



RANCH EHRLO SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Issue 104 July 2019

PRIDE around the agency

At Ranch Ehrlo, we are constantly striving to ensure all our clients feel safe, whether they are at home, school, or out in the community.

So when Schaller Education Centre principal Hayley Maurer and vice principals Ian McLellan and Scott Landry received a letter from a student asking them to display the Pride flag at Schaller for the month of June (known as Pride month), they didn't hesitate.

The student, who identifies as a lesbian, talked about how, since coming to Ranch Ehrlo, she has felt accepted and safe.

“For youth to thrive in schools and communities, they need to feel socially, emotionally, and physically safe and supported. By raising this flag, you will allow youth to feel comfortable being themselves,” the youth said. “We who identify will feel more included if we have something to show our pride.”

The year 2019 is a special one for the Pride movement.

“This year was the 50th anniversary of the gay Pride movement, which originally started out as a protest for the basic human rights of LGBTQ people,” said Sherry Rapley, psychologist at Ehrlo Counselling and founder of Ranch Ehrlo's True Colours youth group, a support group for Ranch and community LGTBQQ youth and their supporters.

True Colours participated in the Queen City Pride Parade for the third consecutive year. This year they were joined by participants from Ranch Ehrlo's Programs for Persons



We are guided by the CARE, Children And Residential Experiences: Creating Conditions for Change, multi-level model. We work to improve services for our clients through six practice principles:

developmentally
focused

family involved

relationship based

trauma informed

competence centred

ecologically oriented

with Developmental Disabilities as well.

“Many of the LGBTQ youth in our group have experienced discrimination, stigma, or rejection from loved ones because of their gender identity or sexual orientation. This was our third-year walking as a group in the parade. Each year, the youth are surprised at how many ‘allies’ come out to watch the parade from the sidelines and cheer us on. It is an opportunity for them to feel the love that exists within the broader community and to know that they can be proud about who they are.”

Whether it’s through support groups, flag raising, inclusive language, or any number of other initiatives, we have and will strive to make all youth and adults around the agency feel welcome, safe, and loved far beyond Pride month.

Published



Sarah Mayer, a member of Ranch Ehrlo Society’s Clinical Assessment team, achieved a huge personal and professional goal when she was published in the Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma.

Mayer’s article, entitled Enhancing the Lives of Children in Out of Home Care: An Exploration of Mind/Body Interventions as a Method of Trauma Recovery was largely influenced by her work at Ranch Ehrlo.

“I really liked that Ranch Ehrlo had a holistic treatment perspective, where it isn’t just sending kids to counselling and thinking that’s all they need. We do pretty much everything to help develop them in all aspects of functioning, so for me that led to an interest in learning how we can support children and adolescents who come from extensive trauma in recovering from that trauma and then developing positively beyond that,” she explained.

“A big part of mind/body interventions is to kind of repair that connection and bridge that disconnect, so they can get back to a place where their brains and bodies can function as one.”
-Sarah Mayer, psychologist

When individuals experience trauma, there is often a disconnect between the mind and the body and they get stuck in the trauma, unable to move forward. Mayer’s article explores mind/body interventions – ways of bringing the mind and the body back together so individuals can feel present in their bodies and remain in the here and now, and as a result, feel safe and grounded.

“A big part of mind/body interventions is to kind of repair that connection and bridge that disconnect, so they can get back to a place where their brains and bodies can function as one, together, and they are no longer in a constant state of fight or flight or freeze,” she explained.

Mayer’s article explores yoga, arts-based interventions, and mindfulness in general.

“Each of these interventions is based on mindfulness-based practices – you have to be present and really just living in the moment to engage in an arts-based activity, or to just focus on yoga,” she explained. “These practices really allow people to reconnect with themselves and feel a sense of safety in their body.”

As a member of the clinical assessment team, Mayer applies these practices to her work at Ranch Ehrlo as well.

“I’ve just always been really passionate about supporting children and youth who have experienced trauma in their lives,” she said. “I think for me there is an aspect of pride in saying that our agency really does do a lot of this, and we are really open to new practices and always keeping up on research and evidence-based practices.”

SASW Distinguished Service Award



Wanda, Patti, and Karen

Congratulations to Patti Petrucka, director of family treatment, who received the 2019 Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers' (SASW) Distinguished Service Award.

She was given the award at her team meeting by Karen Wasylenka, executive director of SASW and Wanda Miller, SASW president. Ranch Ehrlo CEO, Andrea Brittin was also in attendance.

“The award is given to a social worker that demonstrates a long-standing commitment to excellence in social work, and a demonstrated desire to go above and beyond the call of duty to meet client needs,” Wasylenka explained. “Showing respect, caring, empathy, and dignity in all aspects of practice. Demonstrating a basic belief in each human being’s basic worth and endeavoring to bring about lasting change.”

“We are incredibly lucky to have a leader of Patti’s caliber in our organization,” added Brittin. “I just wanted to acknowledge on behalf of the agency our appreciation for Patti and everything that she does.”

Petrucka has been a social worker for over 30 years. In addition to her work at Ranch Ehrlo, Patti has been a sessional instructor with the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Regina for almost 18 years. She has also been an active member of SASW since 2001 and has served on various committees.

“The award is given to a social worker that demonstrates a long-standing commitment to excellence in social work, and a demonstrated desire to go above and beyond the call of duty.”

-Karen Wasylenka, SASW executive director

After accepting the award, Petrucka said a few words and thanked her family program team.

“It is never just a person.” She explained, “There was a book that we were given some years ago about good leadership and it is basically a bus can’t drive itself. It is having the right people, on the right bus at the right time that makes a program, that makes a person, that makes success. This program is not me - it is us.”

Petrucka was also honoured earlier this spring with a nomination in the YWCA Women of Distinction Awards.

Hard to say goodbye



For Ranch Ehrlo Treatment Foster Care (TFC) parents Noël and Tony Matchett, there is no experience like that of being part of this unique program. And it is hard to say goodbye to it.

TFC is a dynamic family-based program that provides homes to children, ages 6 to 15, who require a more intensive level of care than traditional foster care, but less restrictive than residential treatment. The program is not designed to provide long-term foster service and promotes family reunification whenever possible.

For a year, Noël and Tony, who have three biological children of their own, fostered an 11-year-old boy with complex medical needs. To begin with, there were many hurdles to overcome.

“When you have an established home life with a pecking order among the kids, throwing in an older child disrupts the balance of things,” Tony explained. “The equilibrium is off in the beginning.”

But the Matchetts – including their children – adjusted, and credit the program for teaching their biological children things that can’t be learned anywhere else.

“I think having a kid come into your home puts to a test the kind of things you tried to instill in your children,” Noël added.

Throughout the course of the year, Noël and Tony saw the youth they fostered grow in many ways. As they prepare to move they are looking into other fostering options in their new home, but they recognize that it will be a different experience than that of the Ranch’s program.

“There is nothing like this program,” said Noël. “If you feel called to fostering, there is nothing like doing it with other people that are just as called to do it. You really want to be a part of an organization where everyone is all in. I feel like that is what the Ranch is, people who have dedicated their careers to helping these kids.”

You are invited to our 4th annual powwow

Our 4th annual powwow will take place August 29th on the Pilot Butte campus. It is a place to join in celebration through dancing, singing, visiting, renewing old friendships, and making new ones while honouring the culture of our Indigenous clientele, staff, and community partners.

Once again, our powwow will be competitive style – cash prizes will be given out to the top dancers in each age group/dance category. We will also be hosting a family-style carnival and will be providing a hamburger supper free of charge. (A canteen will be available throughout the day, and popcorn and snow cone stations will be available to round out the selection.) Grand entry begins at 1 p.m.

Show your art



Participants from our Programs for Persons with Developmental Disabilities are featured in the Regina Artist Trading Cards display at the MacKenzie Art Gallery’s BMO Learning Centre. The display will be up all summer.

Mini Flegel House



Our newest ‘house’ on Buckland campus - it is a mini Flegel House. The playhouse was built by local inmates from the correctional centre for the youth in our emergency receiving program based out of Flegel House.

Spotlight on safety



Our Occupational Health and Safety Committee organized a “Spotlight on Safety” event for all Francis Street staff. We are continually striving to make our agency a safe place to work for ALL our employees!

Craftsmanship



Just one of the projects created by participants and staff at one of our vocational programs.

Basketball kickoff



Basketball and baseball leagues were running out of Ehrlo Sport Venture this spring. The soccer league kicks off in the summer.

