



Community Services & Quality Assurance

Office Locations:

Fort Frances Office
(Main office)
240 First Street East, Suite 200
Fort Frances, Ontario P9A 1K5
Phone: (807) 274-7787
Fax: (807) 274-6646

Atikokan Office
211 Main Street
P.O. Box 2050
Atikokan, Ontario P0T 1C0
Phone: (807)597-2700
Fax: (807) 597-6920

TOLL FREE NUMBER
1-800-465-7764

Community Services Open House a Success!



Open house participants enjoying the new interactive gaming system in the Family Room.

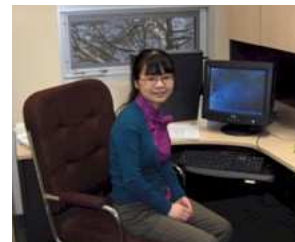
The CS Team would like to thank all those who attended our open house on March 5th. Staff, community partners, families and members of the media were all on hand to tour the new facilities in the basement of our offices at 240

First Street East. The new facilities house the Volunteer, Family Centred Conferencing and Supervised Access Programs.



Cartoon characters painted on the new facility's entrance wall by a local artist.

Welcome to Lily Xu



The CS Team would like to welcome Lily Xu as our new Data Analyst Intern. Lily is from Thunder Bay, and was hired through the financial assistance of the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund. Although she has only been with us for a month, Lily's extensive knowledge of database systems has already resulted in much efficiency for the agency.



Child Protection Services

"Caring Dads": Working with Abusive Men



On March 5th and 6th, 2009, I attended the Community Forum Conference entitled "Working Together to End Woman Abuse". The conference was partially organized and funded by the Atikokan Crisis Centre. Service providers from all across Ontario were in attendance.

Domestic Violence continues to impact our community, and it is still one of the most common reasons a Child Protection case is opened. For a Children's Aid Society (CAS), intervention has meant working with the non-offending parent to ensure they act in a protective capacity. This is not a perfect system, as many women will lie to protect their partners, and hide abusive relationships in the fear that the CAS will become involved with their

family. A locally offered therapeutic intervention program for abusive men does exist. However, it is not specifically directed at service delivery for fathers.

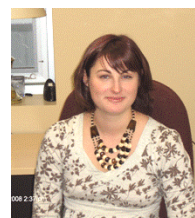
In Thunder Bay, a program has recently been initiated, which provides clinical intervention to abusive men involved in the child protection system. The program is called "**Caring Dads: Working with Abusive Men**". It was initiated as a pilot project in 2005. The program is facilitated by a network of service providers from Probation and Parole, the local CAS, and by Mental Health counselors.

The program focuses on men, and starts with a motivational interview. Questions are asked such as "What would an ideal father be?" and "How has my child experienced me?" Participants are then provided with the tools they need to bring about changes to their behavior.

To date, results of the "**Caring Dads**" program have shown that abusive men tend to adhere to rigid gender stereotypes, have a tendency to

unreasonably apply hostile intent towards their children's behavior, and generally undermine the authority of the mother when it comes to determining discipline or granting or denying privileges in the home. Abusive men also tend to minimize the impact of domestic violence on their children, and this program works on speaking to the shame, and denial inherent to these cases, so that help can be sought in a proactive manner.

Although access arrangements for abusive Dads should not be changed as a result of a father completing this program, and should be based on observation, it is, in the very least, filling a much needed gap for extending therapeutic help towards abusive men.



Lindsay Kavalench,
Family Service Worker

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically; or to provide feedback about the newsletter, please notify us by sending an e-mail to: Information@facsrr.ca



We are on the Web!
www.facsrr.ca

Please post
 on your
 bulletin
 board!



Call your local
 office of
 Family & Children's
 Services
 24 Hours a day,
 7 Days a week
 Or visit us on the
 web www.facsrr.ca

Developmental Services



Safe Kids Week is Safe Kids Canada's largest-scale annual public awareness program designed to help reduce the frequency and severity of preventable childhood injuries, the leading cause of death and disability of Canadian children. This campaign receives sponsor support from Johnson & Johnson. This year the **13th Annual Safe Kids Week** will be held from **May 25th to May 31st, 2009** with the focus being home product safety.

Product related injuries are a leading cause of injury for children under the age of fourteen. The campaign will emphasize education, engineering and enforcement solutions to reduce product related injuries and fatalities. Some of the products that we use regularly and take for granted can seriously harm a child.

The following ideas may help

reduce the risk to your child, when buying products.

The "3 S" Guide

Size: For smaller children, choose bigger products. Children under the age of three, put things in their mouths, up their noses and in their ears. They do not always play with the toy or use a product as it is intended.

- If a product is small, or can break into small parts, a child under three should not play or use it. If the parts fit in a cardboard toilet paper roll (1 1/4 inches or 3 cm), then it is too small for children under 3. Any toy with a warning label, indicating use for children over the age of 3, should be taken as a safety warning. Any products or toys labeled with this warning have small parts and are not suitable for children under age 3.
- If a product has batteries, ensure that the batteries are locked inside toys and that the child can't easily access them. Small batteries can be swallowed as well as cause burns.
- If a product has magnets, make sure that they are firmly attached to the products. Children have been seriously injured from

swallowing small magnets.



Strings: Check that strings or tails on products are not long enough to cause strangulation or choking. Check that they are firmly attached to the product.

Surface: Check that the product is smooth, that it does not have sharp points or rough edges, on which a child could scratch or cut themselves. Ensure that soft products are fire resistant and that the stuffing can't come out. The soft stuffing can cause choking.

For more information on the campaign, check out the Safe Kids Canada website at www.safekidscanada.ca/safekidscanada.

Brenda Witherspoon-Bedard
 Child Development Worker



"Make the Connection" Parenting Program for Parents with Babies 0-12 months

"Make the Connection" is a parenting program for parents and babies birth to one years of age. It is an interactive parenting program that promotes secure infant attachment, two-way communication and infant led learning—the essential building blocks for healthy, happy futures. Based on current research and sound principles of adult learning, this enjoyable program combines parent-baby activities, parent discussion and personalized video feedback. The next session starts on April 17th at the Best Start Hub (1150 Portage Avenue) at 10:00am. This exciting program is a partnership between the Northwestern Health Unit, the Best Start Hub and the FACS Child Development Program. Register now! Limited space available. Call Brenda Witherspoon-Bedard @ 274-7787 ext. 243 or Miranda Sigurdson @ 274-9827 for more information. Snack and child care will be provided if needed.

Children's Mental Health Services

Children's Mental Health Week 2009: May 2—May 9

Both the Atikokan and Fort Frances offices are planning to reach out to the community and are planning special events to join the effort to raise awareness of the mental health needs of children and young people across our province.

Please stay tuned for more information on the FACS agency website as well as the local newspapers in regard to when our special events will occur.

You may ask yourself, why is it important to raise awareness of the mental health needs of our children? Please consider the

following information from **Children's Mental Health Ontario**. "One in five children and youth in Ontario will struggle with his or her mental health. That means more than 500,000 young people in this province will suffer from a diagnosable mental health problem such as depression, anxiety, bullying and eating disorders.

Across the province, Children's Mental Health Ontario and it's members host open houses, school yard walks, shopping mall kiosks and informational workshops, to inform Ontarians of the signs and symptoms that a child may be struggling with a mental health issue and of the successful treatments available.



Mental health problems can affect any young person, regardless of age or circumstance. There is no one to blame for it and there is no shame in recognizing the need for treatment. Early intervention can provide a hopeful and healthy future." The goal of this event is to assure that no child needs to suffer alone with challenges pertaining to their mental health.

Troy Clink
 Manager of Children's
 Mental Health Services