



CFS Matters!

Spring 2016

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Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba

strengthening families and
protecting children since 1899

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Dear Friends,

In this issue of *CFS Matters*, we are pleased to highlight several examples of the positive community engagement opportunities our Agency staff members have participated in.

Effective community engagement, on these many levels, strengthens our connections to the community, supports our understanding of community needs, and

strengthens our ability to respond to those needs.

This is critical to our Agency's achieving its mission and goals.

Successful community engagement also takes energy and commitment—it doesn't just happen. These partnerships and collaborations help to ensure effective engagement as well as provide necessary financial supports.



If you are receiving a hard copy of our newsletter but would prefer it via email, please send your email address to commed@cfswestern.mb.ca



Thank you to our community for your continued support!

Phil Shaman
Phil Shaman
President, Board of Directors

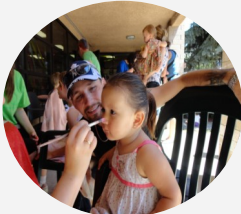
Dave McGregor
Dave McGregor, MSW, RSW
Chief Executive Officer

Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba exists so that children are safe and nurtured in strong, loving families within a community of caring people.

Elsbeth Reid Family Resource Centre

255—9th Street
Brandon MB R7A 6X1
204-726-6280

Open 9 am—5 pm weekdays



Preschool Enrichment Program

2nd Floor
2227 Brandon Avenue
Brandon MB R7B 0S9
204-727-6650



Family and Community Development Centre

Unit 4, 613—10th Street
Brandon MB R7A 4G6
204-726-7033



Victoria Day Care Centre

1st Floor
2227 Brandon Avenue
Brandon MB R7B 0S9
204-728-9845



Community Mobilization by Sabrina Dhaliwal

Since April 2015, Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba (CFS Western) has been part of a newly adopted community initiative called **Community Mobilization Westman** – a proactive approach by a variety of community resources that act together to identify and help individuals or families in potentially serious negative situations.

The initiative is facilitated by Brandon Police Service and unites many different community agencies and sources who share a common goal of enhancing community safety. The aim is to connect individuals or families with helpful community resources before their issues reach a crisis situation. Brandon is the first Manitoba city to adopt the program, although it has been active in Saskatchewan and Ontario cities for over five years.

"Community Mobilization is a community plan because as single agencies, none of us can solve societal problems alone," said **Sabrina Dhaliwal**, CFS Western's representative.

"A multi-agency approach works because while we all have unique perspectives on personal, social, and community challenges, we also each have a piece of the puzzle that can fit together to collectively understand and address the issues at a community level and make a positive difference."

Besides CFS Western and Brandon Police Service, other Westman

agencies involved include Prairie Mountain Health, the Brandon School Division, RCMP, Probation Services, the Brandon Correctional Centre, Dakota Ojibway Child and Family Services, the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, and the Brandon Friendship Centre. Other agencies are involved on a case-by-case basis.

"Together these agencies form a **HUB** and meet twice weekly to identify individuals or families in what are called 'acutely elevated risk' situations – for example, are they likely to harm themselves or others, do they need urgent help of many services, etc," said Dhaliwal.

If the answer is yes, then the case is put through a process to determine which Agencies need to get more involved with the person or family.

The process begins with the referring agency determining a need for multiple services involvement. That agency then presents the situation to the HUB using general terms and without specifically identifying the individual or family. If the HUB believes it meets the acutely elevated risk criteria, limited personal information is then shared to decide which agencies need to be further involved.

Those agencies then discuss their involvement level and determine roles before their dialogue continues about specific approaches. Then, only the identified participating agencies continue the conversation in a



breakaway format separate of the HUB. The discussion is still limited to only the specific information needed to assess the situation and determine the appropriate follow-up actions.

Within 24-48 hours of the HUB determination, members of the involved agencies will literally knock on the door of that person or family and offer them the appropriate community support, services and help in hopes of quickly eliminating or reducing their risk factors. Individual or family participation is voluntary.

"This approach offers the person or family a single entry point for help and they don't have to make a variety of appointments with different agencies which can be stressful and overwhelming," said Dhaliwal.

As of December 1, 2015, 89 referrals were made to the HUB. Of those, 59 accepted help and were connected to the services they need.



Voices Retreat by Cali Cline

Last October, my colleague **Kirsten Gillis** and I had the pleasure of taking two of our Agency's female youth in care to a two-day annual weekend retreat hosted by *Voices: Manitoba's Youth In Care Network*. Voices provides support, encouragement, and advocacy to young people in and from care in Manitoba. The purpose of their retreat is to bring these youth together in a safe place to learn, laugh, share experiences, and make new friends.



Our Agency sends staff and youth reps to this event every year, but for Kirsten and me it was our first time. Wow – what an experience! The weekend was jam-packed with fun activities like Aboriginal teachings and ceremonies, horseback trail riding, paint ball, skill building, and talking circles.

Our girls got to meet youth from other child and family service agencies throughout the province and learned they are not alone in their struggles as youth in care. As workers, Kirsten and I gained a better understanding of their in care experiences and got to deepen our relationships with them.

One 17-year-old– youth said “For me, this experience has given me an idea of what family feels like. Before, I was never part of a family that talked to each other over dinner. This was the first time I ever spoke to someone during a meal at the table. Now I know what family feels like.”

One of the weekend's special highlights was the focus on song writing and poetry as a way for the youth to express themselves and tell their stories. There was even a song writing workshop led by professional singer Ingrid Johnson and the Funky Fresh Band.

We also had time to reflect on the many struggles that our youth in care face, and it touched all of our hearts in an unforgettable way.

All of the youth also got to participate in a project for the Manitoba government about how to better the education system for youth in care. The kids were asked

to express their many concerns and ideas on how to improve their school experiences.

This was exciting because the information shared by the youth would then be taken back to policy makers to address the exceptional needs that students in the care of various agencies face. The students said that it needed to be recognized that they were different from youth not in care, and that there was a stigma associated with being a youth in care. They also talked about a lack of communication between staff and other school supports, and that, while they often had to move homes, they couldn't stay in the same school due to catchment rules. As well, the youth spoke about their lost opportunities when they didn't get permission from birth families for events or were unable to take part in certain activities such as hockey because of financial challenges.

Voices' youth retreat is now in its ninth year. The next event is scheduled for late April with youth and workers from all across Manitoba attending.



(l-r) Kourtney Reddaway (age 14); Cali Cline, Madison Engelbretson (age 19), Kirsten Gillis

Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre by Lisa Ramsay, Coordinator

The Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre is located at 255—9th Street in Brandon, telephone 204-726-6280 (or toll free 1-800-483-8980) and is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Resource Centre gratefully acknowledges the financial support of its many donors, including the:



and the



It's spring again and what a busy time we've had since the last one!

I'll start with our 2015 summer program. Coordinator **Erin Holman** led a series of fun activities for 84 different families throughout July and August. Together parents and children enjoyed many craft days, local pools and parks. There were also weekly trips to Minnedosa beach, walking trails and visits with bison. Seeing families spend quality time together to create special memories is a privilege.



Erin also coordinated our Sun Fund for Kids camp program last summer. Thanks to the generous support of our community, she was successful in giving 174 children a unique camp experience. This was Erin's second summer with us and we all benefited from her organizational skills, fun way of relating to families and work ethic.

The summer of 2015 also had us saying goodbye to **Jenna Cameron**, our Community Liaison Social Worker. Jenna had been with us for two years in a pilot project position. Her warmth was effective in connecting parents to

our services and various other community organizations to help them strengthen their parent and child bond.

Fortunately in December we welcomed **Jillian Nesbitt** to the role. She has been with the Agency for several years and is doing a wonderful job of picking up where Jenna left off. We much appreciate that Jillian will enhance our capacity to respond to families in need.

The fall of 2015 brought a beautiful mix of opportunities for families. Last spring, our eight-week *Positive Discipline* course got wonderful reviews in terms of measurable outcomes, parent feedback and staff reflections, so we were excited to offer it *twice* in the fall!

As well, we began the *Blended Families* program and continued with the perennial programs that families count on us to deliver such as support groups, Family Circle and Drop-In Playtime. *Mothers and Daughters In Touch*, a relationship enhancing opportunity for moms with girls ages 9 to 11 and 12 to 14, was also available along with several different parent and child crafting days.



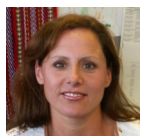
I'm going to reflect on our partnerships for a minute because the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre is all about partnering! We have partnerships with local businesses who donate to us. We have partnerships with various service clubs and funders who financially support our work. We partner every week with other local agencies to deliver and coordinate programs and share resources.

We simply could not do it without these partnerships. Many of the people within these other organizations help us in concrete ways to resource what we do, but they also share words of support and encouragement to us as a staff. Their words of appreciation have tremendous merit to us. It propels us forward and revitalizes our energy to advocate for early intervention and prevention services.

CFS Western is about child safety and within our mission statement we also commit to creating a community of caring people who will help take care of one another. In the seemingly endless era of incomplete press coverage and insatiable appetite for bad news, we need to also remember the value of this partnership work. Your partnering is what nurtures that community of caring people. So thank you to our partners.

If you have thoughts, suggestions and feedback, I'd love to talk with you—contact me anytime at 204-726-6258 (toll free 1-800-483-8980) or email frc@cfswestern.mb.ca.

Lisa Ramsay



Resource Centre recognized for work with SPIN

Last September, the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre was honoured to be recognized by the Brandon & Area Suicide Prevention Implementation Network (SPIN), a group of community agencies working together to promote wellness and reduce the risk of suicide.

"We chose the Resource Centre as one of our 2015 award recipients because of their ability to meet the needs of people with limited supports or who are struggling with family stressors," said **Kathy Foley**, Past Chair of SPIN and now retired Program Educator for PMH's Mental Health.

"They have also been an excellent community partner working with other organizations to meet the needs of high risk groups."



(l-r) Lisa Ramsay, Jill Brown, Kathy Foley

Foley and current SPIN Chair **Jill Brown**, who both nominated the Resource Centre for the SPIN award, were also impressed by the array of innovative programs and services the Centre delivers to strengthen families and build resiliency, which can help lead to healthier communities.

"The Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre is about all issues that impact family life, including the topic of suicide," said **Lisa Ramsay**, Coordinator of the Resource Centre.

"Our contribution to the prevention of suicide is done through reducing parents' social isolation and our committed staff members who are available as skilled listeners.

"Without judging, we listen to many stories that families share and aim to inspire hope as their journey takes them from pain to healing."

Ramsay said that it is not easy to hear the depth of hurt that many suffer, but it is necessary to begin to get the appropriate help that some need.

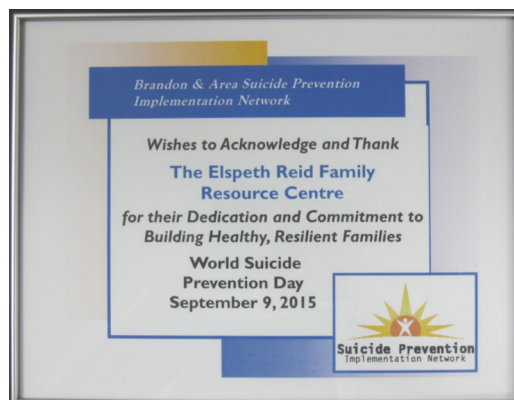
"When we gather parents together and facilitate the formation of meaningful and real friendships, we help parents carry their burdens."

She added that suicide is an issue that has impacted many of the Resource Centre families they work with. She said sometimes parents can be in such pain and depression that they feel there is no other option to end their torment. She also said that, sadly, many of our community's youth experience these emotions and need help and support.

"Some parents have even shared their stories in groups about how they once felt suicidal, or perhaps even made attempts, and how they came back to once again feel life's joys.

"It's this sharing that can give another parent hope."

The Resource Centre partners with many local organizations to strengthen the safety net for families.



"It's the sharing of stories about feeling suicidal and how that person came back to once again feel life's joys that can give others hope."

"We are so proud to work with Prairie Mountain Health and other community agencies to prevent suicide.

"Together we will ensure not another soul is lost to this devastating tragedy."

Every year, SPIN puts out a call for nominations of individuals and organizations who help make our community 'suicide-safer' through mental health promotion, activities that build healthy resilient communities, suicide prevention or intervention, or suicide grief support.

SPIN has been operating since 2001 and has a network of 26 organizations that meet monthly. CFS Western has been involved for about 14 years. Foley said that while everyone experiences stress at some time in their life, one in 20 will develop suicidal thoughts although fortunately most don't act on those thoughts.

Foley stressed that if someone is experiencing emotional distress they should definitely seek help....it is available. Resources and support can be found through the Westman Crisis Services, the Manitoba Suicide Line, Manitoba Farm and Rural Support Services, and SPIN.

If you or someone you know is struggling with emotional distress, seek help. For more information, visit www.spinbrandon.ca or call 204-578-2529.

Congratulations Corner

They did it!

Back in June 2015, social workers from across CFS Western attended several graduations of youth who had once been a part of the Agency.

"This is a huge milestone for these grads and they didn't get there alone," said **Breanna Dick**, CFS Western's Youth Engagement Specialist.

"The workers involved with these individuals played a huge role in supporting these youth, walking alongside them through their journey and believing in them and their successes.

"Time may have passed since our involvement with these youth, however I believe the support that was given to them has played a part in the youth finding their inner strength, drive and ability to achieve the major goal of graduation!

"Thank you to all the workers who have supported and advocated for these youth during their time in our care!"

Social worker **Connie Dabbs** added that one of the graduates, who had been involved with many areas of our programs and many of our staff, actually finished school in January—a whole semester early.

"I am so proud of what he has accomplished!"

Well done everyone!



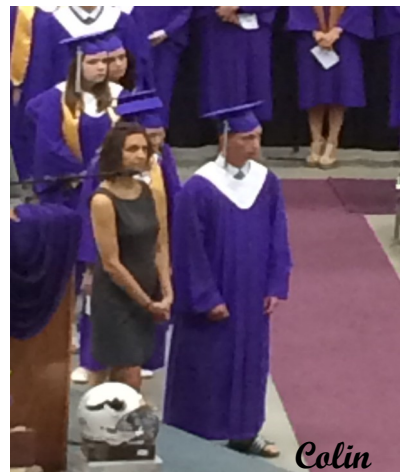
Gale



Madison



Myranda



Colin

Congratulations



Cody (front centre) is pictured with (l-r) In-Home Support worker **Debbie Haywood**, his mom **Melissa Payette** and Neepawa social worker **Dawn Haines-Shaw**

Perseverance pays off!

Last fall, Neepawa social worker **Dawn Haines-Shaw** was thrilled to present 16-year-old **Cody Payette** with a \$300 cheque from the Scotia Capital Stay In School Award.

"Cody has cerebral palsy and cognitive impairment," said Dawn.

"He has overcome many challenging experiences but he continues to work hard and learn.

"Cody cannot communicate verbally but is learning to use devices that aid in his interaction with others.

"It has not been easy for him, but he perseveres and that is why I felt he really deserved this award."

Cody's mom Melissa was also very excited by the award. They will use the funds to buy equipment necessary for Cody's continued learning in school.



Thank you for your support!

CFS Western greatly appreciates the financial support of these and the many other donors who make our family strengthening programs possible!



Eric Lawson (right), President of the Rotary Club of Brandon #1344, presents **Dave McGregor** (left), Chief Executive Officer of Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba, with a \$9500 donation toward the Agency's Parent-Child Home Program, a family-based literacy program run by CFS Western for over 30 years. The Rotary Club of Brandon #1344 is a long time supporter of CFS Western and its family strengthening programs.

Dave Burba (left), Road Rebels Car Club, presents **Lisa Ramsay** (right), Coordinator, The Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre, with a donation of \$3,719.93 from the Road Rebels' 2015 fundraising events such as their end of season fall car show and barbecue and their spring swap meet. Over the past six years the Road Rebels have donated over \$15,000 to the Resource Centre—a valuable resource for Westman children and families—to help with their family strengthening programs and services.



The Kiwanis Club of Brandon's **Hamid Mumin** (left) and **Don Smith** (right) present CFS Western's Community Education Coordinator **Susan Cable** with a \$1000 donation for the Agency's Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre youth programs. The Centre offers a variety of youth-centred programs for youth alone, with their parents, and for just their parents.

Lorna Cowan (2nd from left) and **Kay Addison** (3rd from left) of IODE Diamond Jubilee (1960) Chapter present CFS Western's CEO **Dave McGregor** (left) with a \$700 donation. The funds were used toward the purchase of a RealCare Baby infant simulator, a real-life tool designed to give participants a realistic experience of what parenting an infant is like. Holding the 'baby' (far right) is the Agency's **Lisa Jackson**, Single Expectant Services Worker. IODE Diamond Jubilee (1960) Chapter has supported various Agency programs and services for nearly 50 years.



The Brandon Area Community Foundation's General Manager **Laura Kempthorne** (left) presents **Heather Adam** (centre), Director, CFS Western's Preschool Enrichment Program, and **Dave McGregor** (right), CFS Western's CEO, with a \$10,000 donation for the Preschool's 2016 program year. Nearly 50 years ago, BACF gave the Agency their first start-up grant to develop a day foster care program which eventually became the Preschool Enrichment Program.

Kirkcaldy students sew happy to help

Ashley, Hannah, Anthony, Taylor, Rylee, Kennedy, Carla, Xinrui, Reanna, Jay, Xochilt and Skylar are a group of Kirkcaldy Heights school students (grades 5 to 8) who decided it would be sew simple to help other children by making and giving them fleece blankets.

Last December, as part of the school's High Ability Learning Enrichment Programming or HALEP, the students chose a topic of interest that they would then participate in as a group. With the help of Early Years Resource Teacher and Teacher Librarian **Maria O'Greysik**, the kids came up with the idea of Crafting for Charity.

"Part of our HALEP mandate is try to do something where we give back to the community," said O'Greysik.

"So I thought the idea of Crafting for Charity might be something students would be interested in and capable of completing in our short time together."



She was right. The children worked hard for only two afternoons to make 24 bright blankets. They also brainstormed and did a little research on a number of organizations that might benefit from their donation.

The kids then presented their findings and voted on who the recipients would be. They chose CFS Western to receive a dozen blankets and another organization to receive a second batch of blankets.

"The students really enjoyed making the blankets and knowing they would be put to good use," said O'Greysik.

"The idea that they would be helping other children really appealed to them."

She added that while some of the students had no experience making blankets before, after a few brief directions they all worked well together and helped each other problem solve. Most of them created a couple of blankets and they all enjoyed picking the fabrics and imagining who the child would be who would enjoy their creations.

"The uniquely colourful blankets were a huge hit and all of them were scooped up by our staff to give to client children in about 15 minutes of when the blankets got to our office," said **Susan Cable**, Community Education Coordinator for CFS Western.

"As well, the children receiving the blankets were very excited and thrilled to get them.

"Some of these kids have never had anything like that to call their own before.

"It meant the world to them and put an extra smile on their faces."

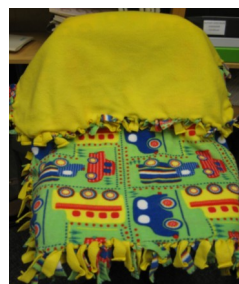
Cable added that having their very own blanket can help a child feel valued, comforted and even perhaps turn a bad day into a good day.

"The warmth, softness and coziness of their own blanket can bring a sense of well-being to a child.

"It's the perfect thing to curl up with on a cold day, or while reading, when they're not feeling well, or just when a child might need a little extra comfort.

"I also think the gift of a snug, soft and cozy, blanket had both the giver and the receiver smiling!"

The Kirkcaldy students also made colourful, individualized cards to go with each blanket.



As the children were making the blankets, they imagined the children who would enjoy them. Here's what a couple of workers said about the client children they gave the blankets to:

- *Worker Rafael chose Kennedy's blanket and gave it to Aurelia, age 2: "Aurelia loves to snuggle and loves blankets too! She immediately fell in love with the blanket and was cuddling with it right away. She and her mom were very thankful for the very thoughtful gift."*
- *Worker Marnie chose two blankets - one for Kaelen, 6 months, and one for Jax, 1: "Kaelan has four siblings. He loves playing on the floor with them and the blanket will be great for him to stretch out on. Jax has three older brothers who are very active. I bet he will love to wrap up in his blanket with his mom by their wood stove."*

Youth program receives \$25,000 to expand services

CFS Western is one of four organizations across the country to receive a \$25,000 "Orange Door Award" from The Home Depot Canada Foundation.

The award is to recognize non-profit organizations that positively engage youth in their communities. The funds are used for supporting youth programs and services.

"We are so excited to be recipients of this funding," said **Breanna Dick**, Youth Engagement Specialist for CFS Western.

"These funds will go a long way in allowing for additional and expanded programs and activities for our youth in care and youth leaving care through our Youth Engagement Strategy program."

The Agency's Youth Engagement Strategy regularly brings together current and former youth in care to discuss their experiences in the child welfare system, share their ideas and recommendations for positive changes to the system which is/was caring for them, and learn about child and family services initiatives.

"These funds will go a long way in allowing for additional and expanded programs and activities for our youth in care and youth leaving care through our Youth Engagement Strategy program."

Some of the current Agency activities for these youth include making life books and blankets, outings for bowling, skating, rock climbing, etc., and special holiday events like an annual Christmas



**CANADA
FOUNDATION**



**The
Orange
Door
Project**

Housing and hope
for homeless youth

party. They also participate in workshops such as résumé building, job searching, post-secondary education and independent living. Youth leaving care are also recognized annually at a celebration attended by their families, friends and CFS staff.

Organizations receiving the award had to submit an online application outlining how their programs and services meet the needs of vulnerable youth and how the youth are involved in those initiatives. The

application also had to explain how increased funding would support youth feedback or youth planned programming, and how it would be used to create new or enhance existing programs.

Applications were submitted from across the country. Award recipients were chosen by The Home Depot Canada Foundation in Toronto, and The Street Youth Planning Collaborative – Youth Leaders Committee, based in Hamilton.



(l-r) **Craig Thomas**, Assistant Store Manager, Home Depot Brandon; **Breanna Dick**, CFS Western's Youth Engagement Specialist; **David Pangman**, Department Supervisor, Home Depot Brandon

It's a bird, it's a plane...no, it's Super-Dave!

Do you know who my mom is - her name is Mommy?! is only one of the questions CFS Western's resident maintenance man **Dave Cowan** gets asked by the children at the Preschool Enrichment Program (PEP).

Dubbed by them as **Super Dave** because of his amazing ability to fix whatever needs it or, as one child says—put stuff up—Super Dave conquers any task put to him.

"When Super Dave lands at the Preschool to paint tall walls, battle overflowing toilets and plugged sinks, or move furniture with ease, he always makes time for the children," said **Heather Adam**, PEP Director.

She added Super Dave lets them peek in his toolkit, answers their scores of questions, gets down on one knee to make eye contact with them, and always listens to their many stories.

"The kids really look forward to his visits and our staff is very appreciative of everything he does here for us."

So the 'Super Dave Fan Club' came up with a plan to thank the man of repairs in person. Keegan, Grace, Darius, Parker, Xiomara, Lacey and Jordan, along with PEP staff Angela, Debra and Tracy, travelled to Dave's home office at 800 McTavish to surprise him with a visit. They gave him a thank-you card they made, lots of hugs including group ones, verbal thank-you's and sang him a song.

After a great visit and lots of chatter, it was snack time so the children invited Super Dave to join them for pretzels and water. There were more questions – does Super Dave get scared when he has to go on the roof to fix stuff (no), what is his favourite tool (depends on the job), what tools does he use a lot (screwdriver and power tools), what foods does he like best (cherry slice made by his

"Super Dave always has time for the children, no matter how busy he is. The kids really look forward to seeing him and often ask if he's coming to visit that day."

daughter and barbecue chicken), and is he a grampa (yes, to five boys).

When asked if they thought Super Dave could fly, the children emphatically shook their heads and said no because he didn't have a cape. They also named the van he drives with his tools and equipment the 'Little Dave Mobile.' One of the kids even calls him his "superhero grampa."

"Dave is always super friendly, kind and patient," said **Angela**, PEP Child Care Assistant.

There is always a job for Super Dave. Angela said that often he'll come to the Preschool to fix one thing and while there get asked to tend to something else.

She also said that despite the many distractions that occur at a lively and busy Preschool, Super Dave gets the job done properly and quickly.

"He takes pride in what he does and doesn't leave until he's sure all is in working order.

"He is extremely nice to work with and a real pleasure to be around—for us and for the children."



Laurie Jackson: 36 years of Making A Difference!

There were laughter, tears, career highlights, food, gifts and an appearance by her favourite politician (really an impersonator). And more than 100 staff, family and friends who came out in December to celebrate and congratulate **Laurie Jackson** on her retirement after 36 years with the Agency.



For many years, Laurie (former Director of Programs) told herself she'd retire "at the top of my game." She'd thought about 'the big R' for a few years, but two things made her see she was already there.

"The early death of my dear friend Marilyn Sterling Blanco in late 2014 helped me decide the time was right," said Laurie.

"My career was (and my life is) motivated by making a difference.

"I believed I'd done that at the Agency and should move on.

"There were new ways I could make a difference and other things I wanted to do.

"And little time, which losing Marilyn made me acutely aware of."

Laurie's career spanned several generations of families, staff and an ever-changing child welfare system. She took on each of her Agency roles with exceptional skill and much determination. She says her last 15 years as Director of Programs was "...the best job a girl could ask for with the most amazing team I could ever imagine."

"Laurie led by example with her commitment for our work and her conviction and belief in what good social practice looks like," said **Dave McGregor**, Chief Executive Officer and long-time friend and coworker of Laurie.

"As a true leader, she was always inspiring and motivating others in the pursuit of excellence to continually do our best when working with children and families."

McGregor said during her long career Laurie had 'seen it all' – trauma, loss, suffering, growth, recovery and the overcoming of adversity for children and families.

"Even so, she constantly stayed positive and very clear about what was really important – the families in our communities and, mostly, the children in our care.

"Laurie was always quick to bring others back to why we are here in the first place – because of the positive impact of our work with children and families."

"To laugh often and much;

To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children;

To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends;

To appreciate beauty, to find the best in others;

To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden path or a redeemed condition;

To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived.

This is to know that you have succeeded."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

During her varied career, Laurie touched every aspect of the Agency's work. She began on the Intake team and was part of the Agency's then focus on abuse investigations and treatment. Years later a move to Resource Development Supervisor allowed her to launch fresh programs and philosophies on foster care and adoption. As Director of Programs,

she was a key player in starting the vibrant and successful *Westaway Bay Project*, a neighbourhood mini resource centre for vulnerable families.

Laurie also led the revamping of the Cypress House program, brought in Vicarious Trauma staff training, introduced the Practice Model and provided a feminist view on domestic violence (to name only a few of her credits!).

She also started weekly *Making A Difference* emails, where staff shared how a coworker made a positive difference to a family or child they worked with.

Laurie said the other thing behind her decision to retire after doing so much was the CFS Western team.

"I really felt I had made a difference to them and played a major role in their development - primarily with the leadership group, supervisors and coordinators of all of our programs.

"The management team shared a solid, cohesive vision for the Agency, staff had a positive view of its direction and many wanted to be part of its continued growth and development.

"It was time for me to let them fly on their own."

What's next for Laurie? She says since her last working day of November 28, she's been too busy to look back. She is a very active community member and she loves to travel.

One thing is sure – Laurie's passion and commitment for all she does will keep making her make a difference!



Laurie reads to the children of the Preschool Enrichment Program on her last day of work. The children surprised her with a visit, hugs and a handmade card to congratulate her.

Coming Events

What.....2016 Annual Conference—Understanding and Skills for Working With Grief, Loss and Trauma in Children

WhenWednesday, May 11, and Thursday, May 12

Time9 am to 4 pm (registration both days 8:30 am to 8:55 am)

WhereKeystone Centre MNP Hall, 1175 18th Street, Brandon

WhoPresentations by *Amelia Franck Meyer*, Chief Executive Officer, and *Mechele Pitt*, Executive Director of Anu Family Services (Minnesota)

Understanding what happens to youth who have experienced trauma, and the psychological impacts of those events, is critical to being able to understand how to work with these youth in a way that promotes compassion and healing. Participants will receive multiple trauma-informed tools and activities used to assist youth with past grief, loss and trauma, and developing healthy emotional connections. This training will renew participants' understanding of, commitment to, and passion for, these youth.

Cost.....\$375 per person (or \$350 each for organizations sending four or more), includes full lunch both days



What.....Annual General Meeting

WhenTuesday, June 7

Time6 pm to 8 pm (approximately)

WhereBrandon University Dining Hall, 270—18th Street Brandon



What.....Preschool Enrichment Program—50th Anniversary Celebration Come and Go

WhenWednesday, June 22

Time2 pm to 5 pm (short program at 3:30 pm)

Where2227 Brandon Avenue (second floor), Brandon

WhoEveryone is welcome! And if you are a former Preschool Enrichment Program child, parent, staff or volunteer, we want to hear about your favourite PEP experience! Use your cell phone or digital camera to tell us your short story (approx 3-minutes) via video, or send us a written version, to info@cfswestern.mb.ca. Deadline for submissions is Friday, May 27.



For more information on these events and more, visit www.cfswestern.mb.ca / News and Events / Events