



Centre for SUICIDE

SUICIDE

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Prevention

Annual Report 2010



From Left: Lloyd Johnson, Millbrook First Nation Councillor; Diane Yackel, Executive Director, CSP; Walter Deagle, CEO, Millbrook Technologies Inc.

Message from the Executive Director

In 2009-10 the Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP) in Calgary, Alberta, Canada began to see itself in several new ways. These new dimensions were grown from bedrock principles in the Centre's primary goals of Education, Research, and Information. The attempt to curb the rates of suicide underpins everything for which the organization stands.

As well as serving the citizens of Alberta, the Centre fulfills a more global mandate. Due to technological change, the sociology of place and time and support now takes on new shape and nuance for CSP. In our changing technological environment a program is going from workshop presentation to online course. Our educational role and forms are being adjusted to address vital cultural implications. All of this growth may not be immediately perceptible to the observer, but these changes have significant implication to the administration and management of the organization.

The Annual Report will attempt visually to document some significant highlights.



From Left: Diane Yackel, Executive Director, CSP; Honourable Rodney MacDonald, President RMD Development Inc.



From Left: Diane Yackel, Executive Director, CSP; Lloyd Johnson, Millbrook First Nation Councillor; Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of Health; Phil Fontaine, Former AFN National Chief and River of Life Spokesperson



From Left: William MacKeen, Senior Managing Partner, Momentum IT Group; Diane Yackel, Executive Director, CSP; Lloyd Johnson, Millbrook First Nations Councillor



It is said by the Elders that every person has a song. A Song of Life.

Message from the Education Director

In the past, CSP has delivered all its training courses in a workshop format. This has meant an opportunity for an instructor or trainer to interact with the participants, and instantly respond to cues of confusion, excitement, or distress. The one to one interaction and group discussions within this format have created exciting teaching and learning opportunities.

As we move forward towards online training we are challenged to create a sense of safety for the learners, as well as find ways to incorporate those learning strategies that allow for individual and group interaction. The River of Life Online Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention course offers exciting possibilities to teach and learn about suicide prevention. Through the online course there is an opportunity to incorporate a variety of teaching strategies, allow participants to reflect on their learning and perhaps apply some of the teachings with the youth in their community. Most importantly, we can bring the voices of the youth, the Elders, and community members into the teachings.



Priscilla Lalonde
Education and Research Coordinator



Rani Murji
Education Director



We gather here to learn the Song of Life for the baby inside Noquisi. We shall pray to the Great Mystery, the Creator of all things and listen carefully to Mother Earth to learn the Song.

Training

Suicide continues to be of growing concern in Canada and around the world. According to Statistics Canada, 3,743 people died by suicide in 2005.



From Left: Elizabeth Ferguson, Elder, Aboriginal Youth Suicide Advisory Committee (AYSAC) Member; Suzanne Macleod, Former Curriculum Designer, CSP



From Left: Laurel Bridges, Former Curriculum Designer, CSP; Ram Murji, Education Director, CSP; Edmee Cornstock, Métis Elder, AYSAC Member.

CSP provides training in suicide prevention, intervention and postvention. With a network of 150 trainers across Alberta, the Centre has delivered approximately 305 workshops across the province in this fiscal year alone.

An Education Centre is not only committed in providing well researched curricula that reflect best practices and current knowledge of suicide, but must also provide training and support to trainers who deliver the curricula. To this end, the Centre for Suicide Prevention ensures quality training for all of its trainers, including mentorship and support. We have welcomed 53 new trainers to our network this year. CSP will be holding a Training For Trainers seminar in Winnipeg in September 2010.



Sculpture in Yellowknife, Photo Courtesy of Priscilla Lalonde



We know every soul has a special vibration that knows its purpose and bears the unique character of its ancestors.



Casey Eagle Speaker, Blackfoot Elder
River of Life Advisor

River of Life

Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Workshop and Online Course

River of Life: Online Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Course is being developed in collaboration and consultation with Aboriginal communities across the nation. As we listen to the Elders and community members, we understand the importance of culture, identity, and spirituality.

How does one, however, speak of culture, spirituality or belonging? The Elders tell us that the Teaching Stories have within them all that we need to know. So, we share an excerpt of a story that can become an important protective factor for a youth going through a time of uncertainty and doubt...



After many hours of prayer and silent vision, a strong wind began to blow across the camp.

Andek the Crow

When Great Spirit was creating the flyers of creation, all the flyers had great purpose. The Eagle was to be the people's messenger of prayers and thanks. The Hawk, too was a messenger of the people's needs and good medicine. The Loon was the teacher of love and relationships. But Andek, The Crow, was without purpose.

Over time, word travelled all across the land about the crow who thought he was born without purpose. Andek, however, found good purpose in helping others to either find or renew their purpose. From that day, Andek travels throughout the land, making friends with all creation by helping them find the right path.

As Andek found out, you become your purpose by doing what feels good with good intention. Walk a good path and you will be guaranteed to find your life's purpose.

Ojibway tradition from Blue Panther, Keeper of Stories



The women became attuned to the unique vibrations and light surrounding Noquisi. Grandmother Wilnota then called for Noquisi to stand and hear her baby's Song of Life.

Resolution No.05

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

July 21- 23, 2009, Calgary, AB

Resolution no. 05/2009

Title: Suicide Intervention and Prevention

Subject: Health and Social Development

Moved by: Chief Charles Weaslehead, Blood First Nation, AB

Seconded by: Chief Leroy Good Eagle Siksika First Nation, AB

Decision: Passed provisionally by AFN Executive Committee on Sept. 10, 2009



WHEREAS:

- a. Today the suicide rate among Aboriginal people is three times higher than the rate for the general Canadian population.
- b. At current, the rate of suicide amongst First Nations youth is five to seven times higher than non-Aboriginal youth.
- c. The prevention of suicide is a priority of the First Nation leadership.
- d. The demographic of First Nation peoples continue to grow, it is expected that suicide and its impact on our communities will grow proportionately.
- e. The AFN recognizes the need to have trained and certified people in each of the First Nation communities to combat the problems associated with suicide both on and off reserve lands.
- f. By way of a strategic alliance, the Centre for Suicide Prevention and Millbrook Technologies Inc. are jointly prepared to offer a culturally specific online training program to enhance the capacity of individuals and communities to implement suicide intervention, prevention and postvention approaches.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:

Mandate the AFN to advocate for increased and accessible training that will enhance the capacity of communities to deal with the problems associated with suicide.

1. Direct the AFN to advocate for enhancement of the National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy that supports a minimum of two people in each community be provided training to combat the problem of suicide.
2. Direct the AFN to advocate for the participation of non-first nation health care and mental health professionals in obtaining culturally relevant training when dealing and working with First Nation peoples.
3. Support the efforts embodied by the strategic alliance of the Centre for Suicide Prevention and Millbrook Technologies Inc. in the provision of a national culturally-based online training program to enhance the capacity of First Nations to implement suicide intervention, prevention and postvention approaches.

Straight Talk

Youth Suicide Prevention Workshop



Suicide is the second leading cause of death among youth in Canada.

(Statistics Canada, 2004)

The Straight Talk: Youth Suicide Prevention Workshop is designed to provide information and interventions for caregivers working with youth at risk of suicide aged twelve to twenty-four. The workshop aims to increase the prevention capability of adults working with youth.



The women began to loudly sing in one voice, one song of life, for the unborn baby. As Noquisi stood in the middle of the sacred circle, she could feel the Song of Life coming into her, giving strength and joy.

Tattered Teddies

An Interactive Handbook and Workshop about Suicide in Children

Over the past year there has been an increasing awareness that children under the age of 12 are capable of thinking about and even attempting suicide. As professionals and caregivers, we often grapple with this possibility wondering how we would respond to a child in distress. What would we say? What would we ask? How would we involve the parents and family without alienating them? How would we access resources for the child and community?

Tattered Teddies: An Interactive Handbook about the Awareness and Prevention of Suicide In Children provides a comprehensive guide in understanding suicide in children.



"My own assessment of the handbook is that it is very useful. The content is thorough and evidence-based, which I like. There is material for both families and professionals who work in this area. The handbook is also extremely well written and user friendly. I would definitely use it again, if the situation was appropriate."

Keith S. Dobson, Ph.D., R. Psych. Professor and Head, Dpt. of Psych., University of Calgary



Each of us know we have a song. A beautiful vibration within as a reminder of our eternal purpose. Those we love must sing that Song to us throughout our lives. We all yearn to be loved, acknowledged, and accepted for the people we are.

Message from the Library

Myra Marrant, Information Services Coordinator

I am pleased to present this (condensed) summary of the activities of the Library for the 2009-10 fiscal year. I am equally pleased to report we have met or exceeded our goals in a number of areas.

Acquisitons

New items were identified through PsychInfo and MedLine printouts, Table of Content alerting services, patron requests, Google and Google Scholar searches, reference checks, news stories and bibliography scans.

The internet continues to be an important source for acquiring new resources, particularly open-access articles, reports, and government documents from other countries. Journal articles were also collected from the University of Calgary

libraries as well as through interlibrary loans from CISTI.



Request for Service

The bulk of requests were from Alberta. There was a substantial increase in Alberta requests.

Publications

What's New in the Suicide Information and Education Collection published 12 issues this year, highlighting new acquisitions, as well as other suicide prevention and mental health resources and websites. *SIEC Alert*, a topical in-depth review was published three times.



When you know your Song of Life, you have two obligations: the first is to find people who have a similar song, similar vibrations, and sing it to each other. The second is to pass this wonderful custom down to the next generation.

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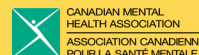


Top Left, Brenda Ann Taylor, Communications Director; Abi Harker, Registrar; Julie Eacrett, Training Assistant. Bottom Left: Tracy Wrubleski, Training Coordinator; Rani Murji, Education Director; Diane Yackel, Executive Director.



From Left: Crystal Walker, Marketing Assistant; Diane Yackel, Executive Director; Julie Eacrett, Training Assistant.

The Centre for Suicide Prevention would like to thank Alberta Health Services for their partial funding support.
The Centre for Suicide Prevention is affiliated with the Canadian Mental Health Association.



*In this way we support our brothers and sisters in this walk and we provide future generations with peace and happiness.
Aho! (Excerpt from River of Life Online Curriculum) Used with permission from the Manataka American Indian Council)*

"It will be a positive step in forging a new relationship between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians, a relationship based on the knowledge of our shared history, a respect for each other and a desire to move forward together with a renewed understanding that strong families, strong communities and vibrant cultures and traditions will contribute to a stronger Canada for all of us."

Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada. Excerpt from the Statement of Apology to Aboriginal Canadians given on June 11, 2008.



Edmee Cornstock,
Métis Elder



RIVER OF LIFE

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq,
Health Minister of Canada



Phil Fontaine,
River of Life Spokesperson and
Former AFN National Chief

Centre for Suicide Prevention #320, 1202 Centre Street SE Calgary, AB T2G 5A5
Phone: (403) 245-3900 Fax: (403) 245-0299 Email: csp@suicideinfo.ca Website: www.suicideinfo.ca