

MARCH 2022

FSC NATIONAL NEWS

Newsletter for members of Family Service Canada



Message from the Board

Well, spring is here and with it, the transition to the endemic phase of COVID. I have had the opportunity to speak to most of you throughout the last year and must say what a hearty, resilient bunch we are. The work has continued and with-it growth and new ways of providing services. I continue to feel so very grateful to you, the network, as it has provided me with such support throughout the last couple of years. I hope it has done the same for you. Remember to reach out to any board member if there is something you are being challenged with. We are here.

The board has a strategic session planned for the end of March. We will be developing an updated road map which will shape our priorities for the next couple of years. I'll be sure to share with you the main themes as we identify them in the next newsletter.

I also wanted to ensure we remind you that we have decided to have a face-to-face Community of Learning (COL) in the fall. Vancouver has agreed to host, and I am so grateful to Maria Howard, Executive Director, and her team for this. We will set a date soon enough and send it out so that you can be sure to attend. The COLs are such a great way to connect and stay on top of current National trends.

Take good care,

Pauline Smale
Board Chair

Board of Directors Spotlight: Shellie Pociuk

Shellie Pociuk is the CEO of Family Service Regina and has been with the organization since June of 2002. She serves as the Treasurer on the Board of Family Service Canada and Family Service Saskatchewan and is a founding partner and steering committee member of the Saskatchewan Non-Profit Partnership.

Before joining the team at Family Service Regina, Shellie worked primarily in the private and public sector. A career shift to the nonprofit sector happened by chance, and Shellie has never looked back. "The passion and dedication of the sector and those that work in it inspires me every day. As a CEO in any organization, our roles can at times be very isolating. When I first started in my role of CEO at Family Service Regina I received a call from a now-retired Executive Director, welcoming me to the Family Service Canada membership and inviting me to reach out at any time for resources



or support. That is something that I have never forgotten, and it spoke to the inclusive, collaborative culture of Family Service Canada. The relationships that I have been able to build across the country with other Executive Leaders in the Family Service Canada network has been so incredibly valuable for myself and my agency.”

When she takes time to recharge, together with her husband of 37 years, they have embraced travelling in their campervan, plotting where they will travel to when retirement becomes their next life stage. A mother to two wonderful adult children, she is anxiously awaiting the arrival of her first grandchild this summer.

Finding the Warrior Within Program at CFS Saskatoon

Finding the Warrior Within is a CFS Saskatoon school-based pilot program currently being offered to children in grades three and four and their families, in collaboration with Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and the Saskatoon Public School Division.

Student groups are both therapeutic and psycho-educational. Presently, groups are offered in elementary schools for a 10 – 12-week period, with each session being an hour per week. School personnel have expressed the hope for this time frame to expand, as they believe this would produce greater outcomes in the future.

Family sessions are offered 2 - 3 times throughout the 10 – 12 weeks, with each session being an hour. The family sessions are held outside of school hours, and provide parents and caregivers a space to learn the basics of anxiety and strategies to help their children at home.



The goal of Finding the Warrior Within is to guide children and their families in discovering internal resources, build on their strengths, expand their social network and experience a life of resilience. The program helps to end the isolation and confusion that young individuals and their families often feel when one experiences anxiety and worry.

Why are Family Sessions Included?

At CFS Saskatoon, our philosophy aligns with supporting and strengthening the family system. Through the provision of both child and family sessions, we are able to extend our reach to the school and home environment. Research and experience have also proven that when working to support children with anxiety, it is pertinent that the family system is involved and well supported.

Why is Anxiety Programming Important for Children?

Our knowledge, which is consistent with research, shows that the number of children and youth experiencing anxiety is increasing. Without proper understanding and skill development, anxiety experienced by children may continue beyond childhood, and potentially into teen and adult years.

“Anxiety is a growing issue in our society. An estimated 1.2 million children and youth in Canada are affected by mental illness – yet, less than 20 per cent will receive appropriate treatment.” Mental Health Commission of Canada (2019)

If you have any program that you’d like to highlight in the newsletter, please contact Pauline Smale at pauline.smale@familycentre.org

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.

