



Aionkwatakari:teke

(A-YOU-GWA-DA-GA-RI-DE-GEH)

"For us to be healthy"

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Supporting PARENTS IN KAHNAWAKE



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Aionkwatakari:teke

Aionkwatakari:teke is a newsletter published six times a year by Communications Services of Kahnawake Shakotia'takehnhas Community Services (KSCS). Our purpose is to provide information on health and wellness issues that affect Kahnawa'kehró:non. All community members are welcomed and encouraged to submit articles provided that they are comprehensive to the general public, informative and educational. Slanderous material will not be accepted. Views expressed in the articles may not necessarily reflect those of KSCS. We reserve the right to edit all articles. All questions concerning this newsletter should be directed to:

The Editor
Aionkwatakari:teke

P.O. Box 1440
 Kahnawake, Quebec JOL 1B0
 Tél: 450-632-6880
 Fax: 450-632-5116
 Email: kscs@kscskahnawake.ca
 (Attention: newsletter editor)

Editor/Layout/Design, Marie David
 Executive Publisher, Derek Montour

Proofreading:
 Curran Jacobs
 Dana Stacey



Contributors:
 Stephanie Horne
 Curran Jacobs
 Trudy Jacobs
 Kaylia Marquis
 Mary McComber
 Kawennaroroks Montour
 Tyson Phillips
 Christine Taylor
 Terry Young

This newsletter is intended to complement, not replace the advice of your health care provider. Before starting any new health regimen, please see your doctor.



Editor's Notebook

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This issue of the newsletter has a lot to do with parenting and attachment theory. I won't go into it here as a few of the articles touch on it and do a better job of explaining it than me. Needless to say; however, that parents in Kahnawake have a lot of support available to them and not just at KSCS but through other services and organizations in the community as well.

There is also an article about the Foster Care program. There seems to be this pervasive belief that Foster Care exists solely to take children away from their parents. This attitude is not unique to Kahnawake and certainly from a historical perspective there is some justification for that belief. As old saying goes, if we forget the past, we are condemned to repeat it. But to continue to hold onto that belief based solely on that historical perspective is to deny the good work that many Indigenous people are doing in their communities to see that Indigenous children remain with their parents or, failing that, are placed with relatives or—at the very least—kept in the community.

This is a HUGE step forward and has been a hard won right. Think of the good work of Dr. Cindy Blackstock or the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada or of the countless other social workers in Indigenous country who believe in Indigenous control over Foster Care and keeping children in their own communities because a child who grows up knowing where they come from has a better foundation from which to grow on. I know one article won't change your mind but KSCS is always open to hearing from you about your concerns or questions, so don't be shy.

That's it for now. Sken:nen.

Marie



Cover: Photos courtesy of the Family and Wellness Center. Cover design: Marie David.



The Roots for Lifelong Trust

BY STEPHANIE HORNE, PREVENTION

Historically, parent-child attachment for our Kanien'kehá:ka ancestors probably occurred in a natural environment. The caregivers in a traditional Kanien'kehá:ka family system lived in close proximity based on the day to day living requirements. It was a multi-generational approach to parenting as we lived in Longhouses under our clan family systems and it was in this way that individuals learned their respective roles

Fast forward to 2014, our families' structure and function have changed and we may be living many different variations of the family systems. For example, some children are born into single parent households. We are also living in the age of technology and are bombarded by different opinions on what is the right way to parent.

Throughout our history, we have looked at the importance of the generations that will follow; the leaders of the future. An essential element of a strong parent-child attachment is the child's brain development after birth. A healthy attachment is the deep emotional connection that forms between you and your baby. The critical *parent-child attachment* will affect all aspects of your child's life such as:

- cognition
- comprehension
- emotion
- behaviour

Recently the Family and Wellness Center offered an eight week group session titled Connections for Caregivers. The goal was to get caregivers and their children to interact in a supportive environment and build connections with other parents in the community. Frontline staff from various organizations in the community took part in the training delivered by Dr Radhika Santhanam-Martin this past May.

Below are some quotes from some of the participants:

"As open and welcome we are to accepting all children at Step By Step, we are firm in the belief that you, as parents, are your child's first teachers. We are here to support you. In the words of one of our founding mothers, 'None of us are here to replace parents. We're here to help your parents take care of you.'"

☞ Colleen, child and family support worker, Step by Step

"Attachment bonds can begin at birth, pre-natally, or even pre-conceptually for some parents. By providing care and teaching to pregnant women, parents, and families, the community health nurses promote those bonds and support parents, whether in the home or in clinic."

☞ Caireen Cross, community health nurse, KMHC

"Healthy child-parent attachment means that parents and children are forming bonds and relationships that help the child's development throughout their

lifespan. Infants and young children should experience a warm, intimate and continuous relationship with their mother, father and family members. The lack of emotional attachment may have significant and irreversible mental health consequences for an individual. If the child develops with healthy attachment, it can be seen as a form of prevention in that children develop confidence, become independent, and know there is support from their parents, family, and the community. The role of the family and community is to encourage and support the child through their development not take responsibility to repair/rebuild the damage caused by years of multigenerational trauma. We need to learn more and take a look at how we are helping our future leaders develop to be the best they could possibly be. We need to provide the tools, skills, knowledge and environments for healthy and well adjusted children who will eventually take on the world as strong Kanien'kehá:ka people."

☞ Lou Ann Stacey, director of family services, KSCS

Source:

www.excellence-earlychildhood.ca

Wahón:nise tho Niióhtón:ne

BY KAYLIA MARQUIS, WAHÓN:NISE THO NIIÓHTÓN:NE

Wahón:nise tho Niióhtón:ne is a grassroots group composed of community members interested in improving early childcare in the community through a holistic approach to whole-family health. The group recognizes that the optimal development of our children involves everyone in the community.

In 2009, Wahón:nise tho Niióhtón:ne consulted with parents, groups, and community members to help us prioritize our areas of focus to ensure we address the areas of highest concern to the families in our community. As a result, we identified four major priorities:

- parental bonding and attachment
- language and culture
- health and safety
- development of a body to oversee daycare facilities within the community.

All of these priorities, of course, include those with special needs.

In keeping with the identified objectives, Wahón:nise tho Niióhtón:ne applied for support from Avenir d'Enfants (distributed through the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission) to assist with kick-starting activities and initiatives that will hopefully evolve into community mainstays.

Over the past two years, Wahón:nise tho Niióhtón:ne has held a Stakeholders

Consultation to discuss the potential to collaborate on projects that meet our common objectives. So many of our community organizations have overlapping missions and goals, it seems the next important step is to make it easier for everyone to work well together. These connections help us to work more efficiently instead of just harder.

Wahón:nise tho Niióhtón:ne, along with other collaborators has begun offering a series of family cooking classes, a series of Kanien'keha classes for parents and caregivers and their small children, as well as working to bring a comprehensive community calendar to Kahnawà:ke, to help everyone get the word out about all their great initiatives.

Collaboration is becoming increasingly important to allow us to address our common needs. Though our community organizations historically may have seemed to work separately, we must always remember that we are working with and for the same people, the same families and the same future.

Just this past May, Wahón:nise tho Niióhtón:ne participated in a working group along with several other community organizations to organize two 2-day sessions to examine attachment in the community.

Attachment refers to the continuing and lasting relationships that young children form with one or more adults and in particular, to their feelings of security and safety. Attachment influences how the brain develops; children who experience stress and who have experienced

trauma can suffer the impact throughout their lives.

The historical experiences of many Kahnawake families—including the residential school system—had an impact on our ability to get close to our children. This is a community concern, so our local organizations must develop a community response. We would like to develop a common vocabulary, align our goals and foster collaboration to address this issue.

The sessions themselves were very successful and the fact that they resulted from a successful collaboration between several of our community organizations can only mean good things for the future of our children.

Wahón:nise tho Niióhtón:ne is excited to explore how we can support each other in providing high quality, effective events and activities that encourage healthy, collaborative behaviour for our community.

If you would like more information or are interested in attending Wahón:nise tho Niióhtón:ne meetings, please contact the Project Coordinator, Kaylia Marquis at 514-777-2046.



Taking Care of Our Own

BY JEAN O'CONNOR, HOME & COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES

Parenting your parent is a term that I've heard frequently and have wondered why this term is used. As adults who are helping our mother, father, uncle, aunt, or older family member—we are not *parenting* them. Rather, we are helping them in areas where they need assistance or are having difficulty.

For example, your mother may not be able or willing to cook meals any longer. In response to this situation, one might bring meals to the home daily or to make a request for Meals on Wheels from Home and Community Care Services (HCCS). In a situation like this, we are helping out; not parenting.

As long as your parent has the capacity to make decisions on their own and has not been deemed incompetent by a physician, they have the right to make their own choices and decisions; even if the adult children do not agree with the decisions.

What happens when we think our parent or other family member is not making good decisions regarding their day to day living choices? Do adult children have the right to tell their parents what to do? Although we do not have the right to make decisions for others, we do have the responsibility to respectfully assist.

Be mindful that helping does not mean making someone do what you think is best for them.

Put yourself in the position of an aging parent who has lost some autonomy and independence and may feel as

though they have lost control of their life. Imagine how you would feel if your child told you that you are too old to make your own decisions, or that you don't know what's best for you, or that you are too old and frail to manage your own affairs.

It's important when you communicate with your parent or family member that you have a shared decision making process. For example, ask them what help they think they need in order to continue to live as independent and autonomous as possible.

Provide your parent with enough information so they can make an informed decision about matters. The only time that you may need to intervene on behalf of your parent is if they are not making rational decisions and putting themselves at risk.

Caring for a family member whose physical and/or mental health has deteriorated can be a very rewarding—and also a very challenging—experience. Be mindful of what your role is in caring for your parent or other family member.

We can only do as much as we can. Ask for help from other family members and seek support from family, friends or from a counsellor. It's well documented that stress increases on the caregiver as demands increase in caring for an older adult.

Setting limits and practicing self-care can ensure that your own health is not compromised. Set limits on what is possible for you to do and ask for help from others such as family and/or friends.

HCCS is available to help with a variety of services depending on the situation. The day program at Turtle Bay Elder's Lodge organizes many activities; home health aids are available to assist in a variety of ways; an adult and elders services counsellor prepares power of attorney and last will documents; Meals on Wheels services delivers meals to homes; home care nursing is available and elder's caseworkers provide individual counselling and support.

An assessment is completed by one of our workers in order to gain an understanding of what services could be helpful to you. Please contact HCCS at 450-632-5499 for more information.

Other resources include the Canadian Caregiver Coalition website at www.ccc-ccan.ca and the Alzheimer Association Suroit, who can be contacted at: 1-877-773-0303.

Prevention in Action

Commitment to a Healthy Community

BY MARY MCCOMBER & TERRY YOUNG, PREVENTION

The Community Prevention Task Force (CPTF) has a new name—Kahnawake Prevention in Action (KPIA)—but the same goals and objectives. The name change came as a result of feedback and recommendations from community participants over a series of meetings held earlier this year.

The group was created to address issues of addictions, violence, teens and parenting from a collaborative perspective. The task force began as a result of community consultations in 1999 to 2001 during the Kahnawà:ke Shakotii'akéhnhas Community Services (KSCS) restructuring initiative referred to as Teionkwa'tenionhátié.

The Vision statement of the prevention group is:

“All Kahnawà'kehró:non will assume responsibility for healthy and productive lives based on Kanien'kehá:ka values and relationships for all members of the immediate and extended families for this and future generations.”

The prevention group has been involved with a number of initiatives in the community and includes various community organizations as well as individual community members. Membership includes—but is not limited to—the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke, Tewatohnhi'sáktha, Education Center, Peacekeeper's, Fire Brigade, Kahnawà:ke Library, and KSCS.

A meeting was held in January 2014, with the intent of developing our annual

community wide campaign. The issue of drug use and abuse in the community was raised as an area of focus for the campaign. For this reason, the community will be presented with various campaigns in the coming year related specifically to drugs and the impact they have on the self, family, and community.

The KPIA speaks as a united group and wants to bring attention to the issue of drugs in our community. The health and social issues that community members and families face are varied and complicated. We recognize the need to work together in all areas for the well-being of individuals from a holistic perspective.

As a community, we need to create and maintain a positive forum for the youth in order to support them in becoming healthy and balanced adults in the future. We have a responsibility to be positive role models for all members of the community.

A positive role model provides structure, consistency, support, and education to youth while limiting their accessibility to drugs and drug paraphernalia. The role model strives to maintain one's own health and well-being in order to reflect a positive lifestyle.

The KPIA group would like to commend all those in the community who take a stand against illegal drugs and paraphernalia within Kahnawà:ke. If you would like more information or would like to participate contact the Manager of Prevention Services at KSCS, Terry Young at 450-632-6880.

Fostering Care

BY TRUDY JACOBS, FOSTER CARE RESOURCE WORKER

Raising children can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience. It can also be very frustrating with all the demands of everyday life e.g., being in a difficult relationship, feeling isolated, or having financial difficulties, that can all make the experience unbearable. Losing control of yourself and losing control of the situation may cause ruptures in the child-parent relationship.

A healthy child-parent relationship requires support for the parents, family and the community. Foster Care can be an option to provide day-to-day care for a child who cannot live safely with their parent(s). Foster Care may be for a few days, weeks, months or longer.

It is always the goal of Foster Care to reunite the child with the parent(s); however, at times this is not possible and long term care is required. A foster parent can be an individual or couple, an extended family member (aunt, uncle, or grandparent) or community member.

In order to empower a parent to take the time needed to become more informed and aware of their child's development, their responsibility and value as a parent—and to repair the relationship—parents can seek voluntary measures for foster care.

The safety and security of the child is always the primary factor for

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Teenagers & Grief

BY KAWENNAROROKS MONTOUR, PREVENTION

Dealing with the death of a family member, friend or acquaintance can be traumatic. As human beings it's okay to feel this outburst of emotions such as sadness, anger, stress and guilt because everyone goes through it. Grief is a natural emotion that everyone experiences; no one can run away from grief because it's always going to be there.

When it comes to talking to teens about grief, the conversation itself can create a standstill. They have an adult understanding of the concept of death but do not have the coping skills or behaviour of an adult. They are no longer children but they aren't adults either.

Adults may tell them to "be strong" for the surviving parents or siblings, which isn't healthy for teens. They may be asked to take on adult roles such as childcare, emotional support, carpooling and part time jobs. However, they shouldn't be taking on these roles because they need the time to heal.

Teenagers may reject the feelings of grief because they feel out of control and overwhelmed or upset by the feelings. In order to get through the process, always acknowledge your teen's presence, their importance, their thoughts, opinions and feelings. Patience is key when dealing with the grief process.

During the years of adolescence they're beginning the journey towards independence and searching for their own identity. However, when a death occurs, teenagers need the support of an adult/parent to feel safe and secure.

Grief can be confusing for teenagers because as much as they are striving for independence, they may also realize they want the support of their parents. Nonetheless, adults need to accept their own grief before helping their teen. Adults need to be available to sit with their teen, listen, and answer their questions. Always validate their feelings and never minimize them.

Everyone grieves differently; some may cry, be angry or laugh uncontrollably. Grief can last for different lengths of time and teens will express all kinds of emotions during this time, which is normal. Thus, there is no *right* way to grieve because we are all different. Be patient and open minded. Some teens will feel more comfortable talking to friends, writing in journals, or creating art. These are healthy ways of expressing grief because they are letting it out instead of holding it in.

On the other hand, teens that try to forget about the event or ignore their feelings may take the escape route by skipping school, lashing out, feeling

depressed, engaging in sexual activity and abusing drugs and alcohol. These are unhealthy choices that will only temporarily numb the pain of their loss. In order for teens to grieve in a healthy way, they should talk to someone they trust or participate in a support group. Teens need a safe and nurturing atmosphere in order to deal with grief effectively.

Resource: www.dougy.org/print/grief-resources/how-to-help-a-grieving-teen/



Profile: Dave Canadian

BY TYSON PHILLIPS, COMMUNICATIONS

Dave Canadian has always played and been involved with sports. Dave was the head wrestling coach for 21 years at the Kahnawake Survival School.

He now works for the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake as a special projects coordinator in sports and recreation. As this interview was conducted in June, Dave was preparing for the 2014 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG).

“Growing up, I’d play many sports with friends. When I was 12 years old, I joined organized sports,” Dave said.

“I started paddling at the Onake Canoe Club, and when I was fifteen, I

started wrestling.” This paved the way to his career working in sports.

The very first NAIG games he went to was in 1990. “The games were in Edmonton that year. We won the wrestling championship and there was going to be a big celebration when we got back to Kahnawake. We were planning a parade and dinner, but the crisis* began and we had to cancel.”

The NAIG games have been held in many different cities throughout the

United States and Canada. This year’s games were held in Regina.

Dave was the chef de mission of team Eastern Door and the North Contingent for the games. “It is my third time being the chef de mission and it’s a huge undertaking. I have many duties that include making sure all the athletes and teams are registered, taking care of travel arrangements, going to many meetings, travelling to Regina to get a tour of the venues, meeting strict deadlines, and the list goes on. I also sit on the NAIG 2014 Board of Directors.”

For the past few months, Dave has been travelling back and forth to Regina. “Just when you think your day is over, I get calls at night. It is non-stop work,” Dave says with a smile.

There were many different sporting events that took place at NAIG including soccer, lacrosse, volleyball, golf, track and field, softball, and kayaking. “When I am asked what is it like going to the NAIG games, I tell people these games are our Olympics and it’s like going to the biggest Pow Wow,” he said. “I meet so many old friends from other nations that I’ve met over the years and to see our

youth participate in the games; it makes us all proud.”

INSPIRING ATHLETES

A great experience at NAIG can solidify an athlete’s commitment to a sport but it can also lead to other opportunities. “It can lead [the athletes] to continuing their education and [going] off to college and university on a sports scholarship,” Dave explained.

“We have success stories of past athletes who went to NAIG, continued their education after high school, and now have good careers.”

Dave was asked if there were more NAIG stories to discuss and he said it would take hours to talk about everything he, the athletes, and the coaches experienced over the years. “Sometimes we will get together and talk about the games. We can stay up all night sharing stories!” he laughed. “Looking back over the past 24 years, the uniforms may have faded but the memories of NAIG will last forever.”

** The 1990 “Oka Crisis” began in Kanehsatake after police intervention at a peaceful barricade protesting a planned golf course expansion in disputed Mohawk territory. In support of its sister community, Kahnawake blocked the Mercier bridge. Both communities spent the summer surrounded by the provincial police and, later, the Canadian army.*

Profile: Angel Robertson

BY TYSON PHILLIPS, COMMUNICATIONS

Angel Kaienwenni:io Robertson has always had a love for playing sports. This past July, Angel went to the 2014 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) and competed in wrestling. As this interview was conducted before the games, Angel hoped to bring home gold and nab the Todd Diabo award.

The sixteen year old attends Kahnawake Survival School and is on the wrestling team. As if that's not enough of a full plate, she also plays volleyball, soccer, basketball, and track and field.

When Angel was in grade seven, she was bullied for playing too many sports. The bullies would tell Angel that she was a boy and make other rude comments. "It made me not want to play sports anymore," she admits. "But why should I give up something I love to do? I grew a thick skin, put aside all the bullying, and continued to play sports."

When Angel started at Survival School, she had little interest in wrestling. One of her friends invited Angel to a practice to see what it was like. "After watching that first practice I decided to try it out. I'm glad I did," she smiled. Angel just completed her third year in wrestling this past June.

This isn't the first time Angel competed in Saskatchewan but her past experiences have made her hungry for the gold at NAIG. "We went this past year to the wrestling nationals in Saskatoon.

I was the first girl from Kahnawake to achieve second place. I almost got the gold," She admits. "That's why I hope to get the gold at NAIG."

An offshoot of being active is that it's helped her in other areas. "One of the benefits of playing sports is that it's a stress reliever. Before wrestling practice, we do a half hour workout. We run around the gym, do sit ups, push ups, etc. You need good cardio before you actually wrestle. All that exercise helps me deal with everyday stress."

Angel's summer job was working at the KSCS Teen Social Club, a group for teens with special needs. "I love working with the teens; they are amazing kids. I often look after my younger brother Joey, who is autistic. He's part of the group, so Joey is with me all day," she said. "This makes it easier for my family as my father and older sister work."

The experience has led to Angel wanting a career where she would work with people who have special needs. "I plan to go to college, play college sports, and have a degree where I can work with teens and adults who have special needs."

Angel would like to tell younger athletes not to let remarks from bullies discourage you. "Do what you love to do. When you are standing on that podium getting gold, be proud of yourself and don't let others bring you down."

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determining the need for placement. Foster Care can also be court ordered in the case of youth protection where a child is at risk, neglected, abused or abandoned.

Either way, Foster Care provides a safe and secure environment for the child to grow and thrive, to develop their self-esteem, empathy and values. It is the community's way to support the family and the child's need to repair the ruptured relationship and restore the family unit. If you think that you can be a support to the child and the family and provide a loving caring home, foster care may be your calling.

For more information on how to become a foster parent, contact Joan Montour at KSCS at 450-632-6880 ext 213.





Attachment Theory

BY TRUDY JACOBS, FOSTER CARE RESOURCE WORKER

Attachment theory was introduced to the community May, 2014 by Dr. Radhika Santhanam Martin, clinical trauma psychologist. The workshop was held at Step By Step and was attended by many community organizations including KSCS, KMHC, Education Center, community schools, and traditional healers and teachers.

Attachment theory is the science of how we connect as human beings. It is the *relationship* to each other, the environment, to self and to the spirit. Dr Martin, coined the terms *Kind Face*, *Safe Hands* and *Being With* that conceptualize attachment theory.

As human beings we are all wired to seek out affection and establish relationships from birth. Relationships build our capacity to organize thoughts and feelings. In order to build brain capacity and brain growth, babies require a safe and secure environment.

When a baby cries, stress is created and cortisol is released by the brain. If the baby's needs are met, stress is reduced, cortisol is diminished and the brain produces oxytocin, a response to pleasurable situations. Touch soothes the baby's body and brain, creating a pleasurable interaction/relationship.

This interaction allows the baby to trust and become more secure and safe, establishing an attachment/relationship. Continued interaction gives way to better behaved and less demanding children. Contrarily, when a baby's needs are not met and no one responds to the

baby's cry, the stress levels increase exponentially and the baby learns not to trust and learns to feel *UNSAFE*.

Parents are the primary relationship links to trust, safety and security. Without proper attachment at an early stage, trust and security are at risk for being compromised and future relationships /interactions and social behaviors can be affected. Poor attachment gives rise to anxiety, rigidity and challenging social behaviors.

Everybody needs a holding environment. People soak up love and affection through the skin with simple touch. Gentle touch shows tenderness, playful touch gives joy and holding someone creates reassurance. Touch is essential in helping babies soothe themselves and organize difficult feelings. *Kind Face*, *Safe Hands* allows others to feel safe in times of distress. By offering a kind face and safe hands others can find comfort in expressing feelings without judgment.

Being With or present in a relationship is important. There is no need to know what happened, to fix the situation or even to do anything—it is just to be with—NO JUDGMENT. Language can be very negative and harmful. A person who may have a problem is not a *problem person*. This is how labels and stereotypes create stigma and feelings of being *UNSAFE* and *INSECURE*.

Distress is the need to re-connect and to learn how to manage feelings. Being present as a caregiver, showing warmth and sensitivity without judgment can help repair ruptures in relationships to

create a kinder, gentler environment for children to grow and thrive. It teaches children to trust, to feel safe and secure, and establish relationships. Children learn to play with others, communicate appropriately and regulate their emotions while gaining a sense of identity. A child needs attention, love and care to feel safe and secure.

Kind Face, *Safe Hands* and *Being With* are the anchors for establishing attachment relations. Knowing what the child needs and what the child is feeling and doing along with what you are doing, feeling and need in the moment are critical in understanding and implementing attachment theory.



Life After School

BY CURRAN JACOBS, HUMAN RESOURCES (SUMMER STUDENT)

When it comes down to it, the course of our lives is determined by the decisions we make. The only insight we have to the future is based on the pros and cons we can come up with for any decision. This can be very exciting and also terribly daunting depending on which crossroads you are currently sitting at.

For the past five years or so, I've tied anchor at the port called *undergraduate studies*. Graduation feels exciting and long overdue, but it also has an air of finality. With big changes, come big choices. The burning question on everyone's mind then becomes: what next? The research I went through for this article helped to ease my mind and I'm hoping it will help other soon-to-be graduates see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

Some people are cool with grabbing their bachelors degree and running straight into the workforce. If this sounds like you, remember that there are an abundance of resources, websites and people who can help guide you. Every school has some sort of career counseling; making an appointment with a counsellor—even in September—is an excellent idea.

Keep your eyes open for job fairs and recruitment booths; there are always companies scouting the universities for young and energetic candidates.

Finally, Tewaohnhi'saktha is a great place to look for employment both in Kahnawake and for positions geared toward Aboriginal candidates. Browsing

their website's job bank is also very helpful. From resumé building to interview tips, job searches to internship programs, the internet is one of your greatest resources. [NOTE: see a list of resources at the end of the article.]

If you're not ready to join the "real world" yet, looking at master's programs is also an option. The master's process is similar to undergrad applications, but requires a couple more supporting documents.

Each school and their individual programs have varying requirements, so when looking at a school's website, be sure to look at the prospective student's section to create your application checklist. GPA requirements generally start at a 3.0 and only go up depending on the program. Also, some master's programs expect you to have completed an honours degree. Consider whether you have met those requirements.

Transcripts and academic reference are almost a guaranteed requirement for applications. Potential supporting documents may include a resumé, admission essay, letter of intent, portfolio, and standardized test scores. The most common one is the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Not all programs require you take the test, but if it is required, or you feel like it will help your application, there are testing centers in the city.

The deadlines for applications also vary depending on the program you are looking at, but across the board, MA deadlines fall somewhere between January and March but it's never too

early to put in an application. In fact, I would advise starting early in the year, especially if you are applying to multiple schools that require different documents.

While you're at it, checking into tuition costs is important so you can plan ahead. Tuition can be anywhere between \$3,000 to \$30,000 a year and somehow it needs to get paid. The Kahnawake Education Center's post-secondary counselor is a good place to start looking at funding options.

Starting a job or navigating through the next stage of post-secondary academia are both viable and exciting. But don't feel limited to simply those options. There is a whole world of opportunity out there. What you choose to do post-undergrad won't define the rest of your life; it'll just add another chapter to the journey.

Resources:

Tewaohnhi'saktha Jobs: <http://tewa.ca/jobs/>

Student Jobs: <http://student-jobs.ca/>

Resume Writing: www.youth.gc.ca/eng/topics/jobs/resume.shtml

Internships: www.internships.com/student

Gap Year: www.gapyear.com/

Avataq Cultural Institute: www.postavataq.gc.ca/Ang/PostAng/doc.htm

KEC Post-Secondary: <http://kec.gc.com/post-secondary-services/>

Loans & Bursaries: www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1351185180120/1351685455328

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"Family is the first school for young children, and parents are powerful models."

~ Alice Sterling Honig

Prevention: Working Together

BY MARY MCCOMBER, PREVENTION

Since the 1980s, Kahnawà:ke Shakotiiá'takéhnhas Community Services (KSCS) has worked in collaboration with Kahnawà:ke schools to offer educational, social and developmental services to Kahnawà:ke youth.

Through this partnership, we hope to meet the needs of Kahnawà:ke youth by providing a full spectrum of prevention activities and services to support the children's educational and social goals.

Whether in the school or in the community, we provide awareness and activities on the prevention of addictions and violence in Kahnawà:ke.

IN-SCHOOL PREVENTION TEAM OBJECTIVES:

- Offer prevention presentations and information to teachers and school staff so they can provide lessons in their classrooms.
- Offer workshops/lessons/groups to students in conjunction with school staff.
- Provide students, parents and school staff with information regarding various health and social issues (e.g., information booths).
- Collaborate with the school administrators, teachers and parents to offer relevant educational opportunities to youth on issues such as healthy relationships, healthy sexuality, addictions and violence prevention.

- Meet with the school administrators to plan and evaluate the programming.

ACTIVITIES & PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS

KSCS hosts community wide educational campaigns throughout the year on various health and social related issues. These campaigns can also run at the schools in various forms e.g, information booths, pamphlets, in-class discussions and exercises. We provide age appropriate education to youth on the issues facing the community. Here is a listing of some of our campaigns:

- Bully Prevention (March)
- Spirit of Wellness (November)
- Safe Grad (April–June)
- Violence Prevention (July)
- Operation Lookout
- Healthy Sexuality
- Gift of Hope Suicide Prevention (December)

For more information on violence prevention month or in-school prevention at Kahnawà:ke Survival School, please contact Mary McComber at KSCS 450-632-6880 EXT 153.

Seskéha/August

- 9 International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
- 12 International Youth Day
- 19 World Humanitarian Day

Seskekó:wa/September

Breakfast for Learning Month

Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

Men's Cancer Health Awareness Month

1 Labour Day (KSCS Closed)

9 FASD Awareness Day

10 International Suicide Prevention Day

21 International Day of Peace

Do you have questions or suggestions?

Is there a topic you would like to see covered in a future issue of the newsletter? Contact us and let us know.

Aionkwatakari:teke

P.O. Box 1440

Kahnawake, Quebec JOL 1B0

Tel: 450-632-6880

Fax: 450-632-5116

Email: kscs@kscskahnawake.ca