



SPRING 2017

OUR VOICE

BC CONFEDERATION OF PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS

BC students #1
in the world in
reading!

PISA 2015 results are in, and
BC students are top of the
class!

A-Way Home: Creating
possibilities for homeless
youth

Fall 2016 DPAC Summit



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

3 - President's Message

Tribute to the work of the late John Bird.

4 - A-Way Home

Creating possibilities for homeless youth.

7 - Public Education a Key Issue

Information on how parents can help make public education a key issue in the upcoming general election.

8 - PISA 2015 Canadian Results

BC students #1 in reading in the world.

10 - DPAC Summit

Enabling DPACs with access, opportunity and resources is key to improving parent engagement across the province.

13 - Mental Health in Schools

One in five children and youth in BC experience a mental health challenge.

14 - Develop Physical Literacy

Playgrounds have a significant role to play.

15 - Professional Development Days

What really happens in schools on ProD days?

17 - The RULER Approach

This approach to social and emotional learning is designed to develop emotionally literate communities.

17 - 2017 Awards Gala Evening

Attendees will enjoy light appies, cash bar and entertainment!

19 - Creating a Better World

The transformative potential of public education.

20 - BCCPAC 2017 Spring Conference and AGM Information

Special "Newbie" conference and AGM registration fee for members.

Thank you to the BCCPAC Publications Committee for their hard work putting this edition of Our Voice together. Thanks to staff for their continued support of BCCPAC committees. Committee members who helped put this edition together are Cathy Jewett, Jocelyn Schonekess, Karen Nordquist, Kathryn Dunne, John Puddifoot and Susan Wilson.

Who We Are

The B.C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) is recognized as the collective voice of parents regarding public school education in B.C. Every public school Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) in the province is eligible for membership. BCCPAC is a charitable non-profit organization registered under the B.C. Society Act.

One of BCCPAC's primary focuses this year is to ensure that our education system meets the learning needs of each student in a positive and respectful manner.

Our Voice

Subscriptions to Our Voice are included with PAC and DPAC membership. If you are not a BCCPAC member but would like to subscribe to Our Voice please contact our office. To submit article ideas please email info@bccpac.bc.ca.

Advertising

For current ad rates please visit our website at www.bccpac.bc.ca or contact our office.

Publication and Copyright

Our Voice is published by BCCPAC. The views expressed in Our Voice are those of the authors and are for member information only. Content may be copied and distributed with an acknowledgment of Our Voice as the source unless otherwise noted.

Contact Us

Suite C, 2288 Elgin Avenue
Port Coquitlam, BC V3C 2B2

Tel. 604.474.0524
Toll Free. 1.866.529.4397
Fax. 604.474.0967

Email: info@bccpac.bc.ca
Visit: www.bccpac.bc.ca



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is with great sadness that we write this message on behalf of our late president, John Bird. John was involved in the public school system for 29 years, including 20 years coaching youth basketball and soccer. He served as a director on six different PACs over 13 years and had been part of the Victoria Confederation of Parent Advisory Council's (VCPAC) executive for 15 years, nine of those as President. John worked on BCCPAC committees for several years prior to being elected President in May 2016. Right from the start, John began working with the Board of Directors to make the necessary changes to this organization to streamline the volunteer hours needed to support BCCPAC's purposes. Portfolios were successfully introduced to help with the work of BCCPAC and the hiring of an Executive Director were just a couple of the changes adopted to move the organization forward.

This year, the board has focussed on three enabling priorities: ceating a stronger profile for BCCPAC, building capacity of our parent leaders, and strengthening our collaborative partnerships.

As part of the Leadership Development portfolio, the Fall 2016 DPAC Summit (featured on pages 10 and 11) was restructured to allow DPAC chairs the opportunity to dialogue with senior Ministry of Education staff of current and emerging issues. It was a tremendous success, and a good example of how parents can work collaboratively to voice unique local concerns and also present a provincial collective voice on more systemic issues. Although John was not able to attend due to health reasons, his passion for schools free from discrimination was embedded in discussion on fostering a culture of change to support inclusiveness.

On the international stage, the PISA 2015 results declared BC students' number one in reading worldwide. Overall, Canada remains at the top of the 72 countries who participate in these assessments. A true reflection of the great work happening in BC classrooms. Speaking of classrooms, the BC Teachers' Federation provided an informative article on Professional Development Days and the BC School Trustees Association encourages parents to make public education a key issue in the upcoming general election.

Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre provides needed information on Mental Health in School and where parents can go for support. The article on how playgrounds help develop physical literacy is a great way to look forward to days of sunshine this Spring. Tamara Banks will be a speaker at our Spring Conference coming up on May 5 and provides a thought provoking article on the RULER approach to social emotional learning.

Homeless youth is a problem across our province, and the A-Way Home Committee to End Youth Homelessness out of Kamloops shares their successful program in that area.

As a Board, we continue to miss John's passion for improving public education. His focus was always on the students and how best to educate and support each and everyone one of them.

The BCCPAC Board of Directors

John Bird

September 16 , 1954
- February 21, 2017



BCCPAC Board of Directors

Acting President/1st Vice President
Farah Shroff SD 39 Vancouver

2nd Vice President
Jen Mezei SD 41 Burnaby

Treasurer
Gord Byers SD 33 Chilliwack

Secretary
Kendra Mann SD 08 Kootenay Lake

Directors
Darlene Campbell SD 57 Prince George
Karen Nordquist SD 44 North Vancouver
Tracy Wright SD 35 Langley

A-WAY HOME: CREATING POSSIBILITIES FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

When working at a community-based agency for homeless adults in Kamloops, BC it was noticed that a large number of youth regularly gathered and hung out outside this program but were unable to access services. After many conversations with these young people, their stories voiced a common theme. Many of them had aged out of the provincial child welfare system. They were now homeless. They lacked housing and did not have the appropriate chronological or developmental age, cultural or holistic supports to meet their unique needs in order to transcend homelessness. Their stories prompted conversations about how we, as a society, expect, impose, and socially construct individual responsibility and accountability about one's readiness and development into young adulthood. As children in care most of these youth shared that they were disconnected from family and co-created their own sense family on the street.

It quickly became apparent that there were structural issues and system failures about the unrealistic expectations for youth aging out of Ministry care. Why is age an arbitrary measure for social norms of independence and readiness? What is youth homelessness? How do we co-create understanding and meaning about youth homelessness? How do we eliminate youth homelessness? Curious questions such as these, co-construct meaningful dialogues about an important issue; dialogues about homelessness co-create new awareness, emergent ideas, and possibilities for homeless youth.

These amazing and inspiring stories sparked a grassroots committee in 2012 called the Former Youth in Care Supported Housing Committee. This small passionate group of eight community professionals met in an abandoned building to generate solutions and co-create possibilities for homeless youth. The enthusiastic and devoted work from this grass roots movement spread to the City of Kamloops. At this time, our committee was unaware that the City of Kamloops was one of five communities across Canada that had received funding to do research and develop a youth homelessness plan. As a result of the City of Kamloops research (2012), it was

Generously submitted by Katherine McParland BSW, Renata Saat BSW and Kathie McKinnon PhD of the A Way Home Committee to End Youth Homelessness

noted specific to youth that “out of 193 individuals surveyed, 54 were identified as currently homeless and a total of 66 reported having experienced homelessness in Kamloops” (p.8). It was evident that youth homelessness was an issue in Kamloops. We were approached by the City of Kamloops to begin a steering committee, to co-construct a realistic action plan called A-Way Home to prevent, reduce, and end youth homelessness in Kamloops. This was the beginning of the A-Way Home movement.

Throughout the country other communities began to recognize our momentum in fighting youth homelessness. Our grassroots ideas grew into a national movement called A-Way Home Canada with the implementation of the action plan across the country. The stories shared by homeless Kamloops youth inspired community dialogues, and have now co-created future provincial and national, possibilities for under-supported homeless youth. A-Way Home has now become an International phenomenon with A-Way Home America and A-Way Home Scotland.

To date, A-Way Home Kamloops has grown to over 118 members from all sectors including businesses, landlords, non-profit agencies, community members, government, and most importantly youth. These dedicated members make up seven committees that are rooted in action to provide a multitude of services for homeless youth. This vast continuum of services range from crisis response to supported transition housing followed by permanent housing with the fundamental focus on youth homelessness prevention. The heart of A-Way Home is the Kamloops Youth Housing First WrapForce, a community centralized housing intake system that has revolutionized the way our community responds to youth homelessness by creatively coordinating services and housing that meet the unique needs of each youth. Each youth receives a WrapForce team inclusive of diverse support services based on the youth's holistic and cultural needs. By merging community services we have co-created 18 new transition program housing units. Once a youth

has stabilized in transition housing, they move into permanent scattered site housing. Local businesses provided financial supports as funded yearlong rental agreements to sponsor youth and bridge gaps with social assistance in hopes to encourage education, employment, identity, autonomy, and empowerment.



To transcend youth poverty and homelessness, Thompson Rivers University (TRU) has partnered with A-Way Home. In an effort to support youth in WrapForce housing to access education, the TRU Foundation provides five High-Need Access bursaries per year. The A-Way Home Employment and Education Team arranges for youth awarded

these bursaries to interview TRU faculty members in order to choose faculty navigators to mentor and support their educational success. This is a move away from traditional charitable models of mentorship, as the youth chooses their faculty navigator, which defuses power imbalances and enhances relational connections. TRU championed an employment and education team with partners from Work BC and School District 73. A TRU counsellor works with youth in Wrap Force housing to upgrade and meet academic milestones to prepare youth for post secondary education. Education co-constructs emergent ideas and new meaning, enhances voice, reduces multiple barriers, improves housing stability, and co-creates future possibilities. Education is transformative.

Possibilities are endless when services, education, and housing are provided for homeless youth. Professional observation and knowledge suggests when youth experience adversity future well-being and potential may be limited. When a youth does not have a family, we as a community become family. Wrapping services around a homeless youth becomes a relational process, co-creates respectful connections and resilience. This generates intra-dependence; this is beneficial to us all. It truly takes a community to raise a child. We all have a responsibility.

Student WorkSafe

Preparing more students in more classrooms for their first jobs.

Resources for teachers, students, and independent learners are available at worksafebc.com.

WORK SAFE BC




Play

CANADIAN-MADE

Blue Imp is proud to celebrate 100 years success as Canada's playground manufacturer! Visit blueimp.com to check out our new exciting new Centennial Series and Centennial Giveaway!

BONUS! Receive a **FREE BENCH** with your order of any regular-priced modular structure valued at \$25,000 or more!

Order must be placed before Dec. 31, 2017! Promo code: **FREE Bench 2017**.



SWING TIME
DISTRIBUTORS LTD.
PARK & PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

To start your project, call us at [1.800.816.6949](tel:18008166949) or visit www.swingtimedistributors.com

HELP MAKE PUBLIC EDUCATION THE KEY ISSUE IN THE BC GENERAL ELECTION

Public education advocates, from trustees to parents, understand the social, economic and cultural empowerment that comes with making public education the number one priority, and with the provincial election just a little less than two months away, the urgency to ensure that our candidates understand the issues that are important to us continues to grow.

There is no doubt that public education is the key to a strong economy, a skilled work force, world class health care, environmental stewardship, restorative justice, truth and reconciliation, peace, understanding and a civil society, and to ensure that voters make it their priority issue this election, the BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA) has launched a campaign to help put public education front and centre in the lead-up to Election Day.

BCSTA is taking a grassroots approach by encouraging local school boards, community members, and concerned citizens to participate by highlighting the specific education needs and challenges in their communities. The only way to make an impact is for stakeholders to come together and underscore the value and impact of public education. Reaching out to people outside the education community, like sector leaders and community members, and turning their attention to

Generously submitted by Glenda Ollero, BC School Trustees Association Media and Communications Specialist.

the interdependent partnerships they have with their local school districts is also vital in achieving the campaign's short and long term goals.

The multi-strategy non-partisan campaign dubbed "Public Education is the Key" centres around the following:

- 10 Key Actions – A 100-day rollout of small actionable tasks that everyone can participate in
- Social Media Photo Campaign – Take a photo with our slogan photo, tell us why you think public education is the key and share it on Twitter, Instagram or Facebook with the hashtag [#bcedkey](https://twitter.com/bcedkey)
- Sector Leaders Speaker Series – a speaker event that engages sector leaders and asks them why is public education essential to them
- Key Kit – An online resource toolkit with digital files to help you create your own posters and materials.

More information about the campaign can be found on BCSTA's [The Education Leader](http://TheEducationLeader.com) website or contact BCSTA Media Specialist Glenda Ollero at gollero@bcsta.org.



PUBLIC EDUCATION IS THE KEY

[#bcedkey](https://twitter.com/bcedkey) | bcsta.org

BC STUDENTS #1 IN READING ACCORDING TO PISA 2015

British Columbia 15-year-old students are #1 in the world in reading according to the results of Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2015. This assessment measures youth outcomes in reading, mathematics, science, collaborative problem solving, and financial literacy, focusing on what students can do with what they have learned in school, at home, and in the community. Students in BC also performed very well in math (9th world wide) and science (3rd world wide), achieving higher average scores than the Canadian average in science, placing them among the top-performing participants globally.

Overall, Canadian 15-year-old students achieved a mean score in science of 528 which is 35 points over the average. Canada was outperformed by only three countries (Singapore, Japan, and Estonia) among all 72 participating countries and economies and remains one of the top-performing countries in science. Almost 90% of Canadian students achieve the baseline level in science.

By Susan Wilson, former BCCPAC Board Member. Susan would like to thank the Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC) for their assistance in the preparation of this article.

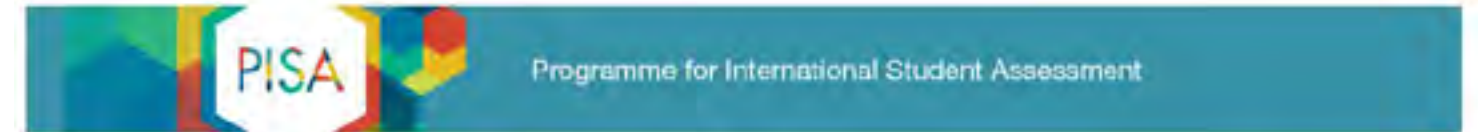
Canadian girls and boys perform equally well in science. Girls have a higher advantage over boys in reading and boys have a slight advantage in math. In Canada overall and in New Brunswick and British Columbia, there was no difference between the anglophone and the francophone school systems in science performance.

The gap that exists between students with the highest and those with the lowest levels of performance is an important indicator of the equity of education outcomes. Canada was one of the few countries with above-average performance and below-average disparity in student performance. For Canada overall and for all provinces, the gap between the highest and lowest levels of performance for science, reading, and mathematics is smaller than the OECD average, suggesting a high level of equity across the country in addition to high performance.

PISA 2015 provides the fourth assessment of science in Canada since 2006 when the first full assessment of science took place. In Canada, as well as across the OECD countries, science performance did not change between 2006 and 2015. In 2006, Canada's average performance in science was at its highest with a score of 534 points: Canada ranked third after Finland (563) and Hong Kong-China (542). Since then, Canadian results have remained very stable with average scores of 529, 525, and 528 points in 2009, 2012, and 2015 respectively.

The PISA 2015 results suggest that in Canada a majority of students have attained a level of scientific literacy that enables them to use their knowledge and skills to engage with issues and ideas related to science. The results of this assessment provide both affirmation and direction for Canadian jurisdictions and classrooms.

Results from PISA 2015 provide an opportunity to confirm the success of our world-class education systems from a global perspective. Canada remains



WHAT IS PISA? The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an international study that measures trends in learning outcomes in science, reading, and mathematics for students at age 15. The study has been conducted every three years under the guidance of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) since 2000. In 2015, it was administered in 72 countries and economies, including Canada. Over 20,000 students from approximately 900 schools took the PISA assessment in the 10 Canadian provinces in the spring of 2015. PISA is valuable for its capacity to provide comparative information on skill levels of students near the end of their compulsory education. Not only does PISA enable comparisons between provinces, countries, and economies on the knowledge and skills of their youth, it also provides an opportunity to monitor their change in performance over time.

The Canadian partners involved in administering PISA are Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and the 10 provincial ministries and departments of education, through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). The Canadian report was developed by CMEC and ESDC.

For more information on PISA 2015 please visit <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/aboutpisa/> or [http://www.cmec.ca/508/Programs-and-Initiatives/Assessment/Programme-for-International-Student-Assessment-\(PISA\)/PISA-2015/index.html](http://www.cmec.ca/508/Programs-and-Initiatives/Assessment/Programme-for-International-Student-Assessment-(PISA)/PISA-2015/index.html)

in the group of top-performing countries and achieves its standing with relatively equitable outcomes.

Canada has actively participated in PISA to ensure that the uniqueness of our country's education systems is taken into account. Factors such as linguistic differences, rural and urban school locations, and cultural influences were all considered when developing the assessment. In addition, the universal framework for each subject incorporates an agreed-upon philosophy for all countries that is based upon the latest pedagogical research. In the sense that Canadian students answer the same questions as students from every other country, it is very fair. The assessment is also unique in that it is not tied to the curriculum of any province or participating country or economy but is instead a fair measurement of students' abilities to use their learning skills to solve real-life situations.

DPAC SUMMIT - NOVEMBER 18 & 19 2016

As a provincial organization, BCCPAC values the importance of district parent representation. District Parent Advisory Councils (DPACs) are the legislated parent voice at the school district level, representing the collective views of parents and Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) in a school district. DPACs are comprised of elected parent representatives from PACs and serve as an umbrella organizations for the PACs in their school districts. DPACs represent the diverse views of parents in their districts and are able to articulate the regional issues parents, students and PACs face.

The focus of the DPAC is often different than a PAC. Often, a PAC focuses on initiatives that pertain to an individual school. DPACs, on the other hand, focus on more systemic issues that affect students and schools across the district and, as legislated in the School Act, may advise the board on any matter relating to education in the school district. DPACs can give input on behalf of district parents into the development of education policy, programs, priorities and decisions of the board. Many districts invite feedback and participation from DPACs on district initiatives, budget and school district committees, but many do not.

Although BCCPAC has representation at the provincial level to provide input on issues such as Curriculum, Aboriginal Education, Reporting and Rural Education, usually the provincial discussions revolve around flexible framework, intent and direction in broad terms and language. How these and other initiatives are specifically applied at the local level is decided by each district, and DPACs are often consulted in this process as the parent voice.

Unfortunately, however, many of our DPACs are

By Jen Mezei
Jen is the 2nd Vice President of BCCPAC and the Communications Director & Media Spokesperson.

not invited to consult meaningfully. As BCCPAC we advocate for parent engagement at the school, district and provincial levels. It is very common at all three levels, that parents are not given the opportunity to provide input in the development of initiatives and policy. Usually, many are asked for feedback after the fact. We believe that enabling our DPACs with access, opportunity and resources is key to improving parent engagement across the province.

The key priority of the Leadership Development portfolio this year, was to provide our DPAC chairs (or designate) with the opportunity to voice regional concerns and provide district perspective at the provincial level to the Ministry of Education and to BCCPAC at the DPAC Summit last November.

The DPAC summit was reformatted this year to a two-day event to allow for collaborative table top discussion on current and emerging issues with senior public servants – educators and policy makers – from the Ministry of Education on the first day. Rather than a stand-and-deliver presentation followed by Q&A, emphasis for the day was on enhancing partnership and dialogue between the Ministry of Education, BCCPAC and DPACs in a respectful and professional forum. DPAC chairs and Ministry staff alike voiced their appreciation for the opportunity to dialogue, brainstorm and explore topics together.

The agenda included:

- Q&A with Minister of Education, Mike Bernier
- Topic: Evidence that Enhances Student Learning.



Focus included a discussion on the types of evidence parents' value and feel are important for enhancing student learning across BC

- Topic: Update on Learning Modernization Project and status of parent engagement
- Topic: Culture and Climate in Schools focused on Safety. Focus included ERASE, SOGI as well as the importance of driving a culture of change to support inclusiveness
- Presentation: Mental Health. Focus was on emerging trends in schools.
- Q&A with Deputy Minister of Education, Dave Byng

Four main themes emerged during the Question & Answer session with Minister Mike Bernier and Deputy Minister Dave Byng: Meeting the Needs of Vulnerable Students & Advocacy, the Implementation of the Revised Curriculum, Funding & Equity in the Funding Formula, and Improving Parent, PAC & DPAC engagement.

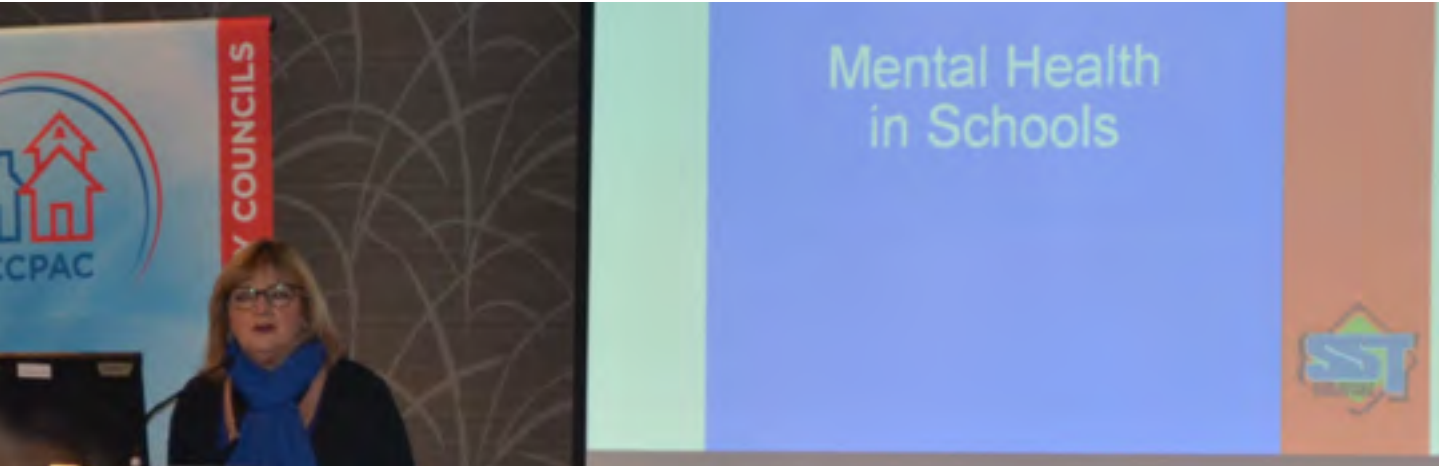
On the second day, DPACs went deeper into the topics and themes that were introduced on the first



day. DPACs provided suggestions and/or examples of how the changes to the curriculum could be communicated better to all parents, and sharing examples of how schools and districts try to ensure that parents feel that there is a culture that is inviting and caring. DPACs also provided BCCPAC with feedback on what type of resources and supports would help DPACs be more successful.

In response to the presentation on Mental Health, DPACs also gave feedback and input to BCCPAC on resources that are available in their communities, strategies that should be encouraged and questions that should be asked if BCCPAC is consulted on Mental Health initiatives in schools in the upcoming months.

So, what will BCCPAC be doing with the input from DPACs? To follow up with the information provided at the DPAC Summit, BCCPAC will be having a committee of the whole during the AGM to help hone and prioritize these ideas, and to allow the membership to take ownership of them. We look forward to a robust discussion and dialogue to help guide the direction of BCCPAC on these current and emerging issues.



JUMP INTO SPRING!

Gourmet Cookie Dough & Cheesecake FUNDRAISER

- Easy to follow, step by step support for any sized organization
- Customized order forms & promotional material (incentive programs available)
- Pre-Sell program... no tracking inventory... one day distribution

Gourmet Cookie Dough

- 4lb Pail...makes approx. 60 - 30 gram cookies
- 11 Gourmet flavours to choose from

\$6
Make \$6 profit on each pail sold
(sell for \$17)



Cheesecake

- 8" round - 2lb cheesecake
- 14 individual pieces
- 4 Gourmet flavours

\$5
Make \$5 profit on each cheesecake sold
(sell for \$18)



future
fundraising.com

1.877.767.9546
info@futurefundraising.com

MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS

Over the last few decades, there has been widespread recognition that positive mental health and wellbeing are the building blocks of learning. When children are overwhelmed by emotions like stress, worry, or sadness, they are much less able to focus on their learning. Neuroscience has revealed that the areas of the brain required for processing and retaining information do not work at their best when mental health challenges are present.

Mental health challenges have many different signs and symptoms, which can vary from person to person. Some common signs to pay attention to include:

- changes in mood;
- changes in the way the child perceives things;
- obsessions;
- fears; and
- feelings of anxiety (anxious thoughts, anxious body signs, anxious behaviour).

It is important to point out that feeling anxious is a normal response to life's stressors (eg. feeling anxious about a test is normal)...it can become a challenge when it starts to impact a child's everyday activities.

It can be difficult to know how and when to talk to a child about their mental health. Fear and stigma associated with mental health challenges can often be barriers to having a conversation. Some helpful approaches include allowing the child the time and space to talk about how they are feeling, to listen and stay calm, and to make sure they are feeling secure and comfortable. Remember, you don't need to be an expert. Just showing you care and are open to having a conversation can go a long way.

BC is currently implementing a new Kindergarten

Generously submitted by the Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre and Health Literacy Team, BC Children's Hospital and the Ministry of Education

to Grade 12 curriculum, which includes a strong focus on mental well-being and social emotional learning. This provides an excellent opportunity for educators, students, parents and community partners to engage in conversations around mental health, and become more informed about available programs, resources and supports.

Many schools have adopted the FRIENDS for Life Program – an anxiety prevention and resiliency building program for students that also includes a parent component (www.friendsparentprogram.com/). The Ministry of Education's ERASE (Expect Respect and a Safe Education) Bullying strategy is a comprehensive initiative that supports schools, families and community partners in fostering school connectedness, promoting positive mental health and responding to worrisome behaviours in children and youth (www.erasebullying.ca).

Information (including workbooks, videos, and apps) for children, youth, families and educators is available through the Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre website at www.keltymentalhealth.ca. The Kelty Centre is BC's province-wide information source for mental health and substance use challenges for children and youth. Individuals who contact the Kelty Centre can receive information, resources, help navigating the mental health system, and one-on-one support from peer support workers. The Kelty Centre is open Monday to Friday and can be contacted by phone (604-875-2084), email (keltycentre@cw.bc.ca) or in person at BC Children's Hospital.

Continued on page 19

Did You Know?
One in five children and youth in British Columbia are experiencing a mental health challenge.



HOW PLAYGROUNDS DEVELOP PHYSICAL LITERACY

Physical literacy is a term we are hearing more and more often. In a nutshell, physical literacy is about developing competence and confidence in the fundamental movement skills that are the building blocks for more complex skills used in sports and recreational activities. At Blue Imp, we recognize the value of physical literacy and understand that playgrounds have a unique role to play in helping all children achieve physical literacy.

As public spaces, playgrounds are available to all children year-round for free. They provide a stimulating setting for unstructured physical activity, allowing children to explore their abilities and learn what their bodies can do. Well-designed playgrounds cater to a wide range of ages and abilities and supply a tremendous variety of movement styles that cannot be accessed in other settings.

The beauty of playgrounds is that as children grow in age and ability, the playground grows with them. Toddlers graduate from a tot swing to a “big kid” swing seat that demands greater stability skill. The climber that once seemed daunting can now be attempted or the overhead that was too hard to get all the way across is now achievable. Whether building on existing skills or attempting something new, children are gradually developing the competence they need to explore other forms of physical activity. And that is what physical literacy is all about.

The fundamental movement skills for physical literacy can be divided into three main categories:



Photo Credit – Blue Imp Recreational Products

Kindly submitted by Blue Imp Recreational Products Ltd.

locomotor skills, non-locomotor (body control) skills and manipulative skills. The good news is that a well-designed playground can help develop all of these skills in an astonishing variety of ways.

Locomotor skills—moving through space in various ways—are developed on the playground in multiple ways. Brachiating (moving hand over hand across an overhead component) is a skill unique to playgrounds, developing upper body strength and hand-eye co-ordination. Sliding is a locomotor skill that playgrounds offer year-round, building core strength along the way. Navigating climbers of varying designs and levels of difficulty—upward, downward and sideways—develops climbing skills as well as strength, agility and co-ordination. Balancing across pods or bridges builds foot-eye co-ordination.

Body control or non-locomotor skills—moving while remaining in one place—are also developed on the playground. Swinging is an all-time favourite movement unique to playgrounds which develops balance and core strength as well as kicking and pushing skills. Hanging and swinging by the arms or rotating while hanging are unique movements supplied by a variety of playground pieces. Playgrounds also provide bouncing, rocking and spinning movements

Manipulative skills—skills developed while using an object—are primarily developed in activities involving balls, bats and racquets. But even here, playgrounds make a difference. As children push each other on a swing, they are using manipulative skills to trap the swing and propel it forward again. Spinners are manipulated by one or more children who set the component in motion again and again while others do the spinning. Teeter-totters and other rocking pieces engage similar manipulative skills.

While they cannot develop each and every fundamental skill children need, playgrounds clearly have a significant role to play in helping children develop the competence and confidence they need to reach be physically literate and active for life.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS: KEEPING TEACHERS CURRENT

BC schools are good places for children to learn. Parents know their involvement in their children’s school and learning is one reason for our students’ success. Having great teachers is also a key to producing great public schools.

Teachers come into the profession highly educated, having a minimum of five years’ post-secondary education. However, that isn’t enough to ensure a continued high quality of instruction. Teachers must keep learning, just like their students. There are many avenues to staying current, but the most consistent is through utilizing professional development (PD) days.

Until 1972, there was only one day in the school calendar for classrooms to be closed so that teachers could participate in furthering their professional learning. In 1972, non-instructional days were added to the school calendar at the request of the profession. Teachers advocated for non-instructional days to be built into the school year so they could keep up with the latest research, share their expertise with each other, and learn from master teachers.

What we seek are good new pedagogies for deep learning. These have a lot in common with good old pedagogies, so we need to make sure we recognize these older pedagogies, value them, and engage the teachers who practice them in moving everyone further forward.¹

The school year was lengthened by five days to provide PD days for teachers without a loss of instructional time for students. In May 1996, the Ministry of Education introduced legislation establishing an Implementation Planning Day.



Generously submitted by Jane Turner, Professional and Social Issues Division with the BC Teachers Federation (BCTF)

The Minister of Education designates the purpose for the sixth non-instructional day. In the past, the sixth day has focused on topics such as pupil assessment, evaluation and reporting policies, curricular issues, accreditation, school planning, student safety, Aboriginal education, and special education. This year, the focus is on the revised curriculum.

The five teacher-driven PD days are constructed around teachers’ individual and collectively identified needs. Research has shown that the most effective professional learning is that which is chosen by the teacher or a group of teachers to meet their self-identified needs at the time. Often the choices are made to better address the needs of the children currently in our schools. However, there may be other, equally compelling reasons for a professional learning choice.

There is a broadly held consensus that meaningful professional learning addresses student achievement, learning needs, and social and cultural contexts; cultivates knowledge generation and mobilization; and builds professional capital and human capacities.²

Schools are dynamic, diverse, and complex places. PD topics and processes are equally dynamic, diverse, and complex. Professional learning helps teachers keep pace with new research as well as provincial and district policy initiatives. We use our professional development days to strengthen our teaching practices, our pedagogical understandings, and our commitment to public education. We do this to better meet the needs of our students.

Endnotes:

1- Michael Hargreaves and Andy Fullan. Call to Action: Bringing the profession back in. (Learning Forward, Oxford: ON. 2016). p.16.

2 - Sherri Brown et al. The State of Educators’ Professional Learning in British Columbia, Executive Summary. (Learning Forward, Oxford: ON. 2016). p.6.

FOR A BETTER TOMORROW WE PLAY TODAY

We don't just manufacture playgrounds at Landscape Structures. What we do here is shape kids' lives by teaching them about persistence, leadership, competition, bravery, support and empathy through play. For more than 45 years, we've invested our hearts and souls into creating amazing playgrounds for communities because for a better tomorrow, we play today. Learn more at shapedbyplay.com.



landscape
structures®



©2017 Landscape Structures Inc.

Contact your local playground consultant
toll free at 1 (866) HABITAT (422-4828)
or email info@habitat-systems.com.

habitat

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND THE RULER APPROACH

CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) defines Social and Emotional learning as the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy towards others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Developed at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, The RULER Approach is an evidence-based approach that supports the development of these 5 competencies through learning how to Recognize, Understand, Label, Express and Regulate emotions.

The RULER Approach to Social and Emotional Learning is designed to develop emotionally literate communities. RULER skills include Recognizing emotions in the face, body, and voice; Understanding the causes and consequences of emotions; Labeling and Expressing emotions to communicate precisely and effectively; and Regulating emotions to promote personal and academic growth. RULER fosters caring, empathetic and engaging learning environments while enhancing academic outcomes such as increased vocabulary, creative and critical thinking, reading comprehension, and writing. RULER directly aligns

By Tamara Banks

Tamara is currently the Principal of Hampton Park Elementary School in Coquitlam and was schooled in the RULER approach at the Yale Centre for Emotional Intelligence. Tamara will be holding a break-out session at the BCCPAC Spring Conference coming up in May.

with both the Core and Curricular Competencies of the Redesigned BC Curriculum.

It is widely recognized that emotional intelligence is essential for students to be effective in all aspects of their lives; socially, emotionally, and academically, while they are in school and beyond. RULER provides educators and families with the tools they need to help students acquire and practice these skills. RULER trains “everyone with a face” and is a whole school/whole community approach to emotional literacy.

- R**ecognizing emotions in self and others
- U**nderstanding the causes and consequences of emotions
- L**abeling emotions accurately
- E**xpressing emotions appropriately
- R**egulating emotions effectively

2017 Awards Gala Evening

Saturday May 6
Guildford Ballroom
7:00 - 9:00 pm

Join
us for light
appies with a cash bar
and entertainment brought to
you by BCCMA winners “The Heels.”
Awards presentations will begin at 7:00 pm



**FREE RESOURCES HELP SCHOOLS
EARN TOP MARKS IN RECYCLING.**

LEARN MORE AT RETURNITSCHOOL.CA

The Return-It School Program provides free recycling resources for BC schools, including educational displays, collection bins and school presentations. It's a great way to promote environmental leadership across the school district and teach students the importance of recycling.

TWO WAYS TO PARTICIPATE:

Certified Return-It Schools:



Mobile pick-up
services



Keep all the deposit
refunds from the
containers collected

The Return-It School Contest:



Collect containers for
a chance to win bonus
cash prizes



Keep all the deposit
refunds from the
containers collected

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL OF PUBLIC EDUCATION: CREATING A BETTER WORLD

*By Dr Farah M Shroff, 1st Vice President and Acting President
of BCCPAC*

How can we create a better society, one in which everyone has the best chance at thriving? This question has been the focus of philosophers, political scientists, sociologists and many others for hundreds of years. While many paths to a better world have been proposed--focusing on environmental sustainability, new political systems, better cooperation between nations, support for Indigenous communities and more--most thinkers agree that universal access to robust public education is a guaranteed straight line to more equitable societies. It may take a generation for the effects of sound public education to be implemented so it is not an instant fix to the many problems of our world. However, once in place, comprehensive and sustainably public education systems help graduates find better jobs, housing and their place in the world. When people are better educated, they participate more fully in their democracies, and vote with informed ideas about what kind of leaders they would like to see. Educating girls is an important part of this transformative promise of public education around the world.



MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS....Continued from page 13

Additional resources for parents, children and youth include:

- FamilySmart (www.Familysmart.ca) - provides families and professionals with information, tools, and tips on how to support and assist children with mental health difficulties.
- www.mindcheck.ca - a website designed to help individuals ages 13-25 in British Columbia check-in on how they are feeling and quickly connect to mental health resources and support.
- Stresslr.ca - an interactive online resource for younger kids (age 9-11) that explains what stress is, why it happens and how we can manage it.

A new provincial mental health digital hub is also now available, where you can search for information and find services across BC. The hub is one of many new and expanded initiatives that are part of a \$140 million investment by the Province to support British Columbians with mental health and substance use challenges.

2017 BCCPAC Spring Conference and Annual General Meeting

May 5-7, 2017

Sheraton Vancouver Guildford Hotel

15269 104th Avenue Surrey, BC

Committee of the Whole will be held during the AGM to help hone and prioritize the discussion items from the DPAC Summit. We look forward to a robust discussion and dialogue to help guide the direction of BCCPAC.

For full Conference and AGM schedules please visit bccpac2017agm.weebly.com



Spring Conference Sessions:

- Grad Transitions
- Mental Health in School Culture
- Self Regulation
- Panel with Ministry of Education Staff
- Cultural Change
- Advocacy 101
- New Curriculum
- Inclusion

Are you new to the BCCPAC Spring Conference? Special Newbie Rate of only \$75 when accompanied by a paying BCCPAC member.

2017 Awards Gala Evening

