

The New Brunswick Youth In Care Network



Now that we've had our first few snow days– the NBYICN can take a breath and catch up! This Fall we were **busier than ever!!!** We had our first Provincial Summit for Youth in Care and our 2nd annual Children and Youth in Care Day! We also reached out to more and more youth in our adventure and cooking programs! After all that excitement you might think that we're ready for a break, but think again! Read on to find out more about how our Winter 2016 season is shaping up!

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The NBYICN is a project developed by Partners For Youth Inc. and funded in part by the Province of New Brunswick.



A word from our coordinators

A hearty welcome to 2016! 2015 was a very big year for us at the NBYICN! We held our first Provincial Summit for Youth in Care, and our 2nd annual New Brunswick Children and Youth in Care Day! And we think they were a huge success. But we could not have done it without you. So we want to take this opportunity to thank all the social workers, consultants, directors, program managers, group home staff, foster parents and adoptive parents who made these events possible. We cannot thank you enough!



Valérie & Robyn

But there is one group of people who we absolutely could not imagine working without, and that is the NBYICN leadership team. WHERE WOULD WE BE WITHOUT YOUR HELP AND GUIDANCE? You folks are the best! For all the early mornings, late nights, Facebook messages and even, yes, panicked phone calls— we thank you!

But we're not stopping here, we've got lots of great activities coming up this Winter. Read on to find out more!

And from one of our leaders!

"Resilience. This is a word I've heard people use to define me. When I retrace the steps along the broken paths that got me here, I understand why. The family that I grew up in is broken. Becoming estranged to my family is a pain that I struggle with to this very day but I still go back. I go back to see the smiles on not so little faces when their big sister comes home, even though their idea of my home has long been different from mine. My home today is with my fiancé and friends who stand by me. My whole world once burned to the ground. But from the ashes, I was able to build the person that I am today. I am a young person struggling with anxiety and depression. I am a survivor of abuse. But who I am, truly and most importantly is a strong individual who strives to be better with each passing day.

I joined this network as a former youth in care, as a young person who has wanted to change the world since I've been in diapers. I call my process the Phoenix Process- I create something beautiful from the ashes of negative situations. I have beaten every odd against me and come out better than ever. I want to give young people the tools that they need to do the same for them. As a member of the NBYICN and a youth care worker, I want to build a safer way for young people to identify, and create their own process, so that they too can defeat the odds.

Resilience may be how you choose to define me, but I am simply surviving, empowering my voice by sharing it with others to make a difference. I am Samantha Neil, an advocate passionate about changing the world and helping others realize that they can do the same."



Sam

Spring & Summer 2015 in review—

Community Presentations on Fostering & Adoption

Starting in March 2015, the NBYICN began collaborating with the Fredericton office of the Department of Social Development to create a community presentation about fostering and adopting youth from care. These presentations were designed to recruit foster and adoptive families in the Fredericton region. We've had great turnouts so far, and spoken to lots of interested foster and adoptive parents. As you can imagine, we've brought our NBYICN real talk to these presentations! We've shared advice for foster and adoptive families, told our stories, and emphasized the importance of permanency and family for youth in care.

For more information on the next presentation, please see visit www.gnb.ca, call 1-800-990-0119, or visit the Government of New Brunswick's Facebook Page.



The Kitchen Jam!



In partnership with the Children's Aid Foundation and Sobey's *Cooking Towards Independence* Program, the NBYICN has been hosting cooking classes. "The Kitchen Jam" is a full-day cooking class designed to teach youth how to make delicious, healthy food! With a focus on several different dimensions of food literacy, these workshops offer youth the opportunity to develop their food safety and preparation skills, learn different kitchen tips and tricks, and find out how you can eat healthy on a budget! When we asked youth what they thought of the workshops, they said:

"It was all amazing!"

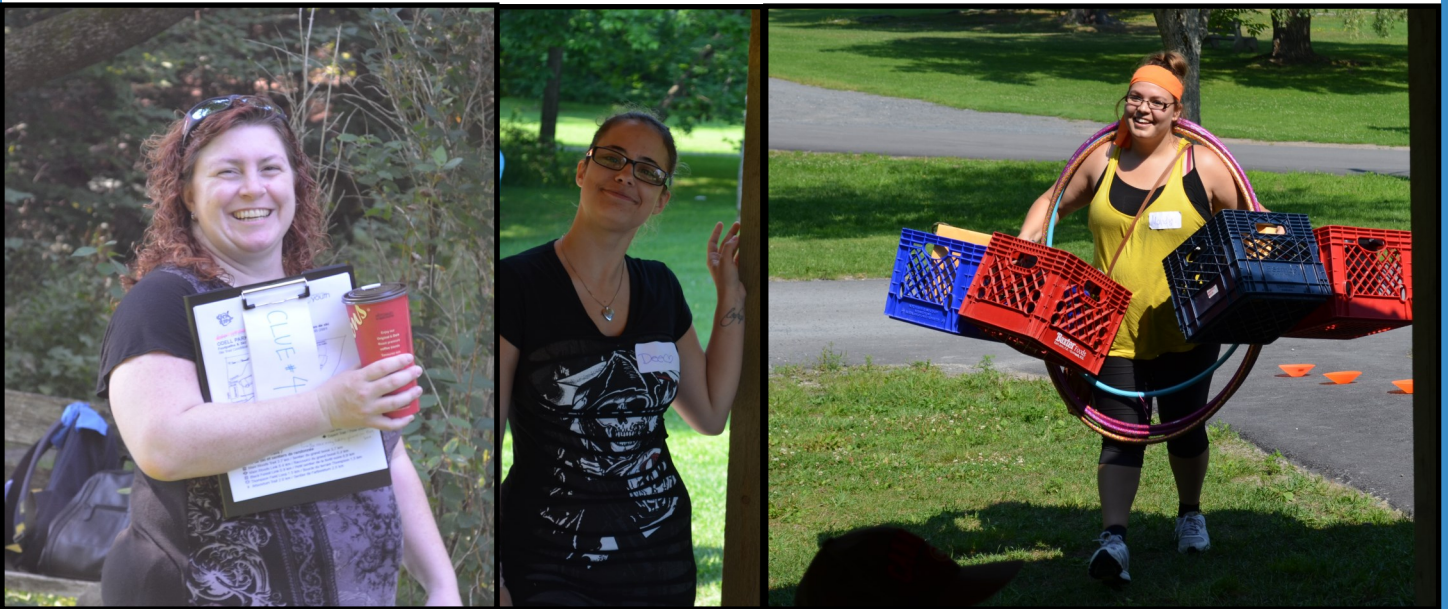
We'll be hosting 3 more cooking workshops this winter! Invitations to attend will be sent out as the date approaches. If you know a youth who is interested in cooking, or needs to learn how, email our coordinator at rippet@partnersforyouth.ca



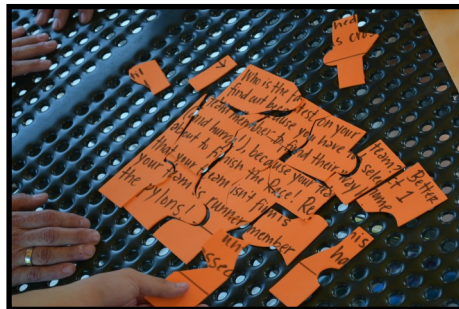
Spring & Summer 2015 in review—

The NBYICN spent our Summer and Fall months thinking up new ways to get youth in care engaged in our many programs. To do so, the NBYICN leadership team created a 3 hour event called *The Great NBYICN Race!* The event combined an epic race (complete with clues, maps, and compasses), food, and an opportunity for current youth in care to connect with our leaders about the NBYICN, and the many ways that they can be involved.

The Great NBYICN Race!



We hosted *The Great NBYICN Race* in Fredericton (*The Great Odell Park Race*) and Moncton (*The Great Centennial Park Race*). And we're hoping to make this a regular event! If this is an event that you'd like us to host in your region, get in touch with the NBYICN coordinator at rlippett@partnersfor youth.ca for more details. We have some great ideas for a Winter Race too, so don't let that snow scare you!



The 2015 Provincial Summit for New Brunswick Youth in Care

On Friday November 27th, over 100 youth in care, and supportive adults gathered in Fredericton for the 1st ever Provincial Summit for Youth in Care! We had folks from Bathurst, the Acadian Peninsula, the Eispogtog First Nation, Fredericton, Sussex, Woodstock, St. Stephen, Edmundston, Saint John, Miramichi, the Kingsclear First Nation, and the Tobique First Nation. We even had the Minister of Social Development, the Honourable Minister Cathy Rogers, in attendance!

The event offered youth in care the opportunity to voice their thoughts and needs about the care system in New Brunswick. They participated in structured discussions that allowed them to name and describe their main concerns with the care system. And name them they did— concerns about group homes, foster families, garbage bags, rules, curfews, requisitions, social workers, and a lack of connections and opportunities.



Halfway through the day, the youth in attendance were asked to decide which of the issues raised were most important. The top 5 issues selected by the youth in attendance were:

1. Wanting to rebuild and keep relationships with their **biological families and siblings.**
2. "Foster Families are too strict and have **too many rules.**"
3. **Lack of training** for Foster Parents, Group Home Staff, and Social Workers on the complex issues that youth in care face.
4. Youth in Care want to be **treated the same** as biological kids in foster homes.
5. "We are often **not ready** to leave the system when we age out."

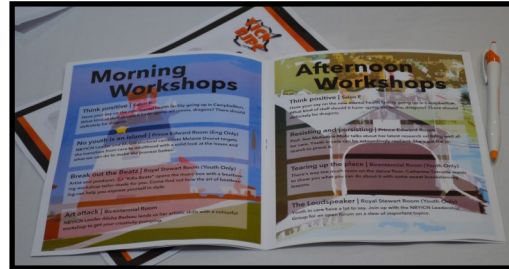
In the afternoon, the youth and adults in attendance worked together to come up with solutions to address these issues. And they are great solutions! At this very moment, hard-working leaders and members of the NBYICN are working to create a report that summarizes these solutions, as well as the entire event's discussions.

We want to thank all the people who made this Summit possible— including our funders— the T. R. Meighen Family Foundation and the Government of New Brunswick!



Want to see some snaps from the event? Turn the page!

The 2015 Summit in Review—



⑤ We are often not ready to leave the system when we "Age Out"

Wait till we're mature
How to pay bills
Teach us how to grow and develop into a "mature adult"

Not only have our day ree paid for, for example, travel

WORKSHOPS for the...
+ We should be tied to government or help also have an ability expenses

Everyone needs for support & a friend!

Wait till we are more mature

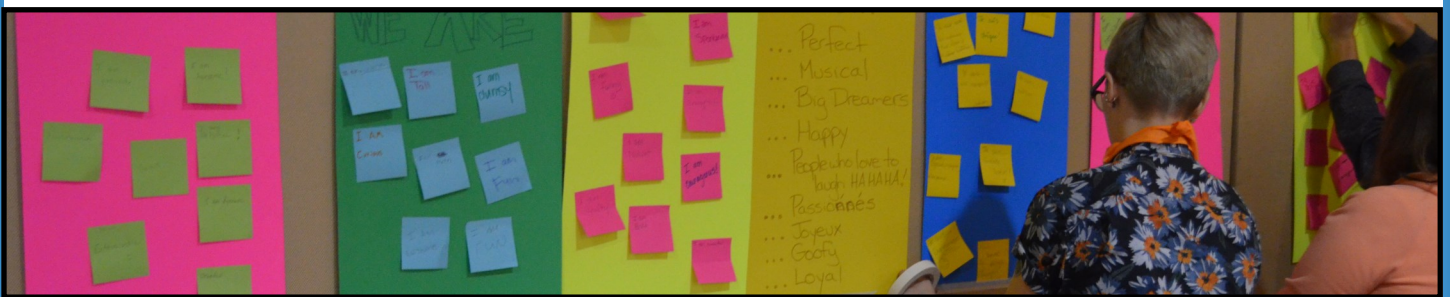
They should be in an age to stand up for the individual

to extend SVCS to the youth who are aging out of the system!

Mentors Teach them how to live on their own he'll say!

Foster family too strict, too many rules and rules are not the same for YIC then they're biological children.

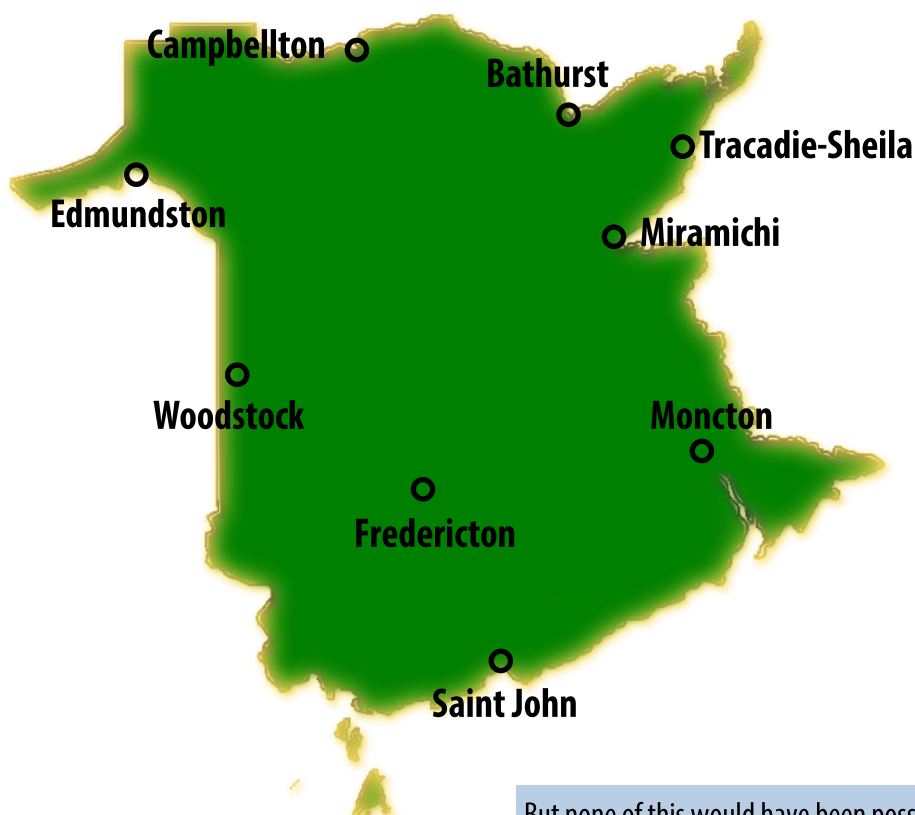
Familles d'accueil trop strictes trop de règlements et parfois les règlements ne sont pas les mêmes que les jeunes biologiques.



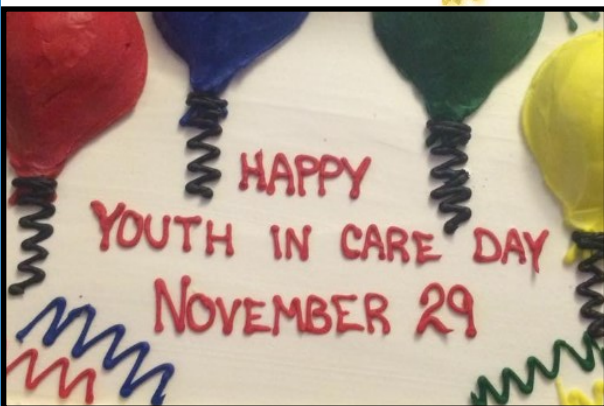
Children and Youth in Care Day 2015

November 29th was the 2nd annual Children and Youth in Care Day in New Brunswick!

November 29th, 2014 marked the official declaration of **Children and Youth in Care Day in New Brunswick!** The Honourable Minister of Social Development Cathy Rogers issued an official declaration, making New Brunswick one of only a few Canadian provinces to take this important step. On November 29th 2015, Children and Youth in Care Day celebrations were hosted in communities throughout New Brunswick. There were celebrations in Fredericton, Woodstock, Moncton, Saint John, Miramichi, Edmundston, Campbellton, Tracadie-Sheila, and Bathurst!



Our initial counts have told us that this year approximately **200** youth in and from care were able to take part in these celebrations! As there are many more youth in care in New Brunswick, we look forward to celebrating with more youth in November 2016! Each region's celebrations were different—some went bowling, some did crafts, some listened to guest speakers, some went out for dinner, some played hockey, and some even busted a move at their own YouTube dance party!



But none of this would have been possible without the tireless support and encouragement of social workers, supervisors, group home staff, and foster parents across New Brunswick! We are so very grateful for all the time and energy that you put into planning and coordinating these events! We look forward to continuing to work together in the coming year! We hope that this tradition will continue next year on November 29th! In order to do so, we will be working with each region of Social Development, and Child and Family Services departments in Wolastoqiyik and Mi'kmaq communities throughout New Brunswick to ensure that even more youth are able to participate in these events! To do so, we'll be updating our *New Brunswick Children and Youth in Care Guide* to give you some more great ideas for 2016!!