



RANCH EHRLO SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Issue 102 March 2019

Family program expansion

The best place for a family to heal is at home. With that in mind, Ranch Ehrlo's Family Treatment Program (FTP) has expanded outside the city of Regina.

The unique, innovative, and nationally recognized program was created in 2006 to address the need for intensive in-home service provision to families in need of clinical treatment. The program expanded several times over the years to allow more families to have access. The latest growth has expanded the program that works to keep families together, to the communities of Moose Jaw and Fort Qu'Appelle.

Due to demand from across the country, Ranch Ehrlo will be growing to allow six additional families to access the program in the neighbouring communities.

"The family program has a lot of strengths and a lot of history but one of the missing pieces for program development is delivering services in families' own communities. Through this expansion, if we can get services to meet families' needs right in their own community, that really is the next step for the program," FTP director Patti Petrucka explained.

She added, "Often families are hesitant to come to the program in Regina because they want to get away from the temptations of the cities or they don't want to be in an urban setting. Many northern families feel safer in smaller communities."

The expansion will allow the program to build relationships and partner with community organizations. Each community has vast services in place that are already assisting families, we simply hope to fill any identified gaps in the service continuum.

Families in the expanded communities can still take advantage of the many group classes offered to parents in Regina as well as access support services locally.

The expansion will include three new homes in each community. Currently, the agency



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

is recruiting new staff, including a therapist and treatment workers in each community.

CARE in loss

Family involvement is a key part of all Ranch Ehrlo's programs. That is especially true for our Treatment Foster Care (TFC) program which serves children and youth, between the ages of six to 15, whose special needs require individualized treatment within a family environment.

Family involvement is also one of the six CARE (Children And Residential Experiences: Creating Conditions for Change) principles which guide Ranch Ehrlo to improve services for children and families.

Eight-year-old Troy* has been with his foster parents since October. Troy has some cognitive delays that make verbal expression difficult for him, but when his grandfather passed away in December, foster mother Nadira Deschner knew that he was feeling deep sadness, even without his saying so.

The day of Troy's grandfather's funeral, Nadira and her husband held a small ceremony for Troy. They read the book *The Invisible String*, which talks about how families can remain connected no matter where they are. Deschner explained that although Troy's grandfather was in heaven now, the invisible string that connects their hearts will always remain.

"The book helped him process that our hearts can still be connected with people (regardless of distance)," Deschner explained. "He lives very far away from his grandmother and siblings, but we can still have that heart connection even though we're apart. And we explained that Grandpa is watching him from heaven now, but that connection can still remain."

They played and sang some of Troy's favourite music, before concluding with a balloon releasing ceremony.

"We explained with the balloons – some things you have to say goodbye to today. And everyone in your family will have to do that too because your grandpa has passed away. So, one of the things you'll have to let go of and say goodbye to his grandpa's hugs."

The second balloon was representative of things Troy could hold onto – like the memories he shared with his grandpa.

“He lives very far away from his grandmother and siblings, but we can still have that heart connection even though we’re apart.”

-Nadira Deschner, Treatment Foster parent

"We said all those things will forever stay with you – and that's the balloon you get to keep. And that balloon is still over his bed."

Deschner says that Troy has been able to verbally express that he's feeling sad due to missing his grandpa and has even asked for a hug.

"That feels like a huge success," she said. "We can see the impact of (being part of the TFC program) in Troy's life. He's just been here for two and a half months and there have already been so many positive changes. It's been so rewarding to see how he's opened up relationally. His little heart is drinking in the love, and he's finding things that bring him joy."

"CARE training is wonderful. I loved it. For the most part, it gave the things I was already doing, language, which validates a lot of what we're doing as foster parents."

*names changed

Celebrating winter in the north





Winter doesn't have to be terrible. After all, without winter you can't have Winterfest!

Corman Park youth and staff travelled to the Buckland campus to participate in the Northern Games on Feb. 15th.

The day was full of fun, kicking off with a snowshoe race in the outdoor arena after the official torch lighting and singing of O Canada. Throughout the day, youth participated in survival-type challenges like wood cutting and fire starting, tested their skills in milk jug curling and the classic bell kick, and came together as a team in games like tug-a-war and shinny. The event wrapped up with awards handed out to participants.

“The Northern Winterfest was so much fun for youth, staff, and our many guests!! A day like this does not happen unless you have a lot of teamwork by a lot of different people,” commented Kevin Mugford, northern residential director.

As always, points were awarded to each house and the day wrapped up with an awards celebration before everyone enjoyed hot chocolate and cookies.

The southern celebration has been re-scheduled and will take place March 2nd on the Pilot Butte campus.

Yukon gold

From January 31st to February 4th five residents and two staff from Ranch Ehrlo's Programs for People with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) visited the Yukon to participate in an invitational Special Olympic soccer tournament, where they took home both the gold medal and memories of a lifetime.

Unit manager Shaun Silzer and personal support leader Cam Huberdeau travelled with the residents for the five-day excursion.

Besides their incredible success in the tournament – their team won all five

games and took the gold medal, there was plenty to write home about. From beginning to end, the trip was full of firsts – for four of the five men, it was their first time on a plane.

“(On the first flight), from Regina to Vancouver there was a lot of nerves but after that it was fine,” Huberdeau recalled.

While there, the team had the opportunity to witness the Northern Lights and participate in a dog sled tour.

“This was an amazing opportunity for our residents to be able to participate in a tournament with their team that they typically would not have,” said Silzer.

“For our residents, it's not just about the sport – it's about being part of a team,” Huberdeau said.

The five practice weekly with their team, and play once per week in a Co-Ed league in Regina.

Ranch Ehrlo a Top Employer, again!

Two, four, six, eight - this designation means we're really great (to work for)!

For the eighth consecutive year, Ranch Ehrlo has been named one of Saskatchewan's Top Employers! This special designation recognizes the Saskatchewan employers that lead their industries in offering exceptional places to work. We are proud to have received this honour and will continue to strive to offer our employees an above-average place to work at in 2019 and beyond.

Women's March

Appleton House caseworker Chandy Kaip invited Ranch Ehrlo staff to join her at the Women's March held on January 19th.

“For our residents, it's not just about the sport – it's about being part of a team.”

-Cam Huberdeau, personal support leader

“I’ve always been a supporter and advocate for human rights. Humans are so busy that sometimes people don’t see the ongoing struggles of women, girls, and non-conforming folks in our communities. By talking about it, sharing statistics and stories, and marching, I hope more people begin to create change,” Chandy said of her reasons for participating.

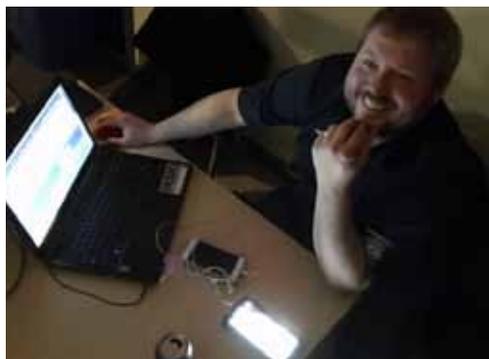
“As a clinical caseworker at Ranch Ehrlo, I am privileged and honoured to be a small part of each adolescent’s life. They choose to trust me with their story and trust they will be kept safe while in our care,” she continued. “I believe it’s important to unite and become a strong voice in our communities – a voice that a lot of our youth do not have.”

This year’s march focused on Truth and Reconciliation, considering the disproportionate number of Indigenous women and girls who are affected, missing, or murdered as a result of violence.



Snowshoeing at northern Winterfest

Dance deejay



Staff helped keep youth dancing at the Northern Valentine’s Day dance held in Prince Albert.

Geoff Pawson corner



If you are out at Pilot Butte, check out the Geoff Pawson Conversation Corner in the newly created Kesten Training Centre.

CARE training



Our Cornell partners delivered a CARE-based activity planning workshop geared toward direct care leaders, caseworkers, unit managers, and directors.

CARE conference



Our awesome staff manning a booth in Edmonton at the Group Care Symposium. The event was a focus on group care and the research and experience of others across the globe.

OHL ambassador



Meet Laura the Outdoor Hockey League Ambassador! She joined the team this year to help promote and assist with the OHL season.