

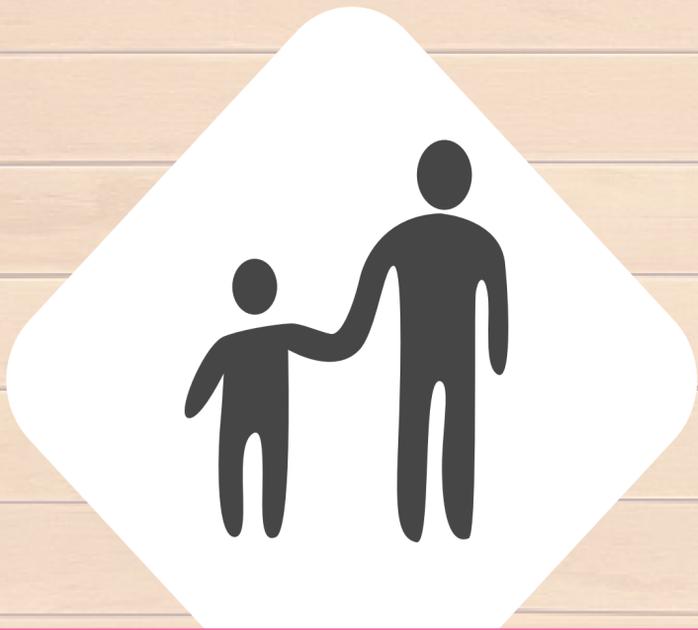
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL - JUNE 2018

**"I am taking care of my three grandchildren... It's nice to be able to talk with other grandparents going through the same thing as I am."
-Program Participant**



FEATURE STORY



Supporting Grandparents as Primary Caregivers

Who: Grandparents fulfilling the role of caregiver/parent

What: Grandparent support programming

When: April-June 2018

Where: Central/West Kings SchoolsPlus, Annapolis SchoolsPlus, Glace Bay SchoolsPlus

Why: Grandparent programming has been developed by SchoolsPlus in various communities to respond to the high number of grandparents taking on the primary care giving role of their grandchildren for a variety of reasons.

SchoolsPlus started delivering supportive programming to grandparents in parenting roles in 2010, since then SchoolsPlus continues to engage and develop creative supports for grandparents at a number of SchoolsPlus sites across the province. During this reporting period from April-June, groups were run for grandparents in 3 different communities.

The Central/West Kings SchoolsPlus Hub partnered with the Kings County Family Resource Centre, Valley Child Development and the Berwick Library to provide a combination of support and information sharing to grandparents. Guest speakers were invited to contribute to the program based on the group's needs and interests. Some of the guest speakers were: mental health clinical staff and a family therapist who specializes in the Circle of Security (trauma). The group members enjoyed the opportunity to brainstorm parenting issues, and share setbacks and successes. Members all stated that they have a sense of connection and feel less isolated than they did before the group. Six grandparents attended the program; childcare was provided. Grandparents and staff have discussed recruiting more participants and continuing the group.

The Annapolis SchoolsPlus Hub provided a program titled GrandLOVE, in response to a request from a school principal in the area. The GrandLOVE Group was hosted at Family Matters Resource Centre / Lawrencetown Education Centre. Childcare and support with transportation was provided. Guest speakers included:

- Family Matters Family Resource Centre – Denise Naugler & Billie Jo Weir
- Senior Safety Officer – Sharon Elliot
- MLA, Minister of Seniors & Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage – Honourable Leo Glavine
- SchoolsPlus Mental Health Clinician – Megan Saunders
- Department of Community Services – Marcy Taylor Burns
- Public Health – Melissa Weekes
- Technology Support, AVRCE – Matthew Henshaw

The Glace Bay SchoolsPlus Hub provided a program titled Grandparents as Parents (G.A.P.). Topics covered included self-care, healthy school lunches, recreation opportunities and Internet safety. The school dietitian engaged grandparents around nutrition and healthy snack/lunch ideas. For the last session the grandparents brought their grandchildren for a Family Fun Night and enjoyed food and games together. Six grandparents participated in the program, and nine children participated in the family night.

One grandparent stated "I am taking care of my three grandchildren ... I look forward to the time at G.A.P. It's nice to be able to talk with other grandparents going through the same thing as I am."



STAFF FEATURE STEPHEN & RACHEL

OUR STAFF



Stephen McCracken has been a passionate SchoolsPlus Community Outreach worker for the past twelve years. Steve came over from Scotland at the age of four. Very quickly he and his family began to understand incredible opportunities in the "new" country. A vibrant community where families could raise kids. Neighbors helping neighbors, people getting involved. Naturally, this informed Stephen's desire to work with diverse communities. In his role as SchoolsPlus Community Outreach Worker, Stephen can be found working hard on a creative project alongside his students, supporting parents to navigate and make connections, and participating in or planning many community events. Stephen's passion and care for the youth, families and schools is evident by the excellent reputation he has built in the Spryfield community, with the six schools he supports. With SchoolsPlus expansion this past year Stephen also provides service to Clayton Park Junior High school in the Fairview area.



Rachel Derocher is the SchoolsPlus Assistant Lead for the J.L. Ilsley and Halifax West family of schools in the Halifax Regional Center for Education. New to this role in October of 2017, Rachel has a strong passion for working with diverse communities and feels very privileged to see youth, families, and community's strengths, resiliency and their ability to thrive despite complex challenges. Rachel has been a social worker in the Halifax Regional Municipality for the last ten years and is always appreciative of the diversity, and unique life stories of all the amazing people that belong to the community. Rachel is dedicated to providing responsive, intentional and anti-oppressive social work support to all youth, families, schools, and communities while building comprehensive partnerships within her family of schools.

Stephen and Rachel were acknowledged by the honorable MLA Lena Metlege-Diab on June 11, 2018 for participating in a community mental health information session provided to the Spryfield community on February 6th, 2018. Stephen, Rachel and Jennifer McCarron (manager for IWK services and partnership with SchoolsPlus) presented about the SchoolsPlus program and the services that are offered to students and families to support mental health. SchoolsPlus participation in this community event is not unique, but part of many partnerships developed in this role.

Stephen and Rachel would like to acknowledge and thank all our colleagues who are actively collaborating with partners. We like to believe we have one common goal; to support students, families and greater community, despite the obstacles and degree of complexities.



ANNAPOLIS VALLEY REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

UNDERSTANDING AUTISM WORKSHOPS

Who: Caregivers for children and youth with Autism

What: Understanding Autism Workshops

When: May - June 2018

Where: SchoolsPlus Community Hub, Windsor Elementary

Why: To address the ongoing need of more support for those who care for children and youth diagnosed with Autism. In May and June SchoolsPlus hosted Autism Atlantic who facilitated five in-depth workshops. Topics included: Understanding Autism, Girls on the Spectrum, Autism and Sexuality, Managing Challenging Behaviours, and Autism and Anxiety. Workshop attendees included parents, caregivers, educators, child protection social workers, and police; as well as youth diagnosed with Autism. An amazing amount of information was shared & learned during the five days.

Partner: Autism Atlantic Consulting Services, Yvonne Rafuse and Kym Hume



CAPE BRETON-VICTORIA REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

ROOTS OF EMPATHY



Who: Grade 6 students

What: Roots of Empathy Program

When: October 2017 - June 2018

Where: Dr. T.L. Sullivan Florence School

Why: Roots of Empathy is an international, evidence-based classroom program that has shown significant effect in reducing levels of aggression among schoolchildren by raising social/emotional competence and increasing empathy.

A key part of the program included, an infant and parent from the community visiting the classroom over course of the program. A SchoolsPlus staff person who is a trained Roots of Empathy Instructor coached students to observe the baby's development and to label the baby's feelings.



CHIGNECTO-CENTRAL REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION COLLABORATION WITH CLINICIANS

Who: Students, SchoolsPlus Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers

What: Supporting students to transfer the skills and ideas they develop with Mental Health Clinicians to everyday lives.

When: Ongoing

Where: Truro SchoolsPlus sites

Why: SchoolsPlus works hard to build solid partnerships with the many clinicians involved with our youth. Students have difficulty transferring knowledge and skills learned in clinic to their everyday lives. Through role modelling, and teachable moments SchoolsPlus Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers work closely with students and Mental Health partners to apply new skills.



None of this would be possible without the ongoing support and cooperation of our partners - big thanks to the team at Mental Health and Addictions, Mental Health Crisis Team, Adolescent Intensive Services at the IWK.

CONSEIL SCOLAIRE ACADIEN PROVINCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY



Who: Families

What: Free meal and activities

When: 3rd Thursday of each month

Where: École acadienne de Pomquet

Why: This program encourages members of the community to spend some quality time together. It helps alleviate some of the stress of meal preparation and offers a little bit of food security. Activities are offered in French. This helps English speaking parents pick up a few French phrases, as well as offers them an opportunity to demonstrate their support for their child's French education.



In April a Pizza and Paint Night was offered. Nearly 30 members of the community attended and great fun was had by all. In May a BBQ and field fun was offered, over 60 people attended. Participants enjoyed playing soccer and other outdoor activities, and enjoyed a delicious meal as a community.

Partner: La Société Acadienne Sainte-Croix



HALIFAX REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

ANXIETY JEOPARDY

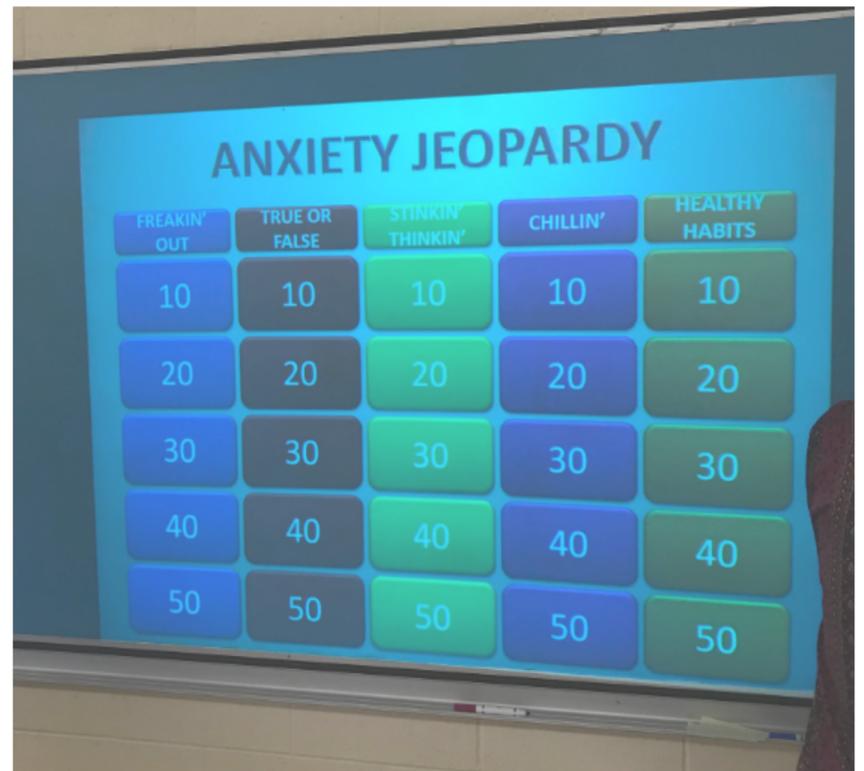
Who: Grade 6 students

What: Anxiety Jeopardy

When: April 26, 2018

Where: A.J. Smeltzer Junior High

Why: SchoolsPlus staff delivered a presentation to Grade 6 students which engaged youth in learning about mental health while playing a fun game of jeopardy. This was part of A.J. Smeltzer's Youth Health Summit which focused on engaging students to be active participants in their own mental health, physical health, and nutrition.



STRAIT REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

INCREDIBLE YEARS



What part of the program was most helpful to you?

Getting to discuss with other parents their experiences, sharing stories and hearing how the techniques we learned worked for people

Reminder notices for the fridge are great, especially when you get frustrated as a parent and need to take a step back.

Who: Parents of preschool and school age children (6 families)

What: Incredible Years Parenting Program included a meal for families and delivery of the curriculum

Where: St. Mary's Education Centre/Academy, Sherbrooke

When: Tuesday evenings, from April 24 to June 12, 2018

Why: On-line survey done by SchoolsPlus indicated a strong interest by parents on a variety of topics

Partners: Kids First (Co-facilitation and childcare), Recreation (childcare), Community Health Board (grant for funding for meal, childcare, and gas money)



SOUTH SHORE REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

#YOUTHTOO EVENT

Who: 146 youth from all the Junior High and High Schools in the South Shore Regional Centre for Education

What: #YouthToo Event. Topics covered included: Consent, Image Sharing and Human Trafficking. SSRCE SchoolsPlus Youth Advisory Committee helped create posters, advertised the event, and attended. SchoolsPlus was an integral part of making this event happen through coordinating transportation for students and providing staff chaperones.

When: May 28, 2018

Where: Bridgewater Junior High School

Why: Youth attended the event to learn and collaborate around the topics of Consent, Image Sharing and Human Trafficking and to discuss how they can make a difference in their communities related to these issues.



Partners: Second Story Women's Centre; RCMP; Harbor House; Freeman House; Sexual Health Centre Lunenburg County



TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

CULTURAL BEADING



Who: Grade 3-6 students

What: Cultural Beading Workshop

When: Thursday, May 10th, 2018

Where: Digby Regional High School

Why: The students learned the art of beading of the First Nations People and created a journal. Students first traced a feather design on a piece of fabric. They were instructed by Aboriginal/Mi'kmaq Student Support Worker, Marlene Joudry in the art of beading of the First Nations People. Once the beading design was completed, the students attached their fabric around a hard cover notebook and created their very own fabric covered journal.

Partners: Aboriginal/Mi'kmaq Student Support Worker



PARTNERS SUPPORT SCHOOLSPLUS HALIFAX REGION CHILDREN'S AID FOUNDATION



The Halifax Region Children's Aid Foundation (HRCAF), in partnership with the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada, provides grants to support programs and services for children and youth in Halifax and across Nova Scotia in hopes of strengthening their well-being by bridging opportunity gaps.

HRCAF has a wonderful working relationship with the SchoolsPlus Community Outreach Workers and Facilitators and has been a consistent partner and supporter of SchoolsPlus through a variety of funding from both their Regional and National Funds.



Pictured above from left to right: Stephanie Downey-Saunders, SchoolsPlus Community Outreach Worker; Jane Boyd Landry, Executive Director, Halifax Region Children's Aid; and Gail McDougall, President, Halifax Region Children's Aid Foundation



Pictured from left to right: Genevieve Morrison and Alicia Nolan, SchoolsPlus Assistant Coordinators getting backpacks, from HRCAF, ready to be distributed to SchoolsPlus sites.

SchoolsPlus sites have received financial support to deliver programs such as after school tutoring to help children achieve academic success made possible through the Foundation's Scotia Capital: Leap to Learning Program.

The Good Beginning Fund has provided funding for eye glasses, summer and recreational camps, school trips, backpacks with personal hygiene products and school supplies for vulnerable youth.

The Sparkle Fund Nova Scotia, when funds are available, provides up to \$500 once a year for youth ages 15-21 who lack the economic resources to access oral health care, and the CIBC Miracle Fund provides enrichment opportunities for arts and cultural activities.

HRCAF's newest fund, the Air Canada Foundation Health and Well-Being Fund, supports various health needs of children and youth being served by child welfare organizations. In 2017 the HRCAF supported over 1200 children and youth, allowing them to participate in programs and services that has brought positive change to their lives.



HALIFAX REGION
CHILDREN'S AID FOUNDATION

