

Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network Annual Report

July 1, 2009– June 30, 2010

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Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network

Year in Review

Network Mandate and Vision

The Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network (CFAN) is a committee comprised of a group of key stakeholders in the area of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. The committee was developed after a need arose to address the social issue of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) in the Calgary Region. Our goal within the network is to support communities by developing resources and initiatives that assist people living with FASD and in understanding this disorder. Our vision is a network, collaborating with communities, families and individuals to promote awareness and prevention of FASD.

The Year in Review

The Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network (CFAN) saw a great deal of growth this past year. The network is comprised of several subcommittee working groups as well as the leadership team and the Network membership.

Community Impact:

Community Worker:

CFAN was able to hire a community outreach worker in November of 2009. The position is to aid the network in CFAN's continuing success as we expand to include a funding role through the Cross-Ministry Committee. Because of CFAN's growth, the Community Worker's role is to assist the Coordinator with special events, facilitating ongoing communication among the membership as well as maintaining the CFAN website and resources. The Community Worker sits on both working groups within the Network as well as any subcommittee working groups.

Additionally, the Community Worker actively participates in the community. Robyn sits at the Calgary Network on Prostitution (CNOP) as well as on an Adult Service Providers committee. Being present in these groups is essential to spread CFAN's name and promote education throughout Calgary. In March 2010, Robyn assisted the Adult Service Providers Committee in planning and hosting a FASD Perspectives Forum which brought various professionals together to help identify potential gaps in services in the areas of housing, justice, finances, relationship building and employment and education.

Empowerment Fund:

The Empowerment fund is a sustainable fund created to provide financial bursaries to individuals and families living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in order to increase and promote their opportunities for growth. The committee is made up of network members as well as the CFAN coordinator.

The committee allocated \$2500.00 (to a maximum of \$500.00 increments) this past year to children, youth, and adults living with FASD. \$2000.00 was spent, with the remaining dollars being returned to the committee. The updated terms of reference this upcoming year will allow the committee members to disperse up to \$5000 fundraised dollars annually with a maximum of \$750 per client. This will allow CFAN to give back to the community when fundraising allows.

The grants allocated were to support individuals to access speech therapy, OT, driver's education courses, to purchase a laptop in order to attend post secondary and other activities in the area of wellness. A total of 7 applicants were allocated funding this fiscal year and 5 applicants were able to spend their funding requests.

Provincial FASD Conference:

The provincial FASD Conference was held in Calgary this past year. Promising Practices, Promising Futures – Alberta's FASD Conference was attended by many of the network members. In addition to this, most of the leadership team also participated in organizing the conference. The conference featured a special focus on strategies for managing caregiver and professional wellbeing. It was very well attended with lots of positive discussions around heroes in our lives. This was a great opportunity for members to network and learn.

Committee/Working Group Highlights:

Prevention and Awareness:

The prevention and awareness committee is comprised of a chair and network members interested in looking at community impact that creates awareness and prevention in the area of FASD (FASD Day activities; fundraising events; public awareness, and media response, just to name a few). The committee organized the Sept 9th- FASD Day Gala Dinner and silent auction this year as well as the FASD day breakfast for International FASD day. Both were very successful events and saw people out supporting the work being done in the field. Over \$4000 was raised in these events and a portion of the dollars went towards the Empowerment fund. The remainder of the funds will be dispersed into other areas of awareness, prevention, and community resources.

CFAN was involved in its first Annual FASD Run (Run FASD), through the Calgary Running Room this year in July. The run acquired tremendous support and was attended by both people in the community of FASD as well as outside the community. This event raised over \$10,000. The Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network will continue this endeavor in years to come.

An important member of our network and leadership team is the Foothills Fetal Alcohol Society. FFAS held their trail ride again this year in the Long View area-also a great turn out and wonderful awareness event!

Professional Development and Resources:

The professional knowledge and resources committee is comprised of a chair and network members interested in increasing access to learning opportunities; best practice; and community resources. This committee worked on the updated CFAN website this year- which is now up and running; began exploring a conference pertaining to integrated recreational opportunities for people with FASD and developing connections through Inform Alberta to begin the process of developing a comprehensive FASD directory.

Cross Ministerial Committee (CMC):

The Network received funding from the Cross Ministerial Committee (CMC) on FASD Initiatives in Alberta this year to provide a continuum of coordinated services in the areas of: targeted and indicated prevention; assessment and diagnosis; and supports for individuals and caregivers. The network leadership partnered with the Burns Memorial Fund to: develop a granting committee;

support in a RFP process; allocation of funds and contract management/deliverables. We received a total of \$1.359 million which was shared amongst agencies in addition to the administration of the network over a period of 15 months (Jan 1/09- March 31/10). CFAN continued to fund the following major projects or collaborations this year in the areas determined by pillars defined by the Cross Ministerial Committee (CMC):

- Foothills Fetal Alcohol Society
- Enviro Wilderness School Association
- Calgary John Howard Society
- MediGene Services
- McMan Youth, Family and Community Services
- Renfrew Educational Services
- Parent Support Association
- Alberta Children's Hospital – FASD Clinic

A list of program descriptions and funding allocation is available upon request.

As a Network, we are one of the leaders in growth, membership capacity and community impact among the 12 Fetal Alcohol Networks of Alberta. The leadership team participates in Network leadership meetings to discuss the strategic plan and to increase communication from CMC to the networks as well as to share both successes and concerns.

In an attempt to ensure continued transparency, due process and good practice, while funding to CFAN increases, the CFAN leadership team has been meeting with Sumera Consulting to assist us in developing a Network Operations Model and a strong Terms of Reference. This is an ongoing process and continues to allow us to look at governance, policies and direction. Guidelines set out by the CMC will be in place by November 1, 2010.

Strategic Planning Day:

The Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network organized a strategic planning day with its members on April 22, 2010. Over 35 members attended and worked on brainstorming for our coming years as a network.

Areas of focus and outcome themes included:

- Resources & Best Practice – Enhancing services by sharing expertise, partnerships and best practice;
- Funding- Fund a continuum of services to address local needs;
- Awareness- Promote community development through education and awareness;
- Effective leadership;
- Respectful communication;
- CFAN meetings - What members want/need from the network;
- Define CFAN: “Just do It!” - Needs assessment and promoting collaboration and improved service delivery.

Our October CFAN meeting will see the beginning stages of looking at developing steps to take to engage a strategic plan to move the network forward. Member participation and solution focused conversations will be the crux of the process in members playing an active part in this community based network.

Year Ahead:

Mercury Rising Triathlon is an organization from BC that runs triathlons across Canada. Mercury Rising Triathlon held their triathlon in Calgary and focused their attention on the Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network by donating proceeds of \$1200 to CFAN this year.

The focus on the year ahead:

- Continue the work on providing up to date resources for the community and continue to work on our website.
- Follow up on the strategic planning session and identify goals to be achieved and tasks to get us there.
- Coordinate a recreationally based workshop on supporting people living with FASD in the community.
- Develop a plan to expand the enrolment in Run FASD
- Continue to work with Sumera on the Operational Model and develop a plan that meets the needs of our network and members.
- Maintain our relationship with Burns Memorial Fund, in assisting us with funding allocation and management. This role will be expanded to include banker responsibility this following year.
- Encourage collaborative efforts within projects being funded through CFAN.
- Seek out funding for the continuation of our community outreach worker
- Participate in the “Christmas Present” prevention and awareness Campaign through Foothills Fetal Alcohol Society (for more information see: Foothills Fetal Alcohol Society website)