

FEBRUARY 2023

# FSC NATIONAL NEWS

Newsletter for members of Family Service Canada



## Message from the Board

Hello all!

As we settle into February and are still seeing winter weather coast to coast, it was a nice break to celebrate “Family Day!” If there is any special day that our organizations understand the importance of, it is Family Day. I would love to think of ways in the future that at Family Services of Canada we could share our events and messaging with each other and build a stronger nationwide voice!

One way to start this is with the launching of our Affinity groups. Thanks to everyone who participated in the recent surveys and please know if you weren't able to, we still hope you will join. Based upon the feedback we received, the two most popular groups were Human Resources and Marketing/Communication. Both these topics received the highest ratings and interest to bring staff together to further discuss.

As with our original plan, we would like to bring these two groups together over the next 7 – 8 months. The goal would still be to invite staff from our organizations to join and set topics they would like to discuss specific to these interest areas. We then would invite the two groups to present at the COL in October about what they learned and any recommendations they may have going forward.

Please consider this note as an invitation to decide if you would like someone from your organization to participate in one or both of the groups. We invite you to send the names and contact information to Simone Plusa at FSGV and once we receive all the names, we will send out the details about starting the groups. Our hope is that a FSC board member will virtually “host” the initial meeting and then invite the group to identify 1 or 2 chairs to lead the group until October. We will also look to each group to decide how often and when they meet. There are no rules, just opportunities for engagement!

Thanks again for everyone's interest and I look forward to hearing the many learnings from many committed and experienced professionals across our organizations.

Happy February and talk soon!

Maria

Simone Plusa – [splusa@fsgv.ca](mailto:splusa@fsgv.ca)

# Agency Spotlight: Family Dynamics

Greetings from Winnipeg, Manitoba to all of my fellow family serving colleagues across Canada!

My name is Millie Braun, and I am the Executive Director at Family Dynamics in Winnipeg. I have been working for this organization for 30 years, and in the role of Executive Director for the past six years.

Family Dynamics is an accredited not-for-profit agency that was established in Winnipeg during the mid-1930s. The purpose of the organization was to ensure that Winnipeg families had access to coordinated services. In the beginning, the primary service was to provide assistance in family homes with child care. This was decades before licensed child care options were available in the larger system.

Today, we continue to offer in-home family support services to families in crisis. Other services that have evolved through the decades include counselling, parenting programs, services for newcomers, including those with complex challenges, and drop in family resource centres in seven low income communities around the city.

What I've found most rewarding about working with Family Dynamics through the years is that as needs and circumstances have changed for families, we have been able to adapt our programs in response. One of the highlights for me was the opportunity to help develop a program for high needs refugees that allowed us to work comprehensively with individuals and families in their settlement journey. We are delighted to be a part of a community of service providers across Western Canada that provides settlement services.

As the COVID-19 crisis fades into the past, we are all in the midst of trying to understand and respond to the lasting impacts of the pandemic on children, youth, and families in our communities. I wish all of you strength and courage in this work and look forward to more opportunities ahead to share ideas and support each other. Best wishes for 2023 to all!



## Strive: Men's Healthy Relationship Group at The Family Centre

The Family Centre in Edmonton offers a therapy group called *Strive: Men's Healthy Relationship Group*, which aims to help men attain more fulfilling relationships and a balanced life with less conflict. This program is facilitated by two mental health therapists.

One of Strive's facilitators, Mark Frederick, feels very grateful to be able to support men in improving their relationships. "It gives me so much hope that there are these men, who may not have otherwise sought out help, come and have these revelations and connections with other people."

The 16-week program consists of four modules: 1. Self-awareness and self-management, 2. Communication skills and conflict management, 3. Core beliefs, values, and life balance, and 4. Power in relationships and impacts of gender socialization.

Sessions include open discussions, skill-building, and self-reflective exercises.

Strive also allows men to meet with others who are going through similar experiences. Mark believes there is something powerful in realizing you aren't the only one. New members continue to join as participants move through their journey in the group. Those, known as veterans, help newcomers feel welcomed and comfortable.

"People can be distrustful at first, and the veterans set the expectations that it's OK to share those difficult things that you are dealing with," says Mark. "That relational piece is where they can see it as more relevant to their lives even when they have vastly different backgrounds."



Facilitators Mark Frederick and Cayley McConaghy

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.