Welcome to our official LPC Newsletter!

By Justine Walker - Communications Director, LPC

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Landon Pearson Resource Centre Newsletter - Spring 2019 Edition! As the Communications Director for the Centre, I've had the opportunity over the past 8 months to take part in many events facilitated and supported by the Centre. I've had the privilege to become acquainted with LPC's vast network of Children's Rights experts from across Canada, the U.S and U.K. The Centre is an educational hub for all information and events pertaining to Children’s Rights. Collectively, we felt that it was important to extend our reach beyond our social media platforms and create a newsletter to share with all of you. This newsletter will act as a platform to stay connected, review our year at the Centre, and share any new, upcoming events.
SHAKING THE MOVERS: OTTAWA REPORT

Compiled by Daniella Bendo, M.A., B.A. - Ph.D. Candidate in Law and Legal Studies, Carleton University

In the final activity of the morning, participants shared some stories about discrimination that they had witnessed or experienced themselves. They were then asked to describe the super power they would want to have to improve the world we all live in.

“I would be able to read minds. A lot of people have difficulty speaking their minds and it would be helpful to understand how they are feeling and their viewpoints on things for people who are scared to share their experiences on discrimination because they might be judged on what they say. If someone is non-verbal and they can’t speak, this would help them especially.”

The purpose of this report is to highlight the voices of young people who participated in a workshop on *Children’s Rights and Discrimination* on November 17, 2018. It records the experience of a group of young people who were supported in the exercise of Article 12 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child: the right to take part in important civil and political processes with the assurance that their voices will be heard and valued. What is unique about STM is that it brings children’s and youth perspectives to those in positions of authority who made decisions on their behalf.

"The common theme here is our acceptance to learn things and we have common values to try and change the world and ‘shaking the movers’ and we want to shake the future and foresee these rights and make the future right for you and other people."

The Ottawa 2018 STM on Discrimination was a one-day workshop that brought 12-17 year olds from across Ottawa together at the Vanier Community Centre. All Shaking The Movers workshops create a space for young people to collaborate with other youth; adults over 30 are not involved in the space. Youth facilitators guided discussions among the participants and had great success in making the conference a welcoming and safe environment. In just a few short hours, young people connected and revealed personal insights from their own experiences of discrimination as well as the many forms of exclusion they have witnessed. This report highlights some of those revelations as well as brings to light the recommendations that sprang from the voices of the young people present.

READ THE ENTIRE REPORT
By Lexy Vincent, 2nd Year Child Studies Student, Carleton University

This past November I had the opportunity to be part of an amazing convention called Shaking the Movers (STM). STM was an event put on by the Landon Pearson Center, that focused on giving youth’s with disabilities the chance to not only speak up about their experiences, but be heard by multiple movers, people in positions of power with the influence to make the changes needed in this field. The convention brought youths from all across the country, with all different types of disabilities together to have an inclusive conversation about what needs to change. Having the opportunity to sit in and take notes while the participants discussed points such as accessibility, advocacy & identity, and education, was informative in many ways. As someone who works with children on a daily basis, it was helpful to know and try to understand some of the struggles these youths have faced on a daily basis. As an active contributor to society, it was helpful to learn about ways I can make a difference or help alleviate some of the struggles in someone else’s life. As a person I found it educating to hear about the situations these youths are faced with every single day, that I was blind to beforehand. One of the most popular phrases of the convention was “Nothing about us without us”, stating that if it involved these youths, then they must be privy to the conversation. Nothing can be decided about their lives without them, something I believe more people need to be aware of.

By Kayla Formica, 2nd Year Child Studies Student, Carleton University

Participating as a note taker in Shake The Movers: Can Disability be Viewed in a Positive Way was very beneficial as it allowed me to think critically about how society treats those with disabilities. Throughout this conference I heard many impactful stories about experiences that I as an abled bodied individual never thought about. I only truly understood after hearing these stories how there is so much more improvement needed within the education system, to achieve greater inclusivity. Many of the children expressed frustration in regards to the lack of accommodations which are needed for tests and other activities, and brought forth many suggestions for improvement.

I thoroughly enjoyed how this organization fostered a sense of community amongst the children with disabilities. I was amazed at how these children from all over Canada developed a friendship with other children that they may not have known from pervious encounters. I had never been involved with an organization that enables children to have agency in relation to the importance of their voice and experiences. Their inclusion within this organization and the broader community allows them to be involved with matters that affect them, including policy, accessibility and education. I feel as though it is important for those who want to work with children, and the children themselves to be involved in this organization.
"La garde partagée des enfants en matière familiale : l’utopie de la pensée magique des tribunaux." By Léonie Bordeleau, Université d’Ottawa

"Le portrait du droit familial a changé considérablement depuis de nombreuses années de par l’évolution de nos mœurs au sein de notre société. Notamment, quant à la garde partagée, la jurisprudence s’est métamorphosée en une tendance plutôt mitigée. Entre les années 1920 et 1975, les tribunaux privilégiaient la garde exclusive des enfants à la mère, elle qui était souvent femme au foyer. Les tribunaux pensaient également que les enfants avaient un besoin essentiel de cette éducation maternelle afin de bien se développer socialement et émotionnellement. Pourtant au fil des ans, cette mentalité s’est peu à peu transformée puisque nous vivons désormais dans une réalité où hommes et femmes se côtoient naturellement sur le marché du travail. Nous sommes passés d’une garde exclusive quasi-assurée à la mère, à la garde basée sur le critère de figure parentale, favorisant majoritairement la figure maternelle, pour finalement aboutir à la garde découlant du critère de parent de référence. De nos jours, les tribunaux semblent avoir adopté une approche relativement consensuelle qui dicte que la garde partagée soit pratiquement rendue la norme, tandis que la garde exclusive de l’enfant, l’exception.

Bien que cette tendance soit de plus en plus courante, les tribunaux doivent demeurer vigilants et ne pas faire fi de l’unicité des besoins de chaque enfant. Au-delà des tendances consensuelles, il est impératif de les protéger en gardant à l’esprit que chacun de ces derniers a un contexte, des besoins et des intérêts qui lui sont propres. Certes, plusieurs experts en la matière diront que la garde partagée est la solution miracle afin de préserver la paix psychologique de l’enfant, alors que d’autres, faisant usage d’une approche plus personnalisée, au cas par cas, relèveront des failles à ce concept appliqué de manière plutôt littérale. Il faut réellement se poser les questions suivantes, à savoir s’il est réaliste et bénéfique d’opter pour la garde partagée dans l’éventualité où il y a présence de conflits parentaux particulièrement sévères. De plus, il faut s’interroger à savoir si la garde partagée est devenue, à ce jour, une présomption d’intérêt de l’enfant. Et finalement, les enfants sont-ils des victimes de cette nouvelle tendance, ou en ressortent-ils gagnants? Voilà des questions qui nécessitent une méticuleuse réflexion et qui seront traitées dans ce travail de recherche."
CRAN - THE CHILD RIGHTS ACADEMIC NETWORK

Dr. Sue Bennett is a professor in the Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa. She is a pediatrician and mental health professional by training and has been recently appointed as Director of Social Pediatrics at the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) after more than 2 decades as Director of the Child & Youth Protection Program at CHEO, working clinically with maltreated children, youth and their families.

CRAN is a broad network of academics, advocates, children’s rights and legal experts from across Canada, the U.S. and U.K. who are involved in teaching, researching, and advocating for children’s rights. The Landon Pearson Centre established CRAN in 2008, with support from the Muttart Foundation and the Centre For Initiatives on Children, Youth and Community. The Muttart Foundation continues their generous funding of this initiative.

Landon Pearson and Virginia Caputo hosted the 10th Child Rights Academic Network (CRAN) Symposium on February 8-9, 2019. Children’s rights scholars, advocates and observers from across Canada and the U.K. met at Carleton with the support of the Muttart Family Foundation to discuss this year’s theme: Children’s Rights and Discrimination. Special guest: Dr. Assefa Bequele, Founder and Executive Director of the African Child Policy Forum (ACPF) to Canada.

Check out Dr. Sue Bennett’s presentation on Discrimination, Health Care and LGBTQ2SIA+ Youth.

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A MESSAGE FROM LANDON PEARSON

By Hon. Landon Pearson, O.C.

This year, 2019, we are commemorating three significant anniversaries related to the rights of children; the first, the 1959 UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child, the second, the 1979 International Year of the Child (IYC) and the third, the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The first was aspirational, the second celebratory and the third judicable, a human rights treaty capable of holding states party to it accountable to the international community for the ways in which they conduct their relations with children. We are planning two events at Carleton to celebrate these important milestones, the first in May 2019 to mark 40 years since IYC and the second on or near November 20 to mark 30 years since the adoption at the UN General Assembly of the children’s convention. For both of these events we are seeking positive stories about progress made on children’s rights and so we would like to invite readers to share something that will lift our spirits in these troubled times.

Send your stories to: landon.pearson@carleton.ca

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Annual Spring Event: "Marking the 40th Anniversary of the International Year of the Child, 1979"
May 2019 - Richcraft Hall Atrium 3:30 to 6:30 PM.
Guest panel and child and youth serving organizations networking event