

**Volume 12**

**Spring 2013**

Celebrating  
**20+**  
Years



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# COMMUNITY EDUCATION NETWORK

**MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Sharon Park**

## Government Removes Employment Assistance Services from Community-Based Agencies

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 CEN was informed through an e-mail that our services would no longer be required in the delivery of Employment Assistance Services. For CEN it means that we will close the doors on CERC/CIRC Centres at seven locations. This e-mail was received by all proponents in Newfoundland and Labrador that deliver these services.

Government has decided that clients will be served by the Department of Advanced Education and Skills.

The number one goal of the CERC/CIRC offices is to assist the unemployed with finding employment. This is accomplished by assisting clients with resume and cover letter writing, access to computers for job searches, assistance with the job search, faxing job applications to potential employers, printing services and one-to-one job coaching. This is considered self-assisted front-line service. Employment counsellors offer one-to-one career counselling, development of return to work action plans, assistance with funding applications, referrals to other agencies when required, interviews and self improvement planning.

The seven offices operated by CEN are located in Port aux Basques, Stephenville, Rocky Harbour, Port Saunders, Flowers Cove, Roddickton and St. Anthony. These offices assisted 1,166 people in obtaining employment in 2012. In addition, over 4,000 people availed of the front-line self-assisted services. There will be an additional 70 offices that will close in Newfoundland.

It is unclear what level of the services currently offered will be available once the community-based offices are closed. How far will clients need to travel to access services? Once again government has excluded community groups in any decision-making process and the impacts will be long lasting.

CEN has just completed an evaluation that measured social return on investment. It was deemed by working with Nef Consulting out of the United Kingdom and, conducting impact studies, that CEN offers a considerable social return for every dollar that is invested by government. This study assesses the impact of programs that grow social development delivered by CEN and funded by both federal and provincial governments. It also studied the benefits that are produced at the community level when an agency operates as a collaborative – an entity where people work together collaboratively, through inspired action and learning to create and realize bold visions for the common future. The study used SROI methodology to understand the social values created by social development work at the community level. This research found that for every 1 dollar invested there was a 16 dollar return on social value at the community level. By removing this service, who provides that social development work at the community level? Will this save government money, I think not, because for every 1 dollar removed now government will spend 15 dollars extra to address social issues later.

Research has shown that government centres cannot serve as community hubs. They have tried and failed over and over. **Once again communities must band together to not only fight for services but to fight for a voice.**



CERC Stephenville

## Community Education Network and Associate Organizations

### **COMMUNITY YOUTH NETWORK (CYN)** *Mary Gaultois, Director—CYN; Tracy Snow, Director—Youth Programs*

The CEN AGM is always an annual highlight for CYN Youth Group members and staff. This year's event in November was even more engaging for our youth members as they took a lead role in the CYN Café. Earlier in the fall, staff posed this question to them; if someone asked you "What does CYN mean to you?" What would you say? The responses were insightful, heartwarming and very telling and formed the basis for their presentation... "What does CYN mean to me?"

With signs in hand, 13 members told café participants about leadership development, fun, making friends, scholarship opportunities, meeting new people, and sharing ideas. From remote Grey River, Frankie Young said being involved with CYN meant that she "is part of group of young people who help out in the community." She spoke proudly about doing garbage pick-up, doing the community recycling program, pulling tabs for the Janeway and fundraising for the annual graduating class -- with only 1 or 2 graduates. From nearby Burgeo, Christopher Hann told participants about the "many learning opportunities I've had by being part of our Youth Group". As a five-year member, he listed the many programs for which he received skill-level certification and thanked CYN "for all you have done for me." From McKays in Bay St. George South, Jason Young feels he's "making a difference in my school and community" and credits CYN for "bringing youth together to make sure our school and home communities are better places." Teddie Dawn Youth, a new member in the Piccadilly High Group, enjoys being a "role model." She's not describing someone who is famous, just someone "who tries their hardest to make a difference" and "gives their all to succeed" at everything in which they take part. These youth expressions of the CYN experience are but a one-time snapshot. Can you imagine the far-reaching impact of this youth engagement organization over the span of twelve years?

It's the longevity of certain programs that demonstrate they are just as relevant now as when we introduced them ten years ago. LifeLong Connections Day is just one of them. On November 21, students from Burgeo Academy, along with others from Ramea and Grey River, had presentations from post-secondary learning institutions and the government departments of Western Health and Advanced Education & Skills. Students also enjoyed workshops on Geocaching, German baking, Jewelry making, Tole painting, Manicures, and Zumba.

February was Violence Prevention Month and CYN supported a number of school-based activities. Motivational speaker, Michael Gaultois, engaged with Grade 5-8 students at St. Thomas Aquinas in Port au Port East and Grade 5-12 students at Burgeo Academy's Respect Day. Schools throughout our regions received Violence Prevention Kits in preparation for Pink Day. A sea of pink was created on days chosen to mark Stand Up Day as students and staff donned pink t-shirts in support of efforts to treat others with respect and kindness.

On February 6<sup>th</sup>, Steve Kent, MHA Mount Pearl North and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement visited CYN. He met with a representative of the CEN Board of Directors and Executive Director as well as with CYN Staff. Steve was eager to learn about the CYN Southwestern model with its emphasis on community education and outreach to rural areas. This meeting was followed by a focus-group session with CYN Youth group members from various communities in Bay St. George area. Some said they felt listened to and respected, while others noted it was great to share their concerns about their school and community. Steve wrapped up by saying he was hopeful there will be future opportunities to visit our site again to gain a better understanding of our educational partnership model.

That update will serve as a lead-in to our most recent changes. On January 1, 2013, all CYN sites will now be under the provincial direction of the Rural Secretariat: Office of Public Engagement – Youth Engagement. All signs point to CYN sites being on the landscape after this contract ends on March 31<sup>st</sup>, but there is every indication that its mandate and focus will change. In addition, at a local level, CYN's sponsor, Community Education Network has led our organization through a planning process which will change where and how youth services are delivered. The winds of change are blowing from all points, and in the process, three long-term staff members have hoisted their sails and are being led in new directions. Bon Voyage to Teresa Peterson and Tracy Snow may these winds blow favourably in your direction. And from me, I'd simply like to say thank you to youth and staff for the many opportunities you've given me to learn about and from you. From all of us lifting anchor, to our youth members, colleagues and community partners, we wish you smooth sailing in your life's journey...we'll miss being part of it, but with change brings opportunity for growth ---for you and for us!

Stay tuned for the new face of CYN in months ahead!



Youth Group members present at AGM CYN Café

**Community Education Network and Associate Organizations**

**YOUTH PROGRAMS ASSESSMENT TOWARDS HOUSING STABILITY**

**(YOUTH PATHS)** *Patrick Park-Tighe, Program Coordinator*

Since its launch in October of 2012, the Youth PATHS (Programs Assessment Towards Housing Stability) has identified several of its strategic directions and partnerships. The project will be examining, among other related issues, the role of social supports in effective prevention, the impact of individual or specialized needs, and the long term success of interventions which include social support, skills development and employment programming. As well, all of the participating programs will take part in a SROI (Social Return On Investment) assessment to determine the social value of the interventions provided under the Community Education Network collaborative.

Over the next several months, research and data collection will be conducted with support from the project leads of the Healthy Baby Club and MOMS

initiative, Community Employment Readiness Center, Community Youth Network, Skills Link, Power Up!, Youth Outreach Worker and the Housing Support Worker. Program participants---past and present---and community stakeholders will be providing additional feedback to help provide a comprehensive and balanced look at CEN efforts.

Following this fact gathering phase, the project's focus will shift to exploring and measuring the effectiveness of CEN programs individually and collectively to prevent or reduce youth homelessness. Ideally, by the project's conclusion, we will have captured an accurate portrait of our impact on a challenging issue as it relates to youth while identifying possible best practices for further application.

**COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE (CAC)** *Bernice Hancock, Program Director*

Winter has started to lose its grip and spring is just around the corner as the daylight hours and the temperature start to slowly increase and we are able to shed a layer or two of clothing. We do hope you have enjoyed this winter and kept active with family and friends as much as possible. Although the winter was cold, young children and their parents and caregivers kept warm and busy at the Family Resource Centres throughout the region.

The Community Action Committee facilitates a variety of programs for expectant and new mothers and their infants as well as young children from birth to six years and their parents/caregivers at the Family Resource Centres throughout Southwestern Newfoundland. Many children and their parents/caregivers have visited our Family Resource Centres over the winter months and have enjoyed drop-in play; story time; healthy baby club activities; baby and toddler time; little chefs; preschool; gym time; and parent workshops. These programs provide enriching opportunities for infants and young children to socialize and to learn through play, thus building a strong foundation for the future. Parents and caregivers as well enjoy the relaxing atmosphere and are able to share their experiences and participate in workshops designed to support them in their role as parents.

This year we joined with the Community Education Network Adult Basic Education Program to celebrate National Family Literacy Day on January 28, 2013. This was an opportunity to highlight the importance of literacy throughout life and encourage families to share the enjoyment of reading with this year's

theme being "Fifteen minutes of fun". Family plays an important role in building a solid foundation for literacy during a child's early years through playing, singing, reading and everyday communications.

So do come join us at your local family resource centre for fun learning through play activities both you and your child will enjoy. All children from birth to six years and their parents, grandparents, caregivers and family and friends are welcome. As well, the Healthy Baby Club provides prenatal programs and postnatal support for expectant and new mothers and their infants. For more information on our programs or a schedule of activities in your area, please contact our main office in Stephenville at 643-5399.



**Family Literacy Day 2013**

**CEN Values**

**Collaborative Processes**



**Individual and Community Knowledge**



**Creative Responses**



**Safe, Caring and Healthy Environments**



## OUR VISION

*To make a positive difference in peoples lives.*

## OUR MISSION

*To create a culture of lifelong learning which promotes personal enrichment in healthy, sustainable communities.*

## OUR PRINCIPLES

*Self-determination; Self-help;  
Maximum use of resources;  
Leadership development;  
Inclusiveness; Life-long learning;  
Community involvement in schools;  
Integrated service delivery;  
Localization; Community Capacity Building; Citizen engagement;  
Institutional responsiveness;  
Participatory practices*

## OUR NETWORK

**The Networking Group includes representatives from the following agencies:**

*Western School District;  
Advanced Education and Skills;  
Western Health; Long Range Regional Economic Development Board; Bay St. George Status of Women;  
Service Canada; College of the North Atlantic; Royal Canadian Mounted Police; Public Information and Library Resources Board; Department of Industry, Trade and Rural Development; Rural Secretariat*



## YOUTH OUTREACH WORKER Kim Kendall Welcome to Girls Circle!

This 8 week program has been taking place at Stephenville Middle School with Grade 6-8 students. Currently 11 young girls participate in this structured support group which focuses on the theme "friendship".

The format is designed to set up a safe, creative environment and provide weeks of age-appropriate themes and activities. Girls Circle usually meets once a week for 1.5 hours. During this time, girls take turns talking and listening to one another respectfully about their concerns and interests. The girls then express themselves further through creative or focused activities such as: role playing, drama, journaling, poetry, dance, drawing, collage, clay, and so on.

When a person voices their ideas and opinions in a safe environment, it strengthens their confidence and self esteem and encourages them to express themselves more fully and critically think about their behaviour and choices. Through this program, young girls gain greater awareness of their options and strengthen their ability to make choices that are consistent with their values, interests, and talents.

If you are interested in running a Girls Circle service learning project, please call the Youth Outreach Worker at 643-2247.



## HOUSING STABILITY INITIATIVE

Raising awareness about housing instability can be a challenge, particularly when the urban "picture" of homelessness -people sleeping on the streets - is something rarely seen in our rural lives. Unfortunately, the sad reality is that we have "hidden homelessness", which is difficult to put a realistic face on, and difficult to address. Homelessness and the struggle to maintain and keep a home is current and real for many in all parts of our region, and is an issue shared by seniors, youth, families, the disadvantaged, and yes, even those who are fully employed. As the cost of everything skyrockets, the current housing crisis can only continue to get worse.

The CBC Pancake Breakfast for Homelessness is one of many ways to raise awareness of this very important issue. The Southwestern Newfoundland Housing Stability Initiative (HSI) has spearheaded its third consecutive local Pancake Day event on Shrove Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013. This participation is part of a larger on-going awareness campaign that has been happening in the province for almost a decade. The Stephenville Lion's Club has been a key partner in working with CEN and other community agencies to make the pancake breakfast a reality, as well as continuing to support the monthly Community Café.

Funds raised from the Pancake Breakfast stay in the local community, and this year's proceeds are being used to assist with Community Cafés and housing support services. On site at the breakfast was a petition to support Bill C-400, which calls on the Government of Canada to adopt and implement a national housing strategy.



And, again this year, patrons were asked to bring non-perishable food items for Stephenville Emergency Food Services, and have their name entered to win prizes donated by CNA, CEN and Western Health.