



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

F.A.M.I.L.I.E.S.™

Newsletter, Vol 28, No 1
Winter/Spring 2021

What's Inside

Family Support Groups

Page 2

VIRTUAL Mental Health First Aid

Page 3

SMART Recovery for FAMILIES

Page 4

VIRTUAL Family Recovery Journey

Page 5

Lakes District Programs & Services

Page 6

Quesnel Programs & Services

Page 7

Family Peer Supporter in Mental Health Training - 2021

Page 8

The Butterfly Effect & the Family Recovery Journey

The Butterfly Effect is found in Chaos Theory and suggests that even a small event can bring about a significant change. Yet, the not so small worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has caught many of us by surprise with the extent and enormity of effect and change – sometimes leaving us struggling to adapt.

One needs only look at history to see the effects pandemics and the associated circumstances have on the mental health of populations across the world. In a pandemic, people living with mental illness and their family caregivers can be faced with additional issues and problems. Families affected by mental illness need additional support and specialized strategies.

The Family Recovery Journey virtual course includes information on mental illness PLUS information within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic to equip families affected by mental illness to manage challenges that we may be faced with during this unprecedented time.

Session 1 explores how the COVID-19 pandemic impacts people living with psychosis, schizophrenia and other mental illnesses, and provides general information on treatment approaches during COVID-19. People with psychosis or at risk of psychotic disorder may be disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

Session 2 recognizes the additional challenges, demands and stressors placed on family caregivers in

the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Families need to adapt strategies for providing support to their loved one during the pandemic while managing additional stressors. Families also need to be aware of their own needs and reimagine their plan for self-care during COVID-19.

Session 3 reminds families of the skills, strategies and resources needed to manage a mental health crisis like suicide or aggressive behaviour. In addition, family caregivers are given information about substance use and guidance around making a crisis plan if you or your loved one contracts COVID-19.

Session 4 talks about strategies for promoting recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic, including how to recognize the warning signs of a relapse and how to cope with relapses if they occur. This session also explores how to instill hope in our loved one and ourselves during this challenging time.

Session 5 reminds families that even in times of significant stress, we can look to our strengths to build our resilience and to inspire us with hope. Families are encouraged

to build on both their internal and external strengths. And they are inspired to advocate for the mental health services and supports they need during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

For more information and to register please connect with Gail Rutledge, Educator at 250-925-4145 or quesnel@bccspg.org



Learn tools to help manage the pandemic with Virtual FRJ Training

 **bcssp.org**

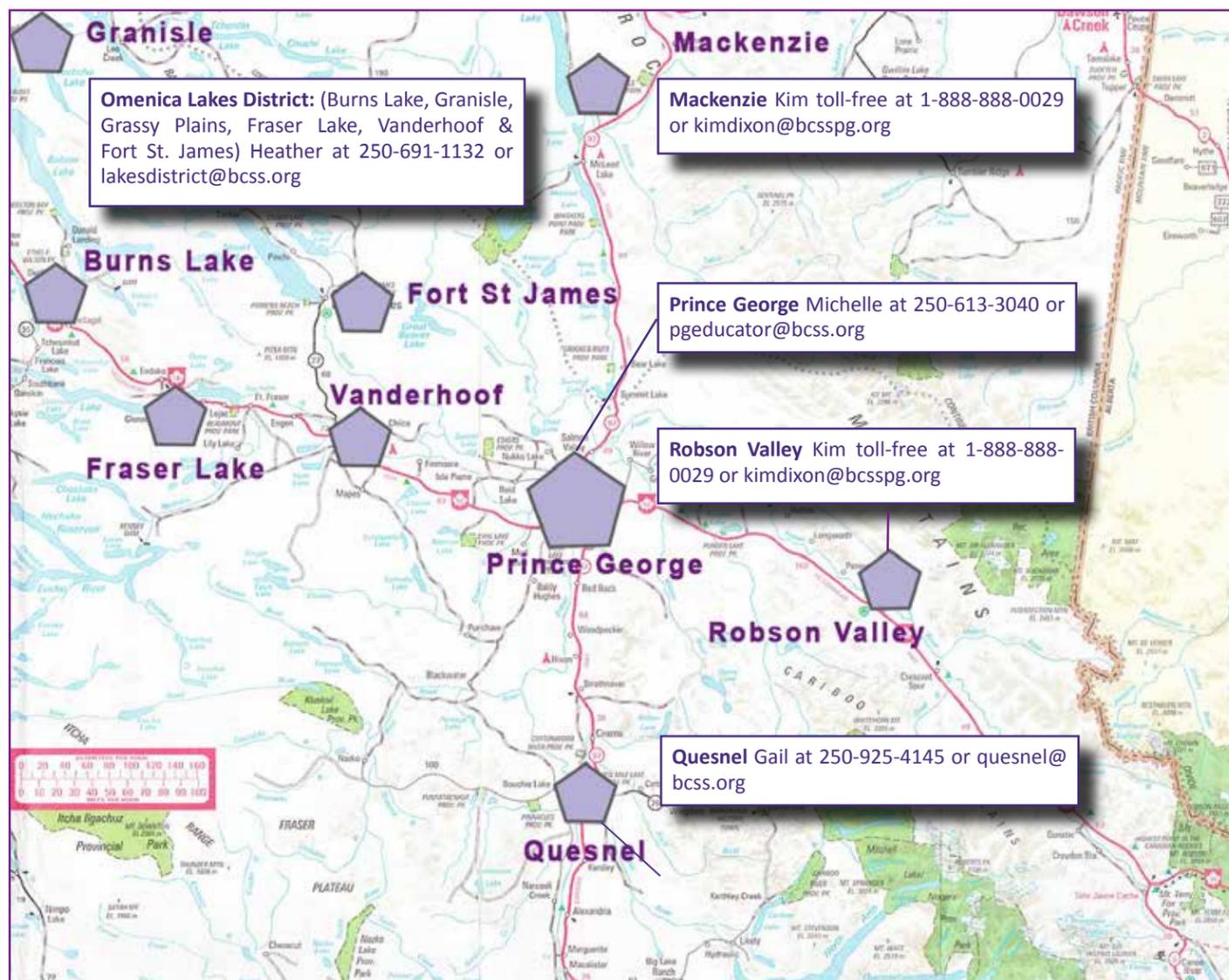
1-888-888-0029

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.

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



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 – call or text; lakesdistrict@bcss.org

Gail Rutledge in Quesnel at 250-925-4145 – call or text; 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.*

Virtual 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. Learn to recognize signs that a person may be experiencing a decline in their mental well-being or a mental health or substance use crisis. Find out how to have conversations that encourage a person to talk about their mental well-being and reach out to professional and other supports.

Register now to become certified in Mental Health First Aid

WHEN: JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

STEP 1: January 2021 Self-directed module

STEP 2: February 2 & 9, 6 - 9 PM Virtual classroom modules

CONTACT: Kim Dixon at 250-561-8033 or email kimdixon@bcsspg.org
Heather Megchelsen at 250-691-1132 or email lakesdistrict@bcss.org

WHEN: APRIL/MAY 2021

STEP 1: April 2021 Self-directed module

STEP 2: May 4 & 11, 6 - 9 PM Virtual classroom modules

CONTACT: Kim Dixon at 250-561-8033 or email kimdixon@bcsspg.org
Heather Megchelsen at 250-691-1132 or email lakesdistrict@bcss.org

FREE for individuals and family members affected by mental illness or addiction

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.

SMART Recovery for Families

OPEN the door to SMART Recovery [substance use] for families

For more information on what lesson(s) might be helpful and to open the door to any of the virtual classrooms please connect with Michelle Ellerton, Educator at 250-613-3040 or pgeducator@bcss.org



There is evidence that problems with alcohol and drugs have increased with the COVID-19 pandemic

You only have to look at history to see the effects that pandemics and the associated circumstances have on the mental health of populations across the world. In a pandemic, people living with mental illness and their family caregivers can be faced with additional issues and problems. Families affected by mental illness need additional support and specialized strategies.

SMART Recovery for FAMILIES virtual classrooms include up to 14 lessons to support family caregivers in learning the skills needed to cope AND to help their Loved One choose recovery.

- Change & Motivation
- Self-care & Self-rewards
- Inner Dialogue
- ABC's
- Beliefs & Disputations
- Positive Communication
- Healthy Boundaries Part 1
- Healthy Boundaries Part 2
- Safety & Support
- Coping with Lapses
- Disable the Enabling
- Trust & Forgiveness
- Setting SMART Goals
- Discover the Power of Choice



VIRTUAL Family Recovery Journey

Strategies for Managing the Impact of Psychosis and Schizophrenia on the Family



What is the Family Recovery Journey?

A program of the Schizophrenia Society of Canada to educate families and friends and provide tools for managing the impact of psychosis on their lives. This program updates and replaces the Strengthening Families Together program.

Who Should Attend?

Family members and friends of persons who experience psychosis.

Schedule	All Sessions are from 6:00-8:00 PM
February 17, 2021	Overview of Psychosis and Schizophrenia
February 24, 2021	Living with Psychosis and Schizophrenia
March 3, 2021	Managing Crises
March 10, 2021	Lived Experience & Recovery
March 17, 2021	Building Strengths and Going Forward

Space is Limited - Register today.

Cost: FREE for individuals and family members affected by mental illness and/or substance use.

Phone: 250-925-4145

Email: Gail Rutlege, quesnel@bcss.org

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 for virtual education workshops every second Wednesday of the month on the following dates: Feb 17, Mar 3, 17, 21.

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.



F.A.M.I.L.I.E.S.™

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, and co-facilitator and PSC Family Peer Support Mentor Candidate, Heather Megchelsen

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:

October 1 – 3, 2021; Cost is free

Training starts 1 PM - 4:30 PM Friday, October 1st

Training continues 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Saturday, October 2nd

Training ends 8:30 AM - 12 PM, Sunday, October 3rd