

Inside Education

November 2012

**It's Coming - The 2013 Annual ACEA Conference -
"Trauma, Violence and Rehabilitation"
March 6, 7 & 8, 2012
Banff Park Lodge, Banff, AB**



For over a quarter of a century, the ACEA has strived to bring together high quality speakers and produce a meaningful conference for workers involved in the correctional and justice systems. Registration is now open for the 27th annual Alberta Correctional Education Association's Banff conference. Once again, The Banff Park Lodge is offering discounted lodging rates for attendees. Details are as follows:

Conference Registration Fee: \$350 Canadian, Students \$175
(Group discount of seven registrations for the price of six available)
Registration includes all meals (except Thursday evening) and ACEA Membership
Accommodation:
Location: BANFF PARK LODGE (Toll Free) 1 800 661 9266
Rate: \$130.00 (+ 11% tax) per night, Single or Double Occupancy
Quote Group ID# 18373 for this rate
Note: Accommodation Deadline January 20, 2013
Registration forms are available at www.acea86.ca

Inside Education is the newsletter of the Alberta Correctional Education Association.

The newsletter is published two or three times a year, and submissions are always welcome.

The ACEA is a professional organization facilitating the educational needs of the incarcerated;

The ACEA strives to broaden professional horizons and interdisciplinary interaction of all personnel involved with correctional education;

Texts published in Inside Education express the views of their authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the ACEA, its executive, or the editor.

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2013 Conference Speakers



Thursday March 7, 2013 - 8:45 am – 10:15 am

Margot Van Sluytman & John Glendon “Glen” Flett
Sawbonna: Justice as Lived-Experience

Margot’s talks and writing workshops are contoured in her belief that Sawbonna shapes hope and healing not only for victim and offender, but for each of us. Margot is an award-winning author, poet and workshop facilitator. Her Master’s Thesis, *Sawbonna: Justice as Lived-Experience*, addresses her strong belief in restorative justice and it’s power assist the healing of victims of crime.



Throughout the course of his life, Glen has spent 23 years behind bars. Now a free man, he dedicates most of his time to the L.I.N.C. Society (www.lincsociety.bc.ca) helping former inmates reintigrate back into society. Glen believes strongly in the concept of restorative justice and its empowerment of victims and the ultimate goal of a safer community for all.

Margot Van Sluytman and Glen Flett will share their story of healing after violent crime. Glen killed Margot’s Father, Theodore, in an armed robbery in Toronto in 1978. In 2007, after reading about her work as a poet and an expressive writing teacher, Glen contacted her. Their inspiring story is what you will hear from both of them.

Thursday March 7, 2013 - 10:30 am – Noon & 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Dr. Gabor Maté

Gabor Maté is a bestselling and award-winning author of four books on a number of important topics for Canadians' health including addiction, attention deficit disorder, mind/body wellness and parental influence. He is a dynamic, effective and inspiring speaker who relates with vigour to both professional health and general wellness audiences. Dr. Maté is presently staff physician at a clinic in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, where his patients are people with drug addictions, HIV and related problems.



Thursday March 7, 2013 - 2:45 pm – 3:45 pm

Peter John Nyarza
Oh, MY LIFE!

At the age of 19, Peter’s life was thrown into turmoil when his home, the country of Sudan, fell into civil war. He endured unimaginable trauma throughout his experiences as a citizen, soldier and refugee. Today, Peter is a successful student who is studying law, but he still deals with the trauma he suffered on a daily basis. Peter will tell us his story and show us how he survived his experiences and freed himself from a world of darkness and isolation.

Friday March 8, 2013 - 8:30 am – 10:00 am & 10:15 am – 11:30 am

Roger Moore & June Parnham
Inspiring Growth & Success

Roger and June are instructors at NorQuest College who have extensive experience in planning, organizing and conducting educational workshops. They will present a plenary session that will focus on bringing the conference to a close in a meaningful way and giving attendees the inspiration and strategies needed to bring the conference’s somewhat heavy theme back into their workplaces.

Your ACEA Board

The members of the ACEA board remain committed to producing a high-quality annual conference. If you are interested in becoming a part of this team as an executive member or regional representative, feel free to contact us for more information.

If you have any questions regarding the ACEA, suggestions for the upcoming conference or contributions for the newsletter, please don't hesitate to contact your local ACEA representative.

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Message from the Editor

Happy November!

Winter is coming. Fortunately, we don't live in the Seven Kingdoms, we don't share the Stark family name, and none of us are reanimated corpses - no matter how tired the upcoming season may make us feel. Instead, for us, winter marks the coming of the Alberta Correctional Education Association's annual Banff Conference. Once again, we are very proud to bring a stellar list of speakers out to Banff for three days of feasting, socializing and, of course, learning. Be sure to read up on our speakers (listed on the first page of this newsletter), register and book your hotel rooms. As before, the Banff Park Lodge is offering discounted room rates for a limited time. Registration and booking information is available online at www.acea86.ca.

Please note that we now have ownership of the ACEA website - www.acea86.ca. Over the past year, we have been working on redeveloping our online image and will be launching a new, updated ACEA website that will be kept up to date and maintained by the members of the board. In case you were wondering, the 86 in [acea86](http://www.acea86.ca) represents the year of the very first ACEA conference.

Shortly after I released the June edition of this newsletter, Lauren Bossler, the CYOC library technician, contacted me regarding the Margot Van Sluytman article. She agrees with Margot about the healing and expressive powers of writing and had been moved by a poem written by one of the students at CYOC. You can find her submission on page five of this newsletter.

Over the past several years, trauma has been shown to have a massive impact of the physical and mental wellbeing of incarcerated (and non-incarcerated) individuals. This has proven to be an area of study where this is much to learn. You can find Vanessa Andrew's submission, "The Importance of being Trauma Informed in a Correctional Setting", on pages six and seven of this edition.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any suggestions or submissions for upcoming editions of Inside Education.

Regards,
Cobern Whitehead

Message from the President

As I sit by the fireplace enjoying an early winter snow storm outside, I begin to think about the upcoming ACEA 27th Annual Conference in Banff on March 6-9, 2013. "Trauma, Violence and Rehabilitation" may mean different things to each of us, but we have brought together some dynamic speakers that will share their thoughts and personal stories that I hope will engage you.

I would like to start off this article by thanking the ACEA board members, past and present. We come from all ends of the province working in correctional institutions, public schools, post-secondary institutions and from non-profit agencies. We only meet three times a year, but with every meeting, email or telephone call, we are always enthusiastic and committed to bringing you the best possible conference we can by diligently researching potential speakers all while working on the corners of our desks...or in my case, in front of the fireplace at home.

We keep looking for ways to improve our contact not only with each other but all of you members as well. We are on Facebook at Alberta Correctional Education Association and Twitter at ACEAtweet and we have created a new website at www.acea86.ca that will be undergoing a facelift over the next month. We have taken ownership of the website, and it is our intention to update regularly as we gather new information.

We love seeing our friends at the conference, but we would love to meet new friends as well. In the coming months I hope to create a booklet that will cover the who, what, where, when and why of the ACEA and list the speakers we have seen over the last few years. The intention is to contact our community friends and invite them to the next conference, giving all of us more resources to better fulfill the needs of our clients.

I don't have all the details at this stage but we are also looking into a co-sponsorship with MRU. This will mean that students and practitioners who attend the conference can receive credits towards their ACSW Category A training hours, allowing us to reach more people and build some great community resources. I think back to last year's conference, "Prevention and Intervention", and wonder how we can improve. We, of course, value your feedback, and I encourage who has any ideas or suggestions to please feel free to let us know. You can find your local ACEA board member on our new and improved website www.acea86.ca or email me at jamie.barrow@gov.ab.ca. I will do my best to get back to you or at least point you in the right direction.

Cheers my friends,

Jamie Barrow
ACEA President

Not why the addiction, but why the pain.
- Dr. Gabor Mate

Why Is It That I Have to Wonder...

By C.S.

I find myself thinking....
Wondering what it's like to have a family
Or a mother to hold me when I cry
Or a brother to pick me up when I fall down
Or a father to guide me in the right direction
Or to know that I will always be loved and cared for.

I wonder what it's like
To live in a house with my own family
To go to school willingly and happily
To have friends I can trust to be there when I need them
To know that I have my own bed to sleep in
And to be told that I am loved and cared for.

As I walk along with nowhere to go
I see families eating dinner together happily
I see kids running around playing and laughing
I see that these families are inseparable and filled with love,

I wonder why I don't have a family
Or why my mother said I was an accident
Or why I was left to fend for myself at 9 years old
Or why I don't recall being told I was loved by my parents.

I would like to think that parents are supposed to be there to tell you they love you and will always be there for you

Well, I don't have that....

I always felt unloved and that no-one cared
I wouldn't let anyone into my life

7 years later I am finally able to start realizing that even though the people who should have been there for me to tell me they love me are not there...
There are other people that do show me they care.
Some of these people are the volunteers that take time out of their day to spend time with us here and show that they care.

So, thank you very much. Your time, energy and commitment mean a lot especially because really you don't have to care about us.

I look up to you guys and appreciate what you do for others. Now I am not left wondering why I am not cared about because I know that I am cared for.

Thank you.

The Calgary Young Offender Centre (CYOC) offers a wide variety of volunteer supported programs within the centre as well as to youth in the community upon release. Youth requiring additional support may request to have one to one weekly visits with a centre or chapel volunteer. Volunteer programs offered include support with addictions, literacy, education, spiritual guidance, dance, music, poetry and art. Every year a dinner is held in honour of the volunteers and a student wrote this poem and presented it during the dinner.

A definition of rehabilitation is, "to re-establish in the esteem of others." (New Webster Encyclopedia Dictionary of the English Language) and this poem, written by a young resident of CYOC, shows how volunteers, through positive interaction, reinforce this.

Lauren Bossler, Library Technician CYOC

Taren Pinel, Volunteer/ Mentor Coordinator CYOC

NEW ONLINE COURSE: Sawbonna and Restorative Justice

INSTRUCTOR: Margot Van Sluytman - www.margotvansluytman.com

FOR: Practitioners and Students of Restorative Justice, Mediation and Conflict Resolution

THEME: How to engage in what and how "justice" means by expanding the restorative justice dialectic. You will be taught how to navigate with your own beliefs, prejudices and wisdom in order to mentor and facilitate those with whom and for whom you work.

TIME-FRAME AND COST: Six Weeks - \$750.00CAD - All materials provided

REGISTRATION: https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=BX4UNQD449ACC

The Importance of being Trauma Informed in a Correctional Setting

By Vanessa Andrews, Youth Worker, Calgary Young Offender Centre

"You talk about love? Don't talk to me about love, I don't believe in it. I don't even know what that is. Every single person I've trusted has hurt me" -14 yr old Voices participant

What shapes the way a young mind sees the world? When a young person has gone through traumatic experiences, what impact does this have on their lives? What can we do in a correctional setting to prevent further traumatization of vulnerable individuals? Dr. Stephanie Covington, co-director of the Center for Gender and Justice, seeks to address these questions in the training workshop "Becoming Trauma Informed: A training program for Correctional Professionals".

Through her work with female offenders across North America, Dr. Covington has gained insight into the commonalities among this population specifically in the area of experiencing trauma. Trauma can be defined as something that occurs when an external event overwhelms a person's physical and psychological coping mechanisms or strategies (Van der Kolk, 1989). Some examples of trauma include emotional, physical and sexual abuse, abandonment, witnessing violence, natural disasters, experiences of war and intergenerational trauma (Dr. Stephanie Covington, 2012).

There are some gender specific distinctions in how females experience trauma as highlighted by Dr. Covington. One of the major differences is that females, more often than their male counterparts, are affected by interpersonal violence. This means that the one who they are saying "I love you" to is the one who is perpetuating the abuse (Dr. Covington 2012). As demonstrated by the opening quote, this can be a particularly painful and confusing experience and may account for the higher incidence of mental health issues among women exposed to interpersonal violence (Dr. Covington, 2012).

The impact of trauma on one's mental and physical health was clearly demonstrated in the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study that was conducted in collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente. This study asked over 17,000 participants to complete a confidential questionnaire regarding whether or not they had experienced any childhood neglect or abuse. The outcome of the study clearly linked the higher scores measuring neglect and abuse with a greater risk of having chronic health problems such as heart disease and diabetes as well as a greater likelihood of having mental illness and addictions issues (Felitti and Anda, 2010).

The effects of trauma are long lasting and debilitating for many. Common effects attributed to trauma can be broken down into three categories; retreating, causing harm to self and causing harm to others. The retreating response is typified by isolation, dissociation, depression and anxiety. Themes of causing harm to self include addictions, eating disorders, deliberate self-harm and suicidal actions. Examples of harm to others would be aggressive behaviours, violence and rages (Dr. Covington, 2012).

In a correctional setting, common procedures such as pat downs, strip searches, handcuffs, restraints and loud noises can trigger or re-traumatize the individual. Dr. Covington acknowledges that some practices such as searches are unavoidable but there is a way to take "universal precautions" by being cognizant of the effects of trauma and responding effectively to de-escalate or avoid potential triggering situations.

The core values associated with trauma informed services are ensuring a safe environment (both physical and emotional), creating trustworthiness, providing choices, fostering collaboration and encouraging empowerment. By maintaining an atmosphere of respect, and learning to recognize the early warning signs of someone who is being triggered we are ensuring that our environment is safer for our incarcerated population as well as our staff. Instead of merely trying to control the undesirable or negative behaviour we can begin to understand what precipitated it. We can react more effectively by providing grounding techniques and self-calming strategies that can be utilized when someone is feeling triggered.

Continued on next page...

The Importance of being Trauma Informed in a Correctional Setting (Continued)

By Vanessa Andrews

For the past year at the Calgary Young Offender Centre, over 55 adolescent females have participated in Dr. Covington's innovative and interactive journaling program called Voices. This program uses a variety of therapeutic interventions that relates to the unique needs of adolescent females including addressing histories of trauma. The Voices program endeavors to forge a connection so that "past experience and present circumstances can be used therapeutically to build a hopeful future" (Owen, 2004).

By being trauma informed in a correctional setting, we can begin to better understand our population and tailor our responses more effectively. This in turn will enhance the services we offer and may predict better outcomes for the youth.

For more information on Becoming Trauma Informed training and other work by Dr. Stephanie Covington, please visit her website: <http://www.stephaniecovington.com/index.php>

References

- Felitti, V., & Anda, R. (2010). The relationship of adverse childhood experiences to adult medical health, psychiatric disorders and sexual behaviour: Implications for healthcare. In R. Lanius and E. Vermetten (Eds.), *The Hidden Epidemic: The Impact of Early Childhood Trauma on Health and Disease*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
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- Owen, B. (2004). Endorsements, *Voices: A Program of Self-Discovery and Empowerment for Girls*. Retrieved from <http://www.stephaniecovington.com/pdfs/v01.pdf>
- Van der Kolk, B. (1989). The compulsion to repeat the trauma: Reenactment, revictimization, and masochism. *Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 12, 389-411.

Trapped

L.J.P. (Inmate Contribution)

Buried feelings, deep inside.

Piercing! Ripping! Screaming!

Walls so high, wires wrapped.
My deams await, the other side.
Need to find, a place to hide.
Free these feelings, let them fly.

Burning! Bleeding! Festering!

Get me, to the other side.
Only there, can I cry.
Slay this demon, I fight inside.
Pray to God, I'll survive.
Keep me safe, I await, the iron gates

