

# INSIGHTS

Volume 23 • Number 2 • Spring 2015

An inside look at the programs and services of Knowles Centre Inc.

## Self-confidence makes BeeJay a winner on and off the sports field



BeeJay's football story began in football season, as one might expect. But her story is really one of determination and confidence.

In the fading days of autumn 2014, BeeJay\* was enjoying a game of catch with some of the staff and boys from the Group Care Program. For BeeJay, this is a great way to spend some time. She has always enjoyed sports, and has taken part in organized hockey, basketball, volleyball, mixed martial arts, as well as plenty of unorganized sports.

On this day, Craig, a youth care worker, saw what speed and a strong throwing arm BeeJay had. In fact, she was showing up some of the boys—many almost a foot taller!—with her skills and ability. Craig joked that a pro team would want to sign her up. In reality, Craig knew a bit about female football because his sister is a coach always looking for good players. Since winter was fast approaching and the season was almost over, it would have

to wait. But BeeJay didn't forget.

Throughout the winter, BeeJay constantly reminded Alix, the recreation coordinator, that she wanted to join a team. As spring approached, BeeJay and Alix worked together to make it happen. Craig's sister invited BeeJay to join the East Side Eagles girls' team, and Alix and BeeJay

worked with Sports Manitoba and her referring social service agency to meet the cost of equipment and registration.

Finally in April 2015, BeeJay was thrilled to begin playing organized football. At first she was a little nervous about joining the team, but the coaches, especially Craig's sister

Kathy, and the rest of the team were happy to have her on their side.

Off the field, one of the team's first challenges is raising funds to buy new jerseys, so the girls no longer have to use the boys' old ones. The team is selling flavored popcorn, and BeeJay is committed to meeting her \$100 goal.

On field is where she likes it best. Although she comes across as a little shy at first, she is drawing on her sporting confidence. She joins the team for three practices and one game each week. BeeJay explains the demanding drills help everyone to get in shape, and learn to work together as a team. BeeJay is fearless on the field and eager to work together with her team to win.

*\*Name has been changed.*

The Board of Directors of



Invites you to attend our

### Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, June 10, 2015 at 12:00 noon

Richard Gooch Auditorium @ John G. Stewart School  
2065 Henderson Highway, Winnipeg, MB

All guests are invited to stay for a lunch prepared by the Culinary Arts Students following the meeting at Knowles Centre

RSVP by June 5th to (204) 339-1951 or [info@knowlescentre.org](mailto:info@knowlescentre.org)

# Students take on bullying with Day of Pink



John G. Stewart School Principal Trevor Holroyd stands in front of his signed pledge, committing to making our school a positive and safe place for all.

Over the last few years, students and staff of John G. Stewart School, located on the grounds of Knowles Centre, have held a bullying awareness week. This year we joined the Canadian Red Cross in their efforts to ensure that every child is treated with respect, by registering our school for Day of Pink. We joined thousands of others across the province by wearing pink shirts on Wed., April 8.

The original pink shirt day event was organized by David Shepherd and Travis Price of Berwick, NS. In 2007, they bought and distributed 50 pink shirts after Grade 9 student Charles McNeill was bullied for wearing a pink shirt on the first day of school. News of this went viral, and today Anti-Bullying Day (a.k.a. pink shirt day) is celebrated on various dates around the world. In 2012, the United Nations declared May 4 the official day; it is recognized by over 25 countries worldwide, such as the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Those who participate wear pink, blue, or purple shirts (depending on location) to symbolize a stand against bullying.

During our awareness week, students and staff took part in activities, including creating posters for the classrooms and the school bulletin

board, watching videos that led to classroom discussions on bullying, creating compliment cards to highlight peers' positive qualities, and playing compliment bingo. The thought-provoking movie BULLY was screened to the high school classes.

Statistics show that almost 60 percent of student-on-student bullying stops within 10 seconds if a peer intervenes. We witnessed this in our gym this spring when two students started picking on a third student. One of their peers walked over, before staff could, and told the students to stop picking on him. This stopped the bullying.

If nothing else this shows that even in this crazy mixed-up world one person can have a huge impact in someone's life. We can all make a difference.

*Contributed by Art Shaw, Day Treatment Support Worker*

## Treatment Foster Care Program

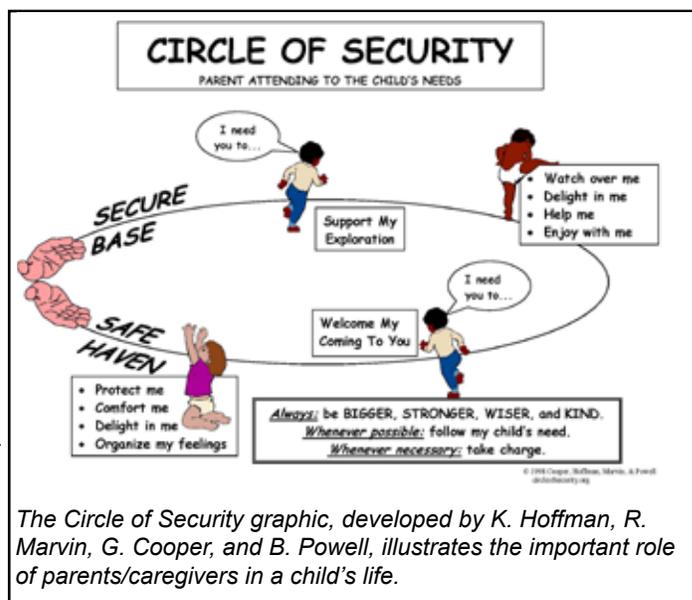
### Circle of Security Training strengthens attachments

Knowles Centre's Treatment Foster Care (TFC) program is continuing its commitment to the foster families and children by offering Circle of Security training. Pam Freeth, BSW, a clinical case manager with TFC, a certified trainer, is currently leading a second small group of foster parents through the weekly sessions. The first group completed their training in March 2015. Eventually, all foster parents will have received the training.

Circle of Security is a relationship-based, early-intervention program designed to enhance attachment security between parents/caregivers and children. Decades of research has confirmed that secure children exhibit increased empathy, greater self-esteem, better relationships with parents/caregivers and peers, enhanced school readiness, and an increased capacity to handle emotions more effectively when compared with children who are not secure.

Children who are living in foster care may have confusing patterns of interacting, often likely due to their early life experiences prior to coming to a foster parent's home. Often foster parents ask, 'Why is my foster child behaving in this way?' It can be very confusing sorting out exactly what the child needs.

With increased awareness, foster parents can better understand how the children's behaviour is related to past attachment patterns. With this training, foster parents are better equipped to recognize the children's needs around the circle.



The Circle of Security graphic, developed by K. Hoffman, R. Marvin, G. Cooper, and B. Powell, illustrates the important role of parents/caregivers in a child's life.

## Sexual Abuse Treatment Program

# Change and continued successes over the years

Knowles Centre's Sexual Abuse Treatment Program (SATP) began in 1989. For the last 15 years, Kristi Venton, SATP coordinator and therapist, has been the driving force behind the program. In this time, the United Way of Winnipeg has consistently funded the program so there is no cost to families.

Originally developed in partnership with Winnipeg CFS, the program is now independently operated by Knowles Centre. As well, the program has expanded its criteria to include working with young people past age 18, to age 21, as well as non-offending family members. "Previously clients who disclosed abuse later in their childhood might have only begun treatment when we had to transition them to adult services," explains Kristi. "Now I can build a positive and longer-term relationship with clients, which greatly impacts treatment."

There have been many successes over the years, Kristi says. "Young people have learned personal safety skills that are important to preventing future abuse. They have gone from feeling depressed to feeling happy and hopeful. Others with self-harming behaviours and suicidal thoughts have overcome these feelings. Many have become more confident and self-assured, are able to make new friends, and to trust again. Some clients have been able to forgive and some families reunify. Best of all, I've seen many go on to thrive."

Sexual abuse occurs more than people realize, says Kristi. She cites studies that show up to one in three people are sexually abused at some point but noted it is under-reported, especially by boys. It is incredibly helpful that people like Sheldon Kennedy and Theo Fleury have come forward. Still, we all have a responsibility to listen and believe children that come forward, to report suspicions and alle-

gations of abuse in a way that supports the child, and to inform ourselves of the risks.

The explosion of internet technology on computers, smart phones, and smart TVs exposes children to many more dangers and access to those who would exploit them from virtually anywhere in the world, says Kristi. But it also has great resource for parents and children. In particular, Kristi recommends the Canadian Centre for Child Protection ([www.protectchildren.ca](http://www.protectchildren.ca)) site for parents as well as young people.

In addition, Kristi offers some additional tips for families:

- Parents need to educate themselves about the benefits and risk of online activity
- Teach children how to use technology safely and what their own responsibilities are when online
- Set age-appropriate guidelines for internet use and monitor children's online activities
- Use technology to your advantage



*Kristi Venton, SATP coordinator/therapist*

with password protections, parental controls, filtering software, monitored child-friendly sites

- Talk about internet safety together and keep the communication ongoing

## PUT THE FUN BACK IN FUNDRAISING!

### Join the 2015 Knowles Centre Charity Croquet Classic

on Tuesday, August 18, 2015 at the historic Fort Gibraltar

Enjoy an afternoon of croquet, a great dinner, and tons of FUN!

**SPACE IS LIMITED. REGISTER NOW TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT.**

Registration is only \$350 for a team of 4

Contact us at 204-339-4692 or [croquet@knowlescentre.org](mailto:croquet@knowlescentre.org)



Sponsored by:



## Knowles Centre hosts Gabor Maté for ADD / ADHD conference

Over 300 people attended the Knowles Centre conference featuring physician, speaker and best-selling author Dr. Gabor Maté on Thurs., May 14. "Scattered Minds: Living with and caring for individuals diagnosed with ADD / ADHD" addressed an alternative model to ADHD rather than a solely genetic model. In particular, Maté believes the human brain is significantly influenced and shaped by the environment, including increasing stresses in the lives of children and adults. And by changing the environment, we can change the affects of the condition.

To receive notices of future conferences, please email your contact information to [info@knowlescentre.org](mailto:info@knowlescentre.org).



Dr. Gabor Maté

## Kids for kids

Students on the Youth in Philanthropy (YiP) committee at Miles MacDonnell Collegiate selected Knowles Centre's recreation program to receive \$1,000 in funds.



YiP is an initiative of The Winnipeg Foundation whereby students research and select local organizations to receive support.

## Bernie Clement & PEMBCORP keeping youth on the go

Special thanks to the Bernie Clement Foundation and Pembcorp Auto Group (Pembina Dodge Chrysler Jeep) for the generous donation toward the purchase of a new van for our Group Care Treatment Program. Reliable transportation helps us get kids to appointments as well as camp and recreation outings.



## Spring cleaning? ReCYCLE your bike at Knowles Centre

Please consider donating your used bicycle to Knowles Centre. Clients will ensure that the bikes get lots more use in the city and at camp!

To ensure safety, bikes should be in good working order, or require only minor repairs.

Contact Alix at [info@knowlescentre.org](mailto:info@knowlescentre.org) to make arrangements for pick-up or delivery.



## Staff News

Knowles Centre welcomed two new clinical therapists in April. **Andrea Moore-Melville**, BA (Hons), MEd, and **Liz Pruden-Skiba**, BSW. Both bring experience working with at-risk youth.

Knowles Centre said goodbye to some employees in March and April. We thank all for their contributions to Knowles Centre, and wish them the best as they advance their careers.

• **Roberta Bartolo**, a clinical therapist working with clients in our Group Care Program, left after four years

- **Marlise Schwartz**, a youth care worker, left the Group Care program
- **Stephanie Olivier** and **Jose Menjivar**, support workers, and **Megan Pryden**, case manager left the SAIL program

Knowles Centre was saddened to learn of the passing of **Rev. Bill Dixon** in March 2015. Bill first served as a counsellor, and became Superintendent in Nov. 1959 until he left in 1964. During his tenure, Bill had to deal with the loss of the original dorm to a fire in Dec. 1959, and the opening of new units two years later.

*Insights* is published by:



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Comments, suggestions and inquiries are welcome.