

NOVEMBER 2018

FSC NATIONAL NEWS

Newsletter for members of Family Service Canada



Message from the Board

The Board would like to thank everyone for making this year's Community of Learning another wonderful opportunity to network and learn together. This year we spent the first day with Lisa Watson, the Co-Founder and CEO of Openly a Canadian Company (changeopenly.com).

We spent the day focusing on Family Service Canada's purpose and our potential impact while strengthening our understanding of system leadership. The board will continue to work with Lisa Watson to develop an action plan generated out of the day together. Stay tuned.

A couple of articles were recommended:

[**The Connections Between Us: Learning to Leverage the Power of a Network Approach**](#)

[**The Dawn of System Leadership**](#)



CEO Spotlight: Deirdre Speers

Deirdre Speers joined Family Services Ottawa as their new Executive Director in October 2018.

Deirdre brings more than 25 years of leadership in the not-for-profit and municipal sectors specializing in social services, housing, child care and community development. Most recently, Deirdre was a founding partner in “Executive Suite Partners” where she has worked with not-for-profit clients to develop business cases, identify required leadership competencies and support governance volunteers in local and nationally based charities. Previously, Deirdre’s leadership roles included serving as President and CEO of the YMCA-YWCA National Capital Region, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Victoria as well as governance roles on local and national Boards.



Deirdre’s strengths in organizational leadership, strategic planning, change management and social enterprise leadership position her well to lead Family Services Ottawa.

“I am excited about joining the team at Family Services Ottawa and working beside the talented staff and volunteers as we respond to the growing and changing needs for quality mental health and wellness support services to help individuals and families thrive in our community” says Speers.

AGM Elections of Officers

Chuck MacLean, past board chair, opened the floor for nominations for Officers. There were three nominations: Pauline Smale to serve as Chair of the Board, Nancy MacDonald to serve as Vice Chair of the Board, and Heather Maughan to serve as both Treasurer and Secretary of the Board. The motion was made, seconded and carried.



Pauline Smale (The Family Centre of Northern Alberta), Patricia Jones (Catholic Family Service Calgary), Nancy MacDonald (Family Service Eastern Nova Scotia), Trish St. Onge (CFS Saskatoon), Joyce Zuk (Family Service Windsor Essex), and Heather Maughan (Family Plus Saint John, NB)

Homeless Outreach: Taking the Office to the Streets

Family Services Windsor-Essex is leading a Street Outreach program in Windsor, Ontario to engage with and support individuals experiencing homelessness. With a team of three Street Outreach Workers, this program is working to connect people to housing and other services.

Street Outreach has long been a tool utilized by agencies to locate individuals experiencing homelessness. Connecting with people in a non-traditional way brings services beyond the walls of our office and to individuals who are often most in need but least likely to come to our agency.

Outreach is a best practice and effective in identifying people who require support. Stigma is a factor that prevents people from visiting agencies. Some individuals are unaware of services. Some people have had negative experiences accessing services in the past. As such, our traditional service delivery model may actually create barriers that prevent those most in need from accessing support.

Each day the Outreach Team travels the streets and meets individuals that could benefit from our programs. Street outreach is an evidence-based practice. It requires a commitment to meet people where they are—even when that place is outside in a city park in the cold of winter. One of the challenges the Outreach Team faces is to provide services in a way that mirrors the confidentiality one could expect in an office setting. Our Outreach Team carries backpacks filled with food, water, hats, and other supplies that might be needed by the people they are meeting with. The workers also have a supply of Tim Horton's cards so that they can offer a cup of coffee or meal.

Running a Street Outreach program has affected the way we work at Family Services. We now look for ways that we can build "outreach" into all of our programs. Satellite counselling office locations, home visits, walk-in counselling clinics and co-locating with other agencies supporting groups who experience marginalization are just a few of the ways we are "taking our work to the streets".

5 Tips for Effective Outreach:

- Be human. People know if you are authentic and genuine
- Wear layers of clothing
- Create survival packs to give out. Include socks, hats, toiletries, water, sunscreen and adjust for season
- Be responsive, not reactive
- You may have to meet with someone many times before they will trust you. Remember Outreach is about engagement



Fun Fact:

In Canadian communities, 80% of people who use mobile health units have a health card and could go to a physician's office or the hospital—but they don't—they prefer the hospital on wheels!

We want to know what is happening in your agency. Let us know about your successes, new initiatives, important changes in staffing, anniversaries, etc. We will include them in future issues of our newsletter.