

2022 NORTHERN ALBERTA EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS & SUPPORT STAFF CONFERENCE



THURSDAY & FRIDAY, MARCH 10 & 11, 2022

9:00AM - 3:45PM

Virtual via Zoom Platform

DAY 1

Thursday, March 10, 9:00am -10:15am

OPENING KEYNOTE BY DR. GORDON NEUFELD

Understanding the Anxious Student

Anxiety is on the rise with students. Unfortunately the pandemic has only exacerbated this alarm-based problem. Anxiety not only affects behaviour but can have a crippling impact on learning as well, including attention, curiosity and performance. Stress management techniques only offer short-term relief at best and often become a source of anxiety themselves. Anxiety begs for an explanation which in turn is our best hope for finding a way through to making a positive difference in their lives. Dr. Neufeld has a well-deserved reputation for making sense of complex problems and opening doors for change.



Thursday, March 10, 10:30am - 11:45am

RUPERTSLAND INSTITUTE

Beyond the Sash: Advancing Métis Education for All

This session is designed for participants to explore several authentic recommended Métis educational materials that help to create teachable moments and provide foundational learning opportunities. Building your foundational knowledge about Métis will empower you to select authentic, accurate resources that honour distinct Métis perspectives. Together we will explore resources designed by Métis educators that integrate Métis voices into purposeful lessons and engaging activities.

BEV BAKER-HOFMANN

Supporting the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Students

The positive mental health of students is always a priority but has been of even greater importance during the pandemic. This session will provide an overview of what is meant by the term “mental health”, some of the mental health concerns for students as a result of COVID-19, and provide a strengths-based positive psychology approach to support students’ mental health and wellbeing, now and after the pandemic.

Thursday, March 10, 10:30am - 11:45am

CHRIS ZARSKI

***Building My Toolbox - Helping and Engaging My Students to Learn
Multiplication and Division***

This session will be interactive and ask participants to connect the needs of their students to the activities presented. Many times our students need a different and more engaging approach to learn multiplication and division - especially when they don't know their number facts! If you are an EA supporting a math class, this session will help provide you with some ideas and tools to use with your students. We will focus on using base 10 blocks and other formats to help students weak in their multiplication facts to multiply and divide numbers. Participants will be asked to have some Base 10 Blocks available or a laptop to use virtual base 10 blocks. You will also be asked to run off a few sheets of grid paper so you join me in the activities! Prior knowledge of the use of these manipulatives is NOT necessary.

JANET BELL

***Enrich and Enliven learning with Google Workspace Activities - with
Read & Write for Google Literacy Supports***

Read & Write for Google provides a ton of literacy supports for student readers and writers alike. In a short hour, we'll do our best to explore ALL this tool has to offer and leave you prepared to offer ALL students in your classes with ways to expand their reading and writing horizons thanks to the small conveniences and supportive enhancements this tool provides all learners.

TAMMY NOVAK

Healthy School Makerspace

Have you ever wondered how to make your class a healthy place? Then come explore your creativity in our healthy schools makerspace! Maybe you'll support healthy relationships or design a healthy eating space. Whatever motivates you, we can help you to find your pace. So come to this online workshop to develop and tinker with your design, and learn how to grow it into a great idea of its time. We will spark your curiosity and ignite it like a flame with ideas to fuel your creativity, tools and resources will be gained. Come collaborate virtually with us, using simple items in your space to design a fresh perspective on your class as a healthy place.

Thursday, March 10, 1:00pm - 2:15pm

TAMMY NOVAK

Active Bodies, Thriving Brains: How Movement Fuels Mental Health

Movement is essential for healthy physical and mental development in children and youth. A growing body of research highlights the vital role that physical activity has on cognition, brain function and mental health. Learn how you can use movement as a tool to promote emotional regulation, stress management, self-esteem, problem-solving skills, and try out some fun, practical movement activities to use in your classroom, school or virtual learning environment!

CATHARINE DIETZMANN

Autism 201

Autism 201 (150 minutes) Autism Edmonton (Autism Society of Edmonton Area) has been providing services and support to people in the community who are living with autism spectrum disorder. Autism 201 is a follow-up session to Autism 101.

Autism Edmonton will present the following topics:

- Deeper understanding of autism spectrum disorder
 - Characteristics of ASD and how to support
 - Sensory Systems/Sensory Processing Disorder Sensory strategies and toolbox
 - Environmental accommodations
 - Comorbidities
 - Communication presented as challenging behavior
 - Meltdowns
 - Triggers
 - Relationship recovery and repair
 - De-escalation techniques
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JANET BELL

Enrich and Enliven learning with Google Workspace Activities - with Read & Write for Google Literacy Supports (REPEAT SESSION)

Read & Write for Google provides a ton of literacy supports for student readers and writers alike. In a short hour, we'll do our best to explore ALL this tool has to offer and leave you prepared to offer ALL students in your classes with ways to expand their reading and writing horizons thanks to the small conveniences and supportive enhancements this tool provides all learners.

Thursday, March 10, 1:00pm - 2:15pm

MÉLISE SEARS

Implementing Classroom Literacy Approaches Part 1

In these sessions, you will learn to support students using literacy practices aligned with current scientific evidence. If you are an educational assistant supporting elementary children who are learning to read and/or are struggling readers, these sessions are for you. Learn what best practices support children's reading development, and which practices should be abandoned.

BEV BAKER-HOFMANN

Taking Time, Making Time for You: Five Mental Health Strategies to Support School Staff Well-being

There is no doubt that working in schools during a pandemic has been challenging and has required us all to dig deep to maintain our positive mental health and well-being. This session will emphasize a positive, strengths-based approach and offer the opportunity for you to create your own path forward with respect to your own well-being. While it is OK to not be OK, we will engage in conversation about not staying stuck in the muck, maximizing your resilience and utilizing strong foundational blocks of positive mental health and well-being such as gratitude, kindness and hope to carry you through the school year! Take time and make time for YOU!

Thursday, March 10, 2:30pm - 3:45pm

KATRIN SANNIG

"What? You want me to sit on the floor and play? Why?"

This session will focus on ways to grow a child's play. It will provide a rationale to why it is important that as adults we are involved in the play that is happening and talk about our role in facilitating play between children and how to do this.

CATHARINE DIETZMANN

Autism 201 (CONTINUED)

Autism 201 (150 minutes) Autism Edmonton (Autism Society of Edmonton Area) has been providing services and support to people in the community who are living with autism spectrum disorder. Autism 201 is a follow-up session to Autism 101.

Autism Edmonton will present the following topics:

- Deeper understanding of autism spectrum disorder
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 - Sensory Systems/Sensory Processing Disorder Sensory strategies and toolbox
 - Environmental accommodations
 - Comorbidities
 - Communication presented as challenging behavior
 - Meltdowns
 - Triggers
 - Relationship recovery and repair
 - De-escalation techniques
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MÉLISE SEARS

Implementing Classroom Literacy Approaches Part 2

In these sessions, you will learn to support students using literacy practices aligned with current scientific evidence. If you are an educational assistant supporting elementary children who are learning to read and/or are struggling readers, these sessions are for you. Learn what best practices support children's reading development, and which practices should be abandoned.

Thursday, March 10, 2:30pm - 3:45pm

SARAH MCKAY

Understanding Family Systems that Contribute to Student Behaviours

Understanding family systems and how they contribute to student behaviours will take a look at the various family dynamics our students may be coming from and some of the challenges they may face due those dynamics. This session will describe some examples of different family systems, the impacts they have on everyday life, and strategies to support our students through difficulties they experience at home and in school.

TAMARA CROZIER

Stop Vaping Before it Starts: What Teachers Need to Know

Alberta Health Services health professionals will discuss vaping and tobacco use amongst youth. Additionally, this session will introduce two school based vaping and tobacco prevention programs which meet the Alberta Program of Studies.

Participants will learn:

- Trends in and prevalence of tobacco and vaping use for school aged youth;
- Components of an effective prevention program;
- How to implement two prevention programs created by Alberta Health Services and partners;
- The Academy of Tobacco Prevention (grades 4 - 6 program)
- GeminAI Rising (grades 7 - 9 program)
- Evaluation results for The Academy for Tobacco Prevention;
- Best Practices for tobacco and like-substance related school based initiatives, including e-cigarettes and vaping.
- A summary of available on-line resources for students, teachers, parents, and administrators to prevent and reduce nicotine use by young people.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDE

Thursday, March 10 and Friday, March 11, (10:30am - 3:30pm)

TRACY GOLNICK - RESOURCE CENTRE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDE - Supporting Youth Modules 2 and 3

Registered participants are given their “access” code for the online module upon registration and completion of Module 1 is required before the start of the conference.

(MHFA) is the help provided to a person who is showing signs of declining mental well-being or crisis. “MHFA - Supporting Youth” is a course designed for members of the public who have frequent contact with young people (ages 12 to 24). Participants will learn how to: - recognize signs that a young person may be experiencing a decline in their mental well-being or a mental health or substance use crisis - initiate conversations that encourage a young person to talk about a mental health or substance use problem - discuss professional and other supports that could help with recovery to improved mental well-being - assist in a mental health or substance use crisis situation - check in with one’s own mental well-being and take action as needed.

This 10-hour course opens with a self-directed module (Module 1) that focuses on the information and strategies that participants will discuss and practice throughout the virtual classroom modules (Modules 2 and 3). Module 1 takes up to 2 hours to complete while Modules 2 and 3 are 4 hours in length each, including breaks.

DAY 2

Friday, March 11, 9:00am - 10:15am



OPENING KEYNOTE BY DR. JODY CARRINGTON
***Re-Ignite: Building Resilience in the Age of
Burnout***

As we step back into the unfamiliar world post-pandemic, many organizations are understandably witnessing what burnout looks like. Emotional exhaustion, a lack of compassion, and an experience of futility have become common experiences for many teams. Dr. Jody has begun walking hundreds of organizations through the process of reconnection to combat burnout and build mental resilience. She has created specific strategies to shift culture, bringing hilarity and truth while reigniting purpose and productivity with this game-changing talk.

Friday, March 11, 10:30am - 11:45am

KIRSTEN CLARK

Behaviour Management Strategies for Educational Assistants

Do you work with students whose misbehaviours take time away from their own learning, or the learning of other students in the classroom? Behaviour problems eat up time and disrupt the classroom environment. And as an EA, they can be downright overwhelming and exhausting to manage. But help is here! In this session, participants will learn ten proven and practical behaviour management strategies that can be implemented right away

ULANA SOLESKY

***Developing and Supporting Students with Addition and Subtraction -
Grades K-3***

Fluency in mathematics means more than fast and accurate recall of facts. Yes, students must know their facts from memory, but learning them by memorization is not helpful. Knowing from memory means learning from deliberately sequenced, strategy-based instruction. Being fluent means moving beyond basic facts to using that same reasoning with larger whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. During this session we will look at the strategies and how to extend them beyond the memorization of basic facts.

Friday, March 11, 10:30am - 11:45am

SUE HUFF

Emotional De-Escalation Workshop

This is a skills-based workshop which will teach you how to help someone quickly de-escalate an overwhelming emotion to return to a more rational, flexible and receptive state of mind. This workshop is especially useful for teachers, parents, administrators, and front line workers who are confronted with the emotional dysregulation of others and aren't sure what to say or do to help the situation.

SUSAN AGRIOS

It Starts With You And It Starts Now

It Starts With You And It Starts Now Being effective and at your best requires you look after yourself first. If you don't, eventually over time you will feel burnt out and exhausted with little energy left. It starts with you, is about looking after yourself first, to bring back the joy in your life, so you can have a better quality of life and continue to effectively help others. Using a variety of simple techniques I will teach you how to lead a healthier life physically, mentally and emotionally. If not now, then when?

COLLETTE SYLVESTRE

Supporting Adjustable Learning Environments - Tier 1 and 2

Today's vehicles are designed to accommodate for the vast range of sizes, shapes and comfort preferences with adjustable seats and mirrors, tilt steering and personal climate control. Imagine if the learning environment for students in the classroom were designed to adjust to the needs of each learner within it? Explore the concept of universal design in the classroom to support the ultimate adjustable environment for students. This session will dive into strategies and tools for universal (Tier 1) and differentiated (Tier 2) supports in the junior and senior high classrooms.

Friday, March 11, 1:00pm - 2:15pm

ULANA SOLESKY

***Developing and Supporting Students with Multiplication and
Division - Grades 3-6***

Fluency in mathematics means more than fast and accurate recall of facts. Yes, students must know their facts from memory, but learning them by memorization is not helpful. Knowing from memory means learning from deliberately sequenced, strategy-based instruction. Being fluent means moving beyond basic facts to using that same reasoning with larger whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. During this session you will explore a variety of multiplicative strategies, ways of using manipulatives to develop deeper understanding, and strategies for moving from concrete to abstract representations

SUE HUFF

Eating Disorders 101

The anxiety and isolation of the pandemic has resulted in a sharp increase in the rate of eating disorders in youth. As the former Executive Director and founding member of the Eating Disorder Support Network of Alberta, the author of a book on families overcoming eating disorders, and a parent of a child who has recovered from Anorexia, I have a depth of knowledge in this field. My workshop will dispel some of the common myths and misunderstandings about eating disorders, share some of the common warning signs, discuss how schools can support families that are impacted, and asks educators to be conscious of how health messaging can sometimes be confused with fat-phobic messaging.

LEANNE ASPEN

Handle with Care: FASD and Dysregulation - The Whole Picture

With FASD being the most prevalent disability in Canada, affecting 4% of our population. It is important that we are updated about new research. As dysregulation frequently occurs for students affected with FASD, care and understanding are needed to create and maintain successful relationships. So, please join us to learn techniques for self-regulation to enrich your skill base when interacting with students. We will be having a mom discussing her daughter's successful interactions at her school.

Friday, March 11, 1:00pm - 2:15pm

COLLETTE SYLVESTRE

Interactive Read Alouds

Interactive Read Alouds allow us to construct knowledge with students, build upon our relationships and further promote a culture of collaboration in a classroom. This session will explore how to engage in an interactive read-aloud, why it is important and what it can look like for an educational assistant to support the teacher during an interactive read-aloud or conduct one of your own during small or whole group instruction.

CARMEN MOORE

Visuals 1 - What do you see?

"Just use visuals..." as a strategy but not sure what that all could mean? There are some obvious examples but there are many that are not so obvious and could make a real difference for a student. There is a mix of introductory information, samples of three types of visuals and how they may help a student to become more independent and successful. There are some practical and creative suggestions as well to use right away!

Friday, March 11, 2:30pm - 3:45pm

ANGELA DESBARRES

Literacy Strategies that Educational Assistants can Reinforce in the Classroom

In this session, Educational Assistants and Support Staff who are working with teachers in the classroom, will review and learn key strategies that they can use to support students in the literacy classroom.

Strategies will include:

- Think alouds - while reading and writing
- Modeling and the Gradual Release of Responsibility
- Question stems to use with students in their reading and writing
- Fix It Strategies
- Five Finger Retell
- Giving Feedback to students
- Knowing when to adjust support - "Gauging engagement"
- Using evidence of learning (or not learning)

KIM BARKER-KAY

My Healing Journey with Michael, A Cree Elder

Kim will share an amazing part of her life that spanned 10 years. She became the unlikely protege of a Cree Elder and was immersed in a path of cultural learning and healing. These 10 years became a critical part of both her personal and professional lives.

SUE HUFF

Stop Helping, Start Empowering- A Workshop on How to Provide Support

This workshop is derived from my training as a Family Peer Support Worker. The program, offered through Canadian Mental Health Association Calgary, covered 80 hours of training and 100 hours of a practicum, so this workshop will only touch on some of the highlights! The workshop will explore the difference between being a supporter and a fixer, how to maintain healthy boundaries, the importance of active listening skills, the dignity of risk, and tolerating discomfort. We will look at how to empower others to take the steps they are ready to take and walk beside them as a beacon of hope and resilience. These tools will be useful in supporting a peer, colleague, loved one, parent, student or friend.

Friday, March 11, 2:30pm - 3:45pm

COLLETTE SYLVESTRE

Using Data to Reduce Problem Behaviours

Have you ever been asked to collect observational data on a student with challenging behaviour but do not really understand how to use that data to assist in the planning for interventions? In this session, Collette will explore the purpose, tools for collection and analysis of behaviour data to inform your learning team's response so that the data can be used to help plan for effective interventions. You will feel more empowered to support the collection of data and receive tools and templates to help you track behaviours and investigate tracking, sharing and displaying the information to build more effective intervention plans.

CARMEN MOORE

Visuals 2 - What else do you see?

This session has a quick summary of the summary of part one information on the how and why to use visuals as well as more practical ideas and suggestions. ***It is recommended to take both parts/sessions but if not, each visuals session can stand alone.**

SUPPORT STAFF STREAM

Friday, March 11, 10:30am - 11:45am

CRAIG CHERWAK

Conflict Resolution

Many people see conflict as a negative experience. In fact, conflict is a necessary part of our personal growth and development. Conflict becomes an issue when the people involved cannot work through it. They become engaged in a battle that does not result in growth. When this type of conflict arises, negative energy can result, causing hurt feelings and damaged relationships. This course will give you the tools that will help you resolve conflict successfully and produce a win-win outcome.

Friday, March 11, 1:00pm - 2:15pm

JIM SMITH

Essential Skills for Managers (with a focus on office managers)

This course gives you an understanding of the elements of successful managing and insight into methods of managing. It provides classroom experience using a variety of tools for managing a department.

Friday, March 11, 2:30pm - 3:45pm

JENNIFER IRESON

Successfully Managing Time and Stress

Have you ever felt as if you don't have enough hours in the day to finish what you have planned to do, while others manage to accomplish their goals on time? Time management is not about squeezing as many tasks into our day as possible. It is more about effective prioritizing and organizing our workload, and learning how to eliminate procrastination and time-wasting habits. By including it in our own personal development plan, we will not only see our productivity rise, but our stress levels reduce.

This course will offer some suggestions for keeping the tide of external demands at bay and help you to develop a truly efficient routine and rhythm to your working day. It will explain what stress is, how to identify stressors, and provide a three-option method for addressing any stressful situation. You will also gather a toolbox of personal skills, including using routines and relaxation techniques, to help reduce stress in your day-to-day life.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

DR GORDON NEUFELD

Dr. Gordon Neufeld is a Vancouver-based developmental psychologist with over 45 years of experience with children and youth and those responsible for them. A foremost authority on child development, Dr. Neufeld is an international speaker, a bestselling author (*Hold On To Your Kids*) and a leading interpreter of the developmental paradigm. Dr. Neufeld has a widespread reputation for making sense of complex problems and for opening doors for change. While formerly involved in university teaching and private practice, he now devotes his time to teaching and training others, including educators and helping professionals. His Neufeld Institute is now a world-wide charitable organization devoted to applying developmental science to the task of raising children. He is a father of five and a grandfather to six.

BEV BAKER-HOFMANN

Bev Baker-Hofmann is a Registered Psychologist with extensive experience in supporting the positive mental health and well-being of children and youth, families and educators. With a curiosity for exploring new pathways, Bev has worked in schools and systems as a teacher, counsellor, consultant, coach, district office leader and Education Ministry interchange. Bev is now “mostly retired” but continues her quest to support her own, and others’, well-being.

TAMMY NOVAK

I have lived in Peace River for 22 years and work as a Health Promotion Facilitator with the Alberta Health Services' School Health and Wellness Promotion team. It is my passion is to help others overcome barriers to live their best lives! After starting my career as a Recreation Therapist, I have now worked in the field of Health Promotion for 10 years. I love to travel, downhill ski, and keep busy being a mom to my two amazing teenagers!

MÉLISE SEARS

Mélise Sears, Speech-Language Pathologist with Peace Collaborative Services, has worked in school districts in the Peace Region for 25 years both in public and private practice. In addition to providing assessment and supervision of treatment, she works as a consultant to school staff. Her passion in professional practice focuses on Autism Spectrum Disorders and on Literacy. She presents regularly to educational staff on a variety of speech, language, and literacy topics and is also a sessional instructor in the Human Services Department at GPRC.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

CHRIS ZARSKI

Chris Zarski has been an educator for over 40 years, and has served as a teacher, principal, supervisor and director and Examiner for Alberta Education. Currently Chris is the Director of Instruction and Staff Development for STAR Catholic Schools. Chris has led numerous district wide initiatives, provided over 600 professional learning sessions, and co-authored/consulted on 18 mathematics resources. She is actively involved with the pedagogy of deeper learning, authentic assessment designs enhancing curriculum delivery and the integration of FNMI resources into all curriculums. Chris has her Master's degree from the University of Alberta focused on assessment and professional learning. Chris loves to learn and believes that all students have the ability to learn at high levels. She also believes that teachers have the best profession ever - enlightening new minds and sparking interest in learning! WOW!

KATRIN SANNIG

My name is Katrin Sannig and I'm a Speech-Language Pathologist. I'm excited to support children, youth and their families and help them achieve their learning goals. I enjoy that I can collaborate with other PCS team members, school staff, community agencies and parents as I truly believe the best outcomes can be achieved through teamwork. In my position with PCS I cover schools in Valleyview and Ridgevalley. I was born and raised in Germany, attended university there and now live outside of the hamlet of Little Smoky, where my spouse and I are raising our two children. We enjoy traveling and hosting international travelers at our place.

TAMMY CROZIER

Alberta Health Services, Tobacco, Vaping and Cannabis Program (TVCP) works to improve the health and well-being of Albertans by preventing the use of commercial tobacco and vaping products, reducing the harms of cannabis, and helping those who use these products stop when they are ready.

CATHARINE DIETZMANN

Catharine is currently the family support coordinator at Autism Edmonton as well as the resource and training coordinator for Autism Alberta's Family Resource Centres. Catharine has worked in the special needs industry for more than 11 years. She started her career as an Educational Assistant with Community Options and moved her way up through the organization becoming the EA mentor, Family Liaison and finally Assistant Director of the Community Preschool Education Program. Catharine is mom to 4 children, all of whom are neuro diverse with diagnosis such as autism, ADHD, anxiety, depression, Tourette Syndrome, sensory processing disorder, dyslexia and other learning delays. Autism became a passion and a learning focus when her oldest daughter was diagnosed on the spectrum back in 1999. Through Autism 101 and Autism 201, Catharine loves to share her knowledge and lived experience with others to help increase understanding of autism.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

COLLETTE SYLVESTRE

As a Learning Associate with Jigsaw Learning, Collette brings a wealth of experience specializing in online learning, synchronous/asynchronous learning design, diverse learning strategies, school leadership and educational consulting. With Jigsaw Learning, Collette works strategically with school district leaders, principals and teachers to bring the vision of Collaborative Response, as well as WeCollab, into reality through facilitating the development of effective plans for implementation. Through fostering collaborative relationships, Collette is highly skilled at supporting administrators and teachers with navigating blended face to face and online platforms to meet the needs of all learners within the context of Universal Design.

JANET BELL

An English teacher originally, Janet's career evolved over the years from classroom consultant, co-leading edtech integration across the province as a member of the 2Learn.ca and ARPCD provincial teams, to school and district leadership as the Department Head at Lillian Osborne High School and TIPS (Technology Integration and Planning Supports) Consultant with Edmonton Public Schools. A Google Certified Trainer and SMART Certified Trainer, these days Janet brings both vision and practical strategies to help support your integration of G Suite and SMART Learning Suite, reputable third-party applications, makerspaces, digital citizenship and more, within today's emergent and shifting learning spaces. In her spare time, she enjoys the four generations of her family.

SARAH MCKAY

Sarah is the Manager of the Safe Schools Department in Surrey School District, BC's largest, most diverse and most progressive school district. Sarah is a regular presenter to education assistants, teachers and administrators in the district and also serves as a resource person/presenter at Safer Schools Together conferences and professional development sessions.

SUE HUFF

Sue Huff is a skilled presenter who brings a wealth of experience to her work. She is the former Executive Director for the Eating Disorder Support Network of Alberta, former Trustee with Edmonton Public School Board, the author of *The Book of Hope*, and has been trained in Emotion-Focused Family Therapy, Mediation, Conflict Resolution and Restorative Justice Practice. She has also worked as a professional actress, an award-winning writer for television, and director for the National Film Board of Canada. Most importantly, she is the parent of a child who has recovered from Anorexia Nervosa and counts the skill embedded in this workshop as the single most powerful tool she has as a parent to help her child process and regulate the powerful emotions associated with this mental illness.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

DR JODY CARRINGTON

Dr. Jody Carrington is a renowned psychologist sought after for her expertise, energy and approach to helping people solve their most complex human-centred challenges. Jody focuses much of her work around reconnection – the key to healthy relationships and productive teams. A speaker, author, and leader of Carrington & Company, she uses all she has been taught in her twenty-year career as a psychologist to empower everyone she connects with. Jody has worked with kids, families, business leaders, first responders, teachers, farmers and has spoken in church basements and world-class stages; the message remains the same – our power lies in our ability to acknowledge each other first. Her approach is authentic, honest and often hilarious. She speaks passionately about resilience, mental health, leadership, burnout, grief and trauma – and how reconnection is the answer to so many of the root problems we face. Her wildly popular book, *Kids These Days*, was published in 2019 and has sold 150,000 copies worldwide. Jody’s message is as simple as it is complex: we are wired to do the hard things, but we were never meant to do any of this alone. With a Ph.D. in clinical psychology, work with major institutions and thriving clinical practice, she brings a depth of experience and insight that is unmatched in the industry. Jody lives in small-town Olds, Alberta, with her husband and three children (she had three kids in 2 years to test her own resilience) and leads the amazing team at Carrington & Company.

SUSAN AGRIOS

Agrios MINDFITNESS (Mindfulness + Fitness) was born in the connective tissues between health and wellbeing. Susan Agrios changes lives. Online and in person, she teaches fitness, mindfulness and yoga for people and businesses the world over. Before MINDFITNESS, Susan was a K-12 teacher and fitness trainer. In the classroom, she inspired her students’ curiosities. And as a world medalist herself, she helped recreational to Olympic athletes reach peak fitness. But in both worlds, no matter their efforts, she saw people were stressed and anxious. Determined to find a fresh way to help, Susan took a leap of faith and set course for India. There she studied yoga and meditation from masters, swamis and gurus. Then Susan brought those teachings home. Today, with her holistic expertise in education, fitness and yoga, she inspires people to practice kindness and lead healthier lives—physically, mentally, and socially. Susan guides schools and businesses to embrace fitness and mindfulness. Through movement and breath, her techniques help others build strong connections to their bodies and minds. The positive effects on focus, emotions and health are profound. Conferences, hikes and retreats benefit from Susan’s kind expertise. Her beKIND Mindfulness and beGRATEFUL school assemblies help students and staff conquer their stress and anxieties. Susan is also the creator of beKIND Mindfitness Triathlons—a first for Canada. And with what is now a global movement, over 25,000 kids, teens and adults have learned to meditate because of her beKIND Mindfulness Challenge. Simply put, Susan gets results.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

ULANA SOLESKY

Ulana Soletsky has been an educator for 37 years, and is passionate about all things that are math from Kindergarten to Grade 9. She spent 26 years in a classroom and for the past 11 years has held the position of AISI Coordinator, and most recently Math/Numeracy Consultant for Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools. During the past 13 years she has also been seconded to the ERLC as a Consultant offering Professional Development in the area of Math and Numeracy, providing sessions primarily in the area of how we can get the best results in our math classrooms. A key component of her work at the school division level involves collaboration with school administration teams and at-elbow support to K-9 teachers. Her focus is primarily around curriculum support as well as planning for staff development and school improvement. She is a certified facilitator in the First Steps in Math and has provided PD in the Number, Number Operations, Measurement strands of First Steps in Math.

ANGELA DESBARRES

Angela retired from Grande Prairie Public School Division after 32 years of service as a classroom teacher, academic support, teacher librarian, administrator, AISI coordinator and the last 10 years as Director of Teaching and Learning. She has a Bachelor of Education from the University of Alberta and a Master of Science in Education with a focus in Elementary Literacy and Reading from Walden University. Angela currently teaches for the Teacher Education North Program at Grande Prairie Regional College. Angela's passion is supporting teachers in becoming confident in their abilities to promote student success by implementing research based best practices, instructional strategies and good assessment. She truly believes that teaching is the ability to first know your students and to know where you need to take them. Know your curriculum, have a toolbox of research based best practices and assessments and then draw on these to meet the needs of your students

KIM BARKER-KAY

Kim is a retired teacher, principal, and researcher. She was also a professional development provider. Kim has an elementary generalist Bachelor of Education degree and a Masters in Educational Studies with a focus on the Roles and Responsibilities of Native Liaison Workers in Northern Alberta. She has 33 years of experience as an educator in High Prairie and area. Kim spent many years researching and learning about barriers to Indigenous student achievement and how to remove those barriers. Her journey led her in many directions, including an opportunity to put what she learned into practice. The results were highly rewarding for students and were encouraging for increasing minority student achievement. Kim's work on closing the achievement gap was influenced by a variety of findings and experiences, including: The Equity Framework, Diversity Training, Cultural Awareness and Personal Wellness as well as Critical Pedagogy and Transformative Theory. Over the years, Kim has become an expert on transforming school cultures and closing the educational achievement gap.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

CARMEN MOORE

Carmen Moore is a passionate researcher, educational leader, learner and team player. She is currently working as an Inclusive Education Coach for Peace Wapiti School Division 76. Carmen is a former classroom teacher, school principal and has over twenty-five years of teaching experience. She received her masters of education (MRE) as well as completed a graduate certificate in autism spectrum disorder (GC/ASD). Her latest endeavor is an active research program in coordination with the University of Kansas and other colleagues where she is helping to create a new series of research based supports for students/school aged children who have autism spectrum disorder (ASD): affectionately called, "Project Independence".

KIRSTEN CLARK

Kirsten Clark is a part-time instructor in the Department of Human Services at Grande Prairie Regional College, mostly teaching courses in the Educational Assistant program. She also works for Academic Support and Disability Services, helping post-secondary students develop organizational, comprehension, study, and coping skills. Previously, Kirsten was a high school English and social studies teacher. Outside of work, her three-year-old son keeps her on her toes!

LEANNE ASPEN

Having been a social worker for more than 30 years, I am grateful for learning numerous skills. I am a sponge when it comes to learning to help people help themselves. My strengths are my communication style, my consistent ability to develop rapport and gain trust quickly and my sense of humour which is extremely beneficial when facilitating. I have been an FASD Prevention Conversation Facilitator for 8 years, and still learning about this complex disability.

JENNIFER IRESON

Jennifer Ireson is Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR) with over 20 years of Human Resources experience. Presently providing HR consulting for small to medium-sized companies in the Greater Grande Prairie, Alberta region.

WITH APPRECIATION & THANKS

NRLC would like to offer thanks and recognize everyone who has contributed to these two days of learning, connecting, and building relationships to engage students.

It is our sincere hope that you all go back to your schools and offices energized and enlightened.

Our appreciation goes to all the presenters, and we hope that each speaker has impacted your role as an Educational Assistant and Administrative support staff.

Thank you to all of our host and technology moderators for the conference.

Sessions will commence promptly at the scheduled time.

Your feedback is very important to us, please take time to complete the post-conference survey once you receive it, your well expressed thoughts will help guide us in future conference development.

Thank you again

NRLC Team