



developmentally focused	family involved	relationship based	trauma informed	competence centred	ecologically oriented
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Ehrlo Counselling continues the journey toward truth

Recently the team at Ehrlo Counselling Services took the next step in their journey towards truth and reconciliation.

After inviting Saulteaux Elder Alvin Kequatooway from Sakamay First Nation and Cree Elder Sam Isaac from Ochapowace First Nation and helpers George Kequatooway and Aaron Kaye, the team of counsellors, psychologists, social workers, and clinicians held a traditional naming service and feast on Treaty 4 Territory in Regina.

“This ceremony acknowledges the respect and strength of the relationship between Ehrlo Counselling Services and the Indigenous people, who we thank for taking care of the land with which we work and live,” explained Shelley Tamaki, registered psychologist and event organizer. The ceremony is part of Ranch Ehrlo Society’s ongoing commitment to

Truth and Reconciliation. It is also an act of commitment to Ehrlo’s mental health services and the community.

“We are individually and collectively taking a personal step toward Indigenous knowledge. Our given spirit name tells us about who we are, aspects of our personality and mission in life to guide us towards living a good life, on a good path, in a good way by taking guidance from our higher power,” Shelley concluded.

Ehrlo Counselling Services received the name of Thundering Buffalo Lodge: the Learning House.



Elders and helpers

New staff at the Ranch



Two new staff have been added to the agency.

Jamie Lerat has accepted the newly established position of Indigenous Advisor.

“As the Indigenous Advisor, Jamie will be responsible to contribute to the development and execution of internal and external Indigenous and community relations strategies to support them and their participants. She will provide guidance to agency leadership, as well as oversee and lead the overall strategy in this area and support cultural understanding and learning activities,” CEO Natalie Huber explained.

Lerat will also be working closely with the agency’s Truth and Reconciliation committee.

Lerat is a First Nations – Metis woman, and a member of Cowessess First Nation. Her educational background includes diplomas in radio broadcasting and broadcast journalism, an Associate in Business Administration, and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Regina.

Elizabeth Fix joined the agency as our Director of Corporate Initiatives on January 19th.

“In this position, Elizabeth is responsible to lead a range of significant strategic projects and initiatives. She will assist the executive and senior leadership team in

providing organizational direction and mixing long-term projects with the urgency of immediate demands,” explained Huber.

Fix comes to the agency from Farm Credit Canada where she was an Innovation Specialist who applied a human-centred design lens when identifying and solving problems.

Mentoring at the Ranch

What started with a few exchanged letters has turned into a positive experience that not only benefited the youth, but also the staff at Ranch Ehrlo.

Laura Logan, a group living unit manager was given supervision over two, six-bed homes in Regina last January. One home, Hilsden, is for young boys 6 to 12 and the other home, Woodward, is for young adults, some as old as 18, getting ready to transition out of care.

Logan envisioned the two programs coming together to form a mentorship opportunity and relied on her youth care leaders (YCL), Jamie Ottaviano and Lisa Barber, to take her vision to the next level.



Because this connection started in the middle of a pandemic, it began as a pen pal relationship. More recently, the two programs have been able to come together to take part in activities such as movies, bowling, sledding, work projects, and a trip to the Science Centre.

“There were a lot of questions in the beginning about how it would work. But it really has turned into a lot of positive relationships with youth and staff,” explained

Ottaviano, the YCL at Hilsden House.

Barber the YCL at Woodward added, “At first some of our youth were a bit nervous but as everyone got to know each other, they really enjoy seeing those little guys. They get to be the big brother or sister which most of them are, but they don’t get the opportunity to be in that role in care.”

This change has also benefited staff in both programs. They share resources and have regular joint meetings. It also has changed relationships and turned strangers into friends. From the Woodward staff perspective, they have had the opportunity to connect with their inner child, get down on hands and knees and play with everyone.

Logan added that they plan to continue having staff and youth build relationships with each other in the new year.

“It has been a joy to watch these relationships flourish. One might think that it would be near impossible to get teenagers involved with these little guys, but our Woodward youth seem to really enjoy the opportunity to help and be seen as leaders. This is the beginning of something really great and it truly is in alignment with CARE!”

CARE in transition

Educators at Ranch Ehrlo’s Transition Centre believe in celebrating a very important milestone in a student’s life and they use the relationship they have built with the participant through CARE to do it.

As students are either discharged out of Ranch Ehrlo or transition from the centre to a mainstream school, educators Chad Fisher and Gary Bresch take a moment to celebrate with students and set them up for success in the future.

“The little victories lead to great results, and we try to build as many little victories day by day with the youth until they reach their goal of moving to a high school program.”
- Chad Fisher, teacher

The Transition Centre is an educational facility in Regina run by the Ranch. It prepares youth to transition from their intake and stabilization Ranch class toward a mainstream placement. It also provides a more structured environment for youth challenged with a more independent learning environment.

Why is it important to celebrate these milestones? Both educators agree that it is essential that the student be reflective of where they started and where they are now.

“We hope it helps them to stay motivated to keep improving while at their new program,” explained Fisher, a teacher at the centre who has been with the Ranch for seven years in a variety of roles. “Many of these youth come from some very unfortunate circumstances and to have the resilience, dedication, and hard work to work through their respective hardships and exceptionalities is no easy task, to say the least.”

They added that it is also important for the other youth in the class to see the success of the student and realize that they can do it too.

Celebrations vary from youth to youth, but it usually involves acknowledging their success in the class and celebrating with favourite foods and activities.

“The little victories lead to great results, and we try to build as many little victories day by day with the youth until they reach their goal of moving to a high school program.”

Remembering the neighbour every group home deserves

Submitted by Sean Bader, unit manager

I’ve worked with Ranch Ehrlo in Prince Albert for 11 years. I’ve seen managers and staff come and go. This work is hard, not for everyone, but it attracts some truly compassionate individuals who desire to leave the world a better place than they found it.

I never thought I would have the honour of meeting two individuals with the same qualities just across the street from our Matheson group home.

It was a slow introduction to our neighbours. When I first started with the Ranch, there may have been a bit more of a stigma about group home care.

I heard our youth described as “bad kids”, “criminals”, “hopeless”. These descriptors were from people who were just as ignorant as I had been. The difference is the ability to challenge your preconceived biases and trust that goodwill can find a way to grow if taken care of properly. Faith in human resiliency, and an unspoken belief that the work we do at the Ranch will turn the tide.

Enter Gaza and Mavis Papp, long-time neighbours, and supporters of Ranch Ehrlo. The couple that saw us simply as

community members, and part of the neighbourhood.

As a unit, we would clear snow from driveways in the winter, not expecting anything in return, just an opportunity to practice community involvement prior to the term being included in our CARE training curriculum.

Our community work seemed only fair, as our residents could be loud and disruptive on occasion. Amends that Gaza and Mavis had never considered necessary nor expected. They always treated our youth as they would anyone else, with friendly greetings, conversations, and above all else, understanding and acceptance.

Gaza would often stop and have a chat on the side of the road, offering support and a friendly face or a wave.

As the years crept along, it became obvious that we hit the neighbour jackpot. Our relationship with the Papps grew stronger as the years went by. If there was anything that they needed to be done, we made sure they knew we were available to help.

Over the past couple of years, Gaza had been seen less and less as his health deteriorated, there was a feeling or a lack of a presence, that was noticed. It was late November that he had taken a turn for the worst. He was taken to the hospital, where he passed on November 27, 2021.

Matheson House put together a bouquet, a card, and a promise that our relationship wouldn't change. We will always be available for any need that may arise, but more importantly, we passed on our appreciation for the recognition and for the level of understanding and acceptance that we had always been shown from a great man and a wonderful woman.

Open house



Our property management team held an open house for our new maintenance shop located on the Pilot Butte campus. The facility is the home base for the maintenance facilities workers. The shop also allows the workers to do projects with our vocational participants.

Staying in contact



Ranch teacher Randee Patton uses the CARE principle of relationship by staying in touch with a former student and her new teacher to help the student succeed in her new home and new school.

Youth and participant art



Even if they don't have much experience with a paintbrush, Ranch Ehrlo staff member Dustin Ritter knows how to bring out the inner artist in all our participants and he has big plans for 2022. Stay tuned.

OHL at Frost festival



Ehrlo Sport Venture players took part in Regina's winter festival Frost on February 4th. Following opening ceremonies, four Outdoor Hockey League teams took to the NHL-sized rink on Wascana Lake.

Thank you health care workers



Our group living director Tandi put together a special thank you to the health care workers who came out to Corman Park to run a booster clinic!