

PREVpectives

Networks of Centres of Excellence—New Initiative  Volume 2, Issue 2

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PREVNet's Third Annual Conference—Creating a World Without Bullying!



From left to right: Scientific Co-Directors Dr. Wendy Craig and Dr. Debra Pepler, and Partnerships Manager Dr. Joanne Cummings

PREVNet's Third Annual Conference was a huge success with over 350 participants in attendance including the majority of our network consisting of 54 Canadian Researchers and 43 National Organizations. This year's conference was held at 89 Chestnut in Toronto, Ontario from May 27—29.

During the first two days of the conference, PREVNet researchers and member organizations came together to network, celebrate past accomplishments, and share research questions that will become part of PREVNet's research agenda as we move forward.

Scientific Directors Drs. Debra Pepler and Wendy Craig urged Network Researchers and Partners to roll up their sleeves and actively participate in the small and large group discussions focused on developing and refining the PREVNet research agenda. PREVNet researchers and partners heeded the call, and two days of animated and productive discussions followed.

Members of the public joined the conference during the second evening at a networking reception. As well as Drs. Craig and Pepler's opening address, the plenary session on the "Public Day" included several highlights. The first Girl Guides of Canada "Girls United Badge" was presented to three girls who had completed a series of activities to foster healthy peer relationships, designed by PREVNet researcher Dr. Tina Daniels and graduate student, Danielle Quigley.

Shaftesbury Films underlined their commitment to Canadian children by donating \$20,000 to PREVNet out of the proceeds of the 2008 Shaw Rocket Award they had won for their television show, "Life With Derek"



Mr. Wayne Strongman of Tapestry and children from the Regent Park School of Music performing at the Wine and Cheese Reception



Dr. Tina Daniels, Carleton University and girls from the Girl Guides who received the Girls United badge

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(cont'd from page 1)

Coverage of PREVNet's Third Annual Conference

which airs on the Family Channel. PREVNet had consulted with Family Channel and Shaftesbury in the development of an episode about bullying that was aired during Bullying Awareness Week in November 2007. Shaftesbury Films was the lead sponsor of our 3rd Annual Conference and we were honoured to have Scott Garvie, Senior Vice-President and one of the Executive Producers of "Life with Derek", join us for the presentation of their donation.

The morning plenary session concluded with a deeply affecting and

unforgettable presentation by Mr. Mike Neuts about his son Myles. Myles Neuts died tragically as a result of a bullying incident in an Ontario school. Mr. Neuts told his story and expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the audience for their collective commitment to bullying prevention. The audience responded with deep gratitude and a renewed commitment to make a positive difference in children's lives. Participants spent the remainder of the day in their choice of three workshops from eight streams: Aboriginal Chil-

dren and Youth, Children's Rights, Cyberbullying, Girls Aggression, High Risk Youth, Parent, Sport, and Youth Engagement.

We were also fortunate to receive generous corporate support from Rogers Communications Inc. and Microsoft Canada, for the second year in a row. Our sincere thanks to all of our corporate partners for supporting the conference and contributing to making Canada a better place for Canada's children and youth.



From left to right: Dr. Wendy Craig, Dr. Joanne Cummings, Mr. Mike Neuts and Dr. Debra Pepler



The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education, Government of Ontario



PREVNet's Networking Dinner held at the University Club of Toronto



Artwork displayed at the conference courtesy of the children of Winston Churchill Elementary School

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Aboriginal Speakers Help Set the Tone for Partners Day at Third Annual Conference

One of the goals of PREVNet's Third Annual Conference was to bring community organizations and researchers together to share, celebrate our accomplishments, and plan for the future. Three powerful Aboriginal women extemporaneously shared their personal stories and learnings.

Ms. Shelley Cardinal (Canadian Red Cross and member of the PREVNet Board of Directors) opened her talk by admitting that in the past she had regarded the university research enterprise with scepticism and reluctance based on the longstanding experience of Aboriginal people. Traditionally, researchers have parachuted into Aboriginal communities to take measurements related to the researchers' own research questions and world views. The researchers quantified problems in the communities, yet they ignored the strengths. Researchers would leave as soon as the data were collected, without making a positive contribution to the host community, leaving a lingering sense of exploitation in their wake.

Shelley explained that when she was first contacted by PREVNet's Scientific Co-Directors, her deep reluctance was

overcome through the experience of patiently getting to know Dr. Debra Pepler and Dr. Wendy Craig. Shelley discovered that she could deeply resonate with their values and aspirations as individuals first, and then as scientists. Through this story, Shelley powerfully communicated one of the central themes of the PREVNet endeavour, that the relationship building process is an essential pre-requisite to any research collaboration that will ultimately bear fruit for participants.

Dr. Susan Dion (York University) told stories from her own life and the lives of Aboriginal girls that guided the crystallization of 'ethical learnings' that help to guide Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal people in their work together. Susan highlighted the processes that are providing the foundation for evaluating the Red Cross "Walking the Prevention Circle Program" for aboriginal communities.

Finally, Dr. Kathy Absolon (Wilfrid Laurier University) discussed her holistic way of understanding research as 'hunting and gathering' – that is, a process that starts with being intimately knowledgeable about a given landscape and with this knowledge as

a foundation, to sensitively scan the landscape in order to discern and discriminate its various features and the complex relationships amongst them.



From left to right: Dr. Kathy Absolon, Dr. Susan Dion and Ms. Shelley Cardinal

These three aboriginal experts delivered insightful and straight-from-the-heart presentations, with their interweaving of personal stories and professional experiences. Their perspective created a powerful impact on PREVNet researchers and partners, providing insights into research approaches within aboriginal communities and the value of bridging the gap between science and practice. They set the stage for a productive day of collaboration for all PREVNet partners, in which everyone's personal, cultural, and professional perspective was respected and honoured.

Update of PREVNet's Current Activities

With a network consisting of Researchers and National Organizations there are new projects being developed everyday. Our current activities include:

- Developing collaborations between PREVNet Researchers and UNICEF Canada, Respect In Sport, the National Ballet School of Canada, YouCAN,

- The ongoing planning of specific initiatives with Family Channel, Girl Guides of Canada, Media Awareness Network, Zapdramatic, the Canadian School Boards Association,

- The ongoing evaluation of Elijah's Kite Opera of Tapestry and the Girls United Program of Girl Guides Canada,

- The development of a Social Network Analysis of PREVNet and an evaluation process for earning PREVNet's Seal of Approval,

- The ongoing activities of PREVNet's Working Groups



PREVNet Scientific Co-Directors Receive CPA Award

On June 12, 2008, at its Annual Convention, the Canadian Psychological Association honoured the “best and brightest in the Discipline - those whose quest for excellence sets standards by which all psychologists are measured”. The Award for Distinguished Contributions to Public or Community Service is awarded to recognize outstanding contributions in serving the public through the application of knowledge and practical skills.

The award recognizes the prodigious work Drs. Craig and Pepler have done to raise Canada’s consciousness about the issue of bullying and peer victimization. In the early 1990s, using remote

cameras to film children’s naturalistic interactions on school playgrounds, Drs. Pepler and Craig documented the prevalence and nature of school-yard bullying. Both researchers grasped the ethical and public mental health imperative to disseminate their research findings back to the community. As their research was published in international journals and they became world renowned scholars they never lost sight of the importance of changing practice in the real world of Canadian families, schools and community organizations.

In addition to an extensive and demanding ongoing program of re-

search for over fifteen years, Drs. Craig and Pepler traveled tirelessly, and generously contributed personal time to make presentations to community groups and professional gatherings. Their impact among Canadian educators, child and youth group leaders, coaches, law enforcement professionals and policy makers is truly changing the way adults think about and respond to bullying and peer victimization throughout the world. Drs. Craig and Pepler are held in the highest esteem by their academic colleagues both in Canada and abroad, as well as by Canadian government and community leaders.

PREVNet Welcomes New Partners to the Network

PREVNet is pleased to welcome new members and partners who have joined us in 2008.

PREVNet Board of Directors

Ms. Joanne Kates,
Camp Arowhon

Canadian Researchers:

Dr. Kathy Absolon,
Wilfred Laurier University

Dr. Nicholas Bala,
Queen’s University

Dr. Elizabeth Banister,
University of Victoria

Dr. Julian Barling,
Queen’s University

Dr. Sandy Hershcovis,
University of Winnipeg

Dr. Michelle Inness,
University of Alberta

Dr. Margaret Jackson,
Simon Fraser University

Dr. Depeng Jiang,
York University

Dr. Manon LeBlanc,
Bishop’s University

Dr. Jana Raver,
Queen’s University

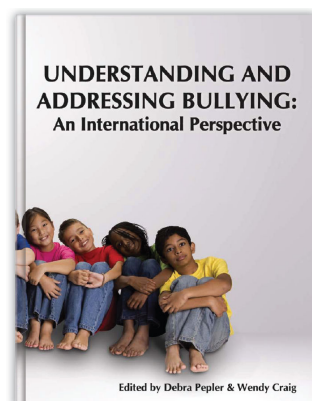
Dr. Dale Stack,
Concordia University

Dr. Anthony Volk,
Brock University

Canadian NGOs:

Mr. Michael Gibson,
Zapdramatic
<http://www.zapdramatic.com>

**As of 2008,
PREVNet includes
54 researchers
from 26
universities across
Canada and 43
national
community
organizations that
work with children
and youth.**



PREVNet’s First Book Available for Purchase

PREVNet is pleased to announce the release of the first volume in the PREVNet Series: Understanding and Addressing Bullying: An International Perspective. This volume is based on the workshops presented at PREVNet’s First Annual conference in May 2006.

Please look for the second volume of the PREVNet series, scheduled for release during Bullying Awareness Week, November 2008 based on the workshops from our Second Annual conference “Rise Up for Respectful Relationships!” in May 2007.

For more information and to order your copy of the first volume please visit:
<http://www.authorhouse.com/BookStore/ItemDetail~bookid~51727.aspx>