

2022 FALL NEWSLETTER

The New Brunswick Youth in Care Network (NBYICN) is a provincial, supportive network for current and former youth in care. The NBYICN strives to unite young people throughout the province who understand what it's like growing up in the child welfare system in New Brunswick. We help provide young people to belong, to feel connected, to have a voice and to thrive while in and after care. The NBYICN is filled with strong network members and leaders who want to work at building a better system for those who come next.



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A word from our Program Coordinator



My name is Zo Bourgeois and I have been the Network Coordinator since December 2016. The NBYICN has been busy this year! We are excited to share with everyone what we have been doing this past year and what to look forward to for 2023.

To begin, I want to let everyone know that I will be leaving this position in the fall of 2022. This decision did not come lightly as this role and organization means the world to me. I have spent over a decade advocating for a better system for our children and youth in care.

My time with Partners for Youth has been incredible. I have grown so much in this role and gained an enormous amount of skills and experiences that will forever stay with me. I have met and worked with so many amazing youth, foster and adoptive families, social workers, community workers, stakeholders and government officials. I am so fortunate for all the connections.

I believe in my time, the leaders and I have completed a lot together.. I am proud of all the work we have done. I will miss all the youth greatly. I have good faith that the new coordinator will take the network further and accomplish even greater things!

I am wishing all the folks who I worked with well and thank you for working alongside of me these years and helping me accomplish so much. Also, thank you for all the incredible memories!

Upcoming Network Coordinator



Hello, my name is Sue King and I am a Registered Social Worker and have worked with Partners For Youth since 2013. I am pleased to be the interim network coordinator for the next year and I look forward to continuing the great work of the network. I like to think I have a relatedness with young people that is rooted in autonomy, mutual respect, honesty and playfulness. Please connect with me anytime by phone or email at sking@partnersforyouth.ca

Equitable Standards

In October 2020, the National Council of Youth in Care Advocates, comprised of provincial and territorial advocates, Youth in Care Networks, youth in care alumni and key allies from across the country, published a summary report of the recurring recommendations on 'aging out' of care that have been put forward by youth with lived experience, advocates and researchers since the late 1980s in *A Long Road Paved With Solutions*.

There are two key recommendations outlined in the report that calls upon governments to eliminate age-based discrimination in child welfare service by implementing readiness-based transitions to adulthood and to establish national standards for transitions from care. To date, many youth are forced to 'age out' of the system at age of majority due to legislated cut-offs, leaving them with little to no supports to deal with yet another drastic transition in their lives. In NB, between 45-50 youth "age out" of care each year.

As a continuation of this work, the National Council released in October 2021 the *Equitable Standards for Transitions to Adulthood for Youth in Care* report, with the accompanying Policy Brief, outlining equitable standards across eight transition to adulthood pillars which were validated by youth in care and alumni from across the country. For more information, please view the link below for the report.

<https://www.cwlc.ca/post/equitable-standards-for-transitions-to-adulthood-for-youth-in-care-public-report-policy-brief>

Bill 114 - The Child and Youth Well-Being Act

In early 2022, the Department of Social Development announced Bill-144 - The Child and Youth Well-Being Act. The new Bill will replace the old Family Services Act - which hasn't been updated in 40 years. The Bill will focus specifically on children and youth - which is a reflection of the new name. The Bill will work in the best interest of the child and put children and youth in care at the forefront.

This is a great step in the right direction. This new Bill highlights important legislative changes, including Jordan's principle, extended supports for youth transitioning out of care and children's rights.

The Department of Social Development will engage with the NBYICN in developing the connecting pieces to this legislation.

Over the coming months we will be framing out a consultation process and if you would like to be involved or learn more please reach out. Updates will be provided to network members and youth through social media.



Workshops

Cooking Towards Independence

Funded by the Fredericton Community Foundation. This past year, we wanted to find a way to connect young people throughout the province in and from care together through fun, creative virtual workshops. We started with four cooking workshops where we invited young people through ZOOM to cook a three-course meal that was easy, affordable and healthy. We mailed out a gift card, menu and ingredient list and we spent an hour and half cooking together as a group. The young people had so much fun learning and cooking together. Once COVID restrictions lifted, we had our final cooking workshop held in-person.



Workshops

Poetry Slam w. Sam

The NBYICN started to host monthly Poetry Slams with one of our network leaders Sam through our public Facebook page. Sam is a power house when it comes to putting words down on paper and turning them into such a fun and empowering poems. She goes on Facebook live and reads aloud five to six poems each time. The public really took a liking to her poems and powerful insights on what it was like being in care, living with mental health challenges, trauma and difficult life transitions. She was able to put a lot of her pain and experiences into a poem that helped people relate and felt like they were not alone. It helped young people who were not as comfortable writing their thoughts down to know there are other people who have similar paths. Sam offered to the public to submit topics that people wanted a poem about and Sam would help to bring their experiences to life through creative writing. One network member in particular was going through a hard time with her birth parent and Sam was able to articulate her feelings and emotions through a poem. This helped the youth feel supported, cared for and that someone understood her pain.



Workshops

Upcoming Workshop

STORYTELLING THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

OPEN TO CURRENT AND FORMER YOUTH IN CARE (12-25 YEARS OLD)

Youth will discover how photography can be a therapeutic tool for their mental health, along with a great way to begin telling their story.



Youth will work with the NBYICN to complete their own Photography Project. They will then get to participate in a gallery experience where their photo and their personal narrative will be showcased (which can also be anonymous) with other youth from across the province in Spring 2023

TO REGISTER FOR THIS
PROJECT, PLEASE EMAIL

sking@PARTNERSFORYOUTH.CA



Youth Works

Funded by the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada. The Youth Works project seeks to help current and former youth in care and at risk youth who feel lost and overwhelmed when thinking of their career and employment future. It is intended primarily for youth who will soon be entering adulthood and may require additional support to help guide them to a more successful future.

The Youth Works project can be delivered in a group setting or one-on-one. Eligibility criteria for the program includes youth who are between 15-29 years; youth with varying levels of education and youth who are ready/willing to engage in the program. Youth Works staff have experience working with current and former youth in care, youth at risk, vulnerable youth and will ensure personalized support and access to employment related opportunities. Support is available to help youth gain stability (housing, physical and mental health) in order to properly prepare them for the program. Access to employment training is available and will ensure the youth are better equipped to meet the requirements for their chosen career path and employment. Youth who are identified as 'job ready' will be referred to employers for meaningful work experience. Wraparound supports can be given to all youth both before and after employment programming. For more information or referrals please contact Sue King.

Partners for Youth Alliance pro-junesse Five-Year Projection
Participant: _____
Date: _____

Visualize where you would like to be in five years. What do you see?
Keywords work just as well as full sentences for this. The important part is just writing something.

FARM - growing food making my living this way. Female partner / House + Barn + animals

(cows, horse, pigs, chickens, goats)

To help guide your thinking:

The people in your life Your home Your work or studies

Is thinking of the future stressful for you (circle below)?

Not at all Very much

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

FIXED MINDSET	MINDSET CHARACTERISTICS	GROWTH MINDSET
SET - YOU HAVE WHAT YOU HAVE	SKILLS-INTELLIGENCE	CAN BE GROWN AND DEVELOPED
HOW THEY LOOK PERFORMANCE FOCUS	MAIN CONCERN	LEARNING / GETTING BETTER PROCESS FOCUS
SOMETHING YOU DO WHEN YOU'RE NOT GOOD	EFFORT	AN IMPORTANT PART OF LEARNING
GIVE UP / CHECK OUT	CHALLENGES	PERSEVERE / WORK THROUGH IT - SHOW MORE GRIT
TAKE IT PERSONAL GET DEFENSIVE	FEEDBACK	LIKE IT / USE IT TO LEARN
HATE THEM / TRY TO AVOID MAKING THEM	MISTAKES	TREAT THEM AS A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

WWW.TRAINGLY.COM



PFY Connect

Funded by the Fredericton Community Foundation Impact Grant, Children's Aid Foundation of Canada and Greater Fredericton Social Innovation, PFY Connect supports timely access to counselling therapy for youth ages 14 to 24.

A youth in need of support will make an initial connection to our designated staff team which includes a social worker - through a simple referral process. They will then be assessed to ensure the appropriate counselling need is met and then PFY staff will reach out on behalf of the youth to a licensed counselling therapist and make the first appointment for the consenting youth. Follow up will occur with the youth from PFY to confirm appointment and address any barriers to attending, such as transportation.

If needed, PFY will support up to 8 sessions of private counselling therapy. This initiative fills a specific gap in mental health support for youth.

For more information and to fill out the referral form, please view our website: <https://www.partnersforyouth.ca/en/pfy-connect/>



Comfort Kits

Partners for Youth Inc. partners with the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada to help create and distribute Comfort Kits for children in care and families. The Comfort Kit is a book bag filled with things to make the child or youth comfortable in their new placement (blanket, teddy bear, snacks, art supplies, journal, resources, gift card, favourite snacks etc.).

To date, we have distributed over 80 comfort kits to children and youth throughout the province.

Children and youth who must meet the following eligibility criteria in order to benefit from the initiative:

- Children and youth aged 0-18
- Children and youth who enter foster or kin care on a temporary or permanent basis
- Children and families in emergency need during the COVID 19 crisis



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 (1926-2016), whose generosity was an important part of Partners for Youth Inc.'s growth over the years.

Partners for Youth Inc. is accepting applications for the Rosemary McCain McMillin Scholarship.

The deadline for the application is June 1st, 2023.

The Winner of the 2022 RMMS is Candace MacFarlene.



"I want to extend a sincere thank you to Partners for Youth and the Rose Mary McQueen Scholarship Fund for the generous support. I am deeply honored to have been chosen as the recipient for this year's scholarship.

Ever since I was a child growing up in foster care, I knew I wanted to be a social worker. Getting my bachelor's degree was the first step in this dream, and now I am completing the final step and getting my Master of Social Work. Being awarded the RMMS has allowed me to fully focus on my studies without the additional stress of finances.

I'm hoping to specialize in the area of trauma therapy. As a child who experienced trauma, I was given the therapy services and supports needed to help me heal and thrive and I hope to do that for other children."

Ben Bourque Scholarship

The Ben Bourque Scholarship is awarded to young people who are or who were in the care of the Province of New Brunswick and who are looking to pursue post-secondary education. The scholarship covers up to \$500 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 obtained the scholarship in previous years.

The Ben Bourque Scholarship fund was founded by family, friends and colleagues.

“My husband and I wanted a meaningful way to commemorate our son's life and recognize the contributions he made to young people through his work with the Department of Social Development. In conversations with friends, family and some of Ben's colleagues, we decided that an award to young people wanting to continue their education would be a fitting tribute. Ben was a committed social worker and through his work was able to help many young people along their often challenging life journeys. Our family's long history with education made reaching out to someone wishing to continue on their educational pathway all the more meaningful. We know that Ben would have found this a useful and appropriate recognition of his contribution to our world, one he had to leave too soon.”

-Wendy Bourque

The Ben Bourque Scholarship is administered by Partners Foundation Inc. The successful applicant will be chosen by the NBYICN Scholarship Youth Committee.

The deadline for the application is June 1st, 2023.

Advocacy

Our network leaders work hard at trying to create more awareness on the needs of children and youth in care. We are asked to present on panels both provincially and nationally. We collaborate with different organizations throughout the province and Canada to speak on our personal experiences growing up in the care system.

We also speak about what is working vs what does not work and how folks can be better supports to our children and youth in care. We speak on P.R.I.D.E panels throughout the province for the department of Social Development to help educate and prepare new foster and adoptive parents for when they have a child or youth in their home. When people hear the experiences of our young people, they always state it's the best part of the training - hearing from the youth who have lived through it.

We take part in documentaries, projects, research studies, conferences, presentations, events, workshops and much more. Any time people are looking to have a youth in care voice, our network members are always supportive to be that voice. We take pride in speaking and delivering the needed information to better inform, educate and prepare the public on what living in the child welfare system is like for young people. We want to create more supportive, trauma-informed allies to be there for those who come next.

Youth in Care Day

New Brunswick Youth in Care Day:

November 29th is a day for children in care in New Brunswick to celebrate “Youth in Care Day”. This day is an important day because it keeps everyone aware that there are children in care who are in need of support of others out of their birth families, and to celebrate the child’s strength, resilience, determination, experiences, thoughts and ideas to improve the care system for everyone involved. This is also a chance for each region of NB to meet, exchange and spend some time together with other children and youth in their region that are in the care system. It’s a day to make new friendships but most importantly it’s a day to have fun. Each region of NB had their own separate celebrations for the children in care. The NBYICN is offering three virtual youth panels in November on various topics related to youth in care.



How to get involved

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!

How to get involved

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 Sue at sking@partnersforyouth.ca.

The New Brunswick Youth in Care Network is supported and housed within Partners for Youth Inc.

New Brunswick Youth in Care Network

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