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ATTACHMENT NETWORK OF MANITOBA
ANNUAL REPORT
2019

CO- CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT- Joanne Brown, Leslie Johnston

As we write this, many of the people who work in the sector that services children and families are either working remotely from home, or facing layoffs due to COVID-19 implications on how we do our work. This will be a fascinating time for historians, sociologists, economists and social science researchers to study, and here we all are living in it. Parents are at home full time with their children but are unable to access all the usual places we tend to go for respite or for fun and stimulation. Parents have become full time teachers, early childhood educators, play partners, referees, and more, all sometimes while trying to do their own paid work from home.

Risk is rising as well. Child welfare workers are not volunteering to enter homes, only upon notification of a concern. The usual places where children would become visible, or where they could show or share a concern from home are off limits now. We hear that domestic violence rates will soar, but we are not yet talking about how the isolation and frustration might spill over to unsafe conditions for children who have no other choice but to remain and accept their conditions. The Canadian Centre for Child Protection is already seeing a 25% increase in online child pornography distribution since the pandemic began.

Parents do not have their usual support systems available to them either. The pandemic and isolation have driven home to all of us just how relational we all are. We do need each other! Each day brings more concern for how families will come out of this, but it is also bringing to light many success stories in families as well. People are slowing down! Without all the running around to extracurricular activities, parents are taking time to sit down to dinners with their children, long walks are turning into long talks, movies are being watched together, family members are recreating a sense of 'who we are as a family' through being together and doing things together.

We know that as parents calm down and feel safe about enduring the pandemic, their children take their cues and do the same. The more the parent creates connection, the calmer the child becomes, the more likely the child is to do schoolwork and even to start to excel at that. Parents are stumbling upon this by accident! As we say in Circle of Security, "You cannot learn if you're not on the top of the Circle".

Prior to this pandemic, we were in the midst of creating a fascinating conference for the end of April, featuring British author Johann Hari, on addiction, entitled Reframing Addiction: The Crisis of Disconnection. We are now having to put that off until May 13, 2021 but that gives you ample time to put aside money to make sure you attend! We are grateful the panel we have selected for the afternoon discussion as well as our moderator for the day, Michael Redhead Champagne, have all made themselves available again for participating. This is a new

foray for the Network to boldly move into thinking about attachment within adult populations, but it is necessary that we understand that attachment is foundational across the lifespan.

To coincide with that conference, we had planned to release a new brochure in our series, 10 Things Your Loved One with an Addiction wants you to Know. We will be releasing that and our other brochure, 10 Things Your Child Needs Their Separated Parents to Know, at our AGM.

We are excited about these 2 new brochures and will have them available for purchase, and as with the others, for free download. They are meant to be jumping off points for considering the need for stability and connection we all have as we go through tumultuous times. Sound like anything we're all going through now? Coming in the fall, we will have another brochure ready, the 10 Things your child with FASD wants you to know, and we thank the New Directions FASD Program for their kind assistance in developing this resource.

This winter we were able to once again offer a Circle of Security Facilitator training, and we held it in Brandon, where we had just over one hundred people attend, including nearly a quarter of the people from out of province. We welcomed trainer Deb Harris from Santa Fe, New Mexico, who we found to be an incredible person and presenter! This was the third training in which Manitoba's child care community sent over 50 daycare directors to receive the training, in the hopes they will continue to move this model into the world of child care. We also saw a strong turnout from many school divisions in Manitoba.

We hold three Network meetings a year and for years have held those either in an afternoon or at an extended lunch. We continue to hear how difficult it is for those working to be granted time away to attend, even though we have tried to make them lunch and learn times. This past fall we had a very well attended meeting with a presentation from Sara Tarrant and Meghan Land McCarthy, who have been presenting to schools and divisions across Manitoba on trauma informed classrooms. Then in February, Brightling Academy Daycare welcomed us as we tried something new- an evening Network meeting, which was very well attended by both workers and parents, and we offered our Attachment 101 presentation. We were so encouraged by that evening that we want to keep doing this but perhaps in different communities across the city this coming year.

Our AGM this spring is being held remotely on Zoom and we are excited to have KidThink Clinical Director, Dr. Jo Ann Unger present to us on the things they are doing in their organization.

We have also continued to support the hampers developed by the volunteer group You Can't Spoil a Baby, where we consistently donate our Baby and Toddler brochures so that each new parent receives a copy of these resources. When we develop funds locally, we also reinvest those funds locally. A case in point was a request we received through social media asking if

we would cover tuition to the Circle of Security facilitator training as the person had no other options, and we were able to make the decision to do so in return for this individual agreeing to provide groups within the first year.

We want to take this time to thank those who have remained dedicated to promoting attachment within their work and families for realizing this is the underpinning of not only healthy families but healthy citizens as well, and really, healthy workforces. We want to thank those of you who have attended our meetings, ordered our supplies, attended our trainings or workshops, and those who share our links. We want to thank Dan Blair of BITSpace Development for rescuing our website and rehabilitating it. We want to thank Adoptions Options staff for hosting us at our usual meetings.

Our board is small but mighty and they take on so much work in developing ideas, promoting the work we do, and keeping these concepts alive in our community. We are looking to see 2 new board members join us at the AGM. Thanks especially to Katie McDonald, who has been taking our social media presence to a new level.

It really is an incredible thing when you consider we have always been a volunteer organization, we do not receive any core funding from anywhere, we really do “pay our own way” in terms of generating money to raise the knowledge and skills of Manitobans as it pertains to relationships.

Be well everyone, and we can leave you with 2 signs found somewhere recently:

And the world came together as the people stayed apart.

And

We isolate ourselves now so that when we come back together, no one is missing.

Public Awareness Committee – Leslie Johnston

The PAC continued to meet over the past year, to brainstorm ways to bring the message of attachment into the wider community. Recently we have focused on expanding the scope of our “Ten Things” brochure series beyond the stages of child and adolescent development and into other pressing societal issues. We have recently completed a “Ten Things” brochure for those whose loved ones are suffering with an addiction. We had hoped to launch this at our spring conference, but will soon have it up on our website for purchase or download. The next brochure, which is currently in production, is designed for people who are in a co-parenting situation, with a focus on what their children need from them in that experience. We are also

at work on a brochure specifically for parents of children who were prenatally affected by alcohol. Look for these to be released on our website in the coming months.

We continue to explore the possibilities of creating a series of podcasts on various topics related to attachment. Although it has proven challenging to get this initiative off the ground, particularly in light of recent physically distancing requirements, this is still very much on our radar. We hope to resume work on this project in the near future.

And finally, we continue to provide introductory workshops for community and not-for-profit groups on the topic of attachment. Over the past year, we have delivered these workshops, mostly free of charge, at Parent Drop-In Centres, as part of Professional Development activities for teachers, and at our Network Meetings. As indicated on our website, we continue to offer these workshops to any community group who has an interest in learning about attachment. If organizations are able to make a donation to the network, we appreciate this, however the majority of these workshops are provided free of charge.

We have a talented and dedicated group of people on this committee who have worked very hard to brainstorm, debate, wordsmith and fine-tune proposed ideas. Some of the ideas come to fruition, others are shelved, but together we continue to work towards a community with a better understanding of the importance of attachment!

The Public Awareness Committee is comprised of: Laurie McPherson, Michelle Kowalchuk, Amber Kulczycki, Cathy Seitz, Joanne Brown, Brenna Campbell and Leslie Johnston.

Conference Report- Lisa Dveris

On April 30th, 2020, the Attachment Network was scheduled to host a ground-breaking conference entitled Reframing Addiction – The Crisis of Disconnection. Due to the global pandemic of Covid 19, our conference has been re-scheduled to May 13, 2021 and will be held at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

Internationally renowned author Johann Hari (Chasing the Scream – the Search for the Truth about Addiction; and Lost Connections – Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression), has said that “the opposite of addiction is not sobriety – the opposite of addiction is CONNECTION”. Mr. Hari’s message is a natural fit with that of our Network and we are thrilled to welcome Johann Hari to provide the keynote address for this conference. Following the keynote, local Indigenous activist Michael Redhead Champagne will engage Mr. Hari in a question and answer session and will then moderate an afternoon panel discussion with a variety of Winnipeggers who are working in the field of addiction.

A resource fair will also be set up for the duration of the conference to provide organizations and agencies working in the field of addiction to showcase their services as well as network. We look forward to hosting this groundbreaking conference in May, 2021.

Social Media & Website Report – May 2020 – Kathleen McDonald

Facebook: We currently have 1234 followers. We continue to share resources and information about attachment related to various topics throughout the life span. We have also been promoting events on our Facebook page – these events are sponsored through various organizations and align with the attachment perspective. If you would like to have an event, resources or information you would like posted on our Facebook page please contact us.

Instagram: We continue to grow on Instagram, we currently have 408 followers. We are working hard to regularly share information on attachment throughout the lifespan on Instagram. If you have resources of information you would like shared please contact us.

Twitter: We are back on twitter! We currently have 74 followers. Find us @AttachmentMB

Website: Over the summer of 2019 we redesigned our website. We are hoping you are enjoying the new website. We are currently working on improving the resource section of the website and are hoping to have a significant library of resources for caregivers and professionals by the end of this summer. If you have resources you would like to share please contact us.

Eblasts: Our newsletters are emailed out on a quarterly basis. These newsletters provide updates on what the network is up to, resources and information regarding attachment. If you would like to receive an eblast please log onto the website and join our mailing list.

We are always interested in submissions to our website or social media, if you have ideas please contact us at admin@attachmentnetwork.ca

Sales Reports- Camillia Layne

Total Sales of \$2763.25 from brochures, DVD's (on line subscription and hard copy), posters and a small amount of remaining income from a previous conference.

We sold 10 Baby DVD's, 8 Toddler DVD's, and 2 boxed sets of DVD's. Our brochures continue to sell in English only with 31 bundles of 50 Baby brochures, 37 bundles of 50 brochures of Toddler, 18 bundles of 50 of school age brochures, and 7 bundles of 50 teen brochures and 4 bundles of 50 of the foster care brochures, and 2 bundles of 20 of foster brochures. We sold 20 copies each of the 4 brochures in French.

We have handed out many copies of the brochures in our other languages such as Ojibwe, Cree, Tagalog, Arabic, and Spanish, but to date, no one has purchased them from us this year.

We do have the 4 brochures available in poster format and sold 1 set of those, and they are in English only.