

## THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

Everybody has reasons why their mind has had enough. Mine would fill a novel. I knew my mind was not in sync with the rest of me, so I called for help. The psychiatrist's diagnosis was Chronic Depression. My stay in hospital is something I'll never forget. While in hospital, my daughter stayed with my sister. When I was discharged I had a psychiatrist and pills: I was in the system.

A year passed and the depression grew worse. Being separated from my son had taken its toll. This time I went to a hospital near my sister. Again I felt like a prisoner. My diagnosis changed to Bipolar/ Epilepsy/Depression.

After that hospital stay, when I got more pills and gained weight, I returned home with my daughter. I sought support from a mental health therapist, who taught me about the illness, relationships and being a single mother.

A year passed and I found myself back in the hospital near my sister. My diagnosis changed to Manic Depression. (Bipolar Disorder is also called Manic Depression.) "Where did all this energy come from?" I wondered. This time my daughter's father got custody of her. I was left alone on more medication.

\* \* \*  
By faithfully going to the psychiatrist and therapist, I've stayed out of hospital for 10 years! My neighbour told me about a mental health organization called Friends & Advocates Peel. I needed a place to give my time and be around people. It helped being there at night, but the daytime felt so empty.

During this time my dog passed away, and I had another hospitalization. This time I learned how to draw and paint and didn't feel like a prisoner.

Finally I went home with new pills, a new doctor, and unsure how I was going to face leaving my apartment. It was bad. I couldn't even go to the mall or cross the street. As the new medication set in, the paranoia diminished and I got the courage to get my life back.

During my last hospitalization I was given a new diagnosis; Bipolar Affective Disorder. This time I was really unwell and went to three hospitals. After an increase in medication and fighting for my independence I returned home.

I had enough of being alone, so I joined CMHA/Peel PAR North, where I work in the kitchen. My forte is cooking and my friends call my home a café.

I have also had Temporary Employment for six months through PAR North. This has elevated my self worth and self-esteem. I also won a Davidson Scholarship to take a course at Sheridan College. I've

applied again this year. The opportunities to learn, grow, be part of a team, socialize, learn healthy life styles, be supported and much more are all there at PAR North. Now, after waking up each morning, eating breakfast, taking my pills, and getting ready, I have a place to go. My life is no longer empty.

Thank-You  
Pamela Writer/poet/artist



*CMHA/Peel's  
24<sup>th</sup> Annual Geranium Sale  
May 19 & 20, 2010 deliveries  
Buy, sell or deliver plants in  
5 colours red, salmon, white,  
light pink or dark pink  
\$5 each or 3 for \$12  
Call Shelagh 905-451-1718 x 320  
or nuttalls@cmhapeel.ca*

Visit our website [www.cmhapeel.ca](http://www.cmhapeel.ca)

*In The News.....*

### Dates To Remember:

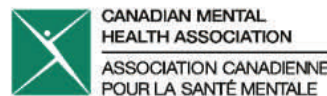
*Our 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Geranium  
Fundraiser April-May 2010*

*Mental Health Week  
May 3-9 2010*

*Annual General Meeting  
June 22 2010*

*The 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Clubhouse  
Conference Nov 3-6 2010*

**Finance & Operations**  
250 Clarence St., Unit 5,  
Brampton, ON L6W 1T4  
905 451 1718  
nuttalls@cmhapeel.ca



**Resource Centre**  
102-2 County Court Blvd.  
Brampton, ON L6W 3W8  
905 451 2123

### MISSION STATEMENT

**CMHA/Peel enhances the well being of all people in our community by promoting and supporting good mental health ~ serving our community since 1962**

*Promoting mental health one mind at a time*



# Canadian Mental Health Association/Peel Branch

*Connections Volume 7*

*Spring 2010*

## BULLYING and Mental Health



Many children have a good idea of what bullying is because they see it every day! Statistics from [www.bullyfreealberta.ca](http://www.bullyfreealberta.ca) claim that approximately one in seven Canadian children aged 11 to 16 is a victim of bullying, and 25% of children in grades 4 to 6 have been bullied. Bullying occurs once every seven minutes on the playground and once every 25 minutes in the classroom. In a majority of cases, bullying stops within 10 seconds when peers intervene or do not support the bullying behaviour.

### What is Bullying?

Bullying is a conscious, willful, and deliberately hostile activity to harm, induce fear through the threat of further aggression, and create terror. It can: come out of the blue; be premeditated; obvious; subtle; done by one individual or a group. Bullying is an antisocial act and needs to be addressed as such.

The four most common types are:

**Verbal bullying** is the most common form. Words are powerful tools than can break the spirit of a child/youth on the receiving end. Whispered words may not be detected. Name-calling, sarcasm, cruel criticism, personal defamation, negative comments, references to one's culture, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, extortion of money and personal items, sexually suggestive or sexually abusive remarks, are examples of verbal bullying.



**Physical bullying** is the most visible and readily identifiable, yet only one third of incidents are reported. It includes: slapping; hitting; choking; chasing; coercing; destroying or stealing belongings; and unwanted sexual touching. The older and stronger the bully, the more dangerous this kind of attack is.



**Social bullying**, also known as relational bullying, is the most difficult to detect. Used to alienate and reject a peer, or to purposely ruin friendships, it can range from subtle gestures, such as aggressive stares, rolling of eyes, sighs, scapegoating, sneers, snickers, and hostile body language, to outright ignoring, excluding, shunning and isolating someone. The onset of adolescence, with heightened emotions, makes the impact of bullying more severe.



**Cyber bullying** is using the internet or text messaging to intimidate, threaten, stalk, ridicule, humiliate, taunt and spread rumors.

Bullying can have long term physical and psychological consequences. A youth might withdraw from his/her family and regular activities, and/or complain of stomach aches, headaches, not being able to sleep, exhaustion or nightmares. If his/her embarrassment or shame is not relieved, he/she may contemplate suicide or violent behaviour.

Bystanders are also affected. There is no such thing as an innocent bystander because he/she has a choice. He/she can intervene, stand idly by, look away, actively encourage the bully, or become a bully him/herself. Fear of intervening can turn into guilt, which can produce physical and psychological consequences. Conversely, a bystander might grow desensitized and become a bully him/herself, or become apathetic and excuse him/herself from intervening.

**Teasing versus taunting: know the difference.** With teasing, there is no intent to hurt the other person, and the person teasing will stop if the person objects. Taunting involves an imbalance of power, and is intended to harm. A taunting person won't stop his/her humiliating, cruel, demanding comments, sometimes disguised as jokes, used to diminish the target's sense of self-worth.

In Barbara Coloroso's "The Bully, The Bullied, and The Bystander" she says most children are either "the bully, the bullied and the bystander." She suggests "recasting the roles ... rewriting the scripts and changing the theme of their play." According to Coloroso, grounding and removing privileges to punish the bully and rescuing the bullied child are temporary solutions, and calls bystanders "the potent force ... to stop the bullying."

She suggests dealing with the different "characters" as follows:

The Bully:

- **Intervene immediately with discipline** – Instruct and teach him/her so that he/she understands and takes ownership of his/her actions. Then guide and help the bully to develop self-discipline and fix the problem, which includes helping the bullied child to heal.
- **Create opportunities to do good** – Adults need to guide children to figure out ways to behave towards others in a caring and helpful way.
- **Nurture empathy** – Bullies tend to see incidents from their point of view only. Help them uncover empathy by teaching them to recognize and label their feelings and thoughts, and take on another person's perspective before acting.
- **Teach Friendship skills** – Teach assertive, respectful, and peaceful ways to relate to others, recognizing that friendships are 50/50.
- **Closely monitor your child's TV viewing, video game playing, computer activities and music.**
- **Engage in more constructive entertaining and energizing activities**  
**Teach your Child to "will good"** - This involves: a) Discerning what is right and what is wrong; b) Acting on what is right, even at personal cost; c) Saying openly that you are acting on your understanding of right and wrong. *Cont....*





## A Message from the CEO

This newsletter's focus is bullying and volunteerism, and the potential one has to positively affect the other.

Anyone can experience the intimidating effects of bullying, from a child in the playground to an adult at work . Only recently have we begun to understand the long lasting negative impact on one's mental health.

Early intervention and redirecting is critical in addressing bullying in children. Bullied children may feel trapped, humiliated and anxious, while bullies abuse power and act impulsively to dominate their victims. Scratch the surface of a bully and you might find an angry child experiencing family problems or abuse at home.

Bullying is a form of violence. Research confirms that focusing on "Developmental Assets" can solve bullying behaviour. The Search Institute's Developmental Assets are: "positive experiences, qualities, behaviours and characteristics that youth and children need to grow up to become healthy and successful adults". Empowering youth to volunteer can pre-empt bullying.

The results of bullying include: a deep sense of alienation, low self esteem, little empathy, impulsivity for violence, and bullying itself. When youth develop a voice through volunteering, their self esteem grows and they act as role models.

Bullying is increasing in the health and community care sector and in the workplace. Limited research suggests that in the USA, 31% of workers report being bullied. Many bullies have psychological issues that have accumulated over time, and if left unaddressed, will follow them throughout their lives.

A bullied person can end up with post traumatic stress and depression. Managers need to identify and address bullying in order to maintain a mentally healthy workplace. Often bullied persons are vulnerable and hesitate to come forward. Understanding the signs is critical to support staff to report bullying. One must also look beyond the bully to address the cause, as there is a strong link to the victim's and perpetrator's mental health.

CMHA/Peel's Youth Net program works towards supporting youth's Developmental Assets, including opportunities for volunteering. CMHA/Peel is also developing a Workplace Anti-Bullying Policy to practice what we preach and ensure our workplace is a safe and mentally healthy environment.

*Sandy Milakovic*

## Bullying and Mental Health cont...

### The Bullied:

- **I hear you; I am here for you; I believe you; you are not alone** - Listen to bullied children talk about their hurt and pain and acknowledge that you hear them. Ask open-ended questions to gather and document details of incident.
- **It is not your fault** – Although the bullied child might have said and done things to aggravate/annoy the bully, ensure he/she knows that all blame belongs to the bully.
- **There are things you can do** – Adults can help children to figure out ways to assertively stand up to bullying, steer clear of dangerous situations, take power back, and fully develop their gifts and skills.
- **Report the bullying to school personnel if occurring at school** - Give the school all specifics of the incidents, and follow up to ensure that the bullied child is being protected, and the bully is being disciplined, not punished or rescued.
- **Ignore the bully and walk away** - Bullies thrive on reaction. Walking away or ignoring hurtful emails or instant messages tells the bully you don't care.
- **Hold the anger** - Bullies want to know they have control over another's emotions; don't show anger.
- **Don't get physical** – Physical force shows anger and increases the risk of getting into trouble, and being hurt, depending on how the bully reacts. Stand up for yourself by being assertive or walking away.
- **Take control of your life** – You can't control other people's actions, only yours. Practice your self-confidence (even if you have to fake it), and ways to respond to the bully verbally or through behaviour.

### The Bystander:

- **Teach your child that he/she is responsible for the consequences of his actions** - Youth who accept responsibility for their own actions are more likely to live up to their own moral code.
- **Build your child's confidence in his or her ability to make good decisions** - Youth who have confidence in their own judgment are not easily manipulated by others. They are not afraid to think or act independently.
- **Teach your child how to evaluate reasons on his or her own** - Youth who can reason will question and develop the skill to resist passively accepting orders, by evaluating whether or not an action is the right thing to do.

Kids need help to break the cycle of violence by: helping a bully change his/her focus to more positive leadership activities; praising a bullied child for remaining non-aggressive and developing inner strength; and praising a bystander who speaks out, stands up and stops the bullying. Teach children to make friends wisely and walk away from harmful friendships. Help children to accurately read social cues, because those who annoy or irritate their peers risk becoming a target or increasingly isolated.

**CMHA/Peel – Youth Net Update.** Youth Net staff and students have completed another Mental Health Promotion initiative around the 40 "Developmental Assets", a strength based framework that focuses on positive contributions that youth make to a community. It concentrates on external and internal assets. By identifying strengths and learning new tools, youth are better able to deal with things like violence or early signs of mental illness. This program can benefit the bully, the bullied or the bystander. For more information please call **905-451-2123 x 431.**

## Volunteers give the greatest gift of all!

### Volunteer Opportunities Available

#### ♥ Geranium Sales Persons

To acquire orders of flowers within the Peel Region from organizations, friends, relatives and neighbours.

#### ♥ Geranium Delivery Persons

Delivery of Flowers to organizations and homes in the Peel Region on May 19th and May 20th Please reply to Shelagh (905) 451 1718 x 320, nuttalls@cmhapeel.ca

#### ♥ Audit Committee

The Canadian Mental Health Association/Peel Branch is seeking a volunteer for its Audit Committee. Awareness of the non profit sector and an accounting designation or financial/business background is required. Orientation to the organization is provided. Meetings are held quarterly, in the evenings in Mississauga or Brampton. This is an excellent opportunity to prepare for eventual Board involvement.

Please reply to Liz (905) 451-1718 x 310, peixotol@cmhapeel.ca



### Volunteerism

Volunteer Canada, a national organization that promotes volunteerism, has a vision. It is that "Canada fosters volunteerism and recognizes volunteer involvement as essential to building healthy, quality opportunities."

Canadian Mental Health Association/Peel Branch is governed by a volunteer board of directors, so volunteerism is at our core. Like Volunteer MBC, a relatively new agency in Peel Region, which coordinates opportunities, we agree that the contribution of volunteers is essential to maintaining a healthy, vibrant society. Every volunteer has a unique gift they can use to help others and improve the community. Become an agent of positive change: **Volunteer!**

### Effects of Bullying

Children who face relentless bullying from their peers are at an increased risk of developing psychotic symptoms by early adolescence. Research shows that bullying can lead to anxiety, depression and even suicide. New studies show that psychotic symptoms, which include hallucinations, delusions, and bizarre and paranoid thoughts, are linked to bullying. Essentially, the stress caused by severe and chronic victimization may be enough to push a vulnerable person over the edge, leading to full-blown schizophrenia. The latest findings, published in Archives of General Psychiatry, are based on an assessment of 6,437 young individuals. At the ages of 8 and 10, the children were asked if they had been bullied in the past six months. Bullying included threats or acts of physical violence, as well as emotional victimization, such as being ostracized by a group of other children. Parents and teachers were also quizzed about the extent of bullying. Then, at the age of 13, the children were assessed for signs of psychotic symptoms. About 46 per cent of the kids had been victims of bullying to some degree. The children who experienced a great deal of bullying tended to be the ones who were most likely to suffer from psychotic symptoms. The study showed that up to 18 per cent of those who were severely bullied had some symptoms. By contrast, 4 per cent of those who were not bullied displayed some psychotic-like behaviour. Nonetheless, bullying is a serious matter with potentially life-altering consequences. Schools and parents should, therefore, adopt strategies to prevent this form of cruel victimization.

**Resources:** [www.bullying.org](http://www.bullying.org)  
[www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca)

## The 2nd CANADIAN CLUBHOUSE CONFERENCE



Wholeness Is Wellness

November 3 - 6, 2010 • Mississauga, Ontario • Hosted by PAR Clubhouse

PRESENTED BY:

**WINNERS' HOMESENSE**



**The PAR Clubhouse**, a program of CMHA Peel is excited to announce the 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Clubhouse Conference, with sponsorship by Winners & HomeSense. The conference will be held at The Novotel Toronto Mississauga, from November 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010. It will be an excellent opportunity to learn more about the Clubhouse approach to Recovery from mental illness, and to find out what is happening at Clubhouses across the country.

Currently we are in the process of coordinating our entertainment, guest speakers and other components of the conference. Registration packages will be available soon.

Follow our progress and keep up to date at [wholenessiswellness.blogspot.com](http://wholenessiswellness.blogspot.com)!

Please contact us if you would like to be added to our mailing list.

We are thrilled to have secured Winners & HomeSense as our major sponsor, and continue to seek additional sponsorships. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, opportunities are available for as little as \$250.00. If you would like to know more, please contact Steve Farstad, PAR Clubhouse Manager, at [farstads@cmhapeel.ca](mailto:farstads@cmhapeel.ca), or by phone at 905-270-6295.

