

NEWSLETTER

September - December 2019

Welcome Back!



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OUR STAFF

Message from Tara



As we enter into another exciting school year we are happy to share a few of the highlights that the SchoolsPlus model is supporting in our province. We see the model growing and expanding and partnerships maturing with exciting results.

SchoolsPlus really is an invitation to an integrated approach to doing our work. I am so pleased that government departments, community-based agencies, community members, families and students are coming together to support one another. If you would like to learn more about how you can engage with SchoolsPlus, I encourage you to reach out to the SchoolsPlus Facilitator in your region to explore opportunities for partnerships.

SchoolsPlus has reached a milestone as of September 2019, with supports now available in every school in Nova Scotia. In some ways this represents a new beginning with a provincial reach and a chance to think about how to best integrate our work for the benefit of Nova Scotia's children, youth and families. We know the collective responses that each regional advisory table works on can bring us closer to our goals.

In this edition you will read about our efforts to support responses to protect our children and youth from the harm of Human Trafficking and child sexual exploitation. We know that all of you are working to wrap around young people and their families in the best way possible.

We are pleased to share updates about SchoolsPlus staff teams and their efforts to strive for excellence in their work. There are also stories from each of the Regional Centers for Education and CSAP who provide co-location for integrated practices to take place. I am also pleased to celebrate the incredible investment and support of our Family Resource Centers in the SchoolsPlus model. Their contributions help make all the difference for families, children and youth in our collaborative work. Thank you again for taking a moment to explore the pages of our newsletter. We look forward to another year to support the wellbeing and development of children, youth and families.

Tara Moore,
SchoolsPlus Provincial Coordinator

FEATURE STORY

Working together to eliminate Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)



Charlene and Thunder,
YWCA Halifax

On November 14, 2019 SchoolsPlus hosted a professional learning opportunity, bringing together multiple government departments and community service providers to continue collaborative efforts to address human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children. Human trafficking is a complex and challenging issue to address. We know that each day in Nova Scotia children and youth are experiencing significant harm as a result of commercial sexual exploitation. This inter-departmental training session was an opportunity to better understand what CSEC is, how it is impacting our province, as well as explore strategies for collectively responding to these issues as service providers. Case examples were used to explore strategies for prevention, identification, intervention and trauma support for those who have been directly impacted. Implications for law enforcement, duty to report and school based staff was discussed.

Interest and participation in the event exceeded capacity with more than 90 participants coming from education, justice, community services, and community-based organizations. Everyone expressed interest in participating in a follow up session to explore further strategies for coordinated responses for this issue. It was agreed that collaboration was the most effective approach to address this issue.

Presenters included:

Charlene Gagnon,
Manager of Advocacy, Research and
New Initiatives, YWCA Halifax

Thunder Shanti Narooz van Egteren,
Tess and Resiliency Coordinator,
YWCA Halifax

Stephanie White,
Program Officer East Unit, Central
Nova Scotia Correctional Facility,
Dartmouth

Representatives of
Halifax Regional Police

Donna Kaulbeck,
Child Welfare Specialist,
Department of Community Services



**“A significant majority of our clients are
or have been victims of human trafficking and/or
sexual exploitation the vast majority have been
victimized before the age of 18.”**

– Stephanie White, Presenter

Nova Scotia Government Employee's Union central office offered in kind meeting space to host the event.



Celebrating Our Staff

Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP)



The Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP) SchoolsPlus staff gathered in Isle Madame on Sept 26th and 27th for a teambuilding event; an excellent beginning to the new school year. This provided Community Outreach Workers and Facilitators an opportunity to discuss plans, and exchange ideas. Many members of the team are new this year, thus providing a learning experience, to enable them to "hit the ground running".

An evening event provided further team building, and a chance to share supper with some of the CSAP staff from the Cape Breton office. It was a fun filled evening, capped with a game of Minute-To Win -It.

YMCA Peace Week

As part of YMCA Peace Week, held the third week in November, YMCAs across Canada present the YMCA Peace Medal to individuals or groups who, without any special resources, status, wealth or position, demonstrate a commitment to the values of P-E-A-C-E through contributions made within their local, national or global community.

This year, Linda Jensen, SchoolsPlus Facilitator for SSRCE joined the 1900 Canadians who have been recognized with this honour. In this role Linda has worked to build many relationships and supported countless partnerships to further engage students, families and service providers to find solutions to complex issues. This work has supported the wellbeing of students and families in her community.

Linda was recognized for her work as a volunteer and a community member who actively seeks to create positive opportunities for youth and families. She works collaboratively with her colleagues to help remove barriers to participation that can sometimes create conflict and require coordination to resolve.



Photo Credit: Keith Corcoran

"Linda makes people around her want to strive to be better. She empowers others to look for possible ways to ease conflict and make positive choices."

- Kim Roy,
YMCA's Youth Coordinator

To learn more about the YMCA Peace Medal visit: <https://ymca.ca/YMCA-Peace-Medal>



Celebrating Our Staff

Professional Learning “Debert Gathering”

This year the SchoolsPlus Mental Health Clinicians and Facilitators had an opportunity to come together to explore topics related to their shared practice on November 15th. Presenters from IWK and Department of Community Services joined the day to share information and engage in integrated service delivery exploration.

The day also provided a reflective opportunity to look at the overall strategic plan for school based mental health services and discussions about effective emergent practices with colleagues from around the province. This annual learning opportunity is coordinated by the provincial SchoolsPlus Mental Health Clinician Advisory committee made up of representatives from RCEs, CSAP, MK, EECD, NSHA and the IWK.

Presenters included:

Tonya Grant, MSW & Holly Murphy, RN,
- Trauma Informed Care Team IWK/NSHA
- Connections between the story of Brain Development and Adverse Childhood Experiences

Jill Barkhouse, Coordinator Child Protection, DCS & Amber White, Coordinator Residential Services, DCS
- Prevention, Protection and Placement – a child’s journey with child welfare

Julie Jaillet, Education and Training Social Worker, DCS
- Overview of training for foster parents and the foster care program in relation to SchoolsPlus

Collaborative working relationships





ANNAPOLIS VALLEY REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

Roots of Empathy



"It is extremely heart-warming to see how the children soften not only their bodies but their voices in response to the baby. She brings with her such joy, innocence and wonderment and as we talk about in the program, feelings are contagious. Baby's and students, faces say it all."

- Kim Siler, SP Community Outreach Worker.

What: Roots of Empathy is a classroom-based program for elementary to middle school students, where infants visit on a regular basis and help to teach students about empathy.

Why: The mission of Roots of Empathy is as follows: "to build caring, peaceful, and civil societies through the development of empathy in children and adults."

When: 27-week program starting in fall of 2019

Where: Windsor Elementary School.

Who: Grade 2 students



CAPE BRETON-VICTORIA REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

PeaceBuilders Program

What: This program is designed to create peer to peer opportunities to build "helping" skills, and bring them to the playground.

Who: Upper grade level students in elementary school

When: Nov -Dec. 2019

Where: Robinfoote Elementary School

Why: We facilitate lessons with students to help prepare them to be placed in leadership roles in their schools. Topics include: values, respect, peer pressure, responding without reaction. This enables the students help their peers work through conflict and continue to have other leadership responsibilities within their school. The students recently earned their "badges" and have started in their new role as "PeaceBuilders".





CHIGNECTO-CENTRAL REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

Out with the Old and in With the New-to-You !!!!



What: A community clothing exchange. Clothing donations of all sizes were accepted allowing families to come in and shop for clothing that they need at no cost.

Who: Parents, students, and community members

When: November 9th, 2019

Where: Riverside Education Centre

Why: Supporting a need as identified by the community. Giving the space for families to obtain resources and supports in a way that is accessible to all, while also increasing community engagement and connection.

Partners: Community volunteers

CONSEIL SCOLAIRE ACADIEN PROVINCIAL

Cooking Program



What: Cooking Program

Who: Parents and students

When: December 2019

Where: École Joseph Dugas

Why: Supporting student and caregiver wellbeing by providing an opportunity to cook healthy meals together.

Partners: Partners included the Parenting Journey, and Lions Club of Clare donated a turkey to each family participating.





HALIFAX REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

Headstrong Summit



Who: 90 Junior High Students from across HRCE joined by participants from one AVRCE school. Masters of Ceremony for the Summit, Andreas Robinson

What: A universal anti-stigma approach to Mental Health. Students heard first voice stories of hope and recovery around mental illness. They brainstormed anti-stigma activities for their schools.

When: November 28, 2019

Where: HRCE office

Why: Building healthy school communities involves engaging student champions and identifying actions for change.

Each school received \$100 to support the ideas generated by the students.

Partners: IWK Primary and Mental Health, NSHA, Mental Health Commission of Canada, Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia and HRCE Healthy School Communities funds.

STRAIT REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

Kitchen Brigades



Who: Students in grades 9-12 at Dr JH Gillis Regional High School, Antigonish

What: Kitchen Brigades Culinary Program. Students participated in weekly workshops under the guidance of a professionally trained chef (Chef Roseanne MacEachern). They prepare different meals around a theme each week and eat the meal together at the end of each session. They can bring leftovers home to share with their families. They also participate in cooking competitions and challenges which are judged by peers, staff, and local chefs. Additionally, they prepared 250 dried soup packages for our local food bank holiday baskets.

When: Mondays after school from November to May

Where: Antigonish

Why: Students learn about eating local, healthy food choices, food security, and cooking techniques.





SOUTH SHORE REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

Budding Explorers



Who: School age students

What: We offer a unique learning experience by providing a program in an entirely natural learning environment. We foster ecological literacy and healthy, responsible living by connecting children with nature. We follow the “Head, Heart, Hands” approach outlined by Forest School Canada. Activities include such things as hiking on and off trail, exploring forested areas and waterways, shelter and fire making, knife and tool use, tree and plant identification, outdoor cooking, camp crafts, and trying new outdoor based recreational activities.

When: Once a month

Where: ACES outdoor classroom

Why: Support student learning through outdoor play

TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

Health Care Panel for Career Exploration



Who: Students in Grade 10-12 from three High schools

What : Integrated service delivery approach to engage youth in career exploration

When: December 12, 2019

Where : Digby General Hospital

Why: Helping navigate high school students to volunteer opportunities and career opportunities in the health care field in their own communities.

Partners: The day was a true community effort, with organizers and sponsors including the team of the Digby and Area Health Services Centre, SchoolsPlus, Turning the Tide/Inspiring Communities Digby, Digby and Area Health Services Charitable Foundation, and Atlantic Superstore Digby.



“We have a physician, educators and health care professionals who are passionate about helping young people in our community see potential career opportunities that would allow them to work in their community and help fill an employment gap in our rural area. This panel was the first step in a more coordinated effort to keep this engagement process going”

-Amy Theriault, SchoolsPlus Facilitator.



Family Resource Centers



A network of Family Resource Centers play an important role in communities throughout Nova Scotia. Family Resource Centers provide a warm and welcoming space for families to gather in a friendly and informal setting. Uniquely responsive to the needs of their communities, they provide a variety of community-based activities and resources for children, youth and families. There are approximately 30 sites, but many include outreach sites, enabling them to bring programs throughout rural areas.

Programs and services might include everything from drop-in playgroups, infant massage, parenting programs, support groups, collective kitchens, prenatal & postnatal nutrition programs, breastfeeding support, toy and resource-lending libraries, to a community trading cupboard. Programs support the parent-child relationship and promote the healthy development of children.

“Family resource programs and services recognize that children and youth grow and develop within the context of families and communities. Holistic approaches to supporting positive outcomes for children and youth are family focused and involve parents and family members, with consideration of the broader community and cultural context” DCS,

<https://novascotia.ca/coms/families/prevention-and-early-intervention/family-resource-centres.html>

Since the inception of SchoolsPlus, Family Resource Centers have been excellent partners. They willingly share space, co-locate programs within SchoolsPlus hubs, jointly develop and implement programs with SchoolsPlus Staff. A few examples include, Kings County Family Resource Centre partnered in delivery a program designed for grandparents who are the primary caregivers of their grandchildren. Family Matters partnered in a similar initiative they called “Grand love”.

Kim Wood, SchoolsPlus Facilitator notes “Maggie’s Place is an amazing partner here in Cumberland. Simply the best. I could not begin to list the partnerships with the SchoolsPlus model over the years!”

Maggie’s Place, as well as all other Family Resource Centres have partnered at numerous locations throughout the Province in delivering the Incredible Years parenting programs, building, social emotional programs, helping with gift cards and costs of snacks, partnering in March break and summer camps, recreational opportunities and food security/ food skills programs.

A graphic featuring a blue diamond shape containing four white puzzle pieces arranged in a 2x2 square. Below the diamond is a blue banner with the text "OUR PARTNERS" in white. The background is a light blue color with a repeating pattern of stylized leaves and flowers in a darker blue/green.

A group of students are gathered around a white table in a classroom, engaged in a board game. The board is a colorful, square game board with various spaces and a central 'GO' space. Students are looking at the board and their phones. There are snacks and drinks on the table. In the background, other students are visible, some sitting at desks and others standing. The classroom has a casual, lived-in feel with various items on shelves and desks.



A group of people are sledding down a snowy hill. One person is standing and pushing a sled, while others are sitting on sleds. The background shows a snowy landscape with trees and a cloudy sky.



National Youth Arts Week with Maggie's Place

STATISTICS

The stats below are based on approximately **85 per cent** response rate of all monthly reports provided by the SchoolsPlus Facilitators and Leaders.

September - December 2019



AVERAGE OF

1193

INTENSIVE (WRAPAROUND)
SUPPORTS PER MONTH

444 NEW REFERRALS

265 NEW SERVICES
REALLOCATED/CO-LOCATED

1096

EXTENDED HOURS

the amount of time SchoolsPlus supported children, youth, and families outside of regular school hours which includes non-instructional time such as summer, evenings, before school, and holidays.



GROUP PROGRAMMING

The total number of children and parent attendances in group programming.

