



**Family Alliance on Mental Illness - Leaders
in Involvement, Empowerment and Support**

F.A.M.I.L.I.E.S.™

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Fall 2020/Winter 2021

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The ECHO Pandemic

Recently, research company Morneau Shepell gathered evidence from organizations across the country showing the COVID-19 pandemic has caused the mental well-being of Canadians to deteriorate. These ongoing pressures are also exponentially affecting those who were already challenged with mental illness and/or addiction prior to the pandemic. This trend is being called the ECHO Pandemic.

COVID-19 affects on Mental Illness

Last Christmas, people with a mental illness were twice as likely to have a substance use problem compared to the general population, according to the Centre for Addiction & Mental Health. And at least 20 percent of people with a mental illness had a co-occurring substance use problem. That number was as high as 50 percent for people with schizophrenia.

By Easter, the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction found the majority of our population reported their alcohol and cannabis consumption had stayed the same during COVID. However, this seemed in direct contrast with national statistics showing sales of alcohol had increased by as much as 153 percent, along with increased purchases of edibles. CCSUA research also revealed individuals with a history of mental illness or substance use problems are at an elevated risk of developing alcohol or cannabis use disorder in the face of stressful experiences such as the pandemic.

COVID impacts youths

An April CCSUA study found in general, Canadians 18 to 34 have been more likely than those over 55 to increase their consumption of both alcohol and cannabis during COVID. This tendency means we must be vigilant monitoring the health of our young people,

especially if they have a mental illness. For instance, the onset of schizophrenia is typically between the ages of 15 to 25, putting this category of youths at increased risk of substance use disorder throughout the pandemic.

ECHO Pandemic & FAMILIES

This information tells us the need for safe access to mental illness and/or addiction support has become more important than ever in the wake of COVID-19.

BCSS FAMILIES and SMART facilitators Heather, Gail and Michelle, offer in-person and virtual help, such as with our SMART Family & Friends (F&F) program.

Self-Management & Recovery Training is a science-based program in response to the growing number of family members affected by concurrent disorders (mental illness, substance use and/or addiction).

SMART Recovery (F&F)

SMART recognizes that being in a close relationship with someone struggling with mental illness, substance use and/or addiction disorders can be a frustrating, painful and sometimes lonely journey. It can be easy to lose your bearings. F&F invites families to focus on

themselves and their goals, an area they may have been neglecting for some time.

Before Thanksgiving, consider SMART Family & Friends mutual educational support to help each family member develop more effective coping strategies and find a greater sense of fulfilment in their own lives. F&F provides support and tools to families and explores new ways of interacting with their Loved One.

In the New Year, be SMART with well-established techniques from modern psychology that equip family members with practical skills and tools to successfully adapt to concurrent disorders, including life-saving strategies to help your Loved One seek recovery.



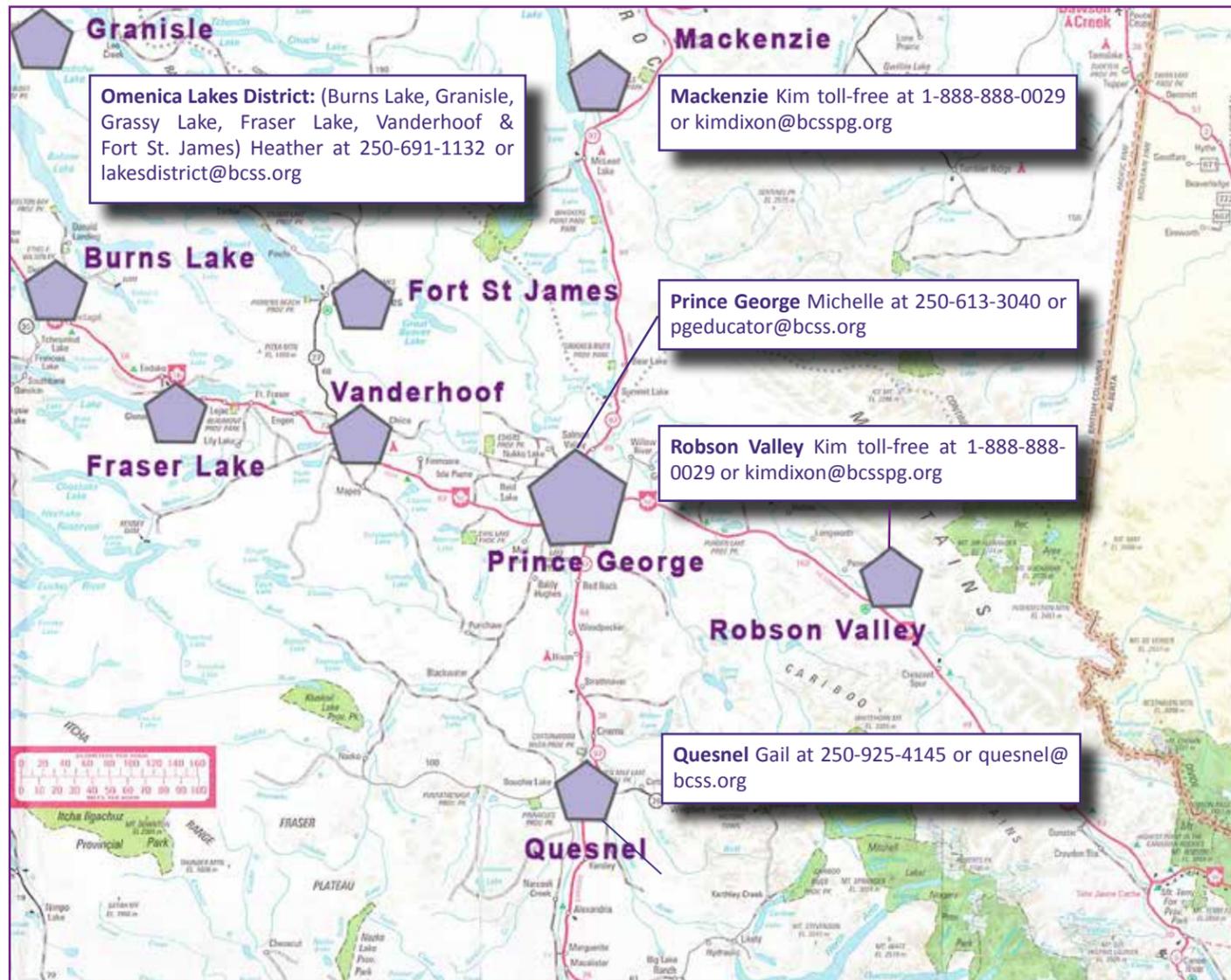
Kim Dixon, BA, MSc, Area Manager
(250) 561-8033; kimdixon@bccspg.org

 **bcssp.org**

1-888-888-0029

SAFE family support & education options ongoing for ALL family members with a Loved One living with ANY mental illness. FREE confidential service with NO referral needed.

Safe Support for ALL FAMILY MEMBERS Affected by ANY Mental Illness



FAMILIES™ Peer Specialists Supporting, Educating, Advocating

FAMILIES™ Peer Specialists provide personal and confidential individual support for ALL family members (parents, partners, siblings, adult children) affected by ANY mental illness (psychosis, schizophrenia, bipolar, depression, anxiety, trauma-related, substance use and addiction disorders). It is important for family members to have the opportunity to work through their thoughts and feelings through conversation. FAMILIES™ Peer Specialists use the trauma model of stress, coping and adaptation in conversation to help family members affected by mental illness deal with immediate crisis, learn to cope with daily challenges and successfully adapt over the long term.

Connect with the FAMILIES Peer Specialist in your area for more information or to make an appointment:

Kim Dixon in Prince George at 250-561-8033 or email kimdixon@bcsspg.org

Michelle Ellerton in Prince George at Michelle Ellerton, 250-613-3040 – call or text; pgeducator@bcss.org

Heather Megchelsen in Burns Lake at 250-691-1132 or email lakesdistrict@bcss.org

Gail Rutledge in Quesnel at 250-925-4145 or email quesnel@bcss.org



BECOME A MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDER

If you've taken a physical first aid course; you've learned the skills needed to help in an emergency.

People can also have mental health emergencies, and it is important that more Canadians know how to provide help in these situations too.

*If I sprain my ankle, chances are you'll know what to do.
If I have a panic attack, chances are you won't.*

Mental Health First Aid is offered to someone with an emerging mental health problem or in a mental health crisis until appropriate treatment is found or the situation is resolved.

Register now to become certified in Mental Health First Aid:

COURSE NAME:	VIRTUAL Mental Health First Aid (NO test)
DESCRIPTION:	Basic introduction to substance use, mood, anxiety, trauma-induced and psychotic disorders. Mental Health First Aid for overdose, suicide, panic attacks, acute stress reaction and psychosis.
DATE & TIME:	Fall 2020 (beginning November) and Winter 2021 (ending March) dates and times TBA
VENUE AND ADDRESS:	Virtual MHFA open to participants throughout the Northern Interior including Prince George, Quesnel, Mackenzie, McBride, Valemount, Burns Lake, Granisle, Fraser Lake, Fort St. James and Vanderhoof
COST:	FREE for individuals and family members affected by mental illness or addiction
TO REGISTER & CONTACT:	Kim Dixon at 250-561-8033 or email kimdixon@bcsspg.org Heather Megchelsen at 250-691-1132 or email lakesdistrict@bcss.org

What you can expect from this course:

- Gain the confidence and skills to engage someone with an emerging mental health problem or in a mental health crisis;
- Greater recognition of mental health problems;
- Decreased stigma; and
- Improved mental health for yourself.

Wednesday Workshops

FAMILIES™ Google Classroom, BC Northern Interior

All workshops are open throughout the day of each course to be completed at your own pace. Sign up for one or more on a first-come basis – places limited – contact Michelle Ellerton at pgeducator@bcss.org. Michelle is also available for Walk n' Talks, phone calls and texting at 250-613-3040.



09 SEP 20

One – Change & Motivation This section will help you understand how we change and why we change.

16 SEP 20

Two – Self-care & Self-Rewards This section provides tools for assessing your level of emotional distress and tools to help you restore balance in your life.

23 SEP 20

Three – Inner Dialogue In this section you will find tools that can help you to remain calm and matter-of-fact in situations where you previously may have found yourself becoming frustrated or angry.

30 SEP 20

Four – ABC's of REBT In this section we will examine the role that your thoughts and beliefs play in your ability to respond to your loved one and other life events.

07 OCT 20

Five – Beliefs & Disputations In this section we will explore some of the more common of thinking that leads to unnecessary emotional upset and distress.

14 OCT 20

Six – Positive Communication Learning to communicate in a positive way – and learning to listen to your loved one in an effective way – are skills that can lead to an improved relationship and the possibility of collaboration vs. confrontation.

21 OCT 20

Seven – Healthy Boundaries Part 1 This section helps you identify and communicate your boundaries.

28 OCT 20

Eight – Safety & Support This section offers tools and suggestions for planning those actions you may need to take in the future to keep yourself and other family members safe.

04 NOV 20

Nine – Coping with Lapses Learn how to effectively respond to your own setbacks in making changes to your habitual responses to your Loved One.

18 NOV 20

Ten – Disable the Enabling This section explores how to identify any of your coping and helping behaviours that may fall under the umbrella of "enabling". These are often behaviours that were well-intended when they began, but may not be working well now.

25 NOV 20

Eleven – Healthy Boundaries Part 2 What are your choices if you have identified and communicated a boundary with your Loved One – and you are ignored? This section is a guide to finding your own answers to this question.

02 DEC 20

Twelve – Trust & Forgiveness This section explores ways that Family & Friends can deal with broken trust, re-building trust and letting go of past hurts.

09 DEC 20

Thirteen – Setting SMART Goals SMART goals are an excellent tool for planning how to regain lifestyle balance, how to get back in touch with those things you really value, and how to shift your focus back on to yourself.

16 DEC 20

Fourteen – Discover the Power of Choice SMART Recovery advocates the "power of choice" and recognizes that each person's path of self-directed change is different. This section explores the choices you have made, the choices you have yet to make, and how to move past fear in making choices.

Lakes District Programs & Services



**Heather Megchelsen, BA
EDUCATOR**

My name is Heather Megchelsen and I work with BCSS FAMILIES. I am available for one-to-one support via phone, text and free Zoom. Please feel free to call me at 250-691-1132 or email lakesdistrict@bcss.org if you have any questions or concerns for your family or friends' mental wellbeing.

For individual/family support one-to-one, text or free Zoom, please contact Heather at 250-691-1132 or email at lakesdistrict@bcss.org



FAMILIES™ Programs & Services for Adults and Children in Lakes District
Hope & help managing a family member with mental illness and/or addiction one family at a time

Quesnel Programs & Services



**Gail Rutledge, BA
EDUCATOR**

Hi, I'm Gail Rutledge with BCSS FAMILIES™. I am available for one-to-one support through phone, text, and free Zoom. Please feel free to call me at 250-925-4145 or email quesnel@bcss.org if you have any questions or concerns for your family or friends' mental wellbeing. See bcsspg.org for updated info on programs and services in Quesnel.

For individual/family support one-to-one, text or free Zoom, please contact Gail at 250-925-4145 or email quesnel@bcss.org



FAMILIES™ Programs & Services for Adults and Teens in Quesnel
Hope & help managing a family member with mental illness and/or addiction one family at a time

FAMILY PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

Vanderhoof Family Peer Support Group

4th Thurs monthly; meets from 3:30 - 4:30 pm outside or on Zoom

Burns Lake Family Support

3rd Wed monthly; meets 6:30 - 7:30pm on Zoom

Women's Support Group

1st Wed 1 - 3 pm monthly; meets outside or on Zoom



SMART Recovery F&F/NAMI Zoom only support group (open to all) 1st Wed monthly, 6:30-7:30 pm

FAMILY EDUCATION (SFT, LEAP, SMART RECOVERY)

Vanderhoof Women's Group

2nd Wed monthly; meets 6:30-7:30pm on Zoom

Burns Lake Women's Group (Elizabeth Fry)

3rd wed monthly; meets 1 - 3 pm outside or on Zoom

See bcsspg.org for details or call Heather 250-691-1132 for more information.

2021 Virtual Education Workshops Quesnel and Beyond

Join Gail every two weeks beginning the week of January 11 through the end of March, 2021 for virtual education workshops.

new Schizophrenia Society of Canada Family Recovery Journey program begins in the New Year!

Learn to set your own recovery goals and enhance the quality of your life.

Contact Gail Rutledge at 250- 925-4145 or Quesnel@bcss.org for more information and to be added to the class list.



FAMILIES™

Family Peer Supporter (in Mental Health) Training 2021

Guidelines for the Practice of Family Peer Support[®]

Learn National Standards of Practice and prepare for "National Certification with Peer Support Canada" with PSC Certified Family Peer Support Mentor, Kim Dixon

The 2020 Family Peer Supporter Guidelines for the Practice of Family Peer Support[®] training was developed in Prince George, BC by Kim Dixon MSc, CPSM (F). Kim has been a Family Peer Supporter with the BC Schizophrenia Society (BCSS) since 1998, and is currently the only PSC Certified Family Peer Support Mentor CPSM (F) in Canada (2020).

The Family Peer Supporter Guidelines for the Practice of Family Peer Support[®] training guide was developed as a tool to support delivery of family peer support in a standardized manner across the Province. It includes national standards of practice for Family Peer Supporters. Family Peer Supporters are encouraged to take additional training including (but not limited to): Mental Health First Aid, safeTALK, NAMI Support Group Facilitator and L.E.A.P. The materials in the Family Peer Supporter training



guide are meant to be used in conjunction with the 2-day training event led by a Family Peer Support Mentor. Mentors have lived experience as family members and have significant acquired experience as Family Peer Supporters. Mentors have also demonstrated the national

standards for knowledge and competences needed to lead the Family Peer Supporters Guidelines for the Practice of Family Peer Support[®] training.

Training and materials, transportation to and from training, accommodation and meals are all provided FREE of charge to eligible participants.

Registration is OPEN to experienced, knowledgeable and competent Family Peer Supporters ONLY.

Contact Kim at 250-561-8033 or kimdixon@bcsspg.org for more information and to pre-register

DATES:

April 30 – May 2, 2021; Cost is free

Training starts 1 PM - 4:30 PM Friday, April 30th

Training continues 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Saturday, May 1st

Training ends 8:30 AM - 12 PM, Sunday, May 2nd