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I thought I’d share my feelings about a recent trip out to Telemiá Camp to attend a “back-to-school” meet and greet and support program planning with school staff. Lois, the school principal invited me and said to be at the boat ramp at 1PM to get a ride down the river to the camp. Since arriving in Fort Providence in April, I have attended a few community events, none of which seemed to begin at the exact time posted, so the one time I was two minutes late, wouldn’t you know it,

the boats left as scheduled. I guess that’s a “school” thing. Anyway, as accommodating as Fort Providence community members are, I was offered a ride by another boater and took my first small journey on The “Mighty Mackenzie.” The school provided a scrumptious whitefish and pickerel lunch before breaking off into planning groups. The most memorable session of the day was with the dedicated language immersion teachers as I sat entranced by the rolling, melodious strains of the Slavey language. It is encouraging to see the work being done in this area and I know it has been decades of efforts to maintain and revitalize Aboriginal languages. I have not traveled far and wide but where I have been, it seems that the NWT is far ahead of other parts of Canada in these efforts. At the end of the day we returned to the water for the short journey home. I explained to the boat-man that this was my first trip on the “big river” and he took the long route home, up past the town and around the islands just off the shore, and I think it is safe



to say this may be a small beginning toward understanding the importance of this river to the people of Dehcho and its role in their life, from the fish under the bow of the boat, and the ripe juicy berries on the banks, to the eagles soaring overhead as we ploughed through the waves under the big “Merc’s” power. Spending even a short afternoon in the camp, on the land, and on the water soothed my spirit and gave me deeper understanding of what is needed to support and help the people of Dehcho. Mahsi.

Gloria Miller, Community Social Service Worker
Fort Providence, NT

Injury Prevention : Thunderstorms

The season of thunderstorms and lightning has arrived and we all need to learn how to protect ourselves from strikes. If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you. “When the thunder roars go indoors! A safe shelter is a substantial building or an enclosed metal-topped vehicle. Stay in safe shelter at least 30 minutes after you hear the last clap of thunder. When indoors, stay off corded phones, computer and electrical equipment. Avoid plumbing, including sinks, bath and faucets. Stay away from windows, doors and stay off porches. Do not lie on concrete floors, and do not lean on concrete walls. If you are outdoors immediately get off elevated areas such as hills, mountains ridges or peaks. NEVER lie flat on the ground. NEVER use a tree for shelter. NEVER use a cliff or rocky overhang for shelter. Immediately get out and away from ponds, lakes rivers, and other bodies of water. Stay away from objects that conduct electricity (barbed wire fences, power lines).

If someone is struck the victim does not carry an electric charge and may need immediate medical attention. Monitor the victim and begin CPR or AED, if necessary. Lightning strikes can be fatal, create multiple burns and some victims may suffer from irreversible brain damage (short term memory, irritability, personality change, ringing in the ears, seizure-like activity, difficulty carrying conversation).

Always to remember only about 10% of those struck are killed 90% survive. But of the survivors, many suffer life long severe injuries and disabilities. If you can't get to proper lightning shelters, at least avoid the most dangerous locations and activities:

1. Avoid higher elevations
2. Avoid wide open areas, including sports fields and beaches
3. Avoid tall isolated objects like trees, poles, and light posts
4. Avoid water related activities: boating, swimming and fishing
5. avoid golfing, golf carts
6. Avoid open vehicles like farm tractors, riding lawnmowers

Here are some “Lighting Safety Myths and Truths “.

MYTHS Lightning never strikes the same place

FACT Lightning often strikes the same place repeatedly.

MYTHS Rubber soled shoes protect you from being struck.

FACT You can be struck by lightning if you wear rubber soled shoes

MYTH A lightning victim is electrified. If you touch them you'll be electrocuted.

FACT The human body does not store electricity. It is perfectly safe to touch a lightning victim.

MYTH Structures with metal, or metal on your body (jewellery, cell phone, MP3 players, watches) attract lightning.

FACT When lightning threatens seek a safe shelter, don't waste time removing metal. While metal does not attract lightning, it does conduct it so stay away from metal fences railings.

Daniele Gregoire, Health Promotions Officer Fort Providence

Source: NOAA National Weather Office



FASD Lunch Conference

In June, the community of Fort Providence had a guest speaker from Yellowknife. Sandra Malcolm from the Department of Social Services gave a lunch conference on FASD. Approximately 80 community members came out to enjoy a lunch of Spaghetti with meatballs, salads, desserts, juice and ice cream floats.

The luncheon was a great success, thank you, to all the community members who came and participated.



Lynda Gwynn

My name is Lynda Gwynn and I am traveling up from Fort Nelson to Fort Liard on a weekly basis to do counselling for DHSSA. I have been working with people from Fort Liard

for the past 13 years, however, this is the first time that I am the one making the trip. I am a registered Social Worker in Private Practice. I have been working in the field for 36 years and still loving it.

My passions are my 11 grandchildren, Cross country skiing and camping.



Nelma De Oliveira

Nelma joined the team on August 2, 2011 as a Community Social Service Worker. She is originally from Brazil and has been living in Canada since 1993. She got a Bachelor Degree in Social Work from York University

in Ontario and her Masters Degree also in Social Work from the University of Toronto. She has been working in the social services field for the past 11 years providing support for seniors and people with physical and mental disabilities.

The focus of her studies for her Masters Degree was in childhood trauma based on the work of Alice Miller, a brilliant Swiss psychologist who dedicated 30 years of her life studying the consequences of childhood abuse.

Nelma is impressed by the friendly environment of Fort Simpson and she is positive this is an excellent learning opportunity and growth.

Sad to see you leave!

Amanda Ocko is leaving DHSSA, as of September 5th. She worked as the Administration Assistant, at the Regional Office, in Fort Simpson for the past 6 ½ years. She will be missed by not only the Fort Simpson staff, but the Dehcho Regional staff. We know that change is “good” but sometimes we fight off change because we fear the unknown and we get comfortable in the routine. Change is coming not only for the Regional office, but for Amanda, too. We wish her the best of luck in her new adventure, and look forward to seeing her sometime in the future!

Hazel Isaiah Tanche, Executive Assistant

Goodbye to Alex Campbell

Dehcho Health & Social Services is sorry to announce that Community Social Service Worker Alex Campbell is leaving Fort Simpson and DHSSA. Alex is off to Whitehorse, his last day of work will be September 9th. Alex has been with the Dehcho Health & Social Services Authority since January 2010.

GOOD LUCK ALEX! We wish you the best in the future.



Natalie Villeneuve: Summer Student

My time with records management has come to an end, I did not know what I was getting into but I enjoyed my time here and managed to complete 70 records management boxes. I learned a lot about the patience you need to do this job and I am very proud to be able to say that I did it successfully. The people I worked with this summer was a great group and I'm sure the experience I gained working with them will be very useful in the future.

The Benefits of Meditation

The health benefits of meditation are well known. While there are a number of different kinds of meditations that people can engage in they usually have a few things in common. The first is that they usually involve sitting, or laying quietly. Secondly, and most importantly, they involve training the mind in some way. The human mind has an insatiable hunger to find something to focus on and it never shuts off (i.e. stops thinking) for more than a few seconds at a time. Indeed some would argue that it never stops at all. It's hard at work even dreaming when we are sleeping for example. The problem with that is that if we allow our minds to stay busy like that, then we never get to experience the benefits of slowing down our thoughts, which often takes the form of worrying, and be more present in the moment. These days, the phrase "Being in the moment" is something that gets tossed around quite readily but many fail to grasp what it truly means when it comes to meditation. In many meditations, we train the mind to stop thinking and just concentrate on what is happening at that very instant. In other words we get out of our heads and into our bodies. Very often that focus is on the process of breathing. Meditators simply focus their attention on the process of breathing: what it feels like to inhale, to exhale, the sound air makes as it enters or leaves the lungs, etc. What happens is that when we force the mind to stop thinking and we focus on what is actually happening in the moment, we get to experience a richness that can be found within each moment. The moment slows down..... and we get to notice things we hadn't before.....like the sounds present in our home..... the smells that permeates the air..... the feel of the piece of furniture we are sitting on.....the temperature of the room..... what the clothes we are wearing feel like on our bodies..... even, with enough practice, what our own heart beat sounds like-which is something most of us have never noticed but is tremendously soothing to experience. Once we have trained ourselves to be in more in moment, we get to quit worrying about either the past or the future (all worrying is about something that happened in the past, or may happen in the future) and we get to simply enjoy the moment we are in. Life is made up exclusively of "moments" and unless we train ourselves to enjoy them as they come, an entire lifetime can go by without us ever realizing that we should have stopped to enjoy each one of them because once passed they can never be relived. This allows us to more fully savour the feast that life has to offer us: the color of the flowers..... how wonderfully blue the sky is..... how we feel about the people we care about..... the delight of watching our children play, etc, etc. When we are caught up in worrying, or ruminating, or being fearful, or busy planning or making a list, or any other mental process that our minds crave, then those moments pass us by. A person who lives each moment to the fullest will never feel regret having wasted their lives.

Don't you think that is something worth pondering?

Or maybe you would prefer not to think about anything and just be in your moment?.....

Pierre Morais,

Mental Health & Addictions Counsellor

I want to give a great big Thank you to our Summer Student, Natalie Villeneuve for her work in Records Management over the summer. Natalie was able to complete 70 boxes of inventory as well work with Debbie and Nancy at the Health Centre to get our records in order. I commend her on her patience and the fact that she never seemed overwhelmed no matter how many boxes kept coming into the office! We are still a long ways from seeing records management completely organized. So next time you are behind in your filing, think of us in records office with hundreds of boxes of files to go and maybe we can all work together to make this work load lessen. The GNWT website for Records management gives all the information you need to file and store records, it can be found here:

<http://www.pws.gov.nt.ca/records/index.htm>

Happy Filing Everyone
Lisa Thurber-Tsetso
Associate CEO



Youth Treatment Project Update

The Youth Treatment project is a federally funded program through Health Canada's Drug Treatment Funding Program (DTFP). The Drug Treatment Funding Program falls under the federal governments National Drug Treatment Strategy.

The Youth Treatment Project is a partnership between Nats'ejee Keh Treatment Center, Dehcho Health and Social Services and the GNWT Department of Health and Social Services.

Currently, the project is in the needs assessment phase. The Project Coordinator, Justin Dalton, is consulting with health and social service professionals, service providers, community representatives and youth across the territories in order to identify capacity gaps in current services and identify need.

On July 29-Aug 1 2011, 14 youth (aged 13-17) from across the Dehcho Region of the Northwest Territories gathered for the 2011 Youth Forum on Substance Abuse at the North Nahanni Naturalist Lodge. The Forum was hosted by Dehcho Health and Social Services with the purpose of engaging youth on issues related to substance abuse and give them a voice regarding their needs in overcoming substance abuse issues.

If you have any questions regarding the project please contact Justin Dalton at 1-867-695-3815 or email at justin_dalton@gov.nt.ca.

Goodbye Dehcho Health & Social Services

September 5, will be my last day of work with the Dehcho Health and Social Services and so this will be the last issue of Health Beat I help to put out. It has been a pleasure working with all of you, and I will definitely miss working for the Authority. I have been living in Fort Simpson for almost my whole life, 22 of my 25 years; and will miss it dearly. I will not, however miss the winters! For those of you who don't know, I'm off to Central America, Guatemala City to be exact. Good Luck everyone, I hope to come back and visit someday,

HAVE A HAPPY WINTER EVERYONE



Amanda Ocko
Administrative Assistant
DHSSA Regional Office



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FIT TESTING

What is Fit Testing? Every second year, the Health Promotion program does Fit Testing, in case of a respiratory infection such as H1N1 or Tuberculosis outbreak. This is the Dehcho Health and Social Services Authority (DHSSA) Respiratory Protection Program; all DHSSA employees must be Fit Tested in the event of an outbreak. Secondly, the reason why Fit Testing is done every two years is because of people's facial structure changes with weight gain/loss.



There are 2 types of Fit Testing: Qualitative Fit Testing that uses a bitter and sweet agent squeezed into a large white hood that allows large number of people to be fit tested quickly, and Quantitative Fit Testing that requires special equipment.

The employee tries on a type of mask called the N95-1860 Health Care Particulate Respirator and surgical mask. Then, the employee puts on the large white hood and we dispense bitter solution into the hood. This is to do a few things; first, to show the employee how fast respiratory infections can get in our airways system, and second, to find out the sensitivity level of the employee. Sounds complicated, but it is an easy process to follow.

We ensure that the employee's mask is properly fitted around the nose, cheeks and chin; the large white hood is placed back on the employee. We dispense a second aerosol in

the hood, in this test he/she should not be able to detect any smell or taste sensation. If the employee detects the smell, then we continue the process until the right fitted mask is found. The employee is given the mask with a fit testing card certifying them for Fit Testing. The mask and card is kept at their work site/area. The supervisor/manager will contact the employee should a respiratory infection outbreak ever occur.

All DHSSA employees should be Fit Tested, please contact your Community Health Representative or Nurse in Charge if you need to be Fit Tested.

Karen Simon, Community Health Representative, Fort Simpson, NT



The MATRIX Recovery Program

What is the MATRIX Program?

We recognize that it is not natural for our community members to have to leave their community to find support to deal with addiction and its impact on their lives and their families. The MATRIX program offers much of the educational components and the support offered in residential treatment programs, in an intensive 5-day-a-week outpatient format, in your community.

The program also incorporates knowledge and support for families afflicted with addiction problems; supporting family members to help the alcoholic or addict in healthy ways and to join the path towards greater recovery.

The 10 week Structured Day-Program aims to;

- Provide information about substance misuse, and addiction through videos, exercises, activities, written material and discussion, and will also incorporate 12-Step Recovery principles and components.
- Assist in identifying and changing patterns and habits
- Develop increased self-awareness
- Build on personal and community strengths
- Develop tools to deal effectively with alcohol and drug issues
- Recognize progress and encourage recovery

**Contact Pierre Morais or
Pat Switzer for more
information at:
695-2293**

When?

The MATRIX Program runs from
Sept 26-Dec 2
with a graduation to follow.

The Matrix program runs:

Monday to Friday from
3- 5pm each day.

Where?: At the SISH Building