

JULY 2021

FSC NATIONAL NEWS

Newsletter for members of Family Service Canada



Message from the Board

Hope everyone is getting an opportunity to recharge over the summer. Many of us are working on re-entry processes and finding new ways to use the skills we've learned during the pandemic. Here is a short 30-minute podcast from Lencioni on re-entry to the workplace: <https://www.tablegroup.com/at-the-table/>—an interesting listen.

The discovery and recovery of the hundreds of the graves of Indigenous children that attended residential schools across Canada continues. It is estimated at least 6,000 children died in these institutions. Justice Murray Sinclair, who heads the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, said, "the federal government stopped recording the deaths around 1920 after the chief medical officer at Indian Affairs suggested children were dying at an alarming rate".

This new finding is a concrete example of the abuse, neglect, violence and ultimately deaths that occurred at the residential schools contributing to what we now understand is the historical trauma experienced by the Indigenous people of Canada. It is a sad time and a time of action. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission released the calls to action in 2015; they are still relevant and not actualized. Our work as national family serving organizations is to create awareness, educate and agitate for change.

The Community of Learning Committee is in full swing and planning a very relevant conference on board governance and the board and ED/CEO relationship. We are still hoping to meet in person and have chosen Toronto as a central and relatively inexpensive location. Pencil in October 26th and 27th.

If you haven't paid your membership dues, please follow up quickly as the due date is approaching. If you require any assistance with this or require some short term support please contact me at pauline.smale@familycentre.org

Pauline Smale
Board Chair

CEO Spotlight: Sandra Rupnarain

Sandra Rupnarain is Executive Director at The Family Services of Peel (FSP). Sandra is a collaborative, strategic and client—and family-focused leader with 15 years' experience providing leadership in not-for-profit social service organizations, including most recently, as Director, Client Services at FSP, a position which she has held since 2008. Sandra has also concurrently held the role of Managing Director, Peel Institute on Violence Prevention at FSP. Her previous leadership roles include serving as the Founder and Executive Director of Family Connection Centre—Toronto and Interim Executive Director of Sexual Assault Violence Intervention Services—Halton. Across all her leadership roles, Sandra is recognized for developing strong relationships and partnerships with staff, clients, the community, and a range of stakeholders to innovate and advance towards the achievement of the organization's mission and vision.

Sandra holds a Master of Divinity/Counselling from Tyndale University, a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and International Relations from York University, and a Degree in Applied Science in Legal Advocacy from City University of New York. Further, she is a Clinical Fellow with the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, a Registered Marriage and Family Therapist, a member of the American Association of Certified Counsellors, and a member of the Canadian Association of Psychotherapists.



Expanded Membership Features on www.FamilyServiceCanada.org

We continue working to make the Family Service Canada website more useful for members. In addition to the resource library, we've recently added a few tools:

- **Member Updates** – Knowing what other member agencies are working on might reveal an opportunity for collaboration or spark an idea. When members blog—and have an active RSS feed—the Member Updates page displays the headline and an excerpt from their recent post. If a post catches your attention, click the headline to jump to the member's website and read the full text. Then connect with the member to learn more.
- **Government of Canada News** – Most Federal Government announcements are not relevant to family service agencies. Sometimes, however, they can point to government priorities and investments within communities and regions. That information may benefit you or the people you serve. The new Government of Canada News page filters federal news releases to show those most likely to have some relevance to FSC members. Quickly skim through the latest announcement headlines and, if one catches your eye, click to read the full text.
- **Provincial Government News** – This page filters news releases from provincial governments. Click on your province to see recent releases from your government.
- **Member Directory** – Want to reach out to another member but can't remember their details? The Directory table lets you sort by column or search to find another member quickly and easily.

These new tools connect you with other members and helpful information from multiple sources in one location. We'll keep improving them over time, so please send us your feedback.

If it's been a while since you last logged in to <https://familyservicecanada.org/>, jump back in and let us know what you think.

Participating in Reconciliation

It's not that we've only now discovered the truth of Canada's history, but it does seem like more Canadians are able (or willing) to hear it and wrestle with it. Confirmation of the stories Indigenous People have been telling us for years about the residential schools hit many Canadians hard. More of us than ever before are keen to understand what our history is, and in response, to engage in the work of Reconciliation.

The big question that many of us are facing is... what do we do? In some ways, that question of what Reconciliation looks like for me, here in this place, might be an essential step. It requires us to look at ourselves and our context and understand the connections and impacts we have (or lack). It may not be a grand gesture, but the personal investment and actions that come out of that journey may ultimately be more meaningful than checking a box.

Still, there are many resources out there that can help us understand or imagine different ways of engaging with Reconciliation.

1. If you haven't already, write a land acknowledgement, but not just a list of the Nations who call the land home. The University of Saskatchewan provides a helpful series of videos to understand how the Land Acknowledgement can be a great starting point for Reconciliation. Find the resources at <https://teaching.usask.ca/curriculum/indigenous-voices/land-acknowledgements/module.php>
2. Understanding the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada is important for understanding the overall shifts (and specific steps) our country needs to make. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in Winnipeg (<https://nctr.ca/>) can help. You'll find the reports from the TRC and links to many other resources and education programs on the site.
3. The First Nations Child & Family Caring Society (<https://fncaringsociety.com/>) is based in Ottawa. They've created an excellent resource to help younger Canadians understand the 94 Calls. You might not be a youth but reading the Calls in plain language is easier to understand. It may help you identify opportunities to participate. Visit their website for information and resources, and find the child-friendly calls to action at https://fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/child_friendly_calls_to_action_web.pdf
4. Reconciliation Canada (<https://reconciliationcanada.ca/>) is an organization based in Vancouver. They engage Canadians in "dialogue and transformative experiences to revitalize the relationships among Indigenous peoples and all Canadians." You'll find toolkits, shareable resources, engagement opportunities, and other ways to get involved on their website.
5. Indigenous Canada, offered by the University of Alberta Faculty of Native Studies, is an online course that explores Indigenous histories and contemporary issues in Canada. The course is available free or for a modest fee if you want a certificate of completion. <https://www.ualberta.ca/admissions-programs/online-courses/indigenous-canada/index.html>

There are so many ways to engage in Reconciliation. Let's keep talking about it, sharing resources, and working towards a more equitable Canada and better relationships between all people who call this land their home.



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.

