

HEAR OUR VOICE

Volume 6, Issue 1

January 2009

Special points of interest:

- Look at the MCYS Strategic Goals
- Have your say—comment on the Strategic goals and make your comments

The Strategic Directions 2008-2012 are available at: <http://www.gov.on.ca/children/graphics/244264.pdf>

- The Ministry is welcoming comments at the following address: RealizingPotential.mcys@ontario.ca

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PCMH UPDATE

PCMH saw a very busy month in January with very exciting outcomes for families across the Province. We are excited by the support we are receiving and feel that the future is promising for all of us who struggle with the issues of child and youth mental health diagnoses.

We need to give some very special thanks to some people who have been leaders for us this past month and who have helped tremendously in paving the path we all wish to travel down to make our children's futures promising.

Don Buchanan of The McMaster Child Health Research Institute. Don continues to provide excellent guidance and shows a passion for families and his eagerness to help us all is always appreciated.

Cathy Dandy, The Family and Youth Engagement Director of Kinark has been a valuable source of support and guidance in helping us particularly with our Press Conference held this month, as well as Kinark offering their support.

Gordon Floyd, Executive Director of Children's Mental Health Ontario shows us compassion and leadership

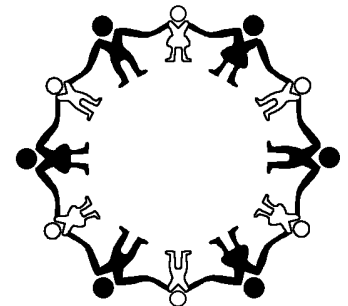
whenever we meet and discuss and is always willing to help and shows us daily that the essence of his work has families at the centre. The staff at CMHO as well has been a source of support and their willingness to participate and help us in our projects allows us to achieve so much more than we originally hoped possible.

All the staff of the Provincial Centre of Excellence at CHEO are second to none. Their compassion, knowledge, and support has helped PCMH in ways that words cannot explain. Special thanks to Executive Director, Dr. Ian Manion, and Dr. Simon Davidson for their care and guidance.

We also need to give a very special thanks to Rick Arseneau and Sandra Dunne of The George Hull Centre who provide their services voluntarily. They have been a remarkable!

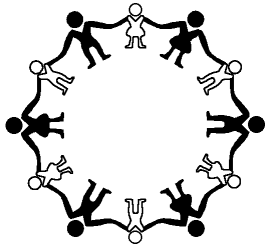
There are so many parents, volunteers who give daily and we also need to mention our strong community leaders who lead our peer support groups and provide much needed com-

fort to those parents in their local communities, without them, our work would not be nearly as important - Deb Hems, Julie Broomer, Liz Nickason, Sonia Melnyk, Andrea Betts, Yolanda Gallo, Sean Quigley, Heather Bishop, Gaby Wass, alima Saad, Judy Coulman.



SOME FACTS PRESENTED AT PRESS CONFERENCE

- ◆ For every \$1 spent on early intervention \$7 saved
- ◆ Over 654,000 children suffer from mental illness in Ontario
- ◆ Suicide is the second leading cause of death amongst 10-19 year olds; 90% have diagnosable, treatable mental illness; suicide rates on the rise
- ◆ Economic burden of mental illness \$22 billion



PRESS CONFERENCE

On January 13, 2009 three parents and one youth from The New Mentality spoke at Queen's Park in a Press Conference addressing the vital need for support for the Child and Youth Mental Health System in the upcoming provincial budget.

Key reports were cited including the Roots of Violence, Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the Auditor General's Report. All these reports show and support the profound need for early interven-

tion and treatment programs and funding to be injected into these areas if we are to truly combat both the social and economic burden of mental health disorders and their impact on families, youth, and communities.

The Press Conference was met with great success, and there were stories featured on Global News, Omni News, The Toronto Star, The Toronto Sun, as well as papers affiliated with these publications across the Province.

PCMH is continuing to capitalize on this most important Press Conference and continues to meet with members of Provincial Parliament to continue to promote the family-centred and family-driven care message.

We were so pleased to have joined with the New Mentality in this initiative and plan to include our youth in many more projects as they are at the heart of our families.

"Mouth rinse Oro-Min which comes from Germiphene Corporation in Brantford Ontario found to be helpful in preventing tooth decay from psychotropic drugs"

F.O.R.C.E. of British Columbia, A Roundtable

Keli Anderson of F.O.R.C.E. British Columbia presented to a roundtable of approximately 27 guests the success and models that her agency uses to support families in British Columbia. It was a day filled with interesting and valuable information and we left with a feeling of renewed vision that we can indeed accomplish such needed change and involvement of the family in this important collaboration with

government, service agencies, community, and professionals to indeed motivate some much needed positive change.

The F.O.R.C.E website:

www.bckidsmentalhealth.org

Keli also shared with us some interesting information she has learned with her personal experiences regarding the effects

of dental damage due to some of the psychotropic drugs that many of our children take. She has found that ***mouth rinse Oro-Min which comes from Germiphene Corporation in Brantford Ontario*** has been proven to reduce the risk of tooth decay from psychotropic drugs. Many of Keli's advice and models will prove to be useful to PCMH and we will keep you posted as we proceed.

Brag about your child's accomplishments!

Submit to:
admin@pcmh.ca

We want to see poetry, art, hear stories, anything that will celebrate their accomplishments and how spectacular they are! They all deserve celebrating—lets share all our wonderful stories!

BRAG BOARD

This is a new section we wish to promote. Lets celebrate and spotlight our kids special talents. This month we spotlight two special girls, both aged 12, both with Bipolar Disorder, and both leaders before their time willing to stand in front of the issues surrounding Mental Illness to show people, they are no different and stigma does not belong with them or others like them!

Erynn Quigley, one of the National Faces of Mental Illness in 2007 has an amazing youtube video discussing things from her perspective. Her words are inspirational, and her willingness to be a National Face of Mental Illness shows that she will be a leader among her peers. Check out her video at: www.squeekywheel.com and help her celebrate her success!

Emily Cannon has been advocating for children since the ripe old age of 7! She tells her story with a truth and transparency that can only be admired. Here is an excerpt from her school speech, to be read in front of the entire school:

"I have a mental disorder, trouble in my brain, but I don't think that makes me so different I should have no friends. I am lucky, I have friends here, but others don't—why?" If only we had the answer to that one Emily!

PCMH Study

PCMH has been distributing parent information sheets. Our goal is to identify and unify as many families as we can across the province to grow our base of support and network as well as to raise the voice for all families.

The information sheet asks the question: If you could change one thing about the system that would make a difference in your child's life, what would it be?

We know there are complex issues surrounding the life of a

child with a diagnosed mental disorder, but we want you to name the most important to you. We are hoping that this survey will show a clear picture of what the unique priorities are to families. Not economists, not professionals, not doctors, not pharmaceuticals, just families. We hope to be able to release this as a study, to demonstrate what families need, what they want, and that they are indeed the experts in how to make their children's lives better.

For this to be a success, we need as many responses as we can get. Promote it, answer it, submit it. Give to your agencies, ask them to distribute to families who could benefit from the growing support network of PCMH.

For an information sheet and survey please email:

admin@pcmh.ca

All support leaders—please encourage your members to fill in and submit.

Our President, Sylvia Naumovski

September 2008 brought Sylvia Naumovski to the PCMH Board as President. She has shown strong leadership and brought a re-vitalization to PCMH. So lets get to know her a little bit:

Sylvia was born and raised in Toronto. In 1980 she received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from York University. From 1982 until 2005 she accompanied her husband abroad and has worked in such cities as Mos-

cow, Atlanta, Baghdad, Iraq, Ottawa, Regina, Toronto, and Woking. She has obtained a diploma in Volunteer Management from Humber College and has been an active member of The George Hull Centre Parent's Association. She is also involved with Madbakh, and supports a group of Somaian-Canadian women helping the East-African Community. In February 2008 she was appointed to sit on the Consumer and Advocate Network

(CAN) one of the committees advising the Provincial Centre of Excellence at CHEO.

Sylvia's commitment to this organization is shown in her dedication to the work, her tireless efforts, and the care she shows each and every member of the community she meets. We are lucky to have her and welcome her and her vision!

**Help PCMH
release their
study showing
what families
need. We need
your input!**

What's NEW

We welcome our newest Support Group Chapter—NIAGARA/ST.CATHARINES. Welcome Andrea and Sonia – two remarkable women who are giving of themselves to support others who face the challenges they have and we welcome them aboard.

Tell us what is new with you—what would you like to see here? Lets list community

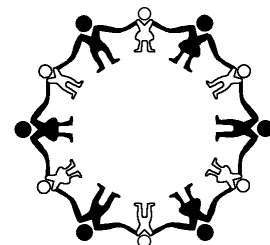
events, talent shows, conferences—what is new in your community with regards to mental health issues, what is new in the province we should mention—lets hear from you

Email us:

admin@pcmh.ca

This is YOUR newsletter—we want to make it about you.

What are your suggestions?



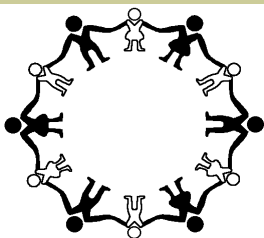
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**New web address
www.pcmh.ca**

**New look and information
coming soon to the website!**



Together we can make a difference

Parents for Children's Mental Health is a provincial, non-profit, organization committed to supporting, empowering, and educating parents and community reducing stigma and raising awareness surrounding the complex issues of Child and Youth Mental Health Illness. Through programs and initiatives, families remain at the core of PCMH's mandate and mission, and promoting the family voice and family-centred and family-drive care at the centre of our objectives.

To EDUCATE, To EMPOWER, To SUPPORT

Become a member—lets work together!

COMING UP—SAVE THE DATE

**Our April Conference/
Parents Supporting Par-
ents Workshop is com-
ing!!!!**

Save the Date:

April 25, 2009

**At the Living Arts Centre
in Mississauga.**

New FORMAT

New PROGRAM

We are so excited about the plans of our upcoming workshop. It is shaping up to be a day filled with information, learning opportunities, networking with other families and parents and having time to support one another and learn about the many ways we are changing.

This year we are pleased to announce that there will be a youth component to our Conference. Again, in partnership with The New Mentality, sessions will be offered specifically geared at youth and their unique issues. This gives them a chance to meet and network with other youth, learn about programs and projects they may like to become involved with, and empower them and surround them with support.

Full program details to be released February, but a hint at what is to come:

Guest Speaker Susan Hess, Past President of PCMH.

Plenary Presenter Gordon Floyd, Executive Director, CMHO

Some sessions and speakers confirmed:

Lindsay Moir to continue to talk to us about special education.

Spencer Brennan brings three new sessions this year.

Cathy Dandy will talk to us about effective public advocacy and how to be election ready and recognizing other key political markers and how to capitalize on them.

Don Buchanan is going to speak about peer support groups and facilitation and the benefits of networks.

Two of our parents who have completed all levels—Halima Saad and Beth Doyle are going to present and we are excited about featuring them.

More to come including some surprises—can't let it all out of the bag here!!!!