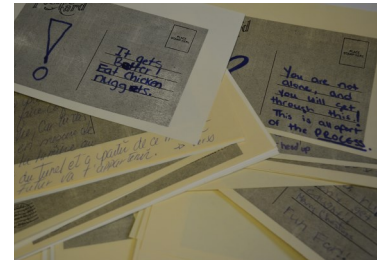


## The New Brunswick Youth in Care Network



The New Brunswick Youth in Care Network (NBYICN) is made up of a collection of youth and young adults whose goal is to unite people who understand what it's like to be in care. We strive to provide a sense of belonging and to empower youth throughout the province.

### WHAT'S INSIDE?

- 2— A word from our Coordinator
- 3— A word from one of our Leadership members
- 4— NBYICN 2017 review
- 5— Provincial Summit for Youth in Care 2017
- 7— Rosemary McCain McMillan Scholarship
- 8— What's coming up?

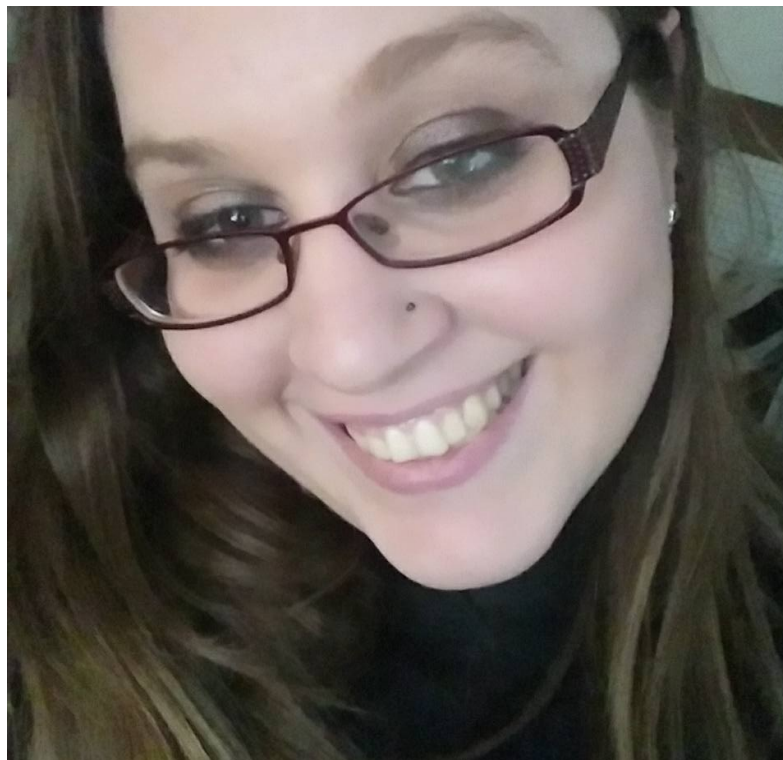
## A word from our Coordinator

Hi everyone! My name is Zoe Bourgeois; most people refer me as Zo. I joined Partners for Youth in 2010 as a network/leadership member for the New Brunswick Youth in Care Network. I became the Program Coordinator in December 2016. I feel so fortunate to be in this position working with the amazing youth and young adults. I was born and raised in Fredericton, New Brunswick. I obtained my Bachelor of Arts in Criminology in 2014 and my Bachelor of Social Work in 2016. Prior to my time with Partners for Youth, I was a Personal Support Worker and Human Service Counselor that included youth mentoring.



## **A word from one of our Leadership members**

As a former youth in care, finding any sense of direction was hard because roads and paths never really took me where I wanted to go. After graduating and starting work as a youth care worker, a co-worker and I shared our stories and she suggested I join the NBYICN. I was hesitant at first, roots never really were my thing and my story never felt important enough. But the folks at the NBYICN taught me no story is too big or too small to make a difference. Joining the NBYICN has given me a path in life I never thought possible and now I get to go on adventures building roads for a better future for youth in care. I couldn't be happier



## NBYICN 2017 review

### NORTH AMERICAN COUNCIL ON ADOPTABLE CHILDREN

On May 4-6, 2017, five members of the NBYICN travelled all the way to Minnesota to take part in the American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) leadership training to help become better leaders within our Network and community.

NACAC was founded in 1974 by adoptive parents to promote and support finding permanent, forever families for children and youth in the United States and Canada.

Our members had a great time in Minnesota. It left our leaders with full inspiration and ideas for our Network.

### PROVINCIAL YOUTH IN CARE SUMMIT

2017 has been a great year for the NBYICN! On May 10, 2017, Partners for Youth Inc. (PFY) organized the second annual full day Youth in Care Summit, *Shaping Your Future*. This was an opportunity for youth to focus on their journey in the foster care system. This event was generously funded in part by the T. R. Meighen Family Foundation – a New Brunswick focused, family based foundation, which supports initiatives that address systemic change in innovative or non-traditional ways.

### DUFFLE BAG PROGRAM

In 2015, a group of social work students from St. Thomas University started a social action project with the goal of ensuring that all youth in care in New Brunswick receive their own duffle bag for their belongings instead of using garbage bags. At the 2015 Youth in Care Summit, a number of youth expressed the need for a duffle bag so they wouldn't have to rely on garbage bags to carry their belongings. After two years working on this project with Partners for Youth Inc., the provincial department of Social Development and the luggage store, Bentley's we are now able to give youth in care their own duffle bag. To date, we have given over fifty (50) duffle bags to youth in care across New Brunswick.

## Provincial Summit for Youth in Care

On May 10, 2017, Partners for Youth Inc. (PFY) organized the second annual full day Youth in Care Summit, *Shaping Your Future*. This was an opportunity for youth to focus on their journey in the foster care system. This event was generously funded in part by the T. R. Meighen Family Foundation — a New Brunswick focused, family based foundation, which supports initiatives that address systemic change in innovative or non-traditional ways.

The Summit was a unique opportunity for youth in and from government care to be engaged on a range of workshops and roundtable discussions that focused on shaping the youth's future.

Approximately 100 people gathered at the Fredericton Inn. Representation included youth aged 13 to 30 years old from Anglophone, Francophone and First Nations communities across the province.





## Provincial Summit for Youth in Care

The Summit provided youth in care with a safe forum to share their views, have their voices heard and participate in making a better future for themselves. They were able to discuss their ideas, develop strategies to help overcome future challenges, and think positively of their journey in care. Youth had the opportunity to take part in workshops that focused on bettering their futures, and providing them with skills to prepare them for the next stages of their life. Even more importantly the Summit showed youth in care that there is a network just for them — the NBYICN — where they can speak freely and passionately about their experiences and their future.

Perhaps the most profound message of the Summit is the need for positivism in all aspects of the foster care system. It is time to reframe the youth at risk paradigm to one that recognizes youth in care as the resilient youth they are living through their own special circumstances. In this way we can all begin to build upon the strengths of foster children rather than focusing on their weaknesses - while still meeting their needs. This could be the first step towards de-stigmatizing the foster care experience and allowing youth in care to face the future with their heads held high.

“Many of these children are strong, resilient, smart and hard-working but we treat them as if they are broken...we have to give them an opportunity to be in a stronger setting.”





## Rosemary McCain McMillin Scholarship

At the Partners for Youth, Inc. 20th Anniversary Gala, the NBYICN announced the creation of the **Rosemary McCain McMillin Scholarship!** It is awarded to young people who are, or were in the care of the Province of New Brunswick and who are looking to pursue studies at the graduate level. The scholarship covers up to \$5,000 of the cost of post-secondary tuition and fees. Anyone who is from care in New Brunswick can apply, including students who have applied for, or even obtained the scholarship in previous years.

The Rosemary McCain McMillin Scholarship was founded by our patron— Rosemary McCain McMillin, whose generosity has been an important part of Partners for Youth Inc.'s growth over the years.

On August 1, Partners for Youth Inc. began accepting applications for the first annual Rosemary McCain McMillin Scholarship. We received excellent applications from many former youth in care throughout New Brunswick.

We are very excited to announce that the winner of the annual Rosemary McCain McMillin Scholarship is **Alisha Badeau**



### **Alisha Badeau | Artist and NBYICN Leader**

Alisha Badeau grew up in Saint John, New Brunswick and was in care at the age of 12 and aged out at 22. She got her B.A at St. Thomas University in Fredericton with a major in Psychology and Minor in Fine Arts. She is a founding Member for the New Brunswick Youth in Care Network, a Youth Advocate of the Year Award recipient of 2013 from the North American Council on Adoptable Children, a board member of Youth in Care Canada and a Leader in the New Brunswick Youth Speak Out Team through the Adoption Council of Canada. She is currently living in Saint John, NB and enrolled in the Distance Learning Graduate Diploma through the Toronto Art Therapy Institute to become an Art Therapist. She continues to advocate for permanency and education in the US, Canada and NB.

## What's Coming Up?

**The NBYICN Meet & Greet:** Do you know of any youth you work with that would benefit from having a support group for youth in care? It would be awesome if you could help the Coordinator set a meeting up with some youth in your area to talk about The New Brunswick Youth in Care Network in September/October. This is a chance for the coordinator to re-connect with some youth after the Summit but also maybe get to know some new youth who you think would benefit from our Network. We can set it up like a pizza party with some fun activities. This is a chance for the youth to connect with us and express any ideas they may have or want to see happen within our Network. If you know any youth who would be interested in attending, email our coordinator Zoe at [zbourgeois@partnersforyouth.ca](mailto:zbourgeois@partnersforyouth.ca)

**Leadership Training Workshop:** This workshop is aimed to help leaders achieve their personal best and to improve their skills and tools in a leadership role. The workshop is filled with a ton of fun group activities and individual exercises to help the youth find their strengths and goals as a leader. There is a big difference in learning about leadership and learning how to lead. This workshop will help youth become better leaders. If you know of any youth who would be interested in registering, email our coordinator Zoe at [zbourgeois@partnersforyouth.ca](mailto:zbourgeois@partnersforyouth.ca)







## How do youth get involved in the NBYICN?

The New Brunswick Youth in Care Network is made up of a collection of youth (over the age of 13) and young adults from all over New Brunswick whose goal is to unite people who understand what it's like to be in care. We strive to provide a sense of belonging and to empower youth in care throughout the province. It is an initiative of Partners For Youth Inc., provided with support from the Province of New Brunswick.

We are always on the look-out for new leaders and members to take part in our programs. As such, there are many ways that youth can become involved in the NBYICN. Because the names of the children and youth who are in care is confidential, youth who are currently in care can join the network through a referral from their social worker(s). The social worker can refer youth in care under 19 to the NBYICN in one of two ways:

1. **Refer youth to be a NBYICN member:** Call or email the NBYICN coordinator and let them know that you have a youth that is interested in joining the NBYICN. They will ask you a few strengths-based questions about the youth (e.g. what do they like to do, what is their greatest need, etc.). They will also ask questions to get a sense of what type of involvement the youth is seeking from the NBYICN. For instance, do they want to take part in our social activities, or are they more interested in leadership activities and working with us to change the care system?
2. **Refer youth to take part in NBYICN programs:** Call or email the NBYICN coordinator and refer any youth who may want to participate in NBYICN programming that is coming up in your region! You can find out about programming coming up in your region by signing up for our newsletters, liking us on Facebook, and/or following us on Twitter. The NBYICN Coordinator will also send emails to each region when an event is coming up!

Youth who are over the age of 19 can **self-refer** to the NBYICN. They can do so through email, or through our Facebook page. The NBYICN Coordinator will ask some of the same strengths-based questions to get to know them, and find out more about their interests! They will then invite them to take part in NBYICN activities.

We are always looking for more youth who want to join the NBYICN! The NBYICN recognizes that each youth is different and will want to be involved differently in the NBYICN. As such, our coordinator is committed to working with each Social Worker and youth to find the best way to introduce them to, and engage them in the NBYICN. For more information on our referral process, or for more information on the NBYICN, you can email our coordinator Zoe at [zbourgeois@partnersforyouth.ca](mailto:zbourgeois@partnersforyouth.ca). You can also reach out to us in the following ways:



[www.facebook.com/NBYICN](https://www.facebook.com/NBYICN)



[www.partnersforyouth.ca](http://www.partnersforyouth.ca)



[@pfyouthnb](https://twitter.com/pfyouthnb)