’une journée scolaire, les écoles confessionnelles indépendantes de la Saskatchewan peuvent offrir une chapelle et une éducation chrétienne pendant la journée scolaire. Il y a également une flexibilité de programmation qui est plus difficile à obtenir dans le secteur public. Par exemple, à Caronport ils ont allongé les heures scolaires ce qui a permis d’offrir six périodes plutôt que les quatre standards. Selon le principal, les étudiants peuvent également mélanger des programmes comme les sports et les beaux arts.

« Nous offrons également des liaisons avec le collège et séminaire Briercrest, une institution qui partage le campus. Ceci signifie que les étudiants du secondaire Caronport peuvent utiliser les installations et faire des choses comme suivre des cours de première universitaire lors de leur dernière année scolaire ou ils peuvent obtenir du mentorat d’un étudiant d’âge collégial. En fait, il y a 19 cours de niveau collégial qui sont disponibles aux étudiants du secondaire. Ces derniers peuvent inclure le grec, la littérature anglaise ou des cours sur la divinité, » dit-elle en notant que ce type d’études est idéal pour les étudiants qui cherchent une alternative aux écoles du secteur public où les choix sont plus limités.

« C’est également une opportunité pour rendre service. Ceci peut inclure un élargissement de la perspective du monde d’un étudiant par un travail d’information chrétienne sur le terrain auprès des groupes défavorisés ou par l’aide à des missions de rue de Régina. »

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change opening the doors for other religious groups to foster the same kind of scenario.

Says the region's school superintendent John Stainsby, "Students go there because of the context or flavour of the school." By this he means students are enrolling to take advantage of the opportunities and spirit of the Christian school.

And, while the situation in Niagara-on-the-Lake suggests that parents are looking harder at making the choice to send little Johnny or Jacqueline to a religious school, the reality is less clear. Says Ray Hendriks, Director of Promotions at the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools, "Ontario enrolment is stable in Christian schools with a pretty level rate of growth. Where we are seeing gains is in the number of parents that are tire kicking and in the number of alternatives that are out there," he says.

The same is true across the country. For example, in New Brunswick where independent faith-based schools also may not teach religion during the school day, Catholic schools are doing quite well. In fact St. Malachy Memorial High School in Saint John has more requests for enrolment than seats in classes.

"We teach the standard curriculum and work within the bounds of the Department of Education," says Monsignor Brian Henneberry, a Catholic priest who heads up the Catholic Archdiocese in Saint John. He reports they have four elementary and one high school that are built and owned by the diocese. These are now rented by the province and run by the Department of Education with lay teachers and an on-site priest assigned as a faith co-ordinator.

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C'est une programmation comme celle de Caronport qui incite plus de parents à fortement considérer les écoles confessionnelles. Pour en être certain, la fortune de ces écoles pourrait très bien être décrite comme une bataille en cour dans Niagara-on-the-Lake. Là, l'école secondaire publique vient juste de fermer ses portes à cause du déclin des inscriptions. Où sont allés les étudiants ? Ils ont emballé leurs affaires et se sont inscrits à une école Mennonite voisine qui est entièrement financée par le secteur public même si l'Ontario a émis un message clair de "non" à l'éducation confessionnelle l'année dernière lors des élections provinciales. Tout ce dont le ministre avait besoin pour autoriser le financement était une promesse de l'école que le programme provincial serait enseigné. Les employés (enseignants) auraient également dû devenir membres de la commission scolaire publique avec une certification du collège de l'Ontario et la religion aurait dû être enseignée hors des heures scolaires.

Il est vrai que certains parents ne sont pas contents de cet arrangement à cause du transport en autobus et la présence d'éléments religieux au sein d'une approche non sectaire à l'éducation dans la province. Cependant, la communauté à largement souscrit au changement ouvrant ainsi les portes à d'autres groupes religieux pour qu'ils favorisent le même genre de scénario.

L'administrateur en chef des écoles de la région, John Stainsby, mentionne que « les étudiants y vont à cause du contexte et de la saveur de l'école ». Ce qu'il veut dire est que les étudiants s'inscrivent pour tirer avantage des opportunités et de l'esprit de l'école chrétienne.

Alors que la situation à Niagara-on-the-Lake suggère que les parents considèrent plus fortement le choix d'envoyer leur petit Johnny ou Jacqueline dans une école confessionnelle, la réalité est moins claire. Ray Hendriks, directeur des promotions auprès de l'alliance ontarienne des écoles chrétiennes dit que « les inscriptions dans les écoles chrétiennes de l'Ontario sont stables et possèdent un agréable taux de croissance. Nous voyons des gains pour le nombre de parents qui cherchent et le nombre d'alternatives qui sont là », dit-il.

C'est la même chose partout au pays. Par exemple, au Nouveau-Brunswick où les écoles confessionnelles indépendantes ne peuvent pas enseigner la religion pendant la journée scolaire, les écoles catholiques se portent très bien. En fait, l'école secondaire St Malachy Memorial de Saint-Jean reçoit plus de demandes d'inscription qu'il y a de place dans les classes.

« Nous enseignons le programme standard et travaillons à l'intérieure des limites du ministère de l'Éducation », déclare Monsignor Brian Henneberry, un prêtre catholique chef de l'archidiocèse catholique dans Saint-Jean. Il rapporte qu'ils ont quatre écoles primaires et une secondaire qui ont été construites et sont la propriété du diocèse. Ces dernières sont maintenant louées par la province et dirigées par le ministère de l'Éducation avec des enseignants laïques et un prêtre sur place assigné à la coordination de la foi.

En Colombie Britannique, les écoles confessionnelles doivent également être accréditées par le ministère provincial de l'Éducation. Au plan organisationnel, les écoles confessionnelles



**“What we are seeing today is a growing group of parents that are seeking out schools rather than just taking their children to the one closest to their homes.”**

« Ce que nous voyons aujourd’hui c’est un groupe grandissant de parents qui recherchent des écoles plutôt que d’inscrire leurs enfants à celle qui est le plus près de la maison. »

In BC, faith-based schools also must be accredited by the province’s department of education. Organizationally, faith-based schools are operated within the bounds of a religious society that oversees administrative aspects and reports to the province.

About 65,000 students attend BC private schools. The network of private and independent schools in BC offer a wide range of choice and diversity. Jewish, Mennonite, Montessori, Waldorf, Sikh, Seventh-Day Adventist, special needs, First Nations, various Christian denominations as well as secular day and boarding schools offer a spectrum of choice to both parents and students. More than 85 percent of private schools in BC are partially funded by the provincial government – receiving between 35 and 50 percent of the public school per-

fonctionnent dans les limites d’une société religieuse qui gère les aspects administratifs et se rapporte à la province.

Il y a environ 65,000 étudiants qui fréquentent les écoles privées en Colombie Britannique. Le réseau d’écoles privées et indépendantes en Colombie Britannique offre beaucoup de choix et de diversité. Les pédagogies juives, mennonites, de Montessori, de Steiner-Waldorf, des sikhs, des adventistes du septième jour, pour les besoins particuliers, des premières Nations, de diverses dénominations chrétiennes ainsi que des écoles laïques et des pensionnats offrent un spectre de choix tant aux parents qu’aux étudiants. Plus de 85 pour cent des écoles privées en Colombie Britannique sont financées en partie par le gouvernement provincial en recevant entre 35 et 50 pour cent de la subvention par étudiant à l’école publique selon la catégorie de l’école. Les écoles privées et indépendantes qui reçoivent des subventions du gouvernement doivent employer des enseignants certifiés en Colombie Britannique et offrir des programmes consistants avec l’atteinte des objectifs du programme provincial obligatoire.

Environ 10 pour cent de la population étudiante du K-12 de la Colombie Britannique provient d’écoles indépendantes. Les écoles indépendantes et privées reçoivent plus de 150 \$ millions en subvention chaque année. Il en coûterait au gouvernement de la Colombie Britannique de 750 \$ millions à 1 \$ milliard de nouveaux capitaux de subvention pour accommoder tous les étudiants des écoles indépendantes et privées comme le dit la province.

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pupil grant, depending on the category of the school. Private and independent schools receiving government grants must employ BC certified teachers and offer educational programs consistent with meeting the outcomes of the provincial mandated curriculum.

Independent schools account for about 10 per cent of BC's K-12 student population. Independent and private schools receive more than \$150 million in funding annually. It would cost the BC government an estimated \$750 million to \$1 billion of new capital funding to accommodate all independent and private school students in public schools, says the province.

"A key difference between Ontario and BC is that Catholic schools in Ontario are really considered part of the public system. In BC we are more like Manitoba in our approach," says Fred Herfst, Executive Director of the Federation of Independent School Association of BC. He reports that independent schools such as Catholic operated institutions are only partially funded similar to Manitoba's model.

Herfst adds that registrations among BC's independent school portfolio has seen regular gains of between one and two percent with last year showing flat performance. "Independent evangelical schools really made their biggest moves after World War II to the present," he says, noting that there is about 350 Independent schools operating in the province with three Islamic schools, four Sikh schools and six Jewish facilities operating, in addition to a host of Christian institutions.

« Une différence majeure entre l'Ontario et la Colombie Britannique est que les écoles catholiques de l'Ontario sont en fait considérées comme faisant partie du système public. En Colombie Britannique nous nous apparentons plus au Manitoba pour notre approche », mentionne Fred Herfst, le directeur général de la Federation of Independent School Association de la Colombie Britannique. Il rapporte que les écoles indépendantes comme les institutions à fonctionnement catholique ne sont que partiellement subventionnées de façon similaire au modèle manitobain.

Herfst ajoute que les inscriptions parmi le portefeuille d'écoles indépendantes de la Colombie Britannique ont connu des gains réguliers entre un et deux pour cent avec une performance aplatie pour l'année dernière. « Les écoles indépendantes évangéliques ont connu leur meilleure croissance après la Seconde Guerre mondiale jusqu'à maintenant », dit-il, en notant qu'il y a environ 350 écoles indépendantes actives dans la province avec trois écoles islamiques, quatre sikhs et six installations juives en service en plus d'une multitude d'institutions chrétiennes.

« Ce que l'école confessionnelle possède en sa faveur est une approche du financement sur plusieurs fronts. Dans le secteur public, les écoles sont supportées uniquement par la trésorerie provinciale avec quelques collectes de fonds privés pour des projets spéciaux comme pour une équipe sportive ou un voyage scolaire. Les écoles religieuses peuvent recevoir une subvention



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“What the independent faith-based school has in its corner is a multi-pronged approach to funding. In the public sector, schools are supported strictly through the provincial treasury with a bit of private fund-raising for special projects like a sport team or a school trip. Religious schools may receive partial funding from the government as well as obtain tuition and donations to add to its operating budget. Sometimes this can create a very well funded program that exceeds what is available in the public sector, a fact that can make the faith-based school more attractive to those outside their religious groups.

Looking around the country, Herfst offers that faith-based schooling will continue to grow as parents and students seek an alternative to the standard fare provided in the public sector. “Over the long run, the survival and growth of these schools will depend on religious observance,” he says.

And certainly, Canada, like other countries in the developed world, is more non-secular than in our grandparents’ day. This said, we are also more polarized with those of faith pushing hard against the non-faith-based majority and the school system. The result is an expanding bundle of ecclesiastical institutions that are working hard to deliver both well accepted academics alongside spiritual components. ✦csc

partielle du gouvernement ainsi qu’obtenir des frais de scolarité et des dons pour les ajouter à leur budget d’exploitation. Parfois, cela peut entraîner un programme très bien subventionné qui excède ce qui est disponible dans le secteur public, un fait qui peut rendre l’école confessionnelle plus attrayante pour ceux de l’extérieur des groupes religieux.

En examinant le pays, Herfst soutient que le système d’éducation confessionnel continuera de croître puisque les parents et les étudiants recherchent une alternative au tarif standard fourni dans le secteur public. « À long terme, la survie et la croissance de ces écoles dépendront de l’observance religieuse », dit-il.

Et certainement, le Canada, comme d’autres pays développés du monde, est plus non séculaire qu’à l’époque de nos grands-parents. Ceci étant dit, nous sommes également plus polarisés en considérant ceux qui ont la foi et qui appuient fortement contre la majorité non confessionnelle et le système scolaire. Le résultat est un ensemble grandissant d’institutions ecclésiastiques qui travaillent dur pour livrer des programmes bien acceptés avec des composants spirituels en parallèle. ✦csc

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## RespectED Earns Honours

After more than two decades in action, this Red Cross program is making a difference across Canada with people learning a lot about the mutual need for respect.

When Aretha Franklin belted out her 1967 hit 'RESPECT', it hit a cord with radio audiences around the world. Written by Otis Redding at a time when people were examining their roles and behaviour like few times in history, 'RESPECT' represents a timeless demand for equality and freedom from oppression.

Enter the Canadian Red Cross and its violence and abuse prevention program, RespectED. This program teaches kids and adults how healthy relationships look and feel, how to recognize the signs of abuse, dating violence, bullying, and harassment, and how to get help. Children and youth learn skills on how to be safe and how to create healthy relationship. Adults gain knowledge to build safer environments within their organizations and communities.



Elaine Ferland (left) receives the 'Preventing bullying and Harassment of Youth' award from the Canadian Red Cross.

**“The impact on the youth and the community is immeasurable,” – Connie Marchal, Manager Boundary Women’s Transitional House, Grand Forks, B.C.**

In 2009, the Canadian Red Cross marked a 25th anniversary for RespectED. The Canadian Red Cross, through this violence and abuse prevention program, is reminding Canadians that violence and abuse are preventable tragedies. And, with this anniversary came a wealth of stories and examples from across the country where the program has made a difference to so many students, teachers and just average Canadians.

Consider that over 25 years the program has educated over 3.2 million Canadian school children and youth, and delivered the message to more than 1.2 million adults. Making this possible is the participation of some 1000 prevention educators.

Indeed, in just one centre, Guelph, some 13,800 students have been impacted by the program since 2001. In this Ontario community, Helen Collins has been working as a child and youth counsellor in the Upper Grand District School Board in Ontario for 30 years. In 2001, the Canadian Red Cross’ RespectED ‘It’s Not Your Fault’ workshop was taught for the first time in the area by volunteers to Grade 7 students. The two-hour workshop explored why abuse and neglect occurred and where youth could go for help.

“I could see the light bulbs going on,” says Collins. “Prior to this, students were unaware of the impact emotional abuse had on their lives.”

After the workshops were introduced in her board, Collins took training so she could deliver the programs herself. She is currently one of 24 partners who teach prevention education to all grade seven students at Upper Grand. She believes the impact of the Canadian Red Cross’ programs is evident.

“We are changing a generation to be kinder parents,” she comments.

It was a similar experience at North Vancouver’s Argyle Secondary School where it all started with one presentation 20 years ago that left a



Tracy Dixon

sense of amazement with Tracy Dixon, a counsellor at the school. Inspired, Tracy took RespectED training and presented workshops to her students until the need to bring in RespectED volunteers was warranted to continue delivering presentations. She suggests that while the topic is sensitive, and the students may not have encountered such terrible situations, they might know someone who has.

“RespectED is a wonderful service and I hope it never stops reaching out to children and youth,” she remarks.

RespectED is also reaching out in the north where social issues tend to be front and centre amid some of Canada’s least advantaged communities. For example, in Manitoba the Frontier School Division is using the program to assist smaller centres and First Nations communities. The largest school division in geographic size, with a territory that covers three-quarters of the province, offering service to 42 schools in 40 communities with 6,000 students, Frontier SD is turning to staff such as Elaine Ferland who works on a one-on-one basis to help children learn basic life skills.

Ferland is an Aboriginal woman from Duck Bay, Manitoba, a rural northern community approximately 430 kilometres north of Winnipeg. Ferland, is a nurse and Child and Family Services caseworker by training, and is now a guidance counsellor ➤

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with the Frontier School Division in Manitoba. Under her tutelage a number of northern communities and reserves are taking advantage of RespectED training thanks to her efforts to adapt it to Aboriginal culture. Recently, she was invited by one northern reserve to speak to children on a ceremonial ground - not in a traditional classroom where she is used to teaching RespectED programs. "I said, 'sure'. Then I thought oh my goodness, what did I get myself into? This is a whole different ballgame." Without the use of computers, flip charts, paper, pens and other tools, Ferland had to use her understanding of her culture to translate the RespectED messages by getting the kids involved interactively.

"I see the hurt in our communities. I find that this program (RespectED) goes in and fills the need," she concludes.

"Our school division is very rural and very northern, and in order for us to do

some of the work we do, it's important that we create partnerships," adds Linda Ballantyne, Frontier School Division Board of Trustees Chairperson. "So, we look for organizations like Red Cross that have excellent (programs) to offer. It's given students an opportunity to talk and share and they have someone that they can trust who is from their community who will be able to help them if they have issues," she says speaking about Ferland who was a recipient of a Red Cross Award for her efforts in 2007.

Making the point hit home still further is Nora Jennings, a 79 year-old Ontario woman from Sault Ste Marie. For the past 10 years Jennings has made it her cause to educate youth about emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and neglect. She gives students resources to recognize abuse, break the silence and receive information on where to go for help.

Further, she has taken her expertise on the road to other parts of northern Ontario. During one stop in Timmins a young mother corralled her following the RespectED presentation where a daughter realized she had been abusing her mom.

"During the break, the mother came over to me, and hugged me and said 'Thank you for coming to Timmins. If you don't do another presentation here just know that this was a breakthrough for us and your time here was a success,'" said Jennings.

It might be more than 40 years since Franklin's groundbreaking hit, but as the volunteer participants can see, the need for respect remains and may be even greater today than ever given the breadth of global conflicts and the increased level of stress in day to day life. As Otis Redding wrote all we need is a little R.E.S.P.E.C.T. to help set things right. ♣csc

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## The Case for Using Peer Tutoring in the Classroom

### Mise en valeur de l'enseignement par les pairs à l'école

by/par Dr. Edward E. Gordon, Ph.D

**The idea of students teaching other students is not a new concept** discovered by 21st-century American educators. Before 1920 the majority of students across the United States attended one-room schools. Children were at many different educational levels and ages. Teachers found they could not do the entire instructional job alone. Therefore, they used older students as tutors to help younger children, or their own peer group. The consensus among educators and parents was that this method helped the younger child's education and simultaneously strengthened the learning and self-image of the older peer tutor. Time moved on. America urbanized. Large schools won out.

However, over the past 30 years extensive published research has demonstrated the positive learning effects of peer tutoring. Let's review how you can apply these best practices in your school.

**L'idée d'associer un élève tuteur avec un élève tutoré, ce n'est pas un concept novateur** découvert par les éducateurs américains du 21<sup>e</sup> siècle. Avant 1920, la plupart des élèves à travers les États-Unis fréquentaient des écoles à classe unique. Le niveau d'éducation et l'âge des enfants variaient. Les enseignants n'arrivaient pas à compléter la démarche pédagogique par eux-mêmes. Par conséquent, on demandait aux élèves plus âgés d'agir comme tuteurs pour les plus jeunes, ou bien pour leur groupe de pairs. Les pédagogues ainsi que les parents étaient d'accord que cette méthode d'enseignement contribuait positivement à la formation des jeunes, ainsi qu'au renforcement de l'apprentissage et de l'image de soi-même chez les élèves tuteurs plus âgés. Les années passèrent. L'Amérique s'est urbanisée. Les grandes écoles ont pris le dessus.

Néanmoins, au fil des dernières 30 années les recherches approfondies qui ont été publiées ont démontré les effets positifs de l'enseignement par les pairs. Passons en revue comment appliquer ces meilleures pratiques dans votre école.

#### Les avantages

Le consensus suggère que les élèves apprennent mieux en s'entraînant que dans une classe axée sur l'enseignante ou l'enseignant. Les avantages les plus cités de l'enseignement par les pairs reviennent au tuteur ainsi qu'au tutoré :

- L'apprentissage des habiletés scolaires.
- La formation d'une attitude plus positive envers l'apprentissage.
- L'acquisition d'une compréhension profonde de la matière.
- Le développement d'une image de soi plus positif.
- L'amélioration des attitudes envers l'école et les pédagogues.

Les chercheurs ont constaté un fait que les pédagogues signalent souvent comme étant un important effet secondaire de l'enseignement par les pairs : une ambiance agréable dans la classe. Un autre bénéfice possible est que les élèves s'épanouissent avec des habiletés transmissibles à la parentalité lorsqu'ils seront grands.





Dr Edward E. Gordon, Ph. D

## Benefits

There is broad general agreement that students will learn better when they help teach one another than when they are in completely teacher-directed classrooms. The most commonly cited benefits of peer tutoring accrue to both tutor and tutee:

- The learning of academic skills.
- Encouraging more positive attitudes towards learning.
- Gaining a deeper understanding of subject areas.
- Developing a more positive self-image.
- Improving attitudes toward school and teachers.

Researchers have found that teachers often report that an important by-product of peer tutoring is a more pleasant classroom atmosphere. Another potential benefit is better-adjusted students with skills transferable to parenting when they mature.

As students are trained in preparation to become tutors, their motivation to learn increases, personal feelings of helplessness are reduced, and the stigma fades of accepting help from others. Since all students have the chance to participate and the opportunity to help, peer tutoring empowers them to feel valuable and worthwhile. From these roots grows a more co-operative classroom learning spirit. Student tutors experience improved personal locus of control, self-esteem and social skills. They may also show a more positive attitude toward school and lower dropout rates, truancy, and tardiness.

Peer tutors can reinforce concepts, help tutees practise skills, assist with individual projects, support problem solving, or challenge tutees' thinking or approaches to learning. Peer tutoring also strengthens tutors' understanding of concepts and skills, engages them in creative thinking and problem solving as they test alternative strategies for helping tutees, and enhances the tutors' self-image. This can become a promising component in building students' critical thinking skills.

A wide gamut of specific K-12 subjects or special student populations can benefit from peer tutoring. Subjects commonly include language arts, math, science, social studies, health, and art, as well as other secondary-school academic topics. Research has also shown that a broad range of regular and special needs students can receive academic benefits from peer tutoring including: low achievers, the socially disadvantaged, the

À mesure que les élèves sont formés en préparation au tutorat, leur motivation à apprendre augmente, les sentiments d'impuissance personnelle sont réduits, et le stigmate ressenti en acceptant de l'aide est diminué. Puisque tous les élèves ont la chance de participer et l'occasion d'aider, l'enseignement par les pairs leur donne le pouvoir de se sentir compétents et utiles. De ces racines, on voit pousser dans la classe un esprit d'apprentissage plus accommodant. Les élèves tuteurs connaissent un locus de contrôle, une estime de soi, et des aptitudes sociales améliorées. Ils ont aussi tendance à démontrer une attitude plus positive envers l'école ainsi que des taux de décrochage diminués.

Le tuteur-pair peut renforcer les concepts, aider le tuteur à pratiquer ses habiletés, épauler les projets individuels et la résolution de problèmes, ainsi qu'éprouver son raisonnement et ses façons d'aborder l'apprentissage. L'enseignement par les pairs renforce aussi la compréhension des concepts et des habiletés chez le tuteur, lui inspire à amener une pensée créatrice à la résolution des problèmes lorsqu'il ou elle emploie des stratégies alternatives pour aider le tuteur, et met en valeur son image de soi-même.

Ceci peut devenir un composant promettant dans le développement d'un esprit critique chez les élèves. Une gamme d'élèves de la maternelle à la 12<sup>e</sup> année ainsi que les étudiants spéciaux peuvent profiter de l'enseignement par les pairs. Les matières abordées sont habituellement les arts du langage, les mathématiques, la science, les sciences humaines, la santé, et l'art, ainsi que d'autres sujets scolaires de l'école secondaire. Les recherches démontrent que sur le plan scolaire, une vaste gamme d'élèves réguliers et à besoins particuliers peut bénéficier de l'enseignement par les pairs. Ce groupe comprend les élèves peu productifs, les démunis sur le plan social, ceux en difficulté d'apprentissage, les élèves gravement handicapés, ceux ayant une déficience mentale, et les élèves manifestant un retard de langage, l'autisme, ou du trouble déficitaire de l'attention avec ou sans hyperactivité.

## Surmonter les obstacles

Si ces recherches sont exactes, qu'est-ce qui empêche les pédagogues d'exécuter davantage l'enseignement par les pairs? Le plus grand obstacle est, semble-t-il, la conviction qu'un élève doit être instruit par un adulte. Autres objections incluent :

- Le montant de temps et d'efforts pour former les tuteurs
- L'impatience des tuteurs
- Les implications de la sélection de tuteurs
- La pertinence de la matière à l'enseignement par les pairs
- Le manque de compétences de la part des tuteurs

Le tutorat par les pairs exige une planification minutieuse et est fondé sur la formation adéquate des tuteurs. L'efficacité de l'enseignement par les pairs est basée sur le fait que ce n'est pas un programme de bénévolat sans règle et sans freins. Nous ne devons pas ignorer ou rejeter les obstacles potentiels en présence chez les pédagogues lorsqu'ils prennent en considération l'utilité du tutorat par les pairs dans leurs salles de classe.

L'enseignement par les pairs exige l'appui des parents et de l'organisme. En général, le tutorat par les pairs est méconnu chez les parents. Il est important de leur apprendre son rôle de

learning disabled, the severely disabled, the mental handicapped, and children with language delays, autism, or attention deficit disorder/hyperactivity disorders.

### Overcoming Obstacles

If all this research is accurate, what impedes teachers from implementing peer tutoring more frequently? The biggest obstacle seems to be the belief that knowledge is best transferred when a child is taught by an adult. Other objections include:

- Too much time and effort to train tutors
- Tutor impatience
- Implications of tutor selection
- Academic subject suitability for peer tutoring
- Lack of expertise on the tutor's part

Peer tutoring requires careful planning and is grounded in the appropriate training of tutors. Effective peer tutoring is not a haphazard volunteer program. We must not ignore or dismiss the potential hurdles that teachers will face as they consider the utility of peer tutoring in their classrooms. Peer tutoring will require parent and organizational support. Parents generally know very little about peer tutoring; they need to be educated about the role of peer tutoring as a support and supplement to teacher instruction and the benefits of tutoring both for the tutee and the tutor.

### Organizing

A successful peer-tutoring program uses six key strategies:

- Defining and planning a peer tutoring program
- Training peer tutors
- Monitoring daily results
- Peer tutoring assessment
- Finding support for peer tutoring
- Sustaining a peer tutoring program

Lack of effective tutor training is the number one cause of the ultimate failure of most classroom peer tutoring efforts. Peer tutoring requires a purposeful program of specific learning objectives, activities, and assessments for developing and determining students' mastery of concepts and skills. To

support et de supplément aux démarches pédagogiques et les bénéfiques du tutorat pour le tuteuré ainsi que le tuteur.

### La planification

Un programme de tutorat par les pairs réussi comprend six stratégies clés :

- Le repérage et la planification d'un programme de tutorat par les pairs
- La formation des élèves tuteurs
- La surveillance des résultats quotidiens
- L'évaluation du tutorat par les pairs
- La recherche d'appui pour l'enseignement par les pairs
- Le maintien d'un programme de tutorat par les pairs

En ce qui concerne la plupart des tentatives vers le tutorat par les pairs en classe, la principale cause d'un ultime échec est le manque de formation efficace. L'enseignement par les pairs exige un programme réfléchi contenant des objectifs d'apprentissage, des activités, et des évaluations particuliers afin de développer et d'établir la maîtrise des concepts et des habiletés chez les élèves. Afin d'être un tuteur efficace, l'élève doit apprendre à communiquer avec ses pairs en tant que partenaire en apprentissage. Mieux réussi est l'élève tuteur qui a un rôle ultra systématique, qui est au courant des principes de bases de l'apprentissage, qui comprend les buts pédagogiques, et qui reçoit une formation sur l'emploi adéquat des activités et des matériaux de tutorat.

### Études de cas

#### New York (New York)

Dans un programme de tutorat mutuel à New York, des élèves de secondaire sous-performants ont donné des leçons particulières en rééducation en lecture aux élèves à l'élémentaire. Les tuteurs de secondaire ont progressivement adopté les attitudes d'apprentissage modelées par les pédagogues chargés de les former. Les résultats étonnants constataient que dans seulement six mois, les notes en lecture des tuteurs ont augmenté d'une équivalence de deux ans. En

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be effective tutors, students need to learn how to interact with peers as learning partners. Peer tutors are more successful if their role is highly structured, if they are made aware of basic learning principles, if they understand curricular goals, and if they are trained in appropriate use of tutoring activities and materials.

## Case Studies

### New York City, New York

In a cross-age peer tutoring program in New York City, high school students who were underachievers tutored elementary students in remedial reading. The high school tutors began to gradually assume the learning attitudes that their teacher trainers modelled.

The results were surprising. In just six months the reading scores of the tutors rose by an equivalent of two years. In fact, the data show that the tutors generally benefited more than their tutees. "Overlearning" probably played a role in these results. Other similar case studies of older upper-grade students tutoring primary-grade children have yielded similar results in countless past research studies.

### Olympia Fields, Illinois

At Arcadia Elementary School in Olympia Fields, Illinois, the students do more than sit in their seats and listen. They help tutor each other, act out vocabulary words, sing songs about their schoolwork, and make lists of their goals that are then hung on the walls.

A third-grade student asked her classmate to present a summary of a book she had recently read and to break down the elements of each chapter. "Are we allowed to act out the scenes?" the eight-year-old asked her tutor. "We'll see," the tutor replied. Thus the peer tutoring session began. >

fait, les données révèlent que les tuteurs en ont bénéficié plus que les tutorés. Le surapprentissage a probablement joué un rôle dans ces résultats. Maintes études de cas semblables du tutorat des élèves d'école primaire par des élèves plus âgés ont produit des résultats analogues.

### Olympia Fields (Illinois)

Les élèves de l'école élémentaire Arcadia à Olympia Fields en Illinois font plus que s'asseoir et écouter. Ils s'entraident en interprétant des mots de vocabulaire, en chantant des chansons axées sur leur travail de classe, et en dressant une liste de leurs buts qui est ensuite accrochée au mur.

Une étudiante de la troisième année a demandé à son pair de lui présenter un sommaire d'un livre qu'elle venait de lire et d'y déceler les éléments de chaque chapitre.

« Est-ce qu'on a le droit d'interpréter les scènes? », demanda la fille de huit ans à son tuteur. « On verra bien, » répond le tuteur. C'est ainsi que la séance de tutorat commença.

Un peu plus de la moitié des étudiants à l'école Arcadia proviennent de ménages à faibles revenus. La directrice, Mme Patricia Ransford, a confiance qu'en utilisant des méthodes pédagogiques variées avec les élèves, les enseignants peuvent mieux les motiver dans l'apprentissage. Durant les trois dernières années, l'école Arcadia a dépassé les normes sur le test de rendement de la commission scolaire.

### Nashville (Tennessee)

L'école secondaire de Overton à Nashville (Overton High School) a été reconnue par l'État du Tennessee pour la réussite de son programme de tutorat par les pairs en mathématiques. Les élèves de terminale ayant des habiletés supérieures en mathématiques agissent comme tuteurs auprès des élèves de première et de seconde année suivant le cours de première année en algèbre. Pour se qualifier, chaque tuteur a besoin d'une >



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A little more than half of Arcadia's student body comes from low-income households. Principal Patricia Ransford believes that using diverse instructional methods helps the teachers better engage the students in learning. For the past three years Arcadia exceeded standards on the state's achievement test.

### **Nashville, Tennessee**

Overton High School in Nashville has been recognized by the State of Tennessee for the success of its peer tutoring math program. Seniors with advanced math skills tutor freshmen and sophomores taking Algebra I. To qualify, each tutor is required to have a letter of recommendation from a math teacher and to participate in a tutor-training program.

Joyce Guss, a senior guidance counselor, began this cross-age tutoring program to raise Overton's graduation rates and increase overall student academic success. To better assess the tutoring results, Guss compared those tutoring to a control group who were not tutored. Her comparative evaluation showed a 14 percent increase in passing grades by the Algebra I students who were tutored.

### **Austin, Texas**

One striking illustration of a win-win situation for both tutors and tutees is a program that paired University of Texas athletes who had scored poorly in reading tests with first- and second-grade special-education students needing help with reading. The tutors were required to complete reading and writing assignments and attend weekly sessions on tutoring in basic reading. Each tutor athlete was assigned to work with a specific child. After a semester of twice-weekly tutoring sessions, most of the elementary-school students not only improved significantly in reading, but their teachers also reported general improvements in self-confidence and motivation. The athletes gained self-esteem by acting as role models and also were motivated to devote more time to academic learning.

## Conclusions

The use of peer tutors in classrooms opens opportunities for teachers to observe students more closely and gain more detailed understanding of individual students' learning profiles and mastery of concepts and skills. Peer tutoring makes it possible to embed assessments of knowledge and skills in learning activities, thus giving teachers multiple ways to monitor and check student progress. Peer tutoring can provide valuable time for teachers to work more closely with individual students needing reteaching or greater support in practising less-developed skills. Students profit from both traditional instruction and peer tutoring. However, research shows that when combined, school achievement may increase, race relations improve, and student socialization may become higher.

Teachers today are pressed for time. With a minimum time investment in peer tutoring, teachers can act as more powerful role models. They can transfer positive learning behaviours into the classroom and social behaviours that can be used at home, such as helping brothers and sisters with homework. This promise of peer tutoring, particularly for disadvantaged or special-needs students, cannot be ignored by teachers who can more powerfully integrate learning both inside and outside the school. ❁csc

lettre de recommandation par un professeur en mathématiques et il doit participer au programme de formation des tuteurs. La conseillère pédagogique, Mme Joyce Guss, a lancé un programme de tutorat mutuel afin d'augmenter le nombre de finissants et accroître la réussite scolaire des élèves en général. Afin de mieux évaluer les résultats du programme de tutorat, Mme Guss compara les tutorés à un groupe témoin qui n'avait pas de tuteurs. Son évaluation comparative démontra une amélioration de 14 pour cent du taux de notes de passage par les élèves en première année en algèbre qui avaient des tuteurs.

### **Austin (Texas)**

Un bon exemple d'une situation gagnant-gagnant pour les tuteurs ainsi que les tutorés se trouve dans un programme groupant des athlètes du University of Texas ayant de faibles résultats aux tests de lecture avec des élèves en éducation spécialisée de la première et deuxième année ayant besoin d'aide en lecture. Les tuteurs étaient obligés d'exécuter des travaux en lecture et en écriture et d'assister au cours hebdomadaire sur le tutorat par rapport à la lecture élémentaire. Chacun des athlètes-tuteurs a été convoqué à travailler avec un élève en particulier. Après un semestre de cours en tutorat deux fois par semaine, la plupart des jeunes élèves ne se sont pas seulement améliorés significativement en lecture, mais leurs enseignants ont aussi signalé des améliorations en général par rapport à leur confiance en soi et leur dynamisme. Les athlètes, eux, ont augmenté leur confiance en soi en agissant comme modèles de rôle. Ils ont aussi été motivés à consacrer plus de temps à l'apprentissage pédagogique.

## Conclusions

L'emploi des élèves tuteurs en classe favorise les occasions pour les enseignants d'observer les élèves de plus près et de mieux comprendre leurs profils d'apprentissage particuliers et leur maîtrise des concepts et des habiletés. L'enseignement par les pairs amène la possibilité d'introduire des évaluations dans les activités par rapport aux connaissances et aux habiletés, ainsi donnant aux pédagogues de nombreux moyens pour surveiller et vérifier le progrès des élèves. Le tutorat par les pairs peut fournir aux pédagogues le temps précieux de travailler de plus près avec les élèves ayant besoin de formation supplémentaire en perfectionnant des habiletés moins bien maîtrisées.

Les élèves tirent profit de l'instruction traditionnelle ainsi que du tutorat par les pairs. Cependant, les recherches démontrent que si les deux méthodes pédagogiques sont combinées, le taux de réussite scolaire et de socialisation des élèves a la possibilité d'augmenter, et les relations interraciales sont améliorées. L'enseignant moderne est pris par le temps. Avec un investissement minimum de temps au tutorat par les pairs, les pédagogues ont le pouvoir d'agir comme de plus puissants modèles de rôle. Ils ont la possibilité de transmettre un comportement positif par rapport à l'apprentissage en classe et un comportement social qui servira aussi à la maison, en aidant à faire les devoirs d'un frère ou d'une sœur, par exemple. L'enseignement par les pairs est prometteur, surtout pour les élèves défavorisés ou avec des besoins particuliers. Ce fait ne peut pas être ignoré par les enseignants, qui ont la possibilité d'intégrer l'apprentissage en classe ainsi que hors de l'école. ❁csc

Edward E. Gordon, Ph.D. taught early childhood education at DePaul University, Chicago, and adult education at Loyola University Chicago. He is the author of many books on tutoring and learning, including *Peer Tutoring: A Teacher's Resource Guide*; *The Tutoring Revolution: Applying Research for Best Practices, Policy Implications and Student Achievement*; and *Centuries of Tutoring: A History of Alternative Education in America and Western Europe*.

For more information on this publications and presentations, visit his website [www.CareersSkillsLiteracyResources.com](http://www.CareersSkillsLiteracyResources.com) which is scheduled to replace [www.TutoringLiteracyResources.com](http://www.TutoringLiteracyResources.com) by October 2010.

Edward E. Gordon, Ph. D., a enseigné l'éducation des jeunes enfants au DePaul University à Chicago, et l'éducation des adultes au Loyola University Chicago. Il est l'auteur de plusieurs livres sur le tutorat et l'apprentissage, parmi eux, *Peer Tutoring: A Teacher's Resource Guide*; *The Tutoring Revolution: Applying Research for Best Practices, Policy Implications and Student Achievement*; et *Centuries of Tutoring: A History of Alternative Education in America and Western Europe*.

Pour plus de renseignements sur ces publications et ces exposés, veuillez visiter son site Web à l'adresse suivante [www.CareersSkillsLiteracyResources.com](http://www.CareersSkillsLiteracyResources.com), qui remplacera [www.TutoringLiteracyResources.com](http://www.TutoringLiteracyResources.com) avant octobre 2010.



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## Looking Out for Number One

## Rechercher le numéro un

Student counsellors face a daily barrage of grief and trauma. Professionals in this area need to look after their personal well-being to continue to be a positive resource for those in need.

Les conseillers pour étudiants font quotidiennement face à un barrage de peine et de traumatisme. Les professionnels de ce domaine doivent prendre soin de leur bien-être personnel afin de pouvoir continuer à être une ressource positive pour ceux qui en ont besoin.

by/par Michelle Hamilton, M. Ed., CCC

**There is increasing recognition of the need for well-trained** counsellors, qualified and prepared to deal with the challenging situations often seen in schools today. And, while school counsellors and their supervisors may recognize the intense and draining nature of the work, they may not be aware of certain unique risks to these helpers who are involved with other people's stress and trauma.

Many crisis situations such as abuse disclosures, suicide/homicide risk assessments, tragic events response, grief, loss, conflict and other mental health crises are highly stressful experiences for both clients and counsellors. Trauma can be defined as exposure to a situation in which a person is confronted with an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, to self or others' physical or psychological well-being (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

### Compassion fatigue

A growing body of theory and research exists that describes how counsellors can be affected by exposure to other people's trauma: the terms compassion fatigue (Figley, 1995), vicarious trauma (Pearlman & Mac Ian, 1995; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995), and secondary traumatic stress (Figley, 1995) have all been used to describe the range of adverse effects that may be seen in helping professionals. Figley (2002), used the term compassion fatigue to describe the "cost of caring": a range of adverse effects on caregivers due to their work with traumatized individuals. >

The concept of compassion fatigue is based on a construct of

**Il y a une reconnaissance croissante du besoin de conseillers** bien formés, qualifiés et préparés pour faire face aux situations de défi qui se rencontrent souvent aujourd'hui dans les écoles. Et bien que les conseillers d'école et leurs superviseurs puissent reconnaître la nature intense et épuisante du travail, ils ne sont peut-être pas conscients de certains risques uniques pour les aidants qui sont concernés par le stress et le traumatisme d'une autre personne.

Plusieurs situations de crise comme les dénonciations d'abus, les évaluations de risque de suicide/homicide, l'intervention pour des événements tragiques, le deuil, la perte, les conflits et autres crises en santé mentale sont des expériences à haut niveau de stress pour les clients et les conseillers. Un traumatisme peut être défini comme l'exposition à une situation où une personne fait face à un événement qui implique une mort réelle ou une menace de mort ou de sérieuses blessures au bien-être physique ou psychologique de soi-même ou d'autres (Association psychiatrique américaine, 2000).

### Fatigue de compassion

Un nombre croissant de théories et de recherches existent qui décrivent comment les conseillers peuvent être affectés par l'exposition au traumatisme d'autres personnes : les termes fatigue de compassion (Figley, 1995), le traumatisme par procuration (Pearlman & Mac Ian, 1995; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995), et le stress traumatique secondaire (Figley, 1995) ont tous été utilisés pour décrire la gamme d'effets adverses qui peuvent >

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## » Back to School Issue

être constatés chez les professionnels de l'aide. Figley (2002), utilisait le terme fatigue de compassion pour décrire le « coût des soins » : une gamme d'effets adverses chez les soignants dû à leur travail avec des individus traumatisés (p.2). Le concept de fatigue de compassion est basé sur une construction de stress traumatique secondaire. Le stress traumatique secondaire (STS) est similaire au stress post-traumatique (SPT), mais le traumatisme n'est pas vécu directement comme une victime, mais par exposition secondaire à l'histoire ou l'expérience d'une victime. Les symptômes du STS et du SPT impliquent trois groupes de symptômes : l'intrusion (pensées, images et sensations intrusives), l'évitement (de personnes, d'endroits, de choses et d'expériences qui suscitent des souvenirs d'événements traumatiques) et l'éveil négatif (hypervigilance, troubles du sommeil, irritabilité, réactions de sur sautage, anxiété) (Association psychiatrique américaine, 2000). Des conseillers souffrant de fatigue de compassion peuvent commencer par s'apercevoir qu'ils ne sont pas émotionnellement disponibles pour eux-mêmes ou pour les personnes importantes de leur vie, qu'ils peuvent souffrir d'engourdissement émotionnel, de peur accrue et d'anxiété ou de sentiments de déconnexion d'avec eux-mêmes et d'autres. Certains conseillers continuent de travailler efficacement, mais se sentent incapables de donner d'eux-mêmes dans leur vie personnelle comme si leur compassion était épuisée.

### Épuisement professionnel

L'épuisement professionnel est un terme plus commun relié au concept de la fatigue de compassion et traumatisme par procuration, mais il se réfère spécifiquement à un état d'épuisement physique, mental et émotionnel ou le mécontentement avec sa situation au travail. L'épuisement professionnel émerge habituellement de façon graduelle sous des conditions de ressources inadéquates ou par une implication à long terme dans des situations épuisantes émotionnellement (Valent, 2002). Les conseillers d'école qui font l'expérience de l'épuisement professionnel peuvent également souffrir de fatigue de compassion, cependant, l'épuisement professionnel peut plus certainement être relié aux conditions de travail, à l'extérieur du conseiller, alors que la fatigue de compassion peut être considérée comme une alternance plus permanente qui existe à l'intérieur de l'individu. Un cas de fatigue professionnelle peut se soigner immédiatement par l'abandon d'un travail alors que la fatigue de compassion et le traumatisme par procuration ne disparaissent pas en changeant simplement les circonstances (Figley, 2002).

### Implications éthiques

Pourquoi est-il important que les conseillers et les administrateurs d'école soient conscients des risques de fatigue de compassion ? Il est important en vertu de l'éthique que les conseillers proagissent envers les autosoins pour entretenir leur santé professionnelle et personnelle afin d'assurer des soins de qualité aux clients que nous servons. Le Code canadien de déontologie professionnelle des psychologues (SCP, 2000) s'attend que les professionnels s'emploient à des activités d'autosoins qui aideront à prévenir des conditions (par ex. l'épuisement professionnel ou les attachements malsains) qui mèneraient à un jugement affaibli et interféreraient avec leur habileté à aider et ne pas nuire aux autres. Le bien-être des

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secondary traumatic stress. Secondary traumatic stress (STS) is similar to post-traumatic stress (PTS) but the trauma is not experienced directly as a victim, but through secondary exposure to a victim's story or experience. The symptoms of STS and PTS involve three symptom clusters: intrusion (intrusive thoughts, images and sensations), avoidance (of people, places, things and experiences that elicit memories of the traumatic event) and negative arousal (hypervigilance, sleep disturbances, irritability, startle reactions, anxiety) (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Counsellors suffering from compassion fatigue may begin to notice they are not emotionally available to themselves or to the important people in their personal lives, may suffer from emotional numbness, increased fear and anxiety, or feelings of disconnection from themselves and others. Some counsellors continue to work effectively but feel unable to give of themselves in their personal lives, as though their compassion is all used up.

## Burnout

Burnout is a more common term that is related to the concept of compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma, but refers specifically to a state of physical, mental and emotional exhaustion or dissatisfaction with one's work situation. Burnout usually emerges gradually under conditions of inadequate resources or by long-term involvement with emotionally draining situations (Valent, 2002). School counsellors who experience burnout may also suffer from compassion fatigue, however, the experience of burnout may have more to do with the working conditions, outside of the counsellor,

étudiants en consultation est certainement un souci important pour les commissions scolaires et les administrateurs doivent être conscients de la façon dont des conseillers qui sont inconsciemment affectés risquent de nuire aux clients vulnérables (Monroe, 1999; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995). Certains conseillers peuvent devenir tellement concernés par les exigences de leur travail et leurs efforts pour aider qu'ils négligent leurs propres besoins, sautent souvent des repas, ne prennent pas de pauses ou travaillent pendant les congés. J.F. Munroe suggère que de tels comportements peuvent nuire à des clients qui nous considèrent comme des modèles : pour des clients qui apprennent à améliorer leur propre habileté à maintenir des limites personnelles, une approche altruiste du travail n'aide pas.

Monroe examine également les implications éthiques du stress traumatique secondaire (STS) pour les organisations et il croit qu'il existe un besoin déontologique évident pour qu'elles fournissent à leur personnel la formation et l'information à propos des risques potentiels afférents aux soins pour les autres.

## Réduction du risque

Bien que certains auteurs croient que la fatigue de compassion et le traumatisme par procuration sont le résultat inévitable d'un travail rapproché avec la douleur émotionnelle des autres (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995; Yassen, 1995), plusieurs stratégies d'autosoins sont réputées pour aider. Il est important que les autosoins puissent être perçus comme une responsabilité professionnelle du conseiller qui peut être supportée de plusieurs façons par l'organisation. La prévention commence par la prise

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while compassion fatigue may be seen as a more permanent alternation that exists within the individual. One's experience of burnout may be immediately remedied by quitting a job whereas compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma do not disappear simply by changing circumstances (Figley, 2002).

### Ethical Implications

Why is it critical that counsellors and school administrators be aware of the risks of compassion fatigue? It is ethically important for the counsellors to take active steps towards self-care to maintain their own professional and personal health as well as to ensure quality care to the clients we serve. The Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists (CPA, 2000) expects professionals to "engage in self-care activities that help to avoid conditions (i.e., burnout or additions) that could result in impaired judgement and interfere with their ability to benefit and not harm others. The welfare of the students in counselling is clearly an important issue for school divisions, and administrators need to be aware of how counsellors, who are unknowingly affected, may risk harming vulnerable clients (Monroe, 1999; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995). Some counsellors may become so involved in the demands of their work and their efforts to help that they neglect their own needs, often skipping lunch, taking no breaks or working during time off. J.F. Munroe suggests that such behaviour can be harmful to clients who look to us as models: for clients learning to improve their own ability to maintain personal boundaries, a selfless approach to work is not helpful.

Monroe also examined the ethical implications of secondary

de conscience : les commissions scolaires peuvent commencer à fournir au personnel la formation pour reconnaître les signes du stress occupationnel et les occasions pour développer des stratégies d'autosoins professionnels et personnels.

### Autosoins professionnels

Des autosoins professionnels signifient de maintenir des connexions équilibrées et en santé dans sa vie professionnelle. Bien que la nature du travail d'un conseiller scolaire ne s'y prête pas souvent, les conseillers peuvent pratiquer l'ajustement du rythme de leur journée de travail pour y inclure des occasions pour des pauses, de connecter avec des confrères et des moments de prise de conscience pour se recentrer sur soi-même (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995). Fixer des limites est un aspect important d'autosoins professionnels, car plusieurs aidants ne savent pas dire « non » et par conséquent se surchargent d'activités épuisantes.

Les frontières sont un autre aspect important d'autosoins professionnels (Pearlman & Mac Ian, 1995; Yassen, 1995). Les frontières temporelles, personnelles et professionnelles fournissent toutes une structure nécessaire pour assurer une saine séparation entre le conseiller et le client. Les frontières émotionnelles sont également importantes : la recherche démontre que des neurones miroir du cerveau peuvent être impliqués dans la transmission d'émotion entre les gens et les conseillers peuvent acquérir des moyens pour réguler leurs frontières émotionnelles quand ils se « connectent » emphatiquement avec des clients (Rothschild, 2006).



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traumatic stress (STS) for organizations and believes there is a clear ethical need for organizations to provide their staff with training and information about the potential risks involved in caring for others.

### Risk Reduction

Although certain authors believe that compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma are the inevitable result of working closely with the emotional pain of others (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995; Yassen, 1995), many self-care strategies are known to be helpful. It is important that self-care can be seen as a professional responsibility of the counsellor that can be supported in various ways by the organization. Prevention begins with awareness: school divisions can begin to provide staff with training to recognize the signs of occupational stress and opportunities to develop professional and personal self-care strategies.

### Professional Self Care

Professional self-care means maintaining balance and healthy connections in one's work life. Although the nature of school counselling often does not allow for it, counsellors can practise pacing the workday to provide opportunity for breaks, connecting with colleagues and moments of mindfulness to refocus on oneself (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995). Setting limits is an important aspect of professional self-care, as many helpers typically do not know how to say no, and as a result become overloaded with depleting activities.

Boundaries are another key aspect of professional self-care (Pearlman & Mac Ian, 1995; Yassen, 1995). Time boundaries, personal boundaries and professional boundaries all provide necessary structure to ensure healthy separation between the counsellor and the client. Emotional boundaries are also important: research shows that mirror neurons in the brain may be involved in the transmission of emotion between people and counsellors can learn ways to regulate their emotional boundaries when empathically 'connecting' with clients (Rothschild, 2006).

The research points to the need for peer support and clinical supervision as critical aspects of professional self-

La recherche montre que le besoin d'un support des pairs et la supervision clinique sont des aspects importants des auto-soins professionnels (Catherall, 1995; Crutchfield & Borders, 1997; Norcross, 2000). Le support des pairs existe quand des conseillers ont l'occasion de donner et de recevoir du support de collègues qui cumulent des tâches de travail similaires (Monroe, 1999; Yassen, 1995). La supervision clinique est un ensemble structuré d'activités centrées sur la conscience de soi et la croissance du conseiller, l'amélioration des capacités, le développement de l'identité professionnelle, la conceptualisation des cas ou d'autres aspects du rôle (Crutchfield & Borders, 1997). Pour la plupart des professionnels de l'aide, la supervision clinique est obligatoire et considérée comme une responsabilité éthique, mais, nonobstant le besoin, très peu de supervision clinique est fournie aux conseillers pratiquant en milieu scolaire (Roberts & Borders, 1994; Sutton & Page, 1994). Il existe divers modèles de supervision des pairs qui peuvent être utilisés dans les commissions scolaires (Agnew et al., 2000; Benschoff & Paisley, 1996; Crutchfield & Borders, 1997).

Les débriefings sont une autre pratique préventive essentielle pour les conseillers et les équipes de crise à la suite d'incidents critiques (Mitchell & Everly, 1997; Valent, 2002). Comme la plupart des efforts d'intervention en situation de crise dans l'école visent à prévenir des réactions de stress à long terme chez les étudiants affectés, l'équipe de crise est aussi à risque pour le stress traumatique et une considération spéciale est requise pour assurer que le personnel de consultation ne subisse pas d'épuisement professionnel en conséquence de leurs interventions. L'importance du débriefing de l'équipe d'intervention est une étape bien connue lors d'interventions pour des événements traumatiques, mais il est probablement sous-utilisé.

Les réseaux de support des pairs devraient consacrer du temps à se concentrer sur des expériences positives et pleines d'espoir que nous avons accumulées dans notre travail professionnel pour donner un sens et un but au travail des conseillers ce qui pourrait les protéger contre le stress et l'épuisement professionnel (Pearlman & Saakvitne,



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care (Catherall, 1995; Crutchfield & Borders, 1997; Norcross, 2000). Peer support occurs when counsellors have the opportunity to give and receive support from colleagues who are involved in similar work tasks (Monroe, 1999; Yassen, 1995). Clinical supervision is a structured set of activities focused on counsellor self-awareness and growth, skill enhancement, professional identity development, case conceptualization or other aspects of the role (Crutchfield & Borders, 1997). For most helping professionals, clinical supervision is mandated and considered an ethical responsibility, but despite the need, very little clinical supervision is being provided to practising school counsellors (Roberts & Borders, 1994; Sutton & Page, 1994). Various peer supervision models exist that may be used in school divisions (Agnew et al., 2000; Benschhoff & Paisley, 1996; Crutchfield & Borders, 1997).

Debriefings are another essential preventative practice for counsellors and crisis teams following critical incidents (Mitchell & Everly, 1997; Valent, 2002). As much of the focus in school crisis response is on preventing long-term stress reactions among affected students, the crisis team also is at risk for traumatic stress, and special consideration is required to ensure that counselling staff is not burned out as a result of their involvement. The importance of debriefing the response team is a well-known step in traumatic events response, but one that may be underutilized.

Peer support networks should also devote a portion of time focusing on positive and hopeful experiences gained through

1995). Faire l'inventaire des histoires à succès de nos efforts pour enrichir les vies d'autres est une pratique importante qui peut contribuer à la résilience des conseillers.

### Autosoins personnels

Un système bien développé d'autosoins personnels est important pour tous ceux qui travaillent dans des situations stressantes. Les autosoins physiques incluent un exercice adéquat, une bonne nutrition, assez de sommeil et même des massages et autres thérapies de soins. Les stratégies d'autosoins psychologiques incluent des activités d'auto encouragement, de relaxation, d'expression créative, de développement des compétences et l'utilisation du rire (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995).

La spiritualité est un autre aspect important des autosoins personnels qui peut revêtir plusieurs formes. Pour certains, se brancher sur le spirituel peut inclure la prière, la méditation, la religion ou le contact avec la nature. La prise de conscience est une autre pratique spirituelle impliquant une concentration consciencieuse et de rester brancher sur soi par un total engagement dans le moment présent (Kabat-Zinn, 1990).

Les autosoins personnels impliquent également le besoin de connexions avec d'autres. Ceci peut inclure l'évaluation et l'amélioration de son réseau de support personnel et, peut être de façon plus importante, d'obtenir de l'aide professionnelle quand c'est requis (Norcross, 2000; Pearlman & Mac Ian, 1990; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995). Plusieurs conseillers choisissent le domaine de

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our professional work, as a sense of the purpose and meaning of their work may protect counsellors from stress and burnout (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995). Taking inventory of the success stories in our efforts to enrich the lives of others is an important practice that can contribute to the resiliency of counsellors.

## Personal Self-care

A well-developed system of personal self-care is critical for all people working in stressful situations. Physical self-care is comprised of proper exercise, nutrition, sufficient sleep, and may also include body work such as massage and other healing therapies. Psychological self-care strategies include self-nurturing activities, relaxation, creative expression, skill development and the use of laughter (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995).

Spirituality is another key aspect of personal self-care that may take many different forms. For some, connecting with spirit may include prayer, meditation, religion or contact with nature. Mindfulness is another spiritual practice involving focused awareness and staying connected to oneself through full engagement in the present moment (Kabat-Zinn, 1990).

Personal self care also includes the need for connection with others. This may include evaluating and improving one's personal support network, and perhaps most importantly, getting professional help when needed (Norcross, 2000; Pearlman & Mac Ian, 1990; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995). Many counsellors enter the helping field with a history of trauma themselves, and those with a personal history are more at risk for negative effects from their work (Pearlman & Mac Ian, 1995). Professional peer groups and organizations that create an atmosphere that views seeking counselling as a healthy sign rather than a sign of weakness or incompetence may improve the health of individuals and the wellness of the organization.

For many counsellors, self-care does not come naturally. We must take active measures to overcome our tendencies to focus primarily on the needs of others, and to learn how to self-nurture and be more open to receiving care ourselves. 🍁 CSC

l'aide avec un historique de traumatismes personnels et ceux avec une histoire personnelle sont plus à risque pour les effets négatifs de leur travail (Pearlman & Mac Ian, 1995). Les groupes de pairs professionnels et les organisations qui entretiennent une atmosphère qui considère que demander de l'aide est un signe de santé et non une faiblesse ou une incompetence peuvent

améliorer la santé des individus et le bien-être de l'organisation.

Pour plusieurs conseillers, les auto-soins ne viennent pas naturellement. Nous devons prendre des mesures actives pour surmonter nos tendances à nous concentrer d'abord sur les besoins d'autrui et apprendre à nous auto-encourager et être plus ouverts à recevoir nous-mêmes des soins. 🍁 CSC



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# “Best Before” Dad

While pundits in some circles argue that labelling children affects their self-esteem and can lead to self fulfilling prophecies, others state that labels can provide useful frameworks for positive interaction and healing.

by Carter Hammett

**Ever since 1840 when the American** Census first included a question on idiocy/insanity, mental health professionals have been trying to label and rationalize behaviours perceived as socially unacceptable.

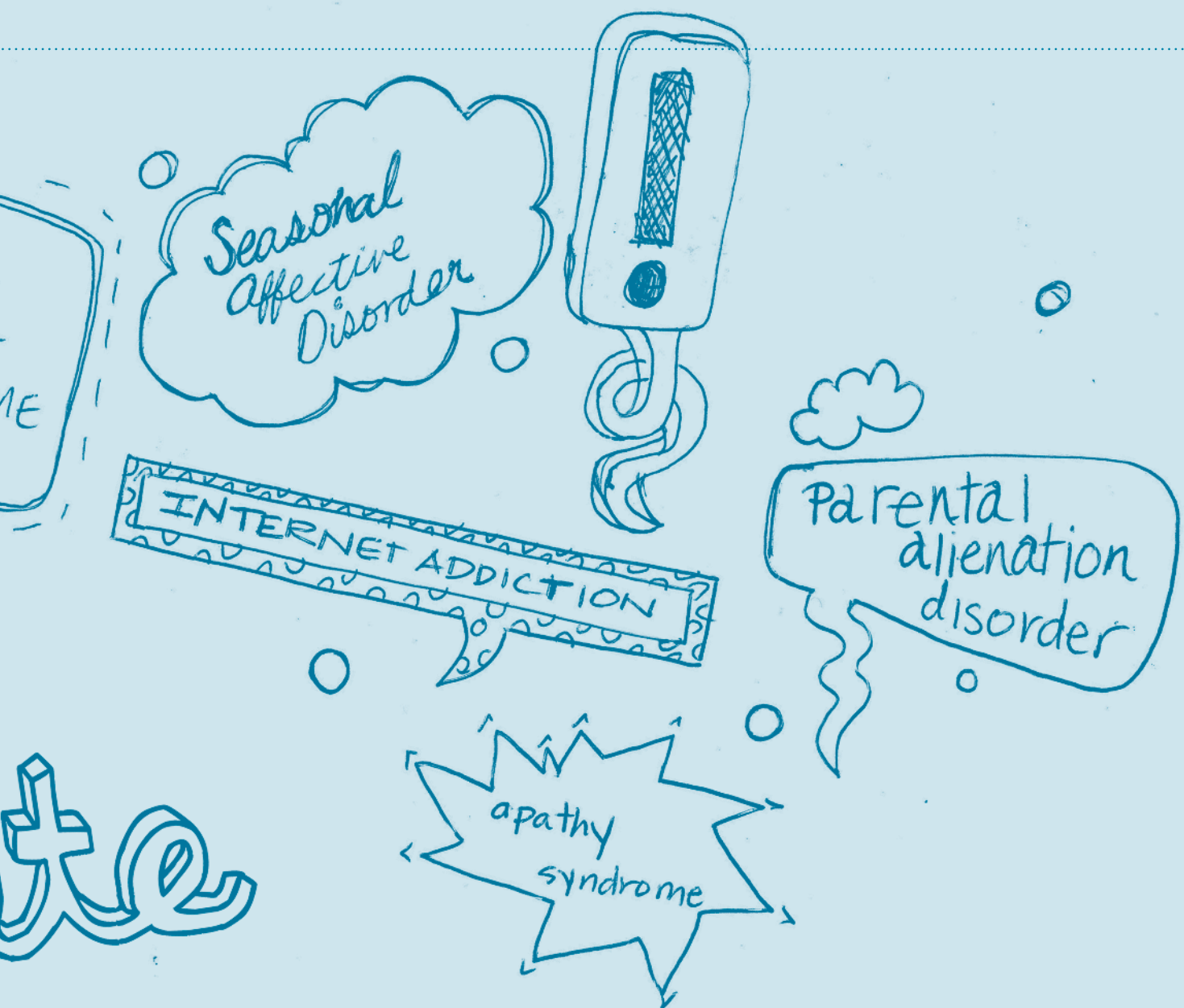
Things are about to get a lot worse. With a scheduled 2013 launch, committees for the fifth edition of that controversial psychiatrist’s bible, The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), are currently reviewing all kinds of disorders you’ve never heard of, that are vying for inclusion. Conditions

such as Internet Addiction, Apathy Syndrome and Parental Alienation Disorder are in direct competition with the better-known but not-yet-included Foetal Alcohol Syndrome and Seasonal Affective Disorder.

Published by The American Psychiatric Association, the most recent version of the DSM clocks in at over 900 pages and includes almost 300 disorders, from mild mental retardation—itsself a dated term—to depression, to a personal favourite, “cognitive disorder not otherwise specified.”

Small wonder then that the tome has come under fire by critics who argue that some disorders listed are either cultural or imagined in nature. Homosexuality, once listed as a mental health disorder itself, was finally dropped in 1973. At a briefing earlier this year, some psychiatrists winced at the possible inclusion of labels like, “Psychosis Risk Disorder”, arguing that everyone was at risk of being labelled with something.

Others charge that the DSM is too heavily influenced by avaricious pharmaceutical companies looking to



make a profit from the latest diagnostic craze. Indeed, medication sales for drugs treating ADHD, autism and childhood bipolar disorder exploded after the definitions were expanded in the most recent DSM, published in 1994. In the United States alone, sales for ADHD medications topped \$4.8 billion in 2008. "I've tried to avoid labels, but they always find you."

There have always been arguments against labelling children. "Labels are for jelly jars," chimes psychologist and

writer Lynne Namka, who once wrote: "Labelling is definitive; once we say it, then it holds meaning. The danger of labels is that children tend to believe what is said about them and live up to that negative expectation. Negative labels keep children caught in negative behaviour. Labelling what we do not know how to deal with is victimization."

Some, like psychologist Carol Dweck have conducted studies on gifted students and found that their motivation to take on challenging assignments actually decreases when

praised for their intelligence, thus pleading a case that labelling can also affect academic motivation.

And while it is probably true that yesterday's "quirky" child is today's pathologized child, labels, especially those used constructively, can provide a useful framework for treating legitimate disorders. Furthermore, the appropriate label is necessary to obtain insurance and funding for treatment, and often, access to service providers.

"Bureaucracy requires the label in order to fund services," says Toronto >

psychologist and artist Michael Irving, who designed the well-received Child Abuse Monument. "Labels can help us understand what is going on as service providers and can help the child understand themselves and get more positive. Labelling needs to be helpful to the child and we need to see the positive

and communicate it."

Ottawa psychologist Judy Goldstein concurs. "The label helps us (service providers) take the right direction and identify the proper intervention that will help. Everyone is an individual and not everyone needs the same intervention. It helps us look at the whole person and

use the diagnosis as part of the puzzle to understand the person," she says.

But a diagnosis can be difficult to understand, especially if criteria differentiates from source to source, as sometimes happens with learning disabilities (LD), for example.

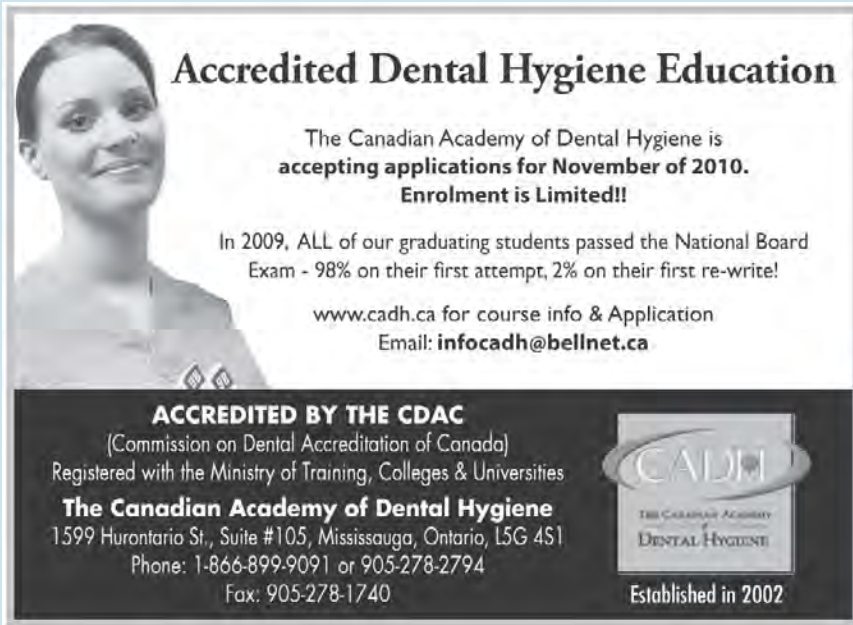
"I prefer the terms 'learning differences' or 'learning styles' suggests another Ottawa psychologist, Brian MacDonald, co-founder of [www.familyanatomy.com](http://www.familyanatomy.com). "Learning disabilities' is the term recognized by schools and physicians, but I'm careful to define it for parents and kids because I think it's a misleading term."

It helps when definitions complement each other. For example, The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario's definition of LD is frequently cited throughout Canada; in part states that LDs are "a variety of disorders that affect the acquisition, retention, understanding, organization or use of verbal and/or non-verbal information. These disorders result from impairments in one or more psychological processes related to learning (a), in combination with otherwise average abilities essential for thinking and reasoning."

MacDonald is quick to point out that this is different from the DSM's definition, which identifies problems with reading, math and written expression, "but the DSM looks at achievement vs. intelligence.

"If you look at a child who spends three hours a night doing homework but his peers are taking only one hour to do the same volume of work and achieving at the same level, those kids who take longer wouldn't meet the criteria to qualify for a label of learning disability," he says.

On some levels, this isn't surprising, given that learning disabilities as a field of study is relatively young, only about 40 years. Studying LD in adults is an even more recent phenomenon. The concept is confusing enough but when you throw other comorbidities into the mix, it can be downright traumatic for the person living with the conditions and difficult to diagnose unless in very skilled hands. Anxiety, for example, frequently mimics symptoms like the restlessness, impulsivity and inattentiveness often associated with Attention Deficit



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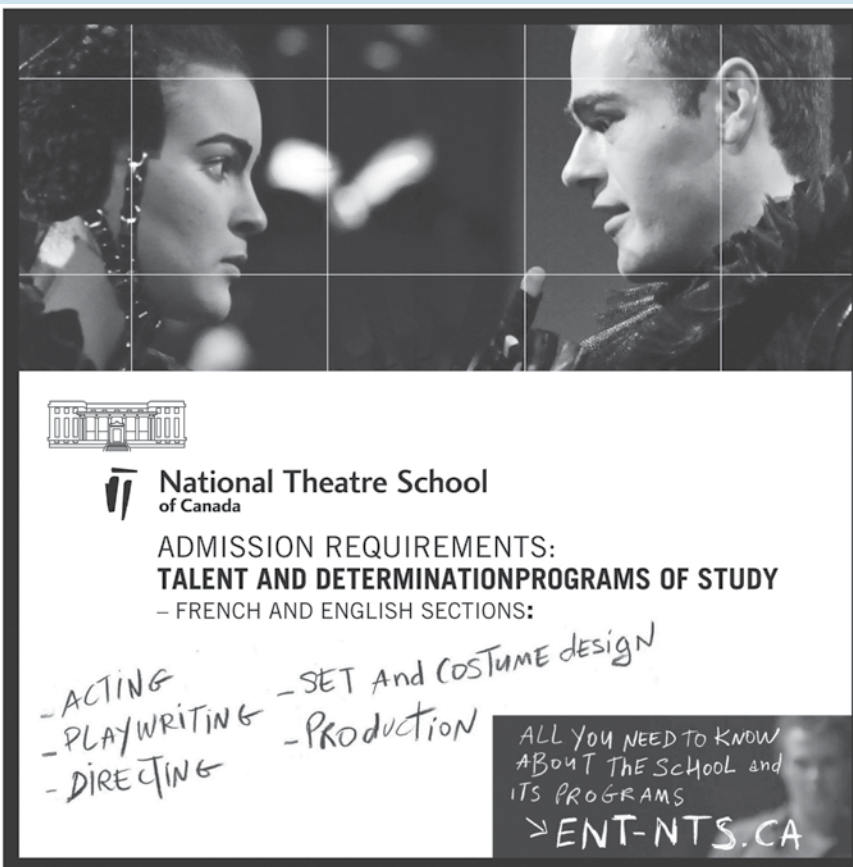
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Hyperactivity Disorder, but can be—and often, is—missed altogether without the proper training and qualifications.

Two diagnoses that frequently and erroneously cross back and forth are those for non-verbal learning disabilities and Asperger’s Syndrome, a “higher-functioning” form of autism. Both disabilities often involve excellent verbal skills, but may also include problems with mathematics, visual spatial processing and social perception.

“Both of these disabilities have social problems for very different reasons,” says Judy Goldstein. “There is some overlap, but kids with Asperger’s may get caught in something and repeat it over and over,

but a non-verbal person wouldn’t do that. A student with non-verbal learning disabilities might have problems in school with spatial perception, but no such problems with Asperger’s. You have to look at strengths, weaknesses and symptoms,” she says.

There are some who argue that both disabilities are one in the same, but there is no conclusive proof of this; another situation where labels given responsibly by a qualified psychologist can clearly help.

All the psychologists interviewed also agreed that a psycho-diagnostic assessment, while helpful, isn’t nearly enough. There have to be solutions and recommendations for accommodations so strategies can be implemented

to suitably monitor and manage the disability accordingly.

“It’s important that parents and students have an awareness of the specific nature of the problem, not just some overall view of the problem, like, say ‘anxiety.” says MacDonald. “But what does it mean specifically for that person? That gives a starting point to find strategies that will be helpful.”

He cites an example of an Ottawa teacher who noticed several students were having problems remembering concepts on a particular subject.

“The teacher worked with the class to brainstorm the areas they were having difficulty remembering and then had them write each item down on 4X6 index

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cards. These were put into a portable format and personalized so the students could use the information on a day-to-day basis and for tests, which is much more like the real world.”

The teacher took an identified – or labelled – problem, in this case, memory, and found positive results when the class collectively took ownership of their situation and wound up with a positive outcome.


And it’s the positivity that’s critical for finding a successful solution when dealing with negative behaviours, says Michael Irving.

“If a child is bull-headed, you might want to say he has tenacity,” he says. “Realize that we’re using that label to serve the client and it does help for the agency and administrative end of things.”

He argues that when inappropriate behaviours present themselves, it’s important to look beneath the surface to determine positive underlying causes. “A child with a brain injury may become angry or irritable and may be trying to protect themselves from too much thinking and processing, so the irritability may be self-protection. You have to ask what is the intent behind the behaviour?”

“Realize that there’s an external response in a problem behaviour and there’s likely a positive root. So, we have to say, “it’s really great that you’re trying to protect yourself, but now we have to ask, what is a more successful way of taking care of yourself? What’s going on inside so you don’t have to arrive at the place where bad stuff is going on?”

When placed in a positive – and positively managed – context, a label can be a tremendously empowering thing for the person being labelled. It can provide a kind of blueprint for treatment, offer an understanding and ownership of a particular challenge. Likewise, it can form the basis for a “healing partnership” between client and support team as the labelled person can formulate strategies to accommodate themselves for later success.

“We have to switch to labels that help understand the positive forces behind problematic behaviours,” says Irving. “At that point we have to shift the label to the positive to serve the child, and not the teacher or the system.” 

*Carter Hammett is an Ottawa-based writer, editor and social worker who has also authored two books on learning disabilities, most recently Conscious Competence in 2006. He also edits a magazine for the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario.*



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**FACING BIPOLAR/** The Young Adult's Guide to Dealing with Bipolar Disorder; Russ Federman, J. Anderson Thomson; New Harbinger Publications; 2010; 161pp; (isbn 978-1-57224-642-3)

Designed as a guide to living with Bipolar Disorder, this book is essential reading for anyone facing the challenges of this game-changing malady. Indeed, when you travel to a new city it helps to have a map. On the first day of school students need a schedule. Those diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder also need a guide to help them navigate the circumstances.

Federman is Director of Counseling and Psychological Services at the University of Virginia's Department of Student Health and Thomson is a staff psychiatrist at the same facility. Both have penned a work that will help Bipolar sufferers get around a world of new medications and therapies as well as develop skill sets to help manage this disorder.

*Facing Bipolar* is a book for those who are just coming to terms with this problem. Both authors suggest the disorder is one that is highly difficult for young adults and late teens to understand and cope. For these young people this book is a good place to start with easy to read chapters that describe medications and therapies; how and when to tell friends and teachers; key factors that will deliver stability; developing a support network and ways to overcome the challenges and prejudices of this disease.



**THINGS MIGHT GO TERRIBLY, HORRIBLY WRONG;** A Guide to Life Liberated from Anxiety; Kelly G. Wilson & Troy Dufrene; New Harbinger Publications; 2010; 165pp; (isbn 978-1-57224-711-6)

It likely comes as no surprise to people that sometimes life can come off the rails. We can plan, strategize, and look forward with an eye to minimizing awful occurrences, but discover that they happen anyway. Some of us live our lives with an overwhelming worry that bad things are just around the corner and despite our best attempts, there is little that can be done.

In *Things Might Go Terribly, Horribly Wrong*, the authors suggest that these troubles will not go away nor will anxiety. They see anxiousness as a common state. Using research supported psychotherapy techniques they challenge readers to accept their feelings of anxiety and find a place where there is breathing room to rest and live in spite of feelings of worry. This book opens a dialogue about the role of anxiety in daily life and how people can work with it and make positive changes.

Inside the authors have used anecdotes and easy terminology that makes this book approachable for a wide audience. For those who suffer from anxiety and life-halting worry, this is a good read and a great place to start the conversation about living with uncertainty.

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**EVERYTHING I'M NOT MADE ME EVERYTHING I AM;** Jeff Johnson; Smiley Books; 2009; 183pp; (isbn 978-1-4019-2548-2)

Jeff Johnson is force to be reckoned with. A leading US political and social commentator who has done groundbreaking work for BET (Black Entertainment Television) and CNN (Cable News Network), Johnson has become a voice for positive

change in America and his message starts close to home.

Inside Johnson poses some hard questions and takes readers on a process of personal discovery. His style is contemporary and punchy making the book a quick and delightful read. Further, the fact that he is on current pop culture Radar means he has street cred with students, a fact that gets the book off the shelf and into the hands of troubled teens. Altogether Johnson's book is a combination of a well considered message of hope and personal fulfilment amid high style values and points of relation that makes *Everything I'm Not* a good title to have on hand.



**ADHD & ME;** Blake E.S. Taylor; New Harbinger Publications; 2007; 177pp; (isbn 1-57224-522-0)

This book was written over the last two years of high school, by student Blake Taylor. Taylor memoirs describe a life of attention deficit and hyperactivity that kept him, his family, neighbours and friends on the lookout for extraordinary behaviour. Diagnosed at age five with ADHD, Taylor takes us on a journey as he

discovers the disorder and learns how to reshape his world to take ADHD into account.

This book represents the first time a young person has penned a memoir to describe what it is like to grow up with this challenge. In the US there are estimates of four million youth who share Taylor's affliction. The goal of the book is to help these people with coping strategies that will allow ADHD sufferer to thrive in a world where they must utilize a unique perspective.

Inside *ADHD & Me*, Taylor brings out the facts that while many look at those with the disorder as ill and poorly wired for success, the reality is that those with ADHD are merely different. "If you are easily distracted, you have a harder time concentrating. But, unlike those who are not easily distracted, you automatically think outside the box."

The message is one that advises students with ADHD to know their limitations, but know their unique gifts as well.

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## A Matter of Balance

The scene of children rushing through school doors throwing their books in the air as they head off to a long summer of relaxation may be coming to an end. Simply, Canadian society has changed from agrarian to urban and the long summer break is now only a matter of enjoying better weather. Gone are the days when kids left school for a summer of work on the family farm.

The idea of balanced calendars got its foothold in North America via California where there are now more than 1000 schools utilizing a multi-track system that has a variety of groups using the facility at different times in an effort to cut costs and reduce school crowding. Here in Canada the idea took hold first in BC with William's Lake deciding on the format in 1990 in an effort to tailor its programs to the needs of the logging industry and its families. And, while there are just a handful of schools now on the year-long calendar, the facts of hard economics and the growing population may well have administrators looking more closely at shorter more frequent holidays and longer running times for facilities.

- Number of Balanced Calendar Schools in Canada - 49
- Number of students in the US on a year long calendar - 2.15 million
- In Canada, the balanced calendar is currently in use in four schools in Alberta, 35 in British Columbia, and nine in Ontario.
- Number of US states that use the approach - 47 including California, Arizona, Hawaii, Kentucky and Nevada.
- Growth in US over the past 15 years - 200 per cent
- Riverside-Sud in Ottawa is the first Canadian French language school to try the program.

### Pros:

- Children learn better with vacations spread out more frequently through the year.
- Teachers have less risk of burnout thanks to vacation frequency
- Student retention is higher because breaks between instruction is less
- More students can be accommodated in a school facility thanks to multi-tracking
- The short breaks provide excellent points to offer remedial training

### Cons:

- The balanced calendar approach makes sourcing childcare more difficult with so many breaks
- Shorter summer vacation means less time for high school students to work at jobs and gain valuable labour experience.
- Tourism activity would suffer and the economy would suffer as a result

*Talkback: Tell us what you think! We welcome your input, ideas and inspirations to share with fellow guidance counsellors. Reach us at: [info@marketzonepro.com](mailto:info@marketzonepro.com).*

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## CORE SKILLS

WoodLINKS' core skills lay the foundation for subsequent areas of specialization and are grouped into Work Readiness and Wood Manufacturing. These core skills include both theoretical knowledge and lots of hands-on skills developed through the completion of exercises and class projects.

### Work readiness:

Safety • Career Awareness • Terminology & Communications • Applied Math • Fibre Supply and Green Certification • Technical Documents and Reports

### Wood Manufacturing:

Manufacturing Processes • Productivity • Quality Control • Cutting Tools • Materials • Construction Methods • Finishing • Design and Manufacturing

## SUB-SECTOR MODULES

Schools can tailor their programs by selecting a sub-sector module that they combine with the WoodLINKS core skills to create a complete program. Sub-sector modules reflect the particular skills and knowledge required for a sub-sector of the advanced wood manufacturing industry.

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Students who successfully complete the core curriculum and sub-sector module receive a WoodLINKS certificate. Graduates are prepared to go directly to work or enter a post-secondary program.

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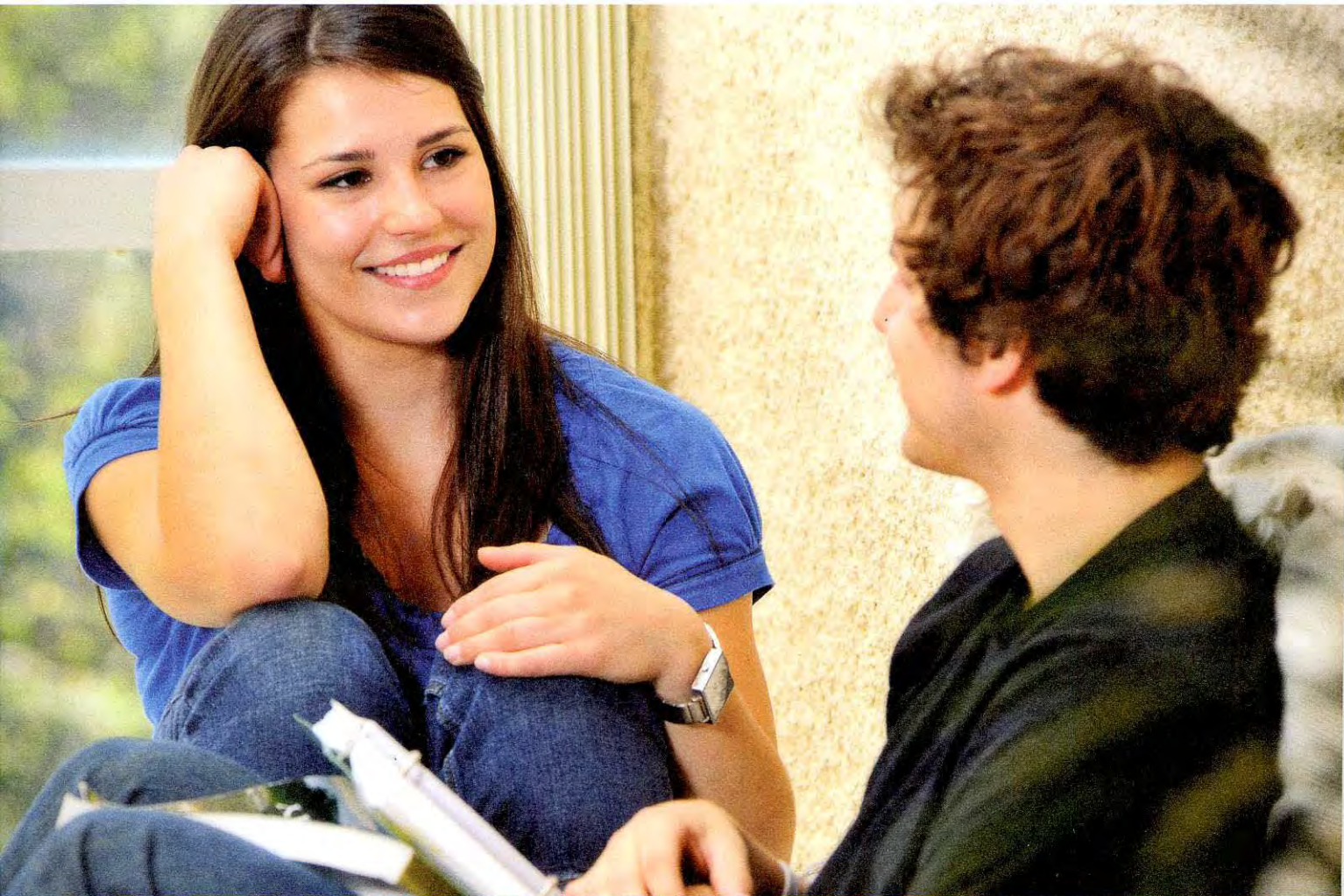
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