

APRIL 2024

# FSC NATIONAL NEWS

Newsletter for members of Family Service Canada



## Message from the Board

Hello all!

I hope this email finds you well, anticipating many of the events that happen in Spring.

The Family Services of Canada board recently met in Ottawa for our annual review, and it was a wonderful time to reflect on the many informative conversations and connections made at the COL this past October in St John, New Brunswick. We spent much time talking about how we should ensure that FSC brings the best value to our family of members and supports the essential services that we all provide.....a strong nationwide community.

Our hope is that through our yearly Community of Learning gatherings, we will grow and strengthen our connections, partnerships, and knowledge sharing. We are excited to announce that COL 2024 will be in Toronto early in the week of October 28th. Please hold these dates in your calendars and keep watching for more details shortly.

Here's to a wonderful spring for us all to enjoy!

Maria

**Mark Your Calendars:** Community of Learning  
Week of October 28, 2024  
Toronto, ON

## CEO Spotlight: Natasha McKenna

This April marks my second-year anniversary as the Executive Director of Family Service PEI. As a first-time ED and as the leader of a small provincial FSO, the two most important things I have gained from being part of Family Service Canada are peer support and inspiration.

In my first month, I was invited to connect with my fellow Family Service EDs in Atlantic Canada. Immediately, Sharon Amirault from Family Plus in Saint John and Nancy MacDonald from Family Service Eastern Nova Scotia made me feel connected and supported in my role. Our monthly calls are a space where we share updates, get advice, and offer our experiences and support. I always leave them with renewed energy and clarity.

The FSC's Community of Learning events have further expanded my network and have really helped me understand the diverse range of programs and services offered by FSOs and see pathways for my organization to enhance our services to respond to the challenges faced by individuals and families.

It has been invaluable to be part of a community of family-serving organizations across Canada. I look forward to the next COL this year and to joining the HR Affinity Group.

Natasha McKenna



## Kit's Place: Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC) model

Sexual abuse happens to a child every day in New Brunswick. This can be one of the scariest and most difficult times in someone's life. Imagine that there is a safe place to go where all services come together to support the survivor. That is the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC) model.

At Kit's Place, a CYAC located in Saint John, NB, community partners (police, sexual assault nurse examiners, social workers, etc.) wrap services around the client in a safe and comforting centre, rather than having to go to the courthouse, police station, hospital, and social worker's office. Nothing can erase the horribleness of what has happened, but at Kit's Place, everything is done to put the child and their family first and make them as comfortable as possible.



What the children, youth, and families love the most is being greeted by Poet, our Lions Foundation of Canada ADI Dog Guide. Poet is truly impacting the lives of those who she greets, have her in a therapy session, or have her with them while being interviewed. This beautiful two-and-a-half-year-old black lab loves to comfort people by listening, sitting with them, and waving goodbye.

One child described Poet as 'magic' because of the difference she has made in their life since receiving treatment services. Poet has this instinctive nature to read and react to a child in distress, and for this, we are truly grateful. The staff love her too.