

Southeast Regional School Psychologists

Portage la Prairie SD (Oct. 2, 2014)

HOSTS: Louise LeLièvre, Karen Pain, Maxine Mutcher, and Melanie Caister

Meeting Minutes

1. After feasting on a delicious pancake breakfast, we watched a live *GoTo* video presentation about the University of Winnipeg's *Accessibility Services & Resource Centre*, presented by Lara Coombs & associate. The centre assesses the needs of students with exceptional needs, and sets up appropriate accommodations for them. They monitor progress, and assist with course management. They are an advocate for students, and have a campus outreach service. They also help students with test and exam preparation. In addition, the centre provides adaptive software training, and gives tours of accessible classrooms. They said that a student can officially designate a parent to act as an advocate for them if needed. Although you usually have to take at least three full-time courses to be considered a full-time student, if you are disabled, you only have to take two full-time courses to be considered full-time for the purpose of acquiring student aid funding. The type of accommodations they provide are listed below:

<u>Campus/Classroom</u>	<u>Tests/Exams</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parking• Registration & seating priority• ASL interpretation & transcribing• Volunteer note taking• Official excuse from class participation (e.g., high anxiety)• Adaptive equipment• Letters of introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extended time• Quiet space• Supervised breaks• Computer software• Scribe & oral presentation• Alternative format• Test/exam deferral• No back-to-back exams

Students can apply for a bursary of up to \$8000.00 per year to pay for adaptive technology, tutoring, a note-taker, etc. Specialists (doctors, psychologists, OTs, SLPs, etc.) fill out their respective portions of the application form, and then it is compiled for submission. The bursary money goes directly to the student. They need to submit receipts for the equipment, materials, and services that they use at reconciliation time. If the money is not all used, the balance must be repaid. At the Accessibility Resource Centre, four private rooms are available for tutoring and rest breaks. There is access to computers with adaptive software (e.g., Dragon Naturally Speaking, JAWS screen reader, Kurzweil 3000, Inspiration, MAGIC or CCTV screen magnifier, Read/Write Gold, etc.), open space for meeting with others or studying, a textbook lending library, and photocopier. For more information, call (204) 786-9771, or check out the website at www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility.

2. Dr. Barbara Woods presented in the early afternoon about the services she provides in private practice, with a heavy emphasis on trauma counselling for children and adolescents. First, she asserted that CBT is like a lead balloon in First Nations cultures. They prefer interventions that follow the medicine wheel, with a learning style of hands-on activities and oral tradition (e.g., doing and hearing). She said that between the ages of birth and 3 years, trauma is a sensory experience of mind and body. Typical reactions are fight, flight, and freeze. Trauma highjacks the midbrain, including the brainstem, amygdala, and hippocampus, which interferes with learning and other normal functions. She introduced us to a Trauma Education Binder from the

National Institute of Trauma/Loss in Children (NIT/LC). It is an 8-10 session program for students between the ages of 5/6 to 18 years. It uses art and drawings, with a swinging back and forth between gradual exposure and relaxation response. Art is useful because it triggers the midbrain (visual-sensory-motor areas). The program focuses on themes of fear, anxiety/worry, anger, guilt/shame, and revenge. The children/adolescents show their drawings and explain them to significant others (e.g., parents, foster parents, social workers, etc.). The program also measures PTSD symptoms before and after the intervention. The program moves the person through a progression of Victim-Survivor-Thriver. Other books, programs, and online courses dealing with grief and trauma can be found at the *NIT/LC* website: <https://www.starr.org/sites/default/files/2014TLCtools.pdf>

3. To end off the afternoon, Michelle Bahuaud gave us updates from Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning. Some items that were covered included the following:
 - Oct. 7 – Dr. Leslie Jocelyn – ADHD medications & sensory issues with ADHD
 - Nov.3-4 – A 2-day trauma forum workshop
 - There is a new consultant for ASD
 - There is a new Resource Teachers Handbook
 - There is a new suicide prevention document