



# FACS

Family and Children's Services  
of the District of Rainy River



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## A Word from the Executive Director



### "I'm In Training" A Common Theme Over the Next Few Months

Last year was a very busy one for our organization. The proclamation of new and significant legislation, implementation of the Auditor General's recommendations, and a new Collective Agreement kept many staff busy and resulted in significant changes at the agency.

As we begin 2008, it is beginning to look like "busy" will be the operative word again. By the end of January a new case management system for the organization will be implemented that is consistent with the expectations of the government's Northern Framework and which we believe will result in significant improvements in the services we provide to those families and children we serve. On January 23rd, a full day case management retreat has been organized to train staff on this new system.

In February, we have retained the services of a consultant to assist us in evaluating the outcome of the current

strategic plan which was developed in 2002. During the two day retreat, staff and Board will also be assisted in developing a new Strategic Plan that will provide a vision for the organization over the next five years. On March 27th, staff will be spending a day developing the first of five annual service plans intended to begin efforts at addressing our new Strategic Plan.

Although planning is still tentative, it's our hope that we will be able to arrange for 5 days of Triple P parent training to our staff before the end of March. This evidence based approach to parenting is world renowned, very compatible with integrated agencies like ours, and very expensive as it is delivered by trainers from Australia. Fortunately, we have managed to secure the necessary resources, and are looking forward to the training which we believe will provide a very solid foundation upon which to build all of our clinical services.

In response to staff need we will be providing a couple of days of Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training to staff before the end of March. Gabe

Carpenter, our Manager of Protection Services, received certification in December and will be arranging training dates shortly. We will also continue to provide 23 days of onsite New Worker training to appropriate child welfare staff over the next several months. Finally the management group had identified the need for Time Management training for all staff by the end of this fiscal year, however in light of priorities, it is likely that this will not occur due to lack of time. How ironic.

In any event given this busy training schedule, don't be surprised if you call one of our staff over the next 3 months and get the message "I'm in Training". But don't be dismayed, if your need cannot wait for their return from training, please remember there is always someone covering in emergencies. Simply dial 0 and ask the receptionist to connect you to someone who is available.

Vik Nowak

## Feature

### Foster Parents' Outlook on Fostering Children

Are you considering becoming a foster parent? One foster parent said, "I strongly encourage it; there are a lot of children in need. Many people think that the process of fostering a child would be overwhelming, but it isn't. The staff at Family and Children's Services are very supportive and they are there for you through the process."

Becoming a foster parent opens up new opportunities. Local care givers stick together and give support to

each other. One foster parent said, "The most difficult situation that I had to overcome was watching the children leave my home." "It was very difficult" she said, "but later when I saw the children that I fostered and they would remember me—it was all worth it. I pray that I have helped them in their journey." When asked what was the most rewarding part of being a foster parent, she replied, "Having new children come into my home, and knowing I can help shape their future."

A second foster parent indicated that, "When becoming a foster parent, you must have an open mind and heart, and really love children. You must be ready to shed some good and bad

tears. This is an experience that goes beyond words. It is so rewarding to see the impact we make on the children's lives years later; and having a child walk up to you and tell you what an impact that you had on their life." The most difficult issue that these foster parents faced was the loss of a child.

Becoming a foster parent sounds like a very rewarding and beautiful experience that many people choose to become involved in. It is a growing and learning process; not only for the children but also for the foster parents.

If you would like to open your heart and home to a child in need, contact Christa Little, Foster Care Coordinator at 807-274-7787 ext 226.

## Community Services & Quality Assurance

### Volunteer Appreciation

This past year has been a very productive and positive one, in both the Supervised Access Program and the Volunteer Program, with policy and procedure changes, new brochures created and the Parent Handbook redone.

We held the International Volunteer Day Celebration on December 5th, with 7 of our volunteers in attendance to enjoy hot apple cider, coffee and snacks. Jacquee Loerzel, Children's Mental Health Therapist and Vik Nowak, Executive Director of the agency spoke to the group and emphasized what a wonderful difference that volunteers make to the people they provide service to.

On December 7th, with additional one-time funding, we were able to provide a full day of training to our Supervised Access Program staff and



volunteers on Domestic Violence. This training was very well received and included six different presentations from various agencies in Fort Frances and Atikokan.



On a personal note, my contract with this agency ends on February 8th, and so it is with a heavy heart, that I must say good-bye. I would like to say thank you to all those who made my past year such a positive experience. I have many new friends and will miss all of you.

Jeanne Pasch  
Supervised Access Program/  
Volunteer Coordinator

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@facsr.ca](mailto:Information@facsr.ca)



We are on the Web!  
www.facsrr.ca

## Children's Mental Health Services

### What is the Intensive Treatment Services Program?



The Intensive Treatment Services Program is a relatively new program to

the agency, and falls under the management of the Children's Mental Health Program. It consists of a multi-disciplinary team of professionals who serve children between the ages of 0—18 years of age and their families. This team includes children's mental health therapists, psychological and tele-psychiatry services, support workers, foster care workers, child welfare workers and other community service providers.

The approach that has been adopted is referred to as a "Circle of Care". This can be defined in several ways, including:

- \* the child and family acting as active participants throughout the process;

- \* the provision of caregiver services;
- \* access to external community services as required;
- \* developing a support plan through the Children's Mental Health Program; and,
- \* recommendations made from psychological and tele-psychiatry services.

There are many services that can be provided, which are based on the needs of both the child and family. These services are available both in the home and in the community, and include counseling services, developmental services, independence planning, parenting education, multi-sensory services, service advocacy, suicide risk assessments and in-home services provided by support workers.

There are a number of objectives to this program. Family reunification is an important goal to the program. Families are assisted with effective and positive parent management,

which is taught mostly through training and modeling. A support worker is attached to the family and provides coaching in the home and community and looks at teaching the family strategies to manage behaviour problems in their children. Often, there are children who do not have access to community services. Opportunities are provided to children to become involved in activities offered in the community.

The goal of the Intensive Treatment Services Program is to keep families together, or to return children to their family as soon as possible. We are dedicated to ensuring the safety of children and youth and promoting optimal development within families and communities.

Referrals to this program can be made through Integrated Services Northwest. In Fort Frances, call 807-274-7787 and in Atikokan, call 807-597-4528 or toll free at 1-866-646-6616.

Irene Mason  
Children's Mental Health Therapist



## Child Protection Services

### Two New Additions

The Child Protection team is pleased to announce the addition of Lindsay Lobb and Lindsay Kavalench.

Lindsay Lobb, Child Protection Support Worker, has come to the

agency from Winnipeg, MB, where she studied social work at the University of Manitoba. Lindsay feels that working in a smaller town



such as Fort Frances will expose her to a much broader range of experiences than if she worked in a large city, where workers tend to specialize in different areas of social work. Many may already know that Lindsay has family in Fort Frances, and her sister Marty is an employee of the neighbouring Children's Services team.

We are happy to have you Lindsay!

Lindsay Kavalench, Family Service Worker, has



returned to the agency after completing a contract position on the Children's Services team, and after taking time to travel in India for a month. Lindsay says that her previous position at the agency made her especially aware of the current social issues in India. For example, Lindsay observed how many children live in poverty and are homeless but do not benefit from the services of any child protection agency. Lindsay's experience was very positive, however, and she describes developing an interest in the Hindu language. Lindsay is glad to be working with agency colleagues again and being back in the community.

svAgawa, Lindsay!

## Developmental Services

### Child Development Program

This program consists of a team of professionals dedicated to assisting families who have children with special needs. It is geared to children 0-6 years, who are at risk for delay or who have a developmental disability.

Services include:

- \* Home visits with flexible hours;

- \* Developmental screening and assessments;
- \* Support and assistance with behavioural issues;
- \* Family support such as advocacy and education;
- \* Linkage with health, financial and other community services;
- \* Assistance with transition to school for special needs children

To find out more information regarding Child Development, contact Child Development workers—Joanne or Brenda in Fort Frances at 807-274-7787 or Jackie in Atikokan at 807-597-2700.



## Children's Services

### Children's Christmas Party

On December 17, 2007 the Children's Services Team facilitated a Christmas party in the agency's board room for the children affiliated with Family and Children's Services of the District of Rainy River. Crafts, games, snacks and movies were available for the children as well as, a visit with Santa Claus.

Children of all ages and their care givers were present to participate in the festive activities. This annual event is a favourite time as it allows for all the children to come together with each other and the staff for an afternoon of fun, relaxation and celebration. As the afternoon came to an end, the children were presented with a gift from the agency wishing them and their families a very Merry Christmas.



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

