INNOVATION

PRIORITY ACCESS FOR STUDENTS (PAS)
The Priority Access Program provides direct access to Mental Health supports at CTYS for students identified and referred from TDSB & TDSB social work departments. Under the clinical support and supervision of manager Cheryl Tsagarakis, the program has evolved into an innovative, evidence-based individual and family-focused therapy program with excellent positive outcomes for youth and families.

In the 2017-2018 fiscal year, 82 youth and families were served by our talented and professional staff team of 4. Services range from trauma-informed individual youth psychotherapy, parent education, and skill building and Attachment Based Family Therapy. Individual therapeutic approaches include evidence-based CBT, DIT skill building and art therapies to name a few. Many of our PAS clients also participated in additional CTYS groups and attended our Boundless Adventures. One client received a Boundless scholarship to attend their full-year school program.

Attachment Based Family Therapy (ABFT) is a manualized, empirically informed and supported, family therapy model specifically designed to target family and individual processes associated with adolescent suicide and/or depression. ABFT was developed and researched out of Drexel University, Centre for Family Intervention Science, Philadelphia P.A. Our PAS staff team receives monthly clinical support and consultation via Skype with the Clinical Director of Training to support the model application and fidelity.

RESPECTIBILITY

Governed to the Highest Standard

Considerable responsibility is attached to a Board of Directors in the not for profit sector. Together, and as volunteers, they oversee the administration of the organization, ensure its mission is fulfilled, mitigate risk, steward financial resources and protect public trust. This year, our Board identified its priority to broaden both functionality and representation. They designed a recruitment process focused on thoughtfulness, integrity, and a commitment to greater inclusion. The result was the joining of five new Directors, who along with our “veterans”, now bring enhanced skills and experience in government relations, strategic planning, finance, equity, inclusion, community representation, and lived experience.

YOUTH VOICE

In 2017, after an initial journey exploring the world of Youth Engagement, we brought together a group of young people who were passionate about social justice, reducing the stigma of mental health and making an impact on other young people in the community. This group of insightful young people felt as passionate as we did about Youth Engagement. They told us, “It’s important because youth will soon be the adults who shape the world. It comes full circle in the end.”

As a first step, they decided to create a meaningful youth voice at CTYS utilizing social media as this is the medium that youth most often use to communicate, get information and reach out. They wanted to inspire other youth, share success stories and breakdown stigmas. Youth who are struggling, and may feel they are alone, would be able to turn to this blog and see that there’s hope out there that things will get better and also learn that there are people and services that can support them.

This blog is our young people’s vision and they choose to name it “Vision Restored”.

CTYS COLLABORATION

Covenant House Toronto Youth Probation Services Planned Parenthood LGBTQ Youth Collaborative
Gifford Contract Homes Elizabeth Fry The Salvation Army Horizons for Youth Turning Point Youth Services
Yonge Street Mission Boundless Queen West Central Toronto Community Health Centre Fernie Youth Services
Hospital for Sick Children YMCA Toronto District School Board Springboard Services
Toronto Catholic District School Board East Metro Youth Services Ryerson University Tri-Mentoring Program
Rainbow Health Ontario Eva’s Initiatives Youth Without Shelter

Black History I am Black
I am strong
Obstacles can’t stop me
I am confident
Proudly proclaiming my uniqueness
I am sure – footed
Sure that I will achieve everything my heart desires
I am a young, strong, and confident, Black child of God.

By: Lavish Brili