

# The Alberta Counsellor Letter

February 2010

## Editorial



Over the holidays, I went to one movie – *Invictus*. I found it very inspiring and haunting, and I hope to take the outreach students I work with to see it.

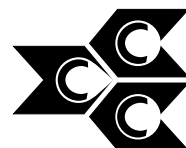
*Invictus* tells the story of how Nelson Mandela (newly elected as president of South Africa in 1994) and François Pienaar (captain of the South African rugby team, the Springboks) worked together through the 1995 Rugby World Cup to bring together the Rainbow Nation.

I have a South African friend who was involved with the '94 elections, which were the country's first universal elections. For those involved in the movement to end apartheid, there was such euphoria. The realities of poverty and systemic racism, which continue to take their toll, had left most suspicious and still polarized.

In 1948, apartheid was formalized in South Africa, a country whose population was only 20 per cent white at the time. The policy categorized people by race (black, white, coloured and Indian) and dictated where and how non-whites would live, work and receive public services. (Some aspects of this policy are hauntingly familiar!) The implementation was

### WHAT'S INSIDE

- ◆ President's Message
- ◆ Conference 2009 Highlights
- ◆ Award Winners
- ◆ Regional Reports
- ◆ University of Alberta Update
- ◆ University of Calgary Update
- ◆ Alberta Education Update
- ◆ Understanding Gaming Addiction
- ◆ Character Education Through Comic Books
- ◆ Roots of Empathy: A Proactive Approach to Creating Safe and Caring School Environments
- ◆ An Australian Counsellor Exchange
- ◆ Reflections on a Pan-Canadian Study of K-12 Career Education



A publication of  
the Guidance Council  
of The Alberta  
Teachers' Association

particularly harsh, and many dissidents were jailed and whipped.

Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years, 18 of which were spent at the infamous Robben Island, where he was allowed one visitor and one letter every six months and his time was spent breaking limestone. He kept the poem "Invictus," by William Ernest Henley (1888), on the wall of his tiny cell. In the movie, Mandela (played by Morgan Freeman, Mandela's own first choice) passes the poem on to Pienaar (handsomely played by Matt Damon).

Repudiation of apartheid grew over the years, and as one of the consequences, for many years South African teams and athletes were not invited to participate in international sporting events – hence, the significance of the Rugby World Cup being held in South Africa. Mandela, who had kept his eye on the big picture and as a former rugby player himself, realized that this event held the promise of bringing the country together. As Cabin (2009) writes,

Neither biopic nor civil-rights melodrama, *Invictus* is a rich study of how wisdom, intellect, and history are often most influential when they come with the price of admission. Athletes, actors, and musicians matter as much to the national identity as our leaders, because they are something to which everyone feels connected. Mandela knew that.

*Invictus* is a story about forgiveness and humanity, and how we can use those in our own lives and work.

At the Guidance Council's annual conference, held in Banff in November, I shared part of a speech written by my grandfather, Frederick Laughlin. Here are his words, which I think reflect Mandela's philosophy:

When you count your assets or look at your inner resources upon which you can draw in time of need, you will find you are far richer than you ever dreamed of being.

First of all we have a tremendous asset in our ability to be loving. No matter what the problem or what the circumstances, we can

be loving. Another of our assets, we can be understanding. Let us push back the clouds of ignorance and doubt by calling forth our ability to understand. Hurts, slights, suspicions, injustices melt before the sum of understanding. It is a great asset that we can use wisdom. We have the privilege of deciding whether to meet our problems with prejudices, snap judgment and careless decisions, or with wisdom, common sense and good judgment. The birth of our wisdom is in our decision to use the wisdom we already possess. An asset we may not realize we possess is our ability to be courageous. We may feel afraid, but courage is one of the inner assets we can count on. Despite our fears we can try to face the issues of our life with courage. He (she, too) is bravest who keeps on even though afraid. You will find that you can do it, if you but try, and you will be surprised at how quickly your efforts to be courageous melt away your fears. You have another asset that can transform a hostile world into a kindly universe that can help you feel hope in the midst of despair. That asset is faith. . . . These assets we have mentioned are but a few. We have more: patience, kindness, honesty, goodwill, diligence, cheerfulness, to name but a few. They make the credit side of our life's ledger far outweigh the debit side.

These words help me; I hope they help you.

I extend my humble thanks to the Guidance Council for the Honorary Lifetime Membership award. It means the world to me, and it has been my pleasure to be involved with guidance and counselling and with the Guidance Council.

## References

- Cabin, C. 2009. "Invictus." Film review. Filmcritic.com. [www.filmcritic.com/misc/emporium.nsf/reviews/Invictus](http://www.filmcritic.com/misc/emporium.nsf/reviews/Invictus) (accessed January 26, 2010).
- Henley, W E. 1888. "Invictus." In *A Book of Verses*. London: Nutt.

Charlotte Bragg

# President's Message



It is hard to believe a new year has begun and the first decade of this millennium has passed. Speaking of 2010, please plan on attending the Guidance Council's annual conference in Banff in November. The conference is a great time to network

and to hit fantastic sessions pertaining to issues you are confronted with as a counsellor. Information on keynote speakers and sessions will be available in early spring. This is great value for your professional development dollars – and in such a beautiful setting!

Many thanks to Brenda Murray and her team for all their work on the 2009 conference. They did a fabulous job, and we all left more informed and rejuvenated for the important work we do for our students and school communities.

As I reflect on Conference 2009, the one session I continue to talk and think about is Peter Churchill's session on gaming and youth. This session was like walking into another world for me, as I am not a gamer (in fact, I'm not even sure how to load a video game). Yet I am well aware of the amount of time my elementary students spend interacting with this form of entertainment. From this session, I learned that gaming is now the number one form of entertainment in the world, and that there is little research in the way of gaming and its effect on youth. I also learned the signs of addiction and about the pleasure-decay pyramid. Since attending this session, I have asked my students more direct questions about the gaming they are involved in and, at times, I kind of sound like I have a minuscule idea of what they are talking about. If you have the opportunity to hear Churchill present, I highly recommend attending. (You can also read more about the session in this newsletter.)

I'm pleased to introduce several new members of the Guidance Council executive.

First is our secretary, Kristine Wilkinson. Kristine is a counsellor at Sturgeon Composite

High School, in Namao. After working with students with disabilities for many years, she decided to continue her education in a different area of interest and completed her master's in school counselling in 2005. For five years, Kristine was the school counsellor and special education coordinator at Gibbons School (Grades 5-9), in Gibbons, and now she has moved to a school with a population of over 1,000 students.

Shelley Boan, a counsellor for the past seven years at W P Wagner School, in Edmonton, is joining Charlotte Bragg as coeditor of *The Alberta Counsellor*. Prior to teaching, Shelley worked as a family support worker for Catholic Social Services, and volunteered at Edmonton's Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital in pediatrics and for the YMCA's Learning at the Y program. She recently completed her master's degree from the University of Calgary.

Lisa McMullin is the new president of the South West Regional. Lisa currently serves the Lethbridge School District in the capacity of counselling coordinator. She provides support and professional development to district staff, collaborates with community partners, and is responsible for developing counselling processes and resources in the district's 19 schools. Prior to holding this position, Lisa served as an administrator, a counsellor and a teacher in Lethbridge.

Our new Alberta Education representative is Connie Ohl. Connie was seconded to Alberta Education in October 2009 from Greater St Albert Catholic Schools. She has a background in educational psychology.

Also participating on the executive this year is Mary Ann Wasylynchuk (aka Chuck), acting as our facilities coordinator. Many of you have met Chuck, who for several years has been our hotel liaison at the conference. She is a retired counsellor with Edmonton Public Schools, most recently at M E LaZerte High School.

Natasha Shewchuk, a counsellor at Strathcona High School in Edmonton, will be our member at large.

Welcome everyone!

Your provincial executive is preparing to start work on a three-year strategic plan for our council. As the plan comes together, it will be communicated in the newsletter. I look forward to your feedback on the goals we set for the upcoming three years.

Jodie Mattia

# Conference 2009 Highlights

Conference 2009: “Voices of Counselling: Inspiration and Solace,” which was held in Banff in November, was a great success – from the inspiring opening keynote of Irene Lewis (president and CEO of SAIT Polytechnic) to the wonderful closing speech of Andrew Brash (a Calgary teacher who has climbed Everest twice).

Delegates found inspiration and solace as they listened to the wide array of speakers. In addition to 17 displays, we had 25 speakers offering 29 sessions on a variety of topics, such as curriculum, wellness, personal counselling, technology and societal issues. On Thursday afternoon, we offered three preconference workshops – on cognitive coaching, gaming addiction and dealing with self-harm.

Although I was not able to attend as many sessions as I would have liked, I gained much insight from those I did attend. Gavin Walker’s

presentation on gangs was shocking but enlightening. My eyes were further opened by Peter Churchill’s dynamic presentation on video game addiction.

I know that others found inspiration in the other wonderful sessions. We had nearly 200 delegates, with 97 attending the Thursday workshops. Thanks for coming!

My thanks go to the amazing Conference 2009 committee:

- Kathie Coutts, food and hospitality
- Gail Dawson, treasurer
- Marlene Donnelly, speakers and publications
- Jennifer Edmondson-Neily, promotions
- Joan Elliott, speakers
- Gloria Greeniaus, registration
- Linda Kennedy, publicity
- Jean Lee, displays
- Joyce Nicholson, registration
- Donna Price, displays
- Mary Ann Wasylynchuk (aka Chuk), hotel liaison

Special thanks go to Tracey Christie for her help with the publications!

*Brenda Murray, Conference 2009 Director*



*South East Regional president Sheldon Wihnan (left) and Todd Markowsky*



*Keynote speaker Irene Lewis (left) and Charlotte Bragg*

*The Conference 2009 committee*



## **Wine and Cheese Reception**



# Award Winners

The following awards were presented at the Guidance Council's 2009 annual conference, in Banff in November.

## Murray Jampolsky Award – Joan Elliott

Les and I are both thrilled and honoured to be here today to acknowledge our esteemed colleague Joan Elliott.

A lifetime of dedication to and passion for education and counselling is recognized today with the awarding of the prestigious Murray Jampolsky Award to Ms Elliott for her outstanding counselling practice.

This is truly a celebration of excellence!

To make this day even more special, Joan's daughter Amanda and her relatively new husband Steve have flown out west to join her (they're from the Big Smoke – Toronto), along with Joan's partner, Mr Al Beddoes, who is also an educator. As a bonus for all, this is happening in Banff, where we are surrounded with the spirituality and beauty of the magnificent, iconic mountains – maybe somewhat symbolic of Joan's peak performance!

Working with Joan has shown us a dedication to guidance and counselling rarely surpassed before. Like a lot of us, she lives and breathes her profession – but then she goes beyond.

Presently, Joan is the learning leader for guidance and counselling at Lord Beaverbrook High School (LBHS), in Calgary, one of the largest high schools in the province. As you can imagine, the demands for her time and attention are endless – but she skilfully addresses all issues with expediency, calm confidence, flexibility and knowledge.

In her leadership position, what is most poignant for me is how she masterfully handles relationships – the most challenging aspect of counselling. (Now, Al, this does not include your relationship with Joan!)

Being at the hub of the school and in a pressure-filled environment (as most of us are), Joan never ceases to amaze me with how quickly

and astutely she can diagnose a problem and then, with the skill of conflict resolution or other techniques in her kit bag, resolve the situation with a win-win for all, while instilling hope. With insight, she then highlights the learning that accompanied the journey.

In her CV, Joan herself writes, "My job is to provide the guidance and opportunity for students' own self-discovery." Is this not the essence of our counselling?

When Les first came to me with the idea to nominate Joan for this award, I shared his excitement. He said, "This is something we gotta do!"

Les, tell us why!

## *Six Reasons I Nominated Joan for This Award*

1. Joan is the only person I have ever met who purposefully leaves really good stuff off her curriculum vitae. I'm not talking about this committee or that committee; I'm talking about whole degrees, specialized certifications, professional qualifications. Joan has such a deep pocket of skills and experience that if we all knew what she could do, she would never have time to do what she does do. Heck, it took me two years to discover what Joan's first two degrees were and why she was nicknamed Mustang Sally!
2. Yep, you heard right – her first two degrees. Joan has more degrees than a thermometer. Even the lifelong-learning advocates are saying, "Enough already!" Her pursuit of knowledge and training gives a little clue as to the keen, curious mind Joan has and her desire to know – really know – important information and to stay current.
3. No matter how early I got to work, Joan was there. No matter how many committee meetings were called, she was there. No matter how late we needed to work, Joan was there. Then I find out she has spent years on the Guidance Council doing even more committee work. No matter what time of the day or night I phoned, she answered. In my nomination letter, I described Joan as tireless in her work. I have come to realize that either Joan never sleeps or Joan is a clone. It's the only explanation.

4. Few people know that Joan was a hooker. (Oh, my, my – you counsellors jump to interesting presumptions!) I found this out when I saw Joan dragging a great big net of rugby balls down the hall at school. Joan has coached women’s rugby for years. I point this out because Joan has always had a special place in her heart for mentoring and empowering young women, especially when it comes to getting the right shoes for every occasion.
5. Joan has X-ray vision, supersonic hearing and the political acumen of Hillary Clinton. Joan knows everything that is going on in the school, and I mean *everything*. She establishes strong relationships with principals, APs, LLs, CPs, parents, students, teachers and caretaking staff. Heck, she’ll even kiss babies. These great connective skills of hers have allowed her to be one of the best shepherds of the guidance and counselling department at LBHS. Joan has steered us through many a minefield over the years and has ensured that we have a department to be proud of. Joan said that she was a counsellor in Toronto for 20 years. I don’t think so; I think she was a CSIS agent. I now know what she meant when she said that her bond is her word.
6. Joan is a savant. Ask her about almost any of her 450-plus students, and she can tell you their background in detail. Ask her about the DSM-IV, parametrics, statistics or other counselling minutia, and you are going to get schooled. Ask her about the important stuff – like muscle cars, social etiquette, food, restaurants, designer clothing, Jimmy Choo, good wines, the south of France, or Italy – and it’s like talking to a blend of editors of *Bon Appétit*, *Elle* and the Fodor’s guides. Jeez, I pride myself on my wide range of knowledge, but Joan has forgotten more than I know. Yep, she is an IS, an impressive savant.

So there’s why I nominated Joan.

Joan is a profoundly well-grounded, skilful counsellor who keeps current with research, news and trends in counselling and education, and who has worked tirelessly for counselling, locally and provincially. Her first and last priority is the students she works with. She is an exceptional leader and administrator, and has a keen intellect.

Working with Joan has made me humble.  
Working with Joan has made me a better counsellor.

I love it when we get to do the right thing. Make no mistake – we should be very happy that we get to do the right thing today by honouring Joan with the Murray Jampolsky Award for Outstanding Practicing School Counsellor.

*Linda Mason and Les Hiebert,  
Counsellors at Lord Beaverbrook High School*



*Murray Jampolsky Award winner Joan Elliott (centre), with nominators Les Hiebert and Linda Mason*

### Previous Murray Jampolsky Award Winners

1985 Alicen Hershman	1997 Ernie Oginsky
1986 Weslyn Mather	1998 Holly Tibble
1987 Verna Brophy	1999 Dev Drysdale
1988 Bill Gordon	2000 Gerry Mowatt
1989 Jeanette Boyle	2001 Robert Plowman
1990 Gail Fedun	2002 Cathy Crocket-Moore
1991 Patricia Allin	2003 Diane Hansen
1992 Terry McRae	2004 Rosemary Secord
1993 Larry Tibble	2005 Brenda Murray
1994 Will Tebay	2006 Wendy Carson
1995 Linda Mason	2007 Shannon Smith
1996 Donna Kniel	2008 Melinda McNie

## Honorary Lifetime Membership – Charlotte Bragg

It was my privilege to present the Honorary Lifetime Membership to Charlotte Bragg at the annual conference in Banff in November. This award was, in small measure, recognition for the tireless work Charlotte has been doing for and on behalf of counsellors across Alberta over the past dozen or more years.

Charlotte began her postsecondary education at the University of Alberta. She graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in political science and then went on to the University of Toronto, where she earned a bachelor of education degree. Later she completed a bachelor of social work degree at the University of Calgary, and came full circle when she graduated with a master of education degree in school counselling from the University of Alberta.

Charlotte's professional experience (some of which overlaps) includes 10 years as a social worker with child welfare, single mother and income security caseloads; eight years as a school social worker with Consulting Services, Edmonton Public Schools (EPSB); three years as an instructor for parent programs with Continuing Education, EPSB; 13 years as a consultant for guidance and counselling with the Centre for Education, Consulting Services, EPSB; and eight years as a consultant with Leadership Services, EPSB.

Charlotte has always demonstrated a commitment to ongoing professional development. In the last three years, she has

- attended Guidance Council annual conferences,
- worked with violent and aggressive youths,
- worked with newcomers,
- attended the Alberta College of Social Workers conference, and
- attended the conferences of the Canadian and American counselling associations.

In her recent professional involvement, she has been

- a member of the outreach committee of St John's Anglican Church, in Edmonton;



*Honorary Lifetime Membership award winner Charlotte Bragg, with Henry Schellenberg*

- a campaign helper in provincial and federal elections;
- a mentor for a student in the University of Alberta's master's program in school counselling; and
- a delegate to the ATA's Annual Representative Assembly for the Edmonton Public local.

Charlotte has held numerous leadership positions, including with the following organizations:

- Edmonton Public Schools, as a consultant in Leadership Services while developing the attendance initiative and as coordinator of the Study Buddy program;
- the Peer Support Network;
- Lions Quest, as an affiliate trainer;
- Terra's school for parenting teens, as a member of the evaluation team;
- the Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities, as a writer and trainer; and
- the Second Step violence-prevention program, as a trainer.

Charlotte has held the following positions on the Guidance Council: secretary, conference director, president, past president, website editor and newsletter editor. She has served on several conference committees. She also coauthored a position paper on comprehensive guidance and

counselling in Alberta that was sent to the minister of education in September.

Charlotte is a wise leader. She knows almost everything, and she definitely knows almost everyone. She is a servant leader who has worked and advocated tirelessly for counsellors in Alberta.

Charlotte is an indefatigable leader. She has an endless supply of ideas and the energy to carry them out through work on initiatives, proposals and action plans.

Charlotte is a forthright leader. She tells it like it is.

Charlotte is a loyal leader. She continues to be dedicated to serving teachers and counsellors even though she retired from full-time employment last June.

Finally, Charlotte is a true leader who is admired and respected by colleagues all over the province. It is a privilege to have been a fellow student, conference committee member and servant on the provincial executive with Charlotte. I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this recognition and the award of Honorary Lifetime Membership in the Guidance Council. Congratulations, Charlotte.

*Henry Schellenberg, Treasurer*

## Invictus

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.

*William Ernest Henley*

---

### Preventing Family Violence and Bullying

The Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying Division of Alberta Children and Youth Services has developed a variety of publications and other resources on family violence and bullying. Topics include the following:

- Healthy relationships
- Child abuse and children exposed to violence
- Women abused in intimate relationships
- Men abused by women in intimate relationships
- Know your rights: Alberta's *Protection Against Family Violence Act* (PAFVA)

Translated resources (print and audio) are also available in Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, Punjabi and Spanish. Audio versions will soon be available in Blackfoot and Plains Cree.

To order or download free resources, go to [www.child.alberta.ca/home/832.cfm](http://www.child.alberta.ca/home/832.cfm).

---

# Regional Reports

## Calgary



The October 30 meeting of the Calgary Regional reflected our growth in terms of representation of guidance counsellors from the Calgary Board of Education, the Calgary Catholic School District, Rocky View Schools, the Foothills School Division, and charter and private schools.

It seems that we are meeting our goals, not only in professional development but also in supporting one another as we face demands and changes in our schools. The many resources and the knowledge of our counsellors should be tapped more at our meetings. (I learned the answers to some policy questions from a few very informed counsellors!) Helen MacKinnon, the consultant for guidance and counselling with the Calgary Catholic School District, has offered to share some of the work counsellors are doing regarding comprehensive guidance plans.

About 30 counsellors attended the luncheon and meeting, with the bonus of door prizes from Ten Thousand Villages (organized by Gail Dawson). A short presentation on the Youth Drug Impact Project, offered through the Calgary John Howard Society, informed counsellors of the sessions available each week. The outcome is to help young people understand the impact of drug use and its connection to criminal activity, which will lead them to make positive choices and to access the many resources available in Calgary.

Shelly Russell-Mayhew, an assistant professor and coordinator of the master of counselling (MC) program at the University of Calgary, shared her research on eating disorders. A comprehensive approach (addressing lifestyle, stress, nutrition, active living, home context and so on) seems to be the most effective treatment. She is interested as well in the development and promotion of health resource materials for schools. Shelly provided handouts, as well as information on the MC program and the university's U-CAPES public counselling service.

Our executive consists of Dale Rudd-Laws (president), Kathie Coutts (vice-president), Tanya Keto (secretary) and Nicole Peters (treasurer). Rob Colvin has done an excellent job as treasurer this past year, but because of his many school demands, he has relinquished his position to Nicole, a colleague counsellor at Lester B Pearson High School. We are grateful to Nicole for taking over. Our executive is setting the direction for this year, and we plan to bring those ideas to our next regional meeting.

The winter months are always challenging, with their cold, dark days. If we are fortunate to be in a school where there are other counsellors, we can often gain inspiration and support from them. I lean upon my two colleagues for that – and now Dawn, our Australian exchange counsellor. (Read more about the exchange later in this newsletter.)

Another avenue of support is our regional meetings. Unfortunately, January was very busy, so we are now planning a meeting for February 26, at Chinook Learning Services (thanks to Jayne Reynett, another supportive counsellor). Our plan is to meet from noon until 2:00 PM, with lunch and a presentation by Charlotte Arbuckle about the support programs offered to Calgary-area schools. Charlotte has a wealth of knowledge, as she is the principal of Woods Homes schools and is involved with Hera (for girls at risk), the Young Adult Program (YAP) and the Adolescent Day Treatment Program (ADTP).

We look forward to getting together and ultimately supporting one another.

*Dale Rudd-Laws*

## Edmonton

The focus of the Edmonton Regional for the 2009/10 school year is to align our work to the Guidance Council's three-year goals:

- To advocate for a professional counselling standard that includes personal and career counselling delivered by certificated teachers



- To continue to provide and sustain resources to enhance counsellors' skills and practice
- To raise the profile of counsellors and increase our regional's membership by inviting all Edmonton-area counsellors to attend our PD sessions and to become active, supportive members

At our October 27 meeting, we encouraged counsellors to join the Guidance Council or renew their memberships, and to participate in our meetings throughout the year.

Charlotte Bragg was our keynote speaker. She discussed the Guidance Council's position paper *A Proposal for Change: Establishing Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Programs in Every School in Alberta*, which was sent to Education Minister Dave Hancock. The paper addresses issues such as the need to define roles, responsibilities and standards for counsellors in Alberta; the need for an Alberta Education contact person for counselling; and the need for up-to-date resources (that is, a comprehensive counselling plan). Charlotte indicated that the Guidance Council is hoping that counsellors are looking at the comprehensive counselling plan and are committed to it, and that they are telling their MLAs what we do and that we need to build up advocates for counsellors.

Charlotte also noted that the *Framework for Kindergarten to Grade 12 Wellness Education* was recently distributed, and counsellors can play a role in this plan.

Our associate members – Denise Salanski (Addictions and Mental Health, Alberta Health Services) and Karen Smith and Karen Dushinski (directors of the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton) – delivered up-to-date information and distributed resources.

At our December 1 meeting, most of our time was spent with Jeff Bath, curriculum manager, K-12 wellness education, Alberta Education. He provided an overview of the *Framework for Kindergarten to Grade 12 Wellness Education* and how these curriculum changes will affect the new program of studies being developed. He also discussed Manitoba's wellness framework as a model his curriculum sector had looked at while designing Alberta's framework. We were able to share with him our message about the continued need for guidance counselling to be

included, for having a comprehensive counselling plan in every school, and for developmental curriculum delivered by certificated teachers who are counsellors. Jeff indicated that counsellors should take part in the stakeholder sessions, and he promised to keep us informed regarding the progress with the program of studies and the stakeholder meetings.

We also learned about opportunities for health internships and how to become involved in the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP), from guest presenter Jim Goodmurphy, a field director with Careers: The Next Generation.

Resources and handouts from the Guidance Council's annual conference, held November 19-21 in Banff, were also distributed.

Members were invited to mark their calendars for our January 19 full-day PD session at Barnett House. The topics were "How to Promote Resilience in Adolescents," presented by Chris Armstrong, a psychologist and counsellor, and "Exploring the Role of Multicultural Educational Brokers in Facilitating the Adaptation of Refugee Children in School Settings," presented by Sophie Yohani, a professor in the University of Alberta's Department of Educational Psychology.

Our next meeting will be held Tuesday, February 16, at 4:00 PM in the Archives Room at Ross Sheppard High School.

Sarah Gilroyed

## South East



In October, we piggybacked onto the Medicine Hat School District's PD day, combining our regional meeting with two PD sessions. The first session was led by Erin Reeder, of the Canadian Mental Health Association, and Christina Johnson, of Medicine Hat Family Service. The focus of their presentation was the laws surrounding disclosure for sexual assault. The second session, led by Anna Schlosser, of the Palliser Health Region, focused on the topic of working with angry adolescent girls.

In October, many high schools in the region hosted Educational Liaison Association of Alberta (ELAA) events. This proved to be

beneficial for students, who were able to speak with representatives from various postsecondary institutions. The timing of these events was perfect, as many of our students are currently applying for admission to colleges and universities.

On December 3, counsellors in the Prairie Rose School Division met for their annual Counsellors' Conversation. The topics of discussion included curriculum changes and their impact, postsecondary ELAA events, youth-at-risk programs and future professional learning for counsellors. This event continues to be of great value in that it enables counsellors to learn from and share with each other, even in this large, widespread school division.

Upcoming PD in our region includes a session on counsellors' best practices at our teachers' convention in February. For the spring, we are planning a presentation on drug awareness in our communities.

*Sheldon Wihnan*

## South West

The South West Regional's focus for 2010 is renewal. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Jim Stewart for his leadership over the past several years. We are appreciative of his commitment and vision. In an effort to breathe new life into the regional, a small but energetic team based in Lethbridge will meet in the near future to develop a preliminary strategy. If you would like to join this initiative, please feel free to contact me at [Lisa.McMullin@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:Lisa.McMullin@lethsd.ab.ca).

We are sponsoring two sessions at the South Western Alberta Teachers' Convention (February 18 and 19). The first, "Falling Through the Cracks – Supporting ESL Students in Core Classrooms," will be delivered by Nancy Brown, lead ESL teacher in the Lethbridge School District. This session will target those who are supporting students in Grades 6–12. The second session, "The Impact of Family Violence," is for teachers at all levels. The session, presented by Michelle Montgomery, of SWCFSA, will help participants identify the impact of family violence on child development.

*Lisa McMullin*

# University of Alberta Update

The Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta was established in 1950. From the outset, counselling psychology was one of the four fields of study taught at the graduate level. In 1967, three areas within the department were established: (1) Measurement and Research, (2) Learning and Development, and (3) Counselling and School Psychology. Although the department has undergone many changes in its six decades of existence, counselling psychology has remained a core area.

Currently, the department offers 18 degree programs in seven content areas. Counselling Psychology is the largest program area, offering three master's degree routes in addition to the doctoral degree.

The MEd in school counselling program began in 1992, to meet the needs of full-time teachers who want to pursue graduate-level training in counselling and to address the shortage of counsellors with appropriate training. The program was developed for delivery to professionals through alternative means. Students are accepted every two years and take courses on weekends and during the summer.

In 2009, the school counselling program admitted 14 new graduate students. The students began coursework in July, taking courses in ethics and research methods. In the fall term, students took classes every second Saturday while maintaining full-time teaching positions.

For more information about the master's in school counselling program, visit [www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/edpsychology/schoolcounselling.cfm](http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/edpsychology/schoolcounselling.cfm).

*Sophie Yohani*

# University of Calgary Update

The University of Calgary's Division of Applied Psychology is now accepting applications for admission to its MSc, MEd and PhD programs in counselling psychology and to the master of counselling (MC) program. The deadline for application is **December 15** for programs beginning the following September. Information about these programs and the application process can be found at [www.ucalgary.ca/apsy/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/apsy/).

Shelly Russell-Mayhew is the coordinator of the MC distributed learning program. The program involves a combination of online and face-to-face delivery. A summer institute will take place on the U of C campus in July.

U-CAPES, our psychological and educational services centre, is busy offering psychological assessment and counselling services to children, adolescents, adults, couples and families in the Calgary region. For more information on U-CAPES, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/apsy/ucapes/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/apsy/ucapes/).

In faculty news, Bryan Hiebert retired at the end of December. Vivian Lalande retired in June and was replaced by Shelly Russell-Mayhew. Clint Westgard will now be working on practicum placements for counsellors in the Calgary area.

*Sharon Robertson*

# Alberta Education Update

I am excited to be the new Alberta Education representative on the Guidance Council, and I'm looking forward to meeting everyone. I have asked for some updates on ministry projects and have received the following information. I will share more as it becomes available.

## Mentoring

Alberta Education's High School Completion Framework includes mentoring under the Positive Connections core strategy. Research tells us that mentoring has positive effects on building a strong connection to school and on high school completion. To assist high school students in learning more about mentoring, a CTS mentoring course is being developed and will be ready for implementation in September 2010.

Mark September 24-26 on your calendars. The Alberta Mentoring Partnership and Big Brothers Big Sisters are cohosting Telling Our Story, a mentoring conference, in Edmonton.

For more information on mentoring, visit [www.albertamentors.ca](http://www.albertamentors.ca), or contact Mike Cooper at [mike.s.cooper@gov.ab.ca](mailto:mike.s.cooper@gov.ab.ca) or 780-422-5399.

## Fact Sheets on Student Health and CYCN

The Student Health partnership and the Children and Youth with Complex Needs (CYCN) initiative have both been around for a while, and many are likely familiar with these programs. For those who aren't, fact sheets are available at <http://education.alberta.ca/media/1110825/studenthealthfactsheetjune2009.pdf> (Student Health) and <http://education.alberta.ca/media/1119754/cyknfactsheetenglish2009.pdf> (CYCN).

The fact sheets were updated in June 2009 and are also available in French. For more information, contact Heather Dechant at [heather.dechant@gov.ab.ca](mailto:heather.dechant@gov.ab.ca).

*Connie Ohl*

# Understanding Gaming Addiction

In November, I had the privilege of attending the Guidance Council's annual conference, held in scenic Banff. As the mom of a 10-year-old boy who has a Wii yet continually asks for the latest Xbox ("Everyone else has it!"), I was especially interested in the session with Peter Churchill, of AADAC, titled "Videogame Abuse: The State of the Debate."

For the entire 90 minutes, I was enthralled. There is a whole other world out there that I have been oblivious to – a world complete with its own lingo, like *avatar*, *guild*, *MMORPG* and *Easter egg*.

I was impressed by the quality of information provided by Churchill. He admitted that "many clinicians are unfamiliar with this world, and are not equipped to discuss or assess use with their clients." We simply do not have enough independent studies and reliable data on the effects of video games on adolescents. Much of the research to date has been conducted by the Entertainment Software Association, leading to biased results.

Nevertheless, Churchill successfully leaned on his own knowledge and experience in dealing with other types of addictions, and combined those with his personal research on popular video games, to provide a room of professionals with an informative and captivating PowerPoint presentation.

The following key points in Churchill's session resonated with me:

- With an average of 80 hours per week of free time, the norm is for young people to spend at least 35–45 per cent of that time in front of a screen (online, video games, TV).
- Video games have become the dominant entertainment medium, and they are

deliberately designed to be attractive and to keep one playing for a long time.

- Video game addicts use (play) longer in one sitting than any other type of addict. As Churchill said, "A norm of long hours of use is potentially costly to social development, family relationships, academic success and physical health."
- *Halo*, *Grand Theft Auto* and *Call of Duty*, which are played by growing numbers of adolescents, provide players with optimal realism and photo-realistic experience. These games also contain disturbing content, including car theft, killing, drug peddling, prostitution and physical abuse against women.
- As with other forms of process addiction, repeated game-play stimulation can lead to pleasure decay and can have a measurable impact on mood and behaviour.
- Multiplayer games are more addictive and harder to set aside than solo games. Massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs) are the greatest concern. Sweden's Youth Care Foundation has described *World of Warcraft* as being as addictive as crack. In 2008, a 15-year-old Swedish boy collapsed in convulsions after 20 hours of playing the game.
- Experts know that ease of access and lack of supervision are major risk factors in adolescent gaming use – much like with substance abuse.
- Current diagnosis and treatment use the gambling model: action versus escape.
- We still need rigorous research and functional MRI studies to best understand gaming addiction.
- Understanding the appeal and rewards of games is critical for engagement, assessment and treatment.
- As with any addiction, recovery for a video game addict depends greatly on ownership without blame.

Michelle Bishop,  
Counsellor/OCC,  
W P Wagner School

# Character Education Through Comic Books

Working to prevent bullying and build positive social skills in youth is important, but can it also be fun? The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities (SACSC) thinks so.

SACSC has developed a series of educational comic books that involve young people in activities and discussions dealing with bullying and related issues. "Bullying is a complex problem, and there are no quick fixes," says Donna Blundell, SACSC executive director. "The best way to prevent it is through early and ongoing character education, and these comic

books are a great way to engage youth in this process."

The five-part comic series stars SACSC's mascot, a Canada goose named Niska. The stories cover the following key topics: living respectfully, developing self-esteem, respecting diversity, dealing with bullying and resolving conflicts peacefully. Each story ends with a moral dilemma that readers are asked to solve through writing and illustrating the final page. This open-ended format serves two purposes, according to Donna: "It encourages youth to reflect on problems they might face, and it gives adults an opportunity to help them work through some possible solutions."

To extend the experience, discussion questions are included with each story. SACSC encourages schools to take advantage of this free resource, which can be incorporated into various curricular areas, including language arts, social studies and health. The comics also provide a comfortable way for counsellors to start conversations about issues that are difficult for young people to discuss.

All SACSC comics and related resources can be downloaded at [www.sacsc.ca](http://www.sacsc.ca).

*Dan Ripley, SACSC*



# Roots of Empathy: A Proactive Approach to Creating Safe and Caring School Environments

**A**s school counsellors, we constantly face issues our students struggle with, such as aggressive behaviours and conflicts, misunderstandings resulting in isolation from the group, and bullying. Understanding other people's feelings and perspectives is difficult for adults at times, and expecting children to show empathy is even more challenging. Dealing with negative situations in a positive manner is challenging in a school setting. So when my family-school liaison worker raved about a new program that focuses on being proactive when it comes to interpersonal conflict, I was very interested in hearing the details.

I am a school counsellor and student services facilitator at St Luke Catholic School, a K-9 school near South Cooking Lake. The program I referred to is Roots of Empathy (ROE). ROE aims to reduce levels of aggression among schoolchildren by raising social and emotional competence and increasing empathy through a classroom program. It is a proactive way to combat the problem of bullying and antisocial behaviours in our schools.

Mary Gordon is the founder and president of and the inspiration behind the Roots of Empathy program. She is recognized internationally as an educator, best-selling author, child advocate and

parenting expert who has created programs informed by the power of empathy. In her programs, the wisdom of babies teaches us how to be human and interact with empathy. Her research has discovered decreased aggressive behaviours and increased prosocial behaviours as a result of the program.

I contacted Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and asked how I could bring the program to my school. I was informed that formal training was necessary and that I would need support to provide the program for our students. FCSS offered to fund my training if I would make myself available for the training days. Support would be provided as long as I presented the program at a Grade 1 level for three sessions.

In mid-September 2006, I attended the training sessions and was provided with the materials to carry the program out at my school. To make the program successful, I needed to assemble a team including my principal, a Grade 1 classroom teacher, students and, most important, a baby (who would be the ROE instructor) and the mother.

ROE teaches empathy by immersing students in the baby's development and celebrating the



*Baby Cael and his adoring fans. Baby Cael takes a few steps with mother Jodie Mattia's support. Students cheer him on with pride.*



*ROE baby Eli Yeo and mom Tara*

milestones along the way. Nine topics are discussed, including caring and planning for the baby, emotions, and communicating.

The mother and her baby visit once every three weeks. Prior to each visit, I prepare my students by coaching them to label the baby's feelings and observe the baby's development related to the current topic. After the visit, a debriefing lesson involves self-reflection and allows students to relate the topic to themselves.

One family our students got to know was that of baby Cael Vincent Mattia. I met his mother Jodie (our Guidance Council president) through my master's in school counselling cohort at the University of Alberta. After the master's program, Jodie was on maternity leave and kindly offered to bring Cael to St Luke to participate in the ROE program.

As we got to know Baby Cael, the students became very drawn to him. They beamed with pride with each milestone he reached. Each time they welcomed him with their song, he responded with smiles, and they vibrated with excitement when he was near. They were careful observers and were quick to pick up on any changes in his appearance and reactions. When Baby Cael learned to walk, they were amazed and cheered. The students were very attentive toward their ROE teacher, Baby Cael, and they were sad to say goodbye to him at the end of the school year.

Working through the ROE program with the team brought about many positive experiences. Through being taught emotional literacy, the students became more competent in understanding their own feelings and those of others (empathy). As a result, they are now less likely to physically, psychologically and emotionally hurt each other through bullying and other cruelties.



Cael and I had the privilege to participate in this fantastic program. This experience supported Cael in his social development as an infant and helped me focus on specific milestones of his. Cael looked forward to seeing the students and really enjoyed the songs they sang to him and the pictures they drew for him. After our third visit, his face would light up upon entering the school, as he knew where he was going and looked forward to seeing his green blanket and the excited faces of the students. The students responded very positively to Cael, and always had excellent questions and observations. From a parental point of view, this was a wonderful experience for both my son and me. From a counselling perspective, I found this program to be outstanding in teaching students not only about Cael but also about themselves. It was a great vehicle for discussing, sharing and observing human needs and emotions.

*Jodie Mattia*

The plan is to expose as many students as possible to the program. After the Grade 1 students, the program was presented at the Grade 7 level, and the possibility of working with kindergarten students is being explored. The ROE program supports our schoolwide character education program.

It looks like our next ROE baby will be my granddaughter Portia! A new adventure will begin!

For more information on Roots of Empathy, contact Sandy Vigrass, Roots of Empathy provincial manager, at 403-410-3808.

*Maria DeRosa*

# An Australian Counsellor Exchange

Anyone who knows Gail Dawson or me (counsellors at William Aberhart High School, in Calgary) may already be tired of hearing about the Australian exchange. We have been excited for some time, and now it is happening! We both attended exchange information sessions through the leadership of Sara Coumantarakis, coordinator of Alberta Education's Educator Exchange Program. Alberta Education and the Calgary Board of Education allowed us the rare option of each taking six months of the year-long exchange, with Gail in Port Macquarie, New South Wales, from January to June 2010, and me taking the placement from July to December 2010. It wasn't difficult to find an exchange partner in Australia; our exchange partner had advertised extensively through e-mail and the counsellor grapevine.

Dawn Dockrill is our exchange partner, and she arrived in Calgary on December 29, with her bloke Mark. It was cold here, and they had just left a wonderful, hot climate; fortunately, they are very adventurous, positive and fun.

Dawn is enthusiastic and eager to learn about our education system, counsellor responsibilities and school culture – and, of course, to do a lot of travelling. She is learning that probably a third of her work at William Aberhart is related to counselling issues, while the rest involves a multitude of tasks, including timetabling, evaluations, grad lists, postsecondary counselling and IPP work. This differs from her work doing primarily counselling and assessment at the Port Macquarie High School and its feeder elementary schools.

What matters, I have learned, is a willingness to learn and to be adaptable to not only a new culture but also a particular school culture. Dawn is eager to contribute in the drama department, as well, as she has an extensive background and interest in the theatre. We are very fortunate to have her as an exchange partner!

*Dale Rudd-Laws*

## Dawn Dockrill's Journal from Canada

What's that cute saying counsellors around the world have on their office walls? "A journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step"? We stepped away from our home across from the beach in Port Macquarie, in 28 degree heat, to start a journey of a thousand miles and 12 months away from our family, colleagues and friends.

Our trip to Calgary was long and drawn out. After a 20-hour flight from Sydney to Taipei and then into Vancouver for a sleep, Mark and I took off to Calgary, our final destination, our home for the next 12 months.

We arrived in Calgary tired and in the dark (in more ways than one), and we couldn't see much of what lay ahead of us except lots of slippery, cold, white stuff that we knew wasn't sand. What we saw the next morning, in the very late dawn of 8:30 (late by our standards, at least), was a beautiful vista of white . . . well, white everything! Houses with Christmas lights, cars, trees, light poles, dogs and a golf course that lives beneath the snow (or so we've been promised).

We have met some wonderful, friendly and helpful people we now consider our friends and neighbours on this tiny planet called Earth. They have taken us shopping, helped us organize car insurance and number plates, shown us how to shovel snow (still having trouble with that, so it may need to be modelled for us a few more times), taught us the road laws and pointed out that being on the left side of the road is not necessarily a good thing in Canada. We were taken out for an Italian dinner with my new colleague Dale and her husband Keith, who explained that the left thing did not extend to the cutlery. Yet another incredibly brave couple took us to a New Year's Eve party in

minus 24 degree weather – totally unheard of anywhere in Australia except maybe in your kitchen freezer. Breaking down the language barrier may prove tricky. Apparently, we speak English without vowels you can annunciate. We will learn proper Canadian speak, orright?

At school I haven't had time to pause for breath. Canadian counsellors are kept hopping and certainly earn their money. Timetabling/scheduling was a completely new task for me, and I have never before watched a sunrise from a school staff meeting! (In Australia, we often go for a swim before and after school, and my school offers surfing as a school sport.) My new colleagues – a team of three and a wonderful support named Lois – have been fantastic and patient with my sharp learning curve. In the Australian school system, a counsellor works alone at several primary and secondary schools but is part of a team of counsellors within a town or designated area who meet once a month. We also support each other over the phone – but there is no Lois!

We keep hearing negative comments about your Christmas-card weather, but we love it for exactly the reason we always point out when chatting with locals. Question: "Why would you leave the sun in Oz to come to this cold place?" Answer: "Because there is no comparison between the two and, look, to us this is beautiful and cold, but a wonderland of stunning sights, sounds and sensations."

If the drive through Banff National Park and the frozen trees hanging heavy with icicles over the Radium Hot Springs, where we soaked away the dust (and snow!) from our journey, are examples of what we have to look forward to, then all we can say is "Wow!" Thank you for hosting us for one whole year.

## Gail Dawson's Journal from Australia

Being in Australia on an exchange is quite an experience. Australia is wonderful. The weather is fantastic, and the scenery is outstanding. I am on the east coast, and it is incredibly lush. Trees and shrubs are absolutely everywhere. When you are not looking at the greenery, you are looking at all of the blue – blue sky and blue water. There are so many beaches, and the ocean is beautiful and powerful.

People in Australia are very casual. In Calgary, we say, "No shirt, no shoes, no service," but here in Australia they say, "No shirt, no shoes, no worries, mate." Australians are very friendly and very active. They seem to be "doing" all of the time. They spend a lot of time enjoying the outdoors.

I arrived in Australia less than two weeks ago, and my time here has been both wonderful and stressful. There are many things to learn and experience. Driving on the other side of the car and on the other side of the road is something you must learn right away. I feel like a student driver. Luckily, I have only been honked at once. Another big difference is the number and kinds of bugs and spiders. They really are everywhere. I'm sure that my spider phobia will be cured by the time I leave here. We've also seen lizards that range in length from two inches to five feet. They're a little scary at first, but once you realize that they won't hurt you, that they're just going to climb a tree and eat some poor bird's eggs, they're not so bad.

There are many things to love about Australia, and obviously some challenges. I wouldn't give up this experience for anything in the world. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity, and I hope that my exchange partner feels the same way.

# Reflections on a Pan-Canadian Study of K-12 Career Education



Research is telling us that almost 70 per cent of all jobs will soon require credentials beyond a high school diploma. We know that change is constant, and the rate of change is accelerating; the work world we entered is very different

from the work world our students face. Bryan Hiebert, of the University of Calgary's Division of Applied Psychology, tells us that students are stressed about these career and life planning uncertainties. We know that parents/guardians are the biggest source of influence on their children's career pathways, but students and parents need help negotiating the maze of postsecondary options.

So the questions remain: Are we giving our students enough support in the area of career education? Do we have enough time in our day to adequately support students and parents as they plan for life after high school? What combination of one-to-one career counselling sessions, large-group sessions, parent workshops, experiential learning options and stand-alone courses do we have in place? What does career development look like in our schools, and what works best?

The Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation initiated a study to gather information on K-12 school-based career development programs and services on a national level. The study began on September 28, 2009, and concluded on October 23, 2009. The Pan-Canadian Study of Career Development Practices in K-12 Public Schools is a comprehensive study involving a self-administered online

survey, an online daily log and documentation of career education programs. In total, 491 surveys were submitted by guidance counsellors. Not all provinces participated in the survey; therefore, the results cannot be generalized to all counsellors in Canada.

Although only a small number of Alberta counsellors participated in the survey, I believe that the responses from across Canada reflect many of our own practices in career education and postsecondary planning.

Below are the conclusions and future considerations outlined in the study's final report. The full report is available at [www.malatest.com/CMSF%20Time-Motion%20Final%20Report%20-%20Dec%202009.pdf](http://www.malatest.com/CMSF%20Time-Motion%20Final%20Report%20-%20Dec%202009.pdf).

## Conclusions

- Guidance counsellors are spending too much time on nonguidance activities.
- There is a lack of mandatory career education courses offered in school.
- There is a lack of career education workshops for parents/guardians.
- Students are not participating in cooperative education opportunities.
- There are differences in employment status (full-time, part-time or itinerant) across provinces.

## Future Considerations

- A substantial portion of a guidance counsellor's working day is devoted to nonguidance tasks. Guidance counsellors' tasks comprise a wide sphere of responsibilities; however, future efforts could be dedicated to identifying and promoting district and school policies and procedures that reduce the expectations on guidance counsellors with respect to time spent on nonguidance activities.
- Given the current ratios of students to guidance counsellors, the K-12 school system cannot expect guidance counsellors to have total responsibility for career and postsecondary education preparation. These must become the shared responsibility of all

K-12 educators, parents/guardians and communities. Innovative and cost-effective models of service, program and delivery should be examined or developed.

- Provinces and school districts may want to ensure that all counsellors in their respective jurisdictions have adequate professional training for their mandated roles and responsibilities.
- Provinces should consider developing and implementing targeted career education programs for those young people who are underrepresented in postsecondary education (Aboriginal, first-generation and low-income students).
- Provinces need to develop a coherent framework for career development programming with the K-12 system. Mandatory curricula should be monitored to ensure that they are being delivered as intended.
- Current and future career education programs should be researched to see if they are working.
- Relatively speaking, surprisingly few schools offer career education workshops for parents/guardians. The literature reviewed in the report stresses the pivotal role parents play in students' career choices, and advocates for more active involvement of parents in school career development programs. Schools may need more support in offering career education workshops for parents. An examination of career education workshop models, frequency and delivery could point toward best practices.
- The low student enrolment rates in cooperative education (work experience)

programs across Canada merits further inquiry. Future research or program evaluation questions could examine whether current models of cooperative education are successfully preparing students to follow workplace, apprenticeship or postsecondary education pathways.

- There is an inverse relationship, or a trade-off, between mandatory stand-alone career education courses and individual career planning with students. While a caveat must be issued with respect to overgeneralization of findings, it appears that mandatory stand-alone career education courses, supported by guidance counsellors, make the best use of guidance counsellors' time and reach more students. Future work could examine how to best use both classroom teachers' and guidance counsellors' insights and input into the delivery of such courses.
- Discrepancies across the provinces with respect to employment status (full-time, part-time or itinerant) are associated with differences in work experience, education levels and time dedicated to individual career planning. Full-time guidance counsellors, on an aggregate level, tend to have more professional preparation. Thus, the feasibility of offering more full-time (rather than part-time or itinerant) guidance counsellor positions should be examined, so that all students across Canada, regardless of the province they reside in, will have the opportunity to benefit from quality career education.

*Phyllis Kornder, Past President*

---

---

## Youth Drug Prevention for Parents

How your child will grow into adulthood is greatly influenced by your actions and words. Their behaviours, decisions and filters are shaped at a very early age, and clear and consistent communication between parents and children is critical to helping them understand what's expected of them. Keep talking – the most powerful tool you have with your teenagers is communication.

For more information on talking to your kids about drugs, visit the National Anti-Drug Strategy website at [www.nationalantidrugstrategy.gc.ca/parents/pubs/print-imprimer/print-imprimer.html](http://www.nationalantidrugstrategy.gc.ca/parents/pubs/print-imprimer/print-imprimer.html).

---

---

---

---

## Speak Out

What's happening on the Web? There's always a ton of activity on the Speak Out website ([www.speakout.alberta.ca](http://www.speakout.alberta.ca)).

Speak Out is an opportunity for Alberta's youth to share their experiences and ideas in order to help people better understand the issues that are important to them. The discussion board is hopping, and January's featured topic was youth homelessness. The Government of Alberta really wants to hear from young people with respect to this and other issues.

The website also includes blog topics and a short monthly survey. By completing the survey, you have a chance every month to win an Epson colour printer. To participate, visit [www.speakout.alberta.ca](http://www.speakout.alberta.ca). If you aren't already a member, you must register before posting.

---

---

---

---

## Inspiring Education

The windup of the Inspiring Education round-table discussions occurred October 18–20 in Edmonton.

The keynote speakers were Jennifer James, a cultural anthropologist who was involved with developing the Second Step violence-prevention kits; Mark Milliron, who specializes in leadership development, future trends and the human side of technological change; and Indira Samarasekera, president of the University of Alberta.

To watch videos of these great speakers, go to [www.inspiringeducation.alberta.ca](http://www.inspiringeducation.alberta.ca). Speaking notes from Daniel Pink, author of *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future* [Ed: About time!] are also available.

---

---

# Guidance Council Publications

To support and inform the work of school counsellors, the Guidance Council has two publications: our professional journal, *The Alberta Counsellor*, and our newsletter, *The Alberta Counsellor*. Guidance Council members are encouraged to submit articles for these publications. Editorial advice and assistance will be provided.

## *The Alberta Counsellor*

*The Alberta Counsellor* contains information about council activities, school counselling programs, reports of regional meetings, and announcements of and reports on professional development opportunities.

We want to hear from you!

Tell us about guidance and counselling projects or initiatives at your school. Everyone would like to read about your approaches to improving high school completion, dealing with bullying, improving your students' academic and social/emotional adjustment and achievement – in fact, anything from the wide world of school guidance counselling.

## *Framework for a Counsellor Article*

To help you, here's an outline:

- What is your name? Your school and teaching/counselling assignment?
- What is your project/initiative? What are your practices?
- What was the impetus for your project?
- What did you hope to achieve?
- What did you need to do to put the project in place?
- Where did you get the time/funding for your project?
- Who else in the school/community is involved?
- What has been accomplished by your project?
- What is the future of your project?

We are also interested in publishing book, film or resource reviews; sample lessons; or reports on professional development activities you have attended.

The newsletter is published three times per year – winter, spring and fall – so please send your submission soon to Charlotte Bragg at [Charlotte.Bragg@epsb.ca](mailto:Charlotte.Bragg@epsb.ca). Deadlines for submissions are **September 15, January 10 and May 1**.

## *The Alberta Counsellor*

*The Alberta Counsellor* is a professional journal for guidance counsellors and related professionals. The journal publishes research and practical articles; book reviews; case studies; discussion of trends, issues and policies; and reviews of new programs and materials. *The Alberta Counsellor* is not refereed. The final decision to publish any article is the editor's.

## *Guidelines for Authors*

- Manuscripts may be up to 3,000 words long.
- Follow the author-date style for citations.
- Submit two copies of each manuscript.
- For photographs and diagrams, black and white is preferred.
- Obtain permission for the use of photographs and diagrams.
- Identify people in photos.
- Include photo credit.
- Manuscripts and photographs will be returned at the author's request.

For more information, please contact Michael Lupart at [mlupart@rockyview.ab.ca](mailto:mlupart@rockyview.ab.ca), or at 403-932-2542 or 403-932-6131.

---

# Guidance Council Executive 2009/10

---

**President**

Jodie Mattia  
Bus 780-352-3782  
mattiaj@wrps.ab.ca or  
jmattia@telus.net

**Past President**

Phyllis Kornder  
Bus 780-992-0889  
pkornder@telus.net

**President-Elect**

TBA

**Vice-President**

TBA

**Secretary**

Kristine Wilkinson  
Bus 780-973-3301  
kwilkins@sturgeon.ab.ca

**Treasurer**

Henry Schellenberg  
Bus 780-464-7127  
henry.schellenberg@ei.educ.ab.ca

**Conference Director 2010**

TBA

**Newsletter Coeditors**

Charlotte Bragg  
Bus 780-434-2162  
lottie1@shaw.ca  
Shelley Boan  
Bus 780-469-8805  
shelley.boan@epsb.ca

**Website Editor**

TBA

**Journal Editor**

Michael Lupart  
Bus 403-932-2542  
mlupart@rockyview.ab.ca

**University of Alberta Representative**

Sophie Yohani  
Bus 780-492-1164  
sophie.yohani@ualberta.ca

**University of Calgary Representative**

Sharon Robertson  
Bus 403-220-6542  
sroberts@ucalgary.ca

**University of Lethbridge Representative**

Kerry Bernes  
Bus 403-329-2447  
kerry.bernes@uleth.ca

**Alberta Education Representative**

Connie Ohl  
Bus 780-422-6505  
connie.ohl@gov.ab.ca

**PEC Liaison**

Randy Proskiw  
Bus 780-645-4491  
randy.proskiw@teachers.ab.ca

**ATA Staff Advisor**

Marv Hackman  
Bus 780-447-9488  
or 1-800-232-7208  
marvin.hackman@ata.ab.ca

**Regional Presidents****Calgary**

Dale Rudd-Laws  
Bus 403-289-2551, ext 404  
dcrudd@cbe.ab.ca

**Central**

TBA

**Mid-Central**

TBA

**Edmonton**

Sarah Gilroyed  
Bus 780-465-1299  
sarah.gilroyed@epsb.ca

**South East**

Sheldon Wihnan  
Bus 403-528-1996, ext 2018  
sheldon.wihnan@prrd.ab.ca or  
sheldesu@telus.net

**South West**

Lisa McMullin  
Bus 403-380-5320  
Lisa.McMullin@lethsd.ab.ca

---

Copyright © 2010 by The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton T5N 2R1. Unless otherwise indicated in the text, reproduction of the material in *The Alberta Counsellor* is authorized for classroom and professional development use, provided that each copy contain full acknowledgement of the source and that no charge be made beyond the cost of reprinting. Any other reproduction in whole or in part without prior written consent of the ATA is prohibited. *The Alberta Counsellor* is published for the Guidance Council (GC) by the ATA. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the ATA or the GC. Editorial and production services: Document Production staff, ATA. Address all correspondence to Charlotte Bragg, 11204 54A Avenue NW, Edmonton T6H 0W2. ISSN 0381-5951.

Individual copies of this newsletter are available at a cost of \$2 per copy plus 5 per cent shipping and handling and 5 per cent GST. Please contact Distribution at Barnett House to place your order. In Edmonton, dial 780-447-9400, ext 321; toll free in Alberta, dial 1-800-232-7208, ext 321.

Personal information regarding any person named in this document is for the sole purpose of professional consultation between members of The Alberta Teachers' Association.