



Winter 2020



Therapeutic Family Care Program

VISION STATEMENT: Every child and youth grows, builds on their strengths and reaches their potential in a positive, secure and enduring environment.

Committees:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Dawn Walcott-Parris
- Dwayne Stacey
- Stephen Martin

MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Annette Fegan
- Duane Durham
- Mary Price-Cameron
- Nicole Broderick
- Tiffany Thickson
- Wendy Gordon



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Greetings from Duane Durham **TFC Program Manager**



It is again a pleasure to be able to say hello to all of you through the newsletter. As we move towards the Holiday Season, it is a pleasure to be able to report on the progress of the Program. As ever, I am first and foremost proud of the work being done by caregivers and staff. Our children are truly the benefactors of all their hard work and dedication.

This has been a difficult and unprecedented time in our lives due to Covid. Society staff, caregivers, and TFC staff have been amazingly resilient in their efforts to support children and families. TFC staff were able to offer provincial supports to other Society's during the summer months. We serviced 20 files.

The Therapeutic Foster Home Program continues to provide service to children; with 20 homes providing the backbone of this service. The Clinical Service and Support Program has continued to develop and grow. Over the past year children and their caregivers were supported, including children in foster, kinship, biological and adoption placements. The Program is helping TFC to broaden it's support to a variety of permanency options for children. The Mixed Modality Program continues to provide service to children and we see the benefits of children living in a family based treatment program with CYW supports. Children appear to be thriving within a family.

Dr. Sian Phillips, psychologist and Dr. Charlie Menendez, psychologist continue to provide support anchoring down our consultant roster across TFC.

We continue to provide enhanced caregiving support to children and youth within our Program. We currently have over 24 children and youth benefiting from one to one worker supports. These workers provide individualized programming of life and social skills, therapeutic recreational opportunities

and also needed respite for caregivers. The hours vary from a few hours a week to 30 hours per week. We are finding that this support is crucial in maintaining children in family settings, where they belong.

We are currently in a Strategic Plan that runs from 2017–2022. It is in keeping with the needs and demands of our sponsoring Societies. We will be beginning a new strategic planning process in 2021, involving interviews with all our stakeholders. This is always an exciting process that allows us to explore new directions and renew our relationship with our partners.

In January 2008 our Program began to implement use of the Assessment Checklist for Children (ACC) as a further means of measuring the range of issues faced by children in the Program as well as their progress. The ACC was developed in 1996 by **Dr. Michael Tarren-Sweeney** for use in the 2002-2003 Children in Care Study of the Mental Health of children in long-term foster and kinship care in New South Wales, Australia. We have been able to understand and speak with greater clarity on the overall clinical needs of our children while at the same time measuring precise clinical and behavioral progress. To date we have over 2200 data entries for the children in our three programs. It is now shown that children/youth are improving in all of our programs. We are also using the outcome measure Thinking about your Child (Granger, 2009) which is an outcome measure to primarily look at our permanency outcomes.

The support from our sponsored Society's continues to be strong and vibrant. We are extremely grateful for the support of the Societies – both staff and the TFC Executive Committee **Dwayne Stacey, Dawn Walcott-Parris and Stephen Martin** and the Executive Directors including **Jennifer McLauchlan, Tami Callahan and Steven Woodman.**





ORANGE SHIRT DAY



Orange Shirt Day is a legacy of the St. Joseph Mission (SJM) residential school commemoration event held in Williams Lake, BC, Canada, in the spring of 2013. It grew out of *Phyllis Webstad Story* of having her shiny new orange shirt taken away on her first day of school at the Mission, and it has become an opportunity to keep the discussion on all aspects of residential schools happening annually.

The date was chosen because it is the time of year in which children were taken from their homes to residential schools, and because it is an opportunity to set the stage for anti-racism and anti-bullying policies for the coming school year. It also gives teachers time to plan events that will include children, as we want to ensure that we are passing the story and learning on to the next generations.

Orange Shirt Day is also an opportunity for First Nations, local governments, schools and communities to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for generations of children to come.

Child Abuse Prevention Month

Written By: Erin Beatty



2020 Dress Purple Campaign

This year's campaign certainly had a different feel; we were not able to have many community events to spread the message this year due to COVID so embracing the changing times, we went virtual. Committee members attended virtual Council Meetings in our geographical area to present

deputations requesting councils to proclaim October 27, 2020 Dress Purple Day, we were still able to decorate many towns in purple ribbon for the month of October.

The "Child Abuse Prevention Month" campaign originally started with a focus on work Children's Aid Societies do in cases of abuse and neglect. Over past few years, with the move to Dress Purple Day and the classroom resources, we have been slowly shifting to a greater emphasis on the work Children's Aid Societies do to support families and keep children and youth at home. This year's campaign completed that shift to a focus on Children's Aid Societies as one of many resources available to support families facing challenges, as well as the role of individuals in the community to help them access the services they need. The majority of children receiving service from HCAS is a result of families being unable to meet children's physical and emotional needs. Some of the difficulties that our families face include mental health concerns, addictions, social isolation, trauma, and extreme financial stress.

Every October, Children's Aid Societies, in partnership with social service organizations, government, and community members across Ontario, run a provincial awareness campaign called Dress Purple Day. On October 27, we dressed in purple to show families facing challenges that we care, and we can help. The aim is to raise awareness about the supports that are available and how to access them. It also encourages all Ontarians to do their part in supporting vulnerable families in their local community.

Dress Purple Day offered an opportunity to remind Ontarians that Children's Aid Societies and Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agencies are open and providing services, and that if they have a concern about the safety or well-being of a child or youth or if their family is in need of support, they should call their local CAS.



TFC Training

TFC Cluster Training Schedule During COVID-19 practices we are providing **VIRTUAL VIDEO training via Microsoft Teams**

MANDATORY REGISTER via email at tfc.reception@tfcprogram.ca We require your email address for virtual participation. Trainings are open to Caregivers, Society Workers, and Community Partners wanting to participate in training and connect with others. Training is from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

March 25, 2021

DIVERSITY AND IDENTITY

Facilitators: Cesar Ndena, Mary Price-Cameron

April 22, 2021

IMPACT OF CAREGIVING ON CAREGIVERS CHILDREN

Facilitators: Jean Skelton, Latoya Howse, Taylor Nelson

May 27, 2021

UNDERSTANDING ATTACHMENT STYLES IN ADULTS AND CHILDREN

Facilitators: Nancy Burton, Cynthia Campbell-Dionne

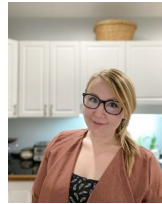
Staffing At TFC



Hi Everyone! My name is Nicole Bilson, I am a Masters of Social Work Student and I was lucky enough to complete the first of my two placements here at TFC! I also work as a Family Service Worker with Highland Shores Children's Aid, so I was very excited to gain a new lens of understanding how developmental trauma can impact the way parents relate to their children later in life. Completing my placement during COVID-19 certainly looked a lot different than I expected; however, my wonderful supervisors still made sure that I had an excellent learning experience. I had so many amazing opportunities during my three months with TFC, including completing Level 1 DDP training, assisting with

facilitating a cluster training on the Neurobiology of Self Care, and attending several virtual trainings. Of note, was the Family Focused Treatment Association (FFTA) conference that was held this past September. The conference had several different training modules that attendees could choose from, including topics such as grief and loss experienced by foster parents, servicing transgender clients in rural communities, problem sexualized behaviours in children, and parenting strategies for raising children with trauma backgrounds. The best part of virtual trainings - they can be attended in your PJs! Thanks for having me, TFC! Although we couldn't connect in person, everyone made me feel incredibly welcomed to the team.

Hello I'm **Sabrina Jones** and I've recently joined the TFC



team as a Casual Support Worker. I received my Child & Youth Counseling Diploma at Loyalist College, and have been a passionate worker in the field ever since. I have babysat since a very young age, and there was no question in my mind that working with children and youth was what I wanted to do.

Previously I've completed three placements at different schools in the Hastings and Price Edward District School Board (HPEDSB) area. Following that I fulfilled a position as a Parent Therapist working in a group home for Quinte Children's Homes (QCH). All of these positions I enjoyed and learned from greatly. It was at QCH that I then received training for Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, and No Wrong Door training.

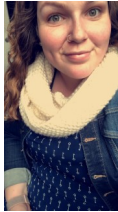
Some awards I'm proud of receiving would definitely be the Anti-Bullying Initiative Award in Memorial of Abigayle Kempton, The James Montgomerie Community Award through Community Living, Rotary of Colborne Gordon Hoselton Memorial Award. All of these awards sum up things that are still of large importance in my life, like community, anti-bullying and helping those in need.

In my personal life I have a wonderful Son and Daughter, they are ages one and three. We enjoy going on walks, gardening, painting colouring, baking, and most of all spending time with family. We have a pet Conure parrot named Pearl, she keeps us always laughing together at home. We are all winter lovers and happily awaiting this winter season and getting the toboggans out.



Thank you all for reading and getting to know me a little better. I'm thrilled to be a part of the TFC team, and can't wait to hopefully meet you all in person one day! Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year !

Hi my name is Alicia Dayton and I have been a Casual Support Worker with Therapeutic Family Care for just over a year. I absolutely love being able to be part of the foster/kin/adoptive journey by supporting both the children and youth as well as the parents/caregivers.



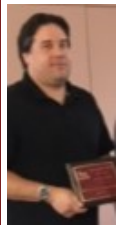
Prior to working with TFC, I have worked with variety of community agencies, including agencies for parenting strategies and supports, and another that offered youth based programming.

I am a graduate of the Child and Youth Care Advanced Diploma program at Loyalist College, and I am currently pursuing my Bachelor's Degree in Social Work with Trent University.

I love spending time outdoors and being active in the community. I do my best to make outdoor recreation part of the experience when working with children and youth. I believe that some of the best conversations and learning can be had while having fun, and as such I've got a large array of games, activities and toys always in tow wherever I am.

I am thankful for all of the families that I have been fortunate to work with, and look forward to meeting many more!

My Name is **Chris Cassista** I was a TFC placement student. In the year 2014 I had to make some major changes to my life and a career change led me to college for my SSW diploma which led to my first placement with TFC. Thereafter, I pursued university to earn my degree in social work of a HBSW. As a mature student there were struggles of full-time work and studies; however, in the end worth all of it and I am excited to start my new career.



I re-connected with TFC in the spring of 2016 for my SSW placement and also was hired as a Casual Support Worker. My field experience was much more than just 1-1 support

and soon evolved into advocating for service and supporting caregiver and family of origin. There were more changes to come. During my first placement, I observed and learned, and was motivated to return to university for my degree in social work. The staff at TFC were very supportive and helpful.

My placement as a clinical case consultant has been an amazing experience. Covid has created some challenges, but they were overcome, and I was provided with a positive and busy placement. I attended case consults along with my supervisor, which promoted critical thinking and ever mindful anti-oppressive practice. I was provided access to trauma informed practice, attachment at the adult level, and DDP level 1; including days with Dr Philips as well as providing direct service delivery. The focus on relationships with service users are key and greatly informs TFC's work.

What makes TFC truly special is the environment and the staff. That moment you walk in the door, you experience it; they approach you with friendship and excitement. You talk with your supervisor regularly, even to just say hello. You are greeted by the Program Manager, who takes the time to check in with you, despite his schedule. It is an environment and culture of positivity, support, friendship, kindness and motivation. I can honestly sing endless praise for everyone at TFC for everyone has been helpful and supported me in my progress. TFC's mission is special, and their staff even more so.

I want to express my thanks and gratitude to TFC for helping me with my journey over these past four plus years. Not only for development and support, but for truly believing in me. For promoting and encouraging my growth, education and evolution both personally and professionally. From the bottom of my heart, thank you to everyone at TFC.

During my time with TFC I had the opportunity to access the **Family Focused Treatment Association (FFTA) Conference**; for which I truly grateful. We were able to choose between several topics per the scheduled time slot provided. Some of the topics were "Grief and Loss in Foster Care", "Sex Trafficking Trauma", "Trauma as a Result of Racism", "Evidence-based Model for Successful Transition to Adulthood" and "Co-parenting and Co-mentoring were among the topics I attended. The



conference was very informative. This provided valuable information adding to my professional knowledge and growth. The FFTA were very successful in making this event virtual, with the ability to pick among a variety of topics, they successfully connected across the Country and Internationally.

Chi-Miigwech, Chris Cassista, SSW, HBSW.

Celebrating Indigenous World View

Author: Cynthia Campbell-Dionne

The Therapeutic Family Care Program has long valued supporting the learning journey of students. I have been very fortunate to have supported many students over the years and this past fall supervised Chris Cassista as he completed his BSW in Indigenous studies through Laurentian University. As part of his placement, Chris provided Cultural teachings with a family based on their request to learn more about their Culture to gain “rootedness”. At TFC we are aiming to recognize the impacts of Colonization for Indigenous people, and work towards broadening our Indigenous World View. The work of Rene Linklater (2014) has been pivotal in assisting us in understanding the importance of “Decolonizing” trauma in our everyday work, recognizing how imperialism has pathologized. Linklater (2014) speaks to the importance of Indigenous World View, philosophies and practices towards healing and resiliency. Today with Chris’ permission we share some of the teachings that he was so kind to provide our families.

The Seven Grandfather Teachings

To cherish knowledge is to know WISDOM
To know LOVE is to know peace
To honor all of creation is to have RESPECT
BRAVERY is to face the foe with integrity
HONESTY in facing a situation is to be brave
HUMILITY is to know yourself as a sacred part
of creation
TRUTH is to know all of these things

(Benton-Banai, 1988)

The Four Sacred Medicines

Tobacco:

Is used in prayer offering to water, tobacco is also used and given to Elders when we ask for their wisdom. We offer with our left hand, for the left hand is giving and the right hand often takes. Tobacco is how we communicate with our ancestors and the spirit world.

Sweetgrass:

Is used for smudging and is the ‘male’ medicine for smudging. Sweetgrass is also used in ceremonies for group cleansing.

Sage:

Is another Smudging medicine and is the ‘female’ medicine for smudging. Sage can be used by women at any time. Traditionally women cannot use scared medicines during moon time because they amplify the energies of the medicines. Sage is Creators' gift to women and can be used to smudge during moon time.

Cedar:

Is used for smudging and is combined with other medicines for burning and smudging. It is both a purifying/cleansing medicine and a healing medicine used in cedar baths for healing.

Oral teachings of traditions.

References: Linklater, R. (2014). Decolonizing trauma work: Indigenous stories and strategies.

Black Point: Fernwood publishing





'Tis The Season For Giving

By: Jean Skelton

Each year, the TFC Program comes together to support a family in need at Christmas time. Like all of you, we are particularly aware of marginalized families in the community who work so hard each day just to get their basic needs met and, of course, the stresses and strains on families are compounded during this time of COVID.

This year, we collected for two families in the community who are currently being supported by the TFC Program, raising over \$600.00 for each family. I am thrilled to be able to visit with these two families to offer them gift cards so that they can then shop for their children.

We know of several CAS staff, programs and agencies that are also working hard to make sure that others enjoy the holiday season, and that children do not go without. For all of your kindness and generosity, may we say "Miigwech", "Gracias", "Merci", "Grazie", and "Do Jeh".

From the TFC Program, to you and yours, may you all have a wonderful holiday season; however you celebrate it. Stay safe and take good care.

Thinking About Your Child Outcome Measures

Update By: Nancy Burton

The **Thinking About Your Child** Assessment tool is a user friendly assessment tool for the parent to complete. It has a dual purpose, first to explore the parent child relationship and how the parent or caregiver understands the child and secondly it considers the parent/caregivers opinion of targeted problems for the child they are caring for. This assessment tool can be completed with the Clinical Case Consultant and makes for a good discussion of the issues and understanding of the child. The tool is completed at the start of service and at the six month mark, and if there is an extension of service, at the next six month mark or end of

service. The tool provides specific scores that can be compared to show progress.

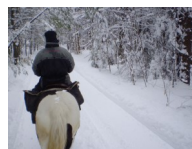
In the parent relational section areas such as Parent Skills and Understanding, Parent Child Relationship, Child Responsiveness to Care and Placement Stability are scored. The subtitles allow you to see the improvement in each area, or lack thereof. In this section the increase in score means there has been improvement.

In the Targeted Concerns section, a lower score would indicate improvement in the specific behavioural challenge. What is sometimes evident is that a child's targeted concern may not improve significantly at first; however the parent/caregiver's understanding, response and meaning making shifts allowing them to feel differently about the child and the behaviour. With this change, the relationship improves as does the placement stability. The tool also allows the parent/caregiver to reflect on the changes from the start of service to the end of service.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

B.P. continues to meet with success this school year, participating in online learning and on track for grade 12 graduation at the end of this school year.

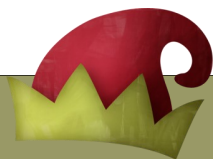


B. continues to enjoy horseback riding and will continue to visit the barn over the winter to enjoy taking their horse out on the trails in winter. It is B.'s dream to have a younger horse and learn how to jump. B. continues to keep

connected to peers during Covid, through the use of Facetime and talks with 'bestie' by phone every day. The teacher also facilitates social gatherings of groups of peers several days a week.

M.B. has finished Undergrad with a minor in Political Science and a Major in the Classics. M. is currently taking a break from school, is working full time with horses and loving it! There is a plan to go back to do a Masters' program in the Classics, and then get a PhD. M.'s goal is to teach at the university level. M. continues to be an integral member of





the W. family. Parents are extremely proud of M. and describe “a fantastic kid.”

D.D. has made a successful transition from a residential placement to a foster family. D.’s heart is open to joining a family by adoption, and D.’s Team is currently working hard to find a permanent adoptive family. D. loves animals and has some ideas about the kind of dog to have in a new family. D. continues to do well at school in school placement, has made new friends in the neighbourhood and remains connected to siblings.



The W. family, first time parents, welcomed two young siblings into their home on a foster-with-a-view placement last year. The siblings are now on Adoption Placement with this family. Over the past 18 months, parents have focused on the use of play and fun in order to build connections and settle these siblings into the family. These siblings have bright, shining spirits and it is always a pleasure to see them. The family has been supported by a great Team and are currently moving towards adoption finalization.



C.H. has begun the Heavy Machine Operator course at Fleming College and is meeting with success. On track to graduate in December 2020. Congrats on this achievement.

Articles of Interest

NACAC Conference August 2020

Written by: Jackie Robertson

We were all very excited when we first heard that the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) 2020 was going to take place in Toronto. A few of us had attended and presented these amazing conferences in the states. There were proposals for TFC to also present in Toronto. As you all know, this conference did not occur in person due to Covid restrictions. I must admit that I was disappointed in not being able to participate

in this learning with people around me.

Nevertheless, TFC clinical consultants had the privilege to be able to attend virtually. NACAC 2020 is a four-day educational event that covered a wide variety of foster care and adoption topics in order to be a resource for the diverse needs and levels of experience of adoptive and foster parents, child welfare professionals, and people who were adopted or in foster care.

The sessions were offered one at a time with the focus of the first day aimed towards professionals, the last day towards parents, and days two and three for parents and professionals.

The session allowed attendees to participate live and/or also listen to a recorded version. Some highlights of sessions offered included:

- The impact of trauma and loss
- Core issues in adoption
- Effective therapeutic techniques in adoption
- Kinship care and birth family connections
- Parenting children with disabilities and challenges
- Older children and youth
- Race, culture, and diversity in adoption and foster care
- Supporting children and families in adoption and foster care
- Recruiting families for children

I must admit, there was a lot of information passed on in a four-day period. It was very reassuring that TFC is already equipped and practicing most of what is current and leading-edge research. I just wanted to share (and remind) a few highlights of the work we do. In adoption (fostering), it



is imperative to truly understand the impact of GRIEF and LOSS for all. Grief and loss are experienced by ALL three constellations (adopted child, biological family-including extended family, and the adopted/foster parent-including family).

“Separation, whether temporary or permanent, from meaningful relationships precipitates an acute sense of loss. Grief is the process through which one passes in order to recover from a loss “

Vera Fahlberg

In adoption; there are seven core issue that is tied to grief and loss. This includes, loss, rejection, shame and guilt, grief, identity, intimacy, mastery and control.

It is also important to remember that children’s responses and/or reactions to grief and loss, abandonment and rejection are not often like adults’ response. Due to their social, emotional, cognitive and brain development; most children do not yet have the same capacity (skills) to identify, express and process their intense emotions due to their (negative) lived experiences (developmental trauma). Thus, children will “act out” what they are emotionally experiencing.

In order to support children to heal from their neglect, abuse & trauma and to build resilience; they need to experience life with a psychologically safe adult who is attuned (behavioral detective) to their emotional needs and responding to what is beneath their often ‘huge’ presenting behaviors.

Upon reflecting from this conference, I am once again reminded of the often difficult, challenging work that our adoptive, parents, foster parents, and kinship parents do with our children who are learning to process their many attachment wounds, abuse, neglect and trauma. I hope this is a reminder of the important work you do daily. Healing comes from meaningful, safe relationship!!



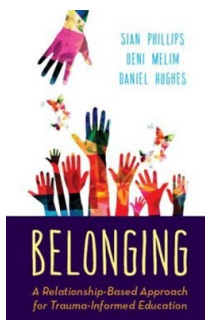
This can be exhausting and overwhelming work. The need for your self-care (self-compassion) is vital to do this challenging work. Self-care is not a reward; it is a process that is included in your day.

There is a comprehensive book on the Seven Core Issues in Adoption and Permanency by Sharon Kaplan Roszia and Allison Davis Maxon that is available at the TFC library for those of you that would like to get a detailed study of this OR just get one of your TFC consultants to give you an overview.

Thank you for the work you do and letting TFC support and journey with you.

Belonging Training

Written by: Cheri Crane



On Oct. 29, 2020 we had the opportunity to come together with Dr. Sian Philips, Deni Melim, and Dr. Dan Hughes to discuss what lead to the creation of the book *Belonging: A Relationship-Based Approach for Trauma-Informed Education*.

Sian shared some of the key concepts of Developmental Dyadic Practice (DDP) and Deni and Sian shared their application of DDP in the creation of a trauma informed classroom which they called the “Belong Classroom”.

They inspired us with stories of how the classroom allowed youth to feel safe at school and to begin to better understand their brains and bodies and how they work to protect them. As well as begin to learn new ways to interact with others and the world and manage big feelings.

TFC Clinical Case consultants, Taylor Nelson, Sara Coyle, Cheri Crane and System Navigator Krista Mathers, also joined and spoke of how they are working with schools and families to educate on this model towards creating classrooms that provide a



greater sense of felt safety and connection for youth that have faced early life adversities. They shared the voices of a principal and a caregiver that have been impacted by the knowledge they have gained in DDP. It was inspirational and emotional to hear a rap song (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFeX93Sdwyg>) created by a caregiver outlining some of the key concepts of DDP and their importance to his daughter and himself and their success.

And if the day could not get any better, we were joined by principal, Mike Blackburn, who is part of a group of educators along with Sian that have moved towards trauma informed schools in the Kingston area. He spoke of the journey he and their group shared as they strove to educate school staff in DDP and developmental trauma and move towards trauma informed schools. He spoke of the barriers and struggles as well as the successes. He spoke of the need for on-going consultation and for all members of the staff group to be supported, to be speaking the same language and to not let the small successes go unnoticed.

We also had the honour of Dan Hughes joining. He is the founder of Developmental Dyadic Psychotherapy (Practice). He shared his thoughts on seeing his work come to life in the school system and the impacts it was having for youth and families.

The day ended with a small panel discussion. The panel included Dan Hughes, Sian Philips, Sara Coyle and Deni Melim. The conversation was rich in content and even though it was the end of the day lots of participation by those attending.

If you have not yet had the privilege of reading the book I would highly recommend. It is not only full of great information, but it is also full of stories that bring the work to life.

ATTACH Conference 2020: The Healing Process of Trauma

Written by: LaToya Howse & Sara Coyle

This year, the annual ATTACH Conference took place online. I had the honoring of attending these virtual recordings throughout the month of November with my colleagues, Clinical Case Consultant, Sara Coyle and TFC student, Nicole Bilson. The conference focused on the healing process of trauma and featured over 12 international professionals who shared their knowledge, expertise and specialties in trauma healing.

The process of healing trauma is a large portion of the work we do with children, youth and families at TFC. As a Clinical Case Consultant with the Therapeutic Family Care Program, I have the wonderful opportunity of *working with families that* make up many diverse backgrounds, and experiences. We walk alongside our families to *help them understand* how their history of trauma may be impacting their ability to *be in a caregiving role to others*. I'd like to compare this process to that of the function of a suture.

I am no doctor, but the purpose and use of a suture is to stop any bleeding and protect the wound of an area that has been seriously harmed. Mostly areas that have a high activity or tension level. Sutures are utilized as one of the strongest ways to hold a wound together to speed up the healing process. In many ways, when working with individuals who have experienced trauma, our function as clinicians is to support the individual to begin the process of identifying the trauma/wound and help them to work through healing. Then, much like a suture, we apply pressure to the area to help the wound close. Throughout the conference, we learned various approaches to help apply pressure to these areas of trauma.



Karen also spoke about the issue of claiming and the shift that permanency parents experience as they move from thinking about their child from a cognitive level (i.e. initially receiving the child's social history) to thinking about their child at a heart level (i.e. a part of claiming, "this happened to my child"). At this time, permanency parents often hurt over the journey that their child experienced and sometimes feel that they were not given all of the information about the child's social history (children and youth go through a similar process). Karen explained that the timing of claiming is different for everyone, and that the important thing is that permanency parents are seeing a progression in their relationship with their child, and not regression or stagnation. And as one participant highlighted, the journey to permanency is not always beautiful and children might not even always reside with you, but ensuring that the permanency parents walk the walk with the child and that the relationship still endures is of critical importance to child and parent alike.

This training also explored the hard questions: supports and services (i.e. respite) that permanency parents predictably need, especially during adolescence, as the task of adolescence is individuation and teens often don't do individuation well because it can be scary. Of note, this is typical adolescent behavior, which is exacerbated for teens who have a permanency journey.

Karen spoke to the importance of professionals supporting permanency parents during this time. The gap in services between adoption finalization and adoption disruption was highlighted, and Karen encouraged participants to think about what accessible, permanency competent supports and services for families might look like, as well as how the system currently responds to requests for support (i.e. family referred to Adoption Department rather than Intake).

For those of you who were unable to join us for this training day, a recording of it will be made available for a period of a couple of weeks.

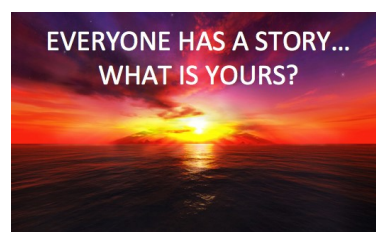
Please connect with tfc.reception@tfcprogram.ca if you would like to get access to this recording.

Some supports for families were also reviewed, including the PALS Post-Adoption Support Group, which is a collaborative initiative between the Regional Adoption Team and TFC. For information about joining the PALS groups, please connect with your Adoption Worker to request to be put on the distribution/notification list for upcoming trainings. During this time of Covid, the PALS groups are being facilitated virtually. PALS groups run in the evening hours and present on a variety of clinical topics related to the field of adoption.

For information about permanency for youth 18+ who are beginning their permanency plan, please visit Never Too Late for a Family, Adoption Council of Ontario at: adoption.on.ca/NTL

For information about joining one of Adoption Council of Ontario's clinical psycho-education groups for adoptive parents, please visit: <https://adoption.on.ca/events> Following are the free virtual (evening) groups beginning 2021:

- Toronto Families, Jan 12 - Mar 02
- Eastern Ontario Families, Jan 13 - Mar 03
- Northern Ontario Families, Jan 14 - Mar 04
- Western Ontario Families, Jan 18 - Mar 22
- Central Ontario Families, Jan 19 - Mar 09
- Parenting Teens, Jan 11 - Mar 08
- Single Parents, Jan 11 - Mar 08
- Kinship Families, Jan 19 - Mar 09
- Trans-cultural/trans-racial Families, Jan 19 - Mar 09
- Blended Families, Jan 21 - Mar 11
- FASD Families, Jan 22 - Mar 12





The Social Determinants of Health

Written by: Tiffany Thickson

2020 has been a year in which we have all been more acutely aware of issues related to personal and public health. We have also been forced to become more aware and critical of our conscious and unconscious bias and how they shape our understanding of equity, including health equity.

On October 22, 2020 TFC invited Sarah Tsang of the Haliburton Kawartha Pineridge Health Unit to present a cluster training on the Social Determinants of Health. The training focused on understanding that health is more than just the absence of illness and that it is not something that can be achieved equally for all people. There are natural health differences that exist within the population (i.e. higher mobility rates in younger individuals vs. older individuals, higher rates of injury to individuals who play sports), however there are also health inequities that exist because of systemic differences that are associated with social disadvantages that are modifiable and considered unfair. The training challenged participants to think about how health inequities are socially constructed and systemically maintained; whereas individuals and groups with higher social status are healthier than those with lower social status'.

As a participant in the training, I reflected that as a white social worker, I belong to a higher social status and am often in the role of "helper". Within that role, I regularly place expectations and task requests on individuals who I am "helping", who belong to a lower social status. Even though I am doing this with good intention, my expectations and requests are essentially asking these individuals to break cycles of health inequalities (such as poverty), that have existed for many, many years and are systemically embedded within our social structures - this a very difficult thing to do!

The Neurobiology of Self Care. A Much Needed Reminder That We Are All Doing The Best With What We've Got!

Written by: Nicole Bilson

On November 26, 2020, I had the pleasure of assisting my placement supervisors Sara Coyle and Taylor Nelson with facilitating a training on The Neurobiology of Self Care. This workshop was offered at just the right time, with many staff members, parents, and caregivers struggling to balance the regular demands of life, personally and professionally during these unprecedented times.

We had over 50 participants join us on Microsoft Teams, including society workers, foster parents and caregivers. Although the group expressed disappointment that we were unable to meet in person and enjoy yummy snacks together, there was a lot of participation over the chat feature.

The training covered important and relevant topics, including how to recognize when you as a helper are experiencing compassion fatigue, or burnout. Taylor invited the group to imagine their daily energy as "teaspoons" and measure how many teaspoons we need to get us through the day. Each interaction or task costs us some of our teaspoons, and we discussed how often a day in the life of a helper causes us to spend more teaspoons than we have at our disposal. This provided us with a great visual of how we can unknowingly spread ourselves thin, and not have enough energy to give to our families at the end of the day.

Sara brought us through a wonderful section, titled "Caring during COVID." We all need some reassurance during this crazy time! We spoke about how what we are living in and through right now is NUTS; experiencing a global pandemic is a Novelty situation for everyone. It has been incredibly Unpredictable and when we are unsure of what is coming next, it is hard to imagine a "normal" future. This uncertainty causes a Threat to the ego, which





challenges our sense of self and our purpose in life. When we feel no Sense of control, this affects our feelings of how much impact we can have on the world, and shakes our confidence, and feelings that we can make a difference in the world, which is so important in the helping field.

As helpers, it is very easy to try to be a superhero, and it can be very discouraging when we feel that we are not performing at our best. The group reflected on the importance of being kind and compassionate with ourselves, and to recognize that we are doing the best that we can, given the circumstances. This is a marathon, not a sprint. As we approach the holiday season, it is important to remember to take time for ourselves to pause, reset and nourish our minds, bodies, and spirits.

We wish you all a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season, and excited to see you at the next training!

The “Ism’s

Written by: Mary Price-Cameron

During the last few months the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) committee at Highland Shores has spent some time discussing and sharing information on the ‘Ism’s and how these intersect in child welfare. Ism’s include sexism, ageism, racism, ableism, weightism, racism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism. When we look at these topics we can see that we are all impacted by them through our own experiences and biases. Often times we are not intentionally using our power, our words, our actions in an oppressive way as it relates to these issues, however we need to own the impact we have on others when we do become aware as this is how change is made.

When I was doing some reading on the “Ism’s” I came across an article by *Dionardo Pizaña, Michigan State University Extension - December 29, 2017*. In this article it breaks down the levels of oppression that make it a system that I found very helpful in my thinking and understanding of impact.

Personal Level

The personal level is associated with our values, beliefs and feelings about individuals different from us and ourselves. Growing up, we are given direct and indirect messages about our values and in many cases the institutions that we interact with as children and adults, such as our schools, faith communities, judicial systems, etc., support those values. If we are in the dominant groups based on race, gender, class, religion and other identities, we are also getting subtle and not so subtle messages of superiority or being the norm that others need to be measured against. Interestingly, I may never share my values or beliefs about others, but they can influence my interactions. For example, I may never share that I believe that “poor people are poor only because they make bad personal choices,” but I can carry this in my mind and heart as I interact with people from a lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

Interpersonal Level

At the interpersonal level, the focus is on our actions, behavior and language as we interact with individuals different from us. If I believe that “poor people are poor based on bad personal choices, I may try to change these individual’s thinking through shaming them for their choices, lecturing them on making better choices to improve their life outcomes or not taking into account the complexities of living in generational poverty. I may also struggle with understanding and acknowledging the importance of the language and names that people use to identify themselves and see this solely as a way to force me to be politically correct.

Institutional Level

The institutional level includes the rules, policies, procedures and practices, which are written and unwritten, within an institution that define who is welcomed and can fully participate or those that may be excluded or discriminated against full participation. A written policy may state that only individuals with certain degrees or formal education can apply for certain jobs, directly or indirectly,



excluding individuals who may have informal experiences or other wisdom that could be considered as valuable for the position. An unwritten policy may be that as a male you need to keep your hair well groomed to be considered for a leadership role within the organization, possibly excluding men who grow their hair long for spiritual or religious reasons.

Cultural Level

At the cultural level, our focus turns to how we define what is right, normal, the truth or beautiful. In short, the social curriculum that inundates us with on a daily basis in the media, in our textbooks and in our daily interactions across differences. It is a national leader saying, "All Mexicans are drug dealers, rapists and criminals," and then national conversations and policies being informed by this "truth". These cultural messages and norms can be direct and indirect and serve to maintain power and privilege for those in dominant groups (i.e., men, middle/owning class people, white people, people without disabilities, etc.).

As we develop a critical consciousness and work to help address and dismantle racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, it is important that we apply a systems approach to our work and begin to analyze, uncover and change that ways that oppression is operating at the personal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural levels.

Winter Driving

How to prepare yourself for winter driving



- Plan your driving in advance; taking into account any delays due to slower traffic, reduced visibility, roadblocks, abandoned automobiles, collisions, etc.
- Avoid driving when fatigued.
- Contact "Road Reports" to get updates regarding road conditions in the region to which you are going.
- Where ever possible, postpone the trip when the weather is bad.
- Check weather conditions for your travel route (and time) before you begin driving.

- Choose warm and comfortable clothing.
- Warm up your vehicle **BEFORE** driving off. It reduces moisture condensing on the inside of the windows.
- Remove **ALL** snow and ice from your vehicle. It helps to see and, equally important, to be seen.

Braking without anti-lock brakes

- Use the heel-and-toe method. Keep your heel on the floor and use your toes to press the brake pedal firmly just short of locking up the wheels.
- Release the pressure on the pedal, and press again in the same way.

Repeat this until you come to a full stop.

Braking with anti-lock brakes

Also use heel-and-toe method, but do not remove your foot from the brake pedal until the vehicle comes to a complete stop.

WINTER DRIVING KIT

A well-stocked driving kit helps handle any emergency. It should include:

- Bag of sand or salt (or kitty litter).
- Tow rope.
- Traction mats.
- Snow shovel.
- Ice scraper and Snow Brush.
- Booster cables.
- Warning devices such as flares or emergency lights.
- Fuel line de-icer (methanol, also called methyl alcohol or methyl hydrate).
- Extra windshield wiper fluid appropriate for sub-freezing temperatures.
- Roll of paper towels.
- Flashlight and a portable flashing light (and extra batteries).
- Blanket.
- Extra clothing, including hat and wind-proof pants, and warm footwear.
- First aid kit.
- Snack bars or other "emergency" food and water.
- Matches and emergency candles - **ONLY USE** with a window opened to prevent build-up of carbon monoxide.
- Road maps.





Fun and Games!

Seasonal Word Search



K N A M W O N S T N X O T F E
 K O W I N T E R E C O C O A L
 P I C I C L E I Z R R R B K G
 C H M B W M I T T E N S M W I
 H S G H W S Z I W D Y F E A L
 T G H Q R A K E N E Z O R F A
 O L X O D S S P R U C E I S U
 B O J E V C A R N I N A L N A
 O V R N L E B G O T A H I O R
 G E T C H I L L Y G Z O M W D
 G S P C D O K T Z G Q L K F B
 A C T S K A T E X S C L D L S
 N I Z M M Y W F E X D Y E A H
 C W N L U T G Y N S O A L K B
 S D O Q V L Q K H W M Q S E A

WINTER
 SNOWMAN
 SPRUCE
 CARDINAL
 CHILLY
 GLOVES
 SKATE
 TOBOGGAN
 SHOVEL

SNOWFLAKE
 ICICLE
 HOLLY
 FROZEN
 SLED
 HAT
 SKI
 COCOA
 MITTENS

AMY'S BEST SNICKERDOODLES

PREP TIME 20 MINS | COOK TIME 14 MINS | SERVES 2 DOZEN

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1-1/2 cups sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup milk
- 3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 cup walnuts or pecans, finely chopped
- 5 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp ground cinnamon

