



Letter from the Director:

Daniel G. Scott

We started off 2010 with our Academic Program review and three visiting faculty, Bruce Ryan, Professor Emeritus from Guelph, Hans Skott-Myhre from Brock University and Leslie Saxon from UVic linguistics department. They interviewed faculty, students and staff as well as consulting senior university administrators to assess our school. Their initial report has been positive and they will also make some suggestions for improvements. We expect a draft report by mid February. Thanks to everyone who spent time with the reviewers, answered their questions and created such a positive impression of the school.

We have a number of new initiatives underway. We are about to launch a new open source on-line journal The International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies assisted by the UVic library. We are also in the early stages of a hiring process for a new faculty member for the school.

Have a good semester.

Daniel Scott

Board sets aside private for-profit childcare option

The Ring, December 2009

Board sets aside private for-profit childcare option
Private childcare has been set aside for the time being as a solution to the challenge of facilitating childcare options for UVic faculty, students and staff.

The university's board of governors passed a motion at its Nov. 24 meeting to defer consideration of private sector childcare as an option at this time. The board did not mandate an alternative approach, and confirmed that the issue of childcare at the university should be dealt with by the administration in the context of the normal priority and budget setting processes.

While acknowledging that childcare is "an enormously challenging issue," board chair Ray Protti made it clear that it's up to UVic's administration to determine how the issue is addressed in the future.

"Although the board has not mandated a major investment or process, we will continue to move forward on childcare," says Vice-President Academic and Provost Jamie Cassels. "We recognize the importance of the issue and will continue to explore ways to address it."

In its report to the board, the administration acknowledged widespread opposition to for-profit childcare from childcare organizations and UVic employee groups.

Cassels says that the administration will look for ways to improve facilities at the current childcare sites, including a new roof and playground; seek opportunities to better integrate related educational and research programs into the childcare operation; and continue to search for cost-effective ways to increase capacity.

In addition to parents' fees, the university currently allocates more than \$500,000 per year to support on-campus childcare. Vice-President Finance and Operations Gayle Gorrill advised the board that while there was "not a lot of incremental funds" to invest

in expanded childcare, "we are going to investigate opportunities both on- and off-campus to expand and enhance our childcare options."

Among some of the options that might be considered are partnerships with nearby neighbourhood childcare facilities, in-home childcare within Family Student Housing and other models of community childcare delivery.

"We welcome input and suggestions and will be discussing possible childcare options with stakeholders over the next several months," says Gorrill.

UVic Childcare Services currently has 154 spaces in a variety of programs. But like other universities, demand for childcare outstrips availability and as of August there were about 180 children on the waiting list. UVic currently ranks in the top third in a survey of 22 Canadian universities in the per-capita provision of childcare.

At its earlier meeting in September, the board requested UVic's administration to conduct due diligence on the private childcare company Kids & Co as a way of meeting the additional needs.



In its report to the board, the administration acknowledged widespread opposition to for-profit childcare from childcare organizations and UVic employee groups. The report also indicated that while more childcare spaces are needed, committing resources to any expansion has to be considered in light of UVic's other commitments and strategic priorities.

Don't forget to thank a youth worker Governments must recognize value of those who do this demanding job

By Jennifer Charlesworth and Daniel Scott,
Special to Times Colonist, November 4, 2009

Most of us made it through childhood and adolescence thanks to a little help from an adult in our lives. Parents, grandparents, older siblings, family friends — they get us through the tough spots when we're young.

But some of us didn't have that help when we needed it. And had problems too big and complex for us or for our friends and family to manage. We needed someone else who cared, and had the skills and know-how to make a difference.

If we were lucky, there was an agency or a community service that employed a youth worker who did care — enough to change the course of our life, or the life of someone we knew and loved. Take a moment tomorrow — Thank a Youth Worker Day — to think about the important difference a youth worker can make in a young life.

Caring people work in every field, of course, and all of them deserve thanks. But our involvement with the University of Victoria's School of Child and Youth Care and the Federation of Community Social Services of B.C. has given us the privilege of meeting the extraordinary people going into youth work. Their commitment and dedication make all the difference in an adolescent's life.

In schools and social agencies, in correctional facilities and hospitals and in the community, youth workers are there for children in B.C.

It's demanding work. Some children and youth, often through circumstances they do not control, have diverse and complex needs. They might be dealing with family trauma and breakdown, challenges in school, behavioural issues getting them in trouble with the law, or problems with drugs and alcohol.

If we were lucky, there was an agency or a community service that employed a youth worker who did care — enough to change the course of our life, or the life of someone we knew and loved.

Youth workers take the time to understand the young people who need their help. They know the resources available in their community. They work to strengthen and build a youth's supports while advocating for their interests, pushing against the doors that are slow to open.

Children need that support to grow up to be healthy, happy and connected adults. The research is there, as are the testimonials from those who have experienced the difference that one adult can make in a young life.

There are many ways to thank youth workers, starting with the simplest. If you know someone doing good work with children or youth on any front, thank them. It will be appreciated.



But there's a bigger way of showing our gratitude. Across Canada, all levels of government are looking closely at spending right now, deciding where the priorities lie and what services will be cut.

They're making decisions based on what they believe is important to you. So please make sure they know how much you value youth workers and other social services supporting children and youth. Let them know that early care and intervention is an investment in the future.

Yes, there's a cost to funding a youth worker to stay in regular contact with an isolated and troubled teenager. But the payback is enormous — both in real dollars saved on social spending later on, and in the boost any child gets from having a caring, skilled adult in their life.

The politicians need to hear from you, now more than ever. The past two months have seen a loss of services to children and youth in B.C. due to government cut-backs, with worse to come next year and the year after. Don't wait any longer to let your political representatives know the value you place on maintaining support for B.C.'s children and youth.

We can't afford to lose any more vital services. Nor can we afford to risk losing the experienced, passionate youth workers who we count on to do their great work, helping B.C. continue to be "the best place on Earth" for coming generations.

Youth workers deserve our appreciation. They also deserve our support to help them do their job, and our commitment to see that the funding for their work carries on even through the ups and downs of a recession. Many of B.C.'s most challenged children wouldn't get

the chance for a new start on life were it not for the hard work and dedication of youth workers. We can all be very thankful for their efforts.

Jennifer Charlesworth is the executive director of the Federation of Community Social Services of B.C., whose 117 member agencies include many doing child and youth work. Daniel Scott is an associate professor and the director of the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria.

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Living with a mentally ill parent

Students create unique support program for teens

By Melanie Tromp Hoover

Winter and Zaharieva. Photo: Robie Liscomb
Two UVic students are putting the power of shared experience to work next term with an innovative pilot program aimed at youth in the greater Victoria community.



Winter and Zaharieva. Photo: Robie Liscomb

Undergraduate students Lilia Zaharieva and Rachel Winter will be working with the BC Schizophrenia Society (BCSS) in January to create and co-facilitate a psycho-educational support group for teenagers living with parents who suffer from mental illness.

"I think this program is really exciting because it will empower the youth involved to become a major part of their own healing process," says Winter, who is currently completing her third-year practicum for her child and youth care degree with the BCSS.

Both students had been looking to get involved with the BCSS, but it wasn't until BCSS Executive Director Hazel Meredith handed Zaharieva a copy of Michelle D. Sherman's book, *I'm Not Alone* that she knew where she fit in as a volunteer with the organization. "It happened so organically—I had a look through

the book and it said everything that I could have wanted to hear as a child growing up with a mentally ill parent," says Zaharieva, a third-year English and philosophy student. "As soon as I finished this book I knew I wanted to share the ideas in it with a larger community."

Zaharieva began research for a program proposal and discovered that somewhere between 20 and 25 per cent of all teenagers live in homes with a family member who has a mental illness. She also read that this particular age group of youth is at high risk for developing mental illness themselves due to both genetics and usually unstable home environments.

"Right now there's no direct support for this group of teenagers in Victoria or even on Vancouver Island," says Zaharieva. "In fact, there are barely any resources of this type available in Canada.

"My main goal is to raise awareness, because people don't talk directly about how mental illness affects youth and yet it's so common—it blows me away what a difference the concept of shared experience makes."

With the author's permission, Zaharieva and Winter repurposed the topics covered in Sherman's book into eight weeks of supportive, pro-active curriculum that will culminate in a group rock climbing session.

"We'll be covering topics that explore feelings, self-care strategies, safety plans and communication strategies," explains Winter.

The pilot program will be run out of the BCSS office and is open to all youth living with parents who have mental health issues—although the material covered focuses on coping tools common to families affected by schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and chronic depression.

"Right now there's no direct support for this group of teenagers in Victoria or even on Vancouver Island," says Zaharieva. "In fact, there are barely any resources of this type available in Canada.

"This group will give five to eight youths a safe space to process their thoughts in an environment that is about them rather than their parents," says Winter. "It will help these teens break the stigma around mental illness by learning how to educate their friends and others about their experience.

"Many are already little parents themselves, so this program is also a chance for these youth to have fun and just be their age."

January's pilot program received a \$1,200 grant

from the Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children's youth-initiative committee and a tremendous amount of support from high school counsellors in the Greater Victoria area.

For more information or to get involved, contact the BC Schizophrenia Society: 250-384-4225 or execdir.bcsc@shaw.ca



A special thank you to **Sweet Surrender Cakes** for the delicious cake. <http://sweetsurrendercakes.com/>

antidote: Multiracial and Indigenous Girls and Women's Network is the recipient of the **Award of Excellence for Cultural Heritage and Diversity** from the BC Representative for Children and Youth. A community grassroots organization, antidote emerged from a participatory action research project with Dr. Jo-Anne Lee (women's studies) and included faculty from the School of Child and Youth Care. A not-for-profit organization of over 150 Victoria girls and women of diverse cultures and backgrounds, antidote has a unique inter-generational structure that uses creative multi-media approaches (documentaries, theatre, photography, poetry, art) to raise public awareness while building leadership skills and social justice activism among members. Info: www.antidotetnetwork.org
The Ring, Ringers, November 2009

Events:

What's up Doc? Research Presentation

Doug Magnuson, Associate Professor,

School of Child & Youth Care

Monday, January 25, 2010

12:30pm - 1:15pm

Human & Social Development Building, Room B141

In recognition of the **2010 UVic Alumni Week**, the School of Child & Youth Care will be hosting a reception for alumni on **Tuesday, February 2, 2010.**

What's up Doc? Research Presentation

Sibylle Artz, Professor, School of Child & Youth Care

Monday, February 22, 2010

12:30pm - 1:15pm

Human & Social Development Building, Room B141

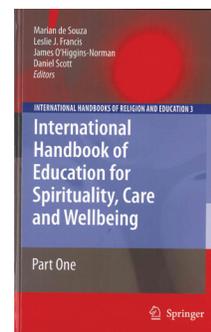
Congratulations to **Sheila Porteous**, current SCYC undergraduate student for successful publication in the Relational Child and Youth Care Practice. The abstract of the article, entitled "Working in the Youth Criminal Justice System", can be viewed online at <http://www.cyc-net.org/journals/rcycp.html> Look for Vol. 22 #2 Summer 2009

Congratulations to **Jonathon Morris**, current SCYC MA student, winner of the 2010 Andy Farquharson Teaching Assistant Award.

"International Handbook of Education for Spirituality, Care and Wellbeing."

Edited by: M. de Souza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins-Norman, D. Scott.

This book explores the dynamic relationship between education and wellbeing. It examines the theory underpinning the practice of education in different societies where spirituality and care are believed to be at the heart of all educational experiences. The book recognizes that, regardless of the context or type of educational experience, education is a caring activity in which the development of the whole person - body, mind and spirit - is a central aim for teachers and educators in both formal and informal learning. <http://www.springer.com/new>



What's up Doc? Research Presentation

Gordon Barnes, Professor, School of Child and Youth Care

Monday, March 15, 2010

12:30pm - 1:15pm

Human & Social Development Building, Room B141

Making connections. . .

16th National Child and Youth Care Conference, Winnipeg, MB May 26-28, 2010

http://www.garthgoodwin.info/National_Conference.html