

The F.O.R.C.E. Society for Kids' Mental Health

'As families, we've been there'



Families Organized for Recognition & Care Equality

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Newsletter
May 2010

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Ministry of Children & Family Development
& the Provincial Health Services Authority

The F.O.R.C.E. Provides...



Support

Provides families with an opportunity to speak to other families who understand and may be able to offer support or advice on what has worked for them.



Education

Provides families and professionals with information, tools and tips on how to support and assist children with mental health difficulties.



Advocacy

Provides assistance that can help both professionals & families in meeting the mental health needs of children and youth.



Navigation

Provides information that can assist families and professionals in knowing the services available and how to access them.

FRASER REGION

Tri-Cities

Parent Mentorship Program: The Tri-Cities Parent Mentorship Program works together with the Social Development Centre at Child and Youth Mental Health. Our goal is to help provide parents with the “wrap-around” they need to help their children and their families be more successful, and feel more supported within their community. Through education in parent classes; groups; and workshops; we want to increase the number of families who receive the help they need, connect them with the F.O.R.C.E., and with other organizations, services and supports that they may find helpful. The end result is to have empowered parents who have what they need to better coordinate support and services for their child. If you are interested, please contact us at tricityforce@gmail.com or call 604.878.3400 to leave a message.

Tri-Cities F.O.R.C.E. (Peer to Peer Monthly Group): Our group continues to grow with new families attending each month. We have many fathers who join us as well! We alternate our topics each month: one month will be an educational piece; the next will be support focused. Sharing with and listening to other families who have walked a similar path is empowering. By sharing our experiences on what’s worked and what hasn’t, you can often uncover gems that may make a difference in your life, your child’s, or someone else’s. We meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the East Hub in Port Coquitlam (3044 Flint Street - ring doorbell), from 6:30-8:30 pm. Childcare is available but limited, so please RSVP if childcare is wanted.

Our email address is tricityforce@gmail.com or call 604.878.3400 to leave a message.

Surrey

The Surrey F.O.R.C.E. (Peer to Peer Monthly Group) meets on the second Tuesday of each month. We are a growing group, and the participants are very supportive and share many ideas and strategies with each-other. A recent highlight was viewing the Separation Anxiety DVD from Anxiety BC.

The Support and Resource Coordinator from Surrey, co-facilitates Parent Information Sessions with staff from Child and Youth Mental Health. The most popular topic, anxiety is presented each month. The depression and mood information session alternates months with the newest topic on managing behavior.

For more information contact Renee at 604-878-3400 or surreyforce@gmail.com

Langley

The Langley F.O.R.C.E. (Peer to Peer Monthly Group) are sporting green ribbons this spring!

The Parent Support group meets on the first Tuesday of the month at the Langley Child Development Centre. As well, the group meets for special guests talks. In January we were hosted at the CYMH office by Leanne Fielding, a Clinician who spoke about interventions for children/youth with depression. In March we were hosted at OPTIONS and the Centre for Child Development by Kirsten Hurst, an Occupational Therapist specializing in Sensory Processing. She helped “make sense” of a great number of perplexing child (and adult) behaviours.

There are a number of community presentations this spring that the Langley Parents are looking forward to. They include: Fraser Health initiative “Including Families in Treatment” a focus group seeking input – ideas, thoughts and feedback to help design a plan to enhance the capacity of family members to participate effectively in the treatment process.

“Positive Approaches to Behaviour” a 6 week series presented by the Langley Child Development Centre.

For more information contact Mary Ann at 604-878-3400 or langleyforce@gmail.com

FRASER FORUM – MAY 8th

(register at forcesociety@gmail.com)

A conference for Parents about their kids

Keynote Address - Medication;

What parents need to know – Dr. Betty Tang

Choice of workshops:

ADHD; A program that supports families
– Kathy Sheppard

Eating Disorders; A new approach at BC Children’s
Hospital - Dr. Connie Coniglio

Meetings with Families; What makes them work
– Mark Littlefield, Michele Phillips, Erica Taylor

Anxiety; What helps and what hinders:
Tips for parents — Trish Lewis, Bev Shields

VANCOUVER ISLAND

South Island

South Island F.O.R.C.E. (Peer to Peer Monthly Group): meets the first Wednesday of each month.

Our speakers have included Dr. Raymond Shred, Registered Psychologist, who did a presentation on Cogmed Working Memory Training. Dr. Kellie Ferguson, ND, who did a presentation on Naturopathic Medicine and ADHD.

Our educational topic nights have been on: (Frustration Anxiety Tension) Fat City DVD, it demonstrates to professionals and parents in a simulated environment on what it is like to have ADHD and Learning Disabilities. Knowledge Network DVD on Struggle for Control: Child and Youth Behaviors Disorders.

On two Friday’s a month we have a Focus Friday from 10-12, the topics have been: ADHD, Anxiety, Bipolar/Depression, Psychosis, Anger Management and Sensory Processing Disorders.

Youth Group

Youth of Parents who are part of the FORCE support/network parent group have been meeting twice a month since November 2009. The youth have been working on the next steps of meeting the goals they’ve been discussing.

It is important to the youth to have teachers understand them. In February of this year they invited their teacher champion to attend their meeting and look over a presentation they were considering and to brainstorm some ideas and how the information would be presented. The teachers who attended were very enthusiastic about what had been created so far and they had some great ideas to contribute and the youth look forward to working with them again.

Other things the youth are doing to address their goals is the development of a resource binder that has interactive web-sites, articles and books that have information on Youth Mental Health. They also had a youth speaker come and talk to them about his school experience and how he graduated from high school, and is now is onto apprenticing to become a carpenter.

VIHA (Vancouver Island Health Authority)

The Orientation Guide for families is being adapted with funding from the Vancouver Island Health Authority through a grant from the Queen Alexander Foundation.

This is a dream come true for South Island parents as there has been a great need for a resource like this to help families understand and navigate the challenging system of Children and Youth Mental Health Services. Look for the guide coming available on the force web-site in the near future.

Federation of Invisible Disabilities (FIDS)

The Federation of Invisible Disabilities started in 1997 as a provincial organization and were very interested in working around changing policy and educating the public about invisible disabilities. Their office was in Victoria.

The FORCE has had a relationship with FIDS since 2005 when it contracted with them for the FRIENDS For Life Parent Program. Our South Island FORCE leader, Lisa Hansen, had also built a relationship with FIDS when she discovered them in her community in 2001. FIDS even wrote about the new Provincial FORCE organization in their newsletter in the spring of 2001.

The FORCE is very pleased to announce that FIDS and The FORCE is now one! A big thanks go to FIDS for their contribution to and confidence in the FORCE to continue supporting families in British Columbia. Funds received from FIDS will be used to expand support to Mid Island.

INTERIOR

Salmon Arm

Salmon Arm F.O.R.C.E. (Peer to Peer Monthly Group): In honour of the group's One Year Anniversary in February, Judy Sims spoke to the parents about 'Expressive Arts Programs for Children, Youth and their Families'. In a crowded nutshell: expressive Arts programs are offered individually or in small group forums with the goal of expanding concepts of understanding and increasing emotional language within a social or partnered interaction. A variety of projects are chosen and offered to assist in specific goal development and to provide opportunities to practice relaxation, positive communication and ultimately to increase self esteem. No special abilities or disabilities are required for meaningful participation – this means parents and caregivers can gain from their experience as well as providing support for the children in their lives. Judy helped the parents to build a bit of an idea resource around using expressive arts for their children.

Penticton

Penticton F.O.R.C.E. (Peer to Peer Monthly Group): Our group is beginning it's 3rd year and continues to grow, learn and provide valuable support, education and navigation tools through small group discussion and guest speakers. Each month we discuss different topics that are relevant to what our families are dealing with here and now. Sharing and listening to experiences of difficulty and triumph in a safe, confidential and understanding environment is empowering and healing. New families are always welcome to join us; just showing up makes a big difference for parents, children, families and our community. We are often surprised by the jewels of wisdom and moments of clarity that come from getting together in the spirit of support, understanding and commitment to our families.

We meet on the last Tuesday of each month at Queen's Park Elementary School Library in Penticton (330 Power Street), from 6:30-8:30 pm. Childcare is available but limited, so please RSVP if childcare is wanted.

Our email address is pentictonforce@gmail.com or call 250-488-3733 to leave a message

Kamloops

Kamloops F.O.R.C.E. (Peer to Peer Monthly Group): has enjoyed the opportunity the most in sharing with other parents who are in the same situations or similar one's and having someone to talk too about their struggles. We have discussed anxieties around holidays, the registered disability savings plan, the CYMH intake process, school based team meetings, Individual Education Plan's, the importance of keeping all medical documentation and any assessments from together so that they can be easily accessible. We have also discussed the importance of parental self care. It was important to our parents to have a community resource list to access. We have been building relationships with community agencies so that we can work together to provide support to our families who have children and youth struggling with mental illness. We would like to thank Jocelyn Campbell at the Henry Grube Education Centre for allowing our group to meet in one of their rooms the 2nd Thursday of the month.

We wish to express our thanks to Gail for being our FORCE parent coordinator in Kamloops in the last year. Gail brought a commitment and experience to the role that is greatly appreciated by the 'FORCE Family' and we wish her the best.

VANCOUVER COASTAL

Urban Aboriginal Parent Advisory Committee

The Urban Aboriginal Parent Advisory Committee is a group of First Nations parents and grandparents who've had experience dealing with MCFD, CYMH or ACYMH, and whose children have mental health challenges. It is an unfortunate fact that many of our people do not access services through (Aboriginal) Child and Youth Mental Health. Our goal is to raise awareness of the many services available from various providers to families facing these challenges; advise ACYMH of better ways to engage the First Nations Community; and to be a bridge between the families and ACYMH.

SECHLT

A lending library for parents has been in development over the last year and next steps are to determine the best location for these resources to ensure access for families. Future plans to support the families of the Sunshine Coast involve a partnership to host and provide information sessions virtually, and in person to outlying communities like those on the Sunshine Coast.

SQUAMISH

Squamish FORCE: A peer to peer monthly group currently consists of a core group of parents who meet regularly once a month to support each other and share ideas. The support and resource coordinator for Squamish has conducted presentations and information sessions both through, and in conjunction with, local school counselors and external groups (i.e. the Rare Disease Foundation). The FORCE was also responsible for the distribution of materials via the local network of school counselors to all schools in SD 48 for Mental Illness Awareness week.

The FORCE values their involvement in the Communities that Care ongoing initiative that enhances and builds on relationships between community partners and families. Our FORCE leader was also pleased to be part of providing input and direction to a study surrounding Parental Mental Health conducted by a local mental health professional.

On a sad note, we are sorry to say good-bye to our Squamish FORCE leader who is relocating to the Interior Region. The FORCE will remain connected to Leslie as she is considered part of our 'FORCE Family' and we wish her the best of luck in her new endeavors in the Interior.

The FORCE is connecting with the mental health team in Squamish to determine how we can partner in supporting the community.

PROVINCIAL NEWS

FRIENDS Parent Workshop News:

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, has been delivering the FRIENDS program to grades 4 & 5 students in BC schools since 2004 and this year a Youth FRIENDS program has been introduced for grade 7 students along with the Fun FRIENDS program being piloted in Kindergarten and Grade 1 classrooms in seven BC School Districts

Parent training and education can enhance the effectiveness of the FRIENDS program through the reinforcement of the FRIENDS-skills and learnings at home.

The FORCE parent training team has grown and the FRIENDS Parent Workshop is being delivered in various communities all around British Columbia. Look to the FORCE website for FRIENDS Parent Workshop information.

We have also completed 3 First Nations FRIENDS parent workshops: Ahousat, Merritt, and Agassiz. April will see two further First Nations sites visited.

Parent involvement and feedback is very important to the F.O.R.C.E. and we modify each year's workshop based on parent feedback.



Look to our Interior Region update in this newsletter for information on our new FRIENDS Parent Pilot in that region.

Ask about the FRIENDS for Life program at your school!

Kelty Resource Centre

The Kelty Resource Centre is a provincial resource centre working to link children, youth and their families with appropriate resources in all areas of mental health and addictions. In addition, we also serve the resource needs of adults with an eating disorder.

If you are looking for information or have a question on how to connect with mental health resources, call on us, we're here to help.

If you would like to speak with a **parent peer support worker from the FORCE** to get additional support and guidance, please come visit or call 604-875-2084 or toll free 1-800-665-1822 or email the kellycentre@bcmhs.bc.ca

Child & Youth Mental Health Day – May 7, 2010



May 7th – Child and Youth Mental Health Day

This year a National Working Group, chaired by Keli Anderson, has been formed to build and coordinate efforts across Canada to establish a national child and youth mental health day. A national website has been created at www.ncymhd.com which will provide a platform for communities across Canada to share their plans for May 7th and build momentum for others to support child and youth mental health on May 7th.

The F.O.R.C.E. will acknowledge and celebrate the day by co-hosting a dialogue that will bring together researchers, parents and youth to discuss priorities for advancing child and youth mental health research in Canada in ways that are meaningful for families. The outcomes from these discussions will be shared with policy makers, researchers, practitioners and potential

funding organizations to support decision-making about areas of focus and approaches to research in the field of child and youth mental health. To our knowledge, this kind of forum has not previously been held in Canada. We hope to have strong representation from each stakeholder group.

Also on May 7th, BC will launch the Provincial Family Council for Child & Youth Mental Health and the National Institute of Families for Child and Youth Mental Health.

The Provincial Family Council and the National Institute for Families have been formed to promote youth and family involvement in efforts to improve the mental health of children, youth and families in BC and across Canada. At any time there are approximately 130,000 children and youth in BC who struggle significantly with their ability to learn, make friends, participate in activities and function in their families due to mental health problems. Despite these numbers, there has not been a formal mechanism for family involvement and contribution to policies, research, programs and practices that could increase support and enhance services for children, youth and families in British Columbia.

To address this, a working group to develop a Provincial Family Council was formed in October 2009. This group has now completed the plan for the launch of the Provincial Family Council that is intended to provide a sustainable, informed and coordinated voice of families to mobilize improvements for child and youth mental health on behalf of BC's families. The BC Provincial Family Council will serve as a model for the development of similar provincial and territorial family councils across Canada. A video and written template will be developed to support this process.

The new National Institute of Families for Child & Youth Mental Health, which is also being launched on May 7, 2010, is a foundation that will be co-led by Dr. Jana Davidson and Keli Anderson and will support Provincial Family Council(s) across Canada.

The National Institute of Families for Child & Youth Mental Health (IF) has been in development since February 2009. This national organization will engage and mobilize families to improve child and youth mental health in Canada. Through consultation, education and partnerships, the IF will be a key national structure dedicated to linking families and systems regarding child and youth mental health.



RBC Foundation®

RBC Funded project: FORCE led collaborative project with the BC Pediatric Society, Vancouver School Board, BC Mental Health & Addictions Services and Ministry of Children & Family Development.