

FSC NATIONAL NEWS

Newsletter for members of Family Service Canada



Message from the Board

The Board of Directors met in March for a strategic planning session - our first face-to-face session since 2018! It was a timely session giving us an opportunity to look forward and re-establish our priorities. We explored our mandate, the Canadian space we hope to fill, as well as more practical pieces specific to events, communication, FSC products, membership, and potential fundraising opportunities.

We are thrilled to share that we intend to have a face-to-face Community of Learning (COL) in October. Vancouver has stepped up to host this year. We know that the last two years has been challenging and that many of us have struggled. We plan to provide space for all of us to be inspired and renew our hope.

This is a quote that resonated for us as we explored themes for the COL.

You can do what you love and still be tired.
You can do what you love and still become burnt out.
You can do what you love and still get excited about a break.

Alisha Robertson, Author, Podcaster, Community Builder, Believer in Doing Business with Intention: <https://www.alisharobertson.com/>

We hope everyone will find the time to join us in October.

Board Chair
Pauline Smale



Board of Directors Spotlight: Trish St.Onge

Trish joined CFS Saskatoon in 2000. She has been involved in a variety of organizations over the past 35 years, in both the public and non-profit sector. She has held a variety of leadership positions, including her current role as Executive Director with CFS Saskatoon. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work degree from the University of Victoria, a Master's in Continuing Education from the University of Saskatchewan, and a Post Graduate Certificate in Executive Coaching from Royal Roads University.



Trish is a strong advocate for the non-profit sector, supporting the work through committees and board participation, locally, provincially, and nationally. She strives to provide inspiration, creative thinking, and vision towards a better future state for leaders, the sector, and communities.

When starting as Executive Director, Trish's predecessor Rhonda Gough had spoken of the merits of Family Service Canada many times. She said to her: "If you do nothing else, continue your membership in Family Service Canada and go the Executive Summits (now Community of Learning)," and so she did! Membership in Family Service Canada has been instrumental in developing relationships and networks that have provided guidance and courage to Trish to serve her organization and community in the best possible way. The group of leaders in the Family Service Canada Network are second to none!

Trish is married to a wonderful man for a really long time, a mom to three grown sons, and grandma to one sweet little girl. In her spare time she enjoys camping, travelling, spending time with family and friends, as well as a competitive game of pickle ball.

Children and Youth mental health support programs at Family Services of Central Alberta

Family Services of Central Alberta (FSCA) like many of you provides preventive, supportive, and early intervention services to support individuals and families for various needs. We believe that the family is the most important resource to the individuals within it. Our mission is to assist individuals and families to maintain dignity, enhance autonomy, and strengthen relationships.

We know from our current programming that many children are struggling with anxiety. What we see happening as our community works through the COVID-19 that anxiety has increased. Responding to community need FSCA has created a continuum, of Children and Youth mental health support programs.



We started by using the program created at BC Children's Hospital's Mood and Anxiety Disorders Clinic. Dr. Jane Garland teamed up with Dr. Sandra Clark, a child psychologist with expertise in CBT. Together they developed these ideas into a group program and training manual to help children and their families better cope with anxiety.

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.



FSCA started first running the Taming the Worry Dragons program in 2013, offering the program to children. After our first two sessions, it came very clear to us that a parent component needed to be added. We have come to believe that for the success of the program it needs to be for both parents and children.

Our current Taming the Worry Dragons program supports children 5-8 years of age and their families to develop healthier coping strategies through use of a variety of tools taught to them over a 6-week anxiety program. The children work with our very skilled facilitator and Sparks (the worry dragon) while the parents spend their evening in a parent group session lead by one of our family therapists. The children and parents come together for the last 10 minutes of the program for the children to share their learnings. Through the years, we have added a few different ways to present the strategies, including a graduation where each child receives their own dragon and parents and children openly share their worries and through a ritual rip that worry up and put it in the worry box. We have had such huge success with this program.

Through COVID and pre COVID we had many families calling looking for a program similar for their older children. Responding to that need, we took the opportunity to take what we knew and have learned creating our own program called Conquer Your Worries, which supports children 9-13 years of age. Once again we have both a children's group and the parent support group. Some of the tools that they learn include: Time Management, Overcoming procrastination, Mental Imagery, Relaxation, Changing our self talk, Friendship and Groups, Sleep, Fueling up, Mental Rehearsal, Laughter, and Exercise.

We are hoping to add to programs in the fall to our continuum. Bloom Empowerment for girls is a program which we have written the curriculum for, and will pilot in one of our middle schools in the fall as an after school program. The second being an anxiety program that the Primary Care Network has written the curriculum for that supports 13-17 year old kids. We will be working over the summer to create the parent component of this program and hope to pilot in the fall as well.

If you have any questions, please contact Judy Scott at (403) 309-8222 or jscott@fsca.ca.