

In the Spotlight

Member Profile

Meet Candice Lys!

"My role on the project is to lead our research team as Principal Investigator and to coordinate the research program for the FOXY Project that focuses on using trauma-informed approaches to prevent teen dating violence among youth in the Northwest Territories (NWT). As an Indigenous life-long Northerner, I am very proud to do this work in my home territory. Recently, I was the first person from the NWT and the 53rd Canadian to become an Ashoka Fellow. This fellowship recognizes social innovation in organizations across the world. I am nearly finished my PhD in Public Health Science through the University of Toronto, and in my spare time I enjoy spending time with my rambunctious beagle puppy Maple and my partner Remi, quilting, and being a Girl Guides of Canada Unit Guider and Board Member"
- Candice Lys.



P.E.A.C.E. PROJECT

PEER EDUCATION AND CONNECTION THROUGH EMPOWERMENT

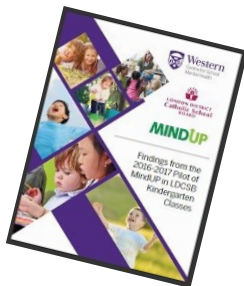
[P.E.A.C.E](#) is delivering an intervention for youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who have come to Covenant House Toronto for support and self-identify as having experienced sexual exploitation. Peer mentor support groups have been running since January 2017 and the project's team members are excited about the start of the fourth group, which began in October 2017 with new participants and newly trained peer mentors.

Covenant House Toronto staff provide expertise using a trauma-informed lens to assist in the development of activities. Participants work together in peer-led support groups to develop and implement activities to support their mental, physical and social health as they transition from sexual exploitation to independence. For instance, the project hosts nutritional activities that include healthy cooking and baking. Creative writing, spoken word, yoga and mindfulness are among other activities that the youth participate in through the project. In addition to this, P.E.A.C.E organizes recreational activities and participants enjoyed some rides at the Canadian National Exhibition over the summer!

Participants are currently discussing the effectiveness of the intervention, including suggestions and ideas for future implementation. The project's team members are pleased to share some of the feedback they have been receiving from the peer mentors:

MindUP for Young Children

The [MindUP for Young Children project](#) has wrapped up the pilot year, completing MindUP in a trauma-informed framework in 15 LDCSB classrooms and two parent/child groups at Merrymount. Check out the findings from the 2016-2017 Pilot of MindUP in LDCSB Kindergarten Classes!



[School Board Report](#)
[Parent Report](#)



"Amazing experience, thank you for this opportunity and for creating a space that is truly inclusive and fosters a sense of connectivity and real safety. Today set the tone in an empowering way, where through each other's inputs we really were able to ask and answer some questions. Very healing, and instructive. Thank you."

"Mind to Heart was a good, calm, relaxing, comfortable, safe way of learning meditation, mindfulness, tones of energy and space, and just being "present" in the moment. Learned a lot about being a Space Holder and safe techniques."

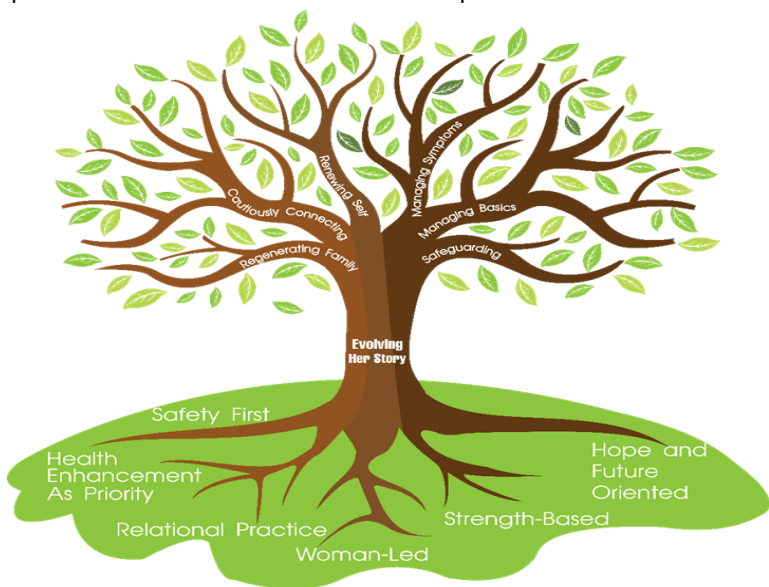
"I learned and felt more comfortable with the structure of how the group run and the meaning behind trauma-informed practice, grass-roots approach and vicarious resiliency."

"I liked the way that we were able to practice the mindfulness activities and leading them. I think that I'll definitely practice doing these at home to prepare for the groups."

iHeal in Context

[iHeal in Context](#) is developing and evaluating a health promotion intervention designed to support women who are in the transition of separating from an abusive partner. The project is undertaking a randomized control trial (RCT) of the intervention in communities in New Brunswick, Ontario, and British Columbia.

To date, the project's team members have focused on drawing on the "lessons learned" from three previous studies to refine both the intervention and their approach to studying its effects. Across these studies, they have found that women's quality of life increased and depressive and trauma symptoms decreased immediately after the intervention; these improvements were maintained 6 months later. In interviews, the women were very positive about the intervention and its impact on their lives.



Building on the findings, and feedback from the women, nurses and other staff who participated in the earlier studies, the project's team members have refined the following aspects of their approach:

First, they have consolidated 20 'principles' which guide the intervention to 5 (shown as the 'roots' in the iHEAL tree). Most importantly, they have shifted from "woman centered" to "woman-led" as a key principle and grounded the entire intervention in relational practice (shown as the foundation under the roots).

Second, they have developed an updated, evidence-based intervention manual and a companion 'practice guide' for nurses, integrating suggestions for clearer guidance and easy-to-use tools.

Third, iHeal has begun developing a companion workbook for the women that will provide tools and resources to support their health promotion work in the six 'components' of the intervention (shown as the branches of the tree).

Fourth, the project's team is now developing a standardized curriculum to prepare the nurses to deliver iHEAL, including on-line modules. Finally, the project is currently refining its research protocol as well.



[Sole Expression](#) is a trauma-informed Hip Hop dance group. This 10-week program offers participants between the ages of 12-17 who have experienced child abuse/ and or family violence, the opportunity to experiment with dance moves to reduce trauma-symptoms. Sole Expression recently started its 3rd group series in Toronto and has found that each time the program is offered, the response is better with a higher number of referrals as word spreads.

During one of the sessions, one participant said that the time when she is at the group is the only time that she is not thinking about the rest of her life. Another participant reflected and said, "I have such bad stage fright. I can't believe I was able to do that." This was week 3 and she continued to dance in front of others, to the point where she was doing it on her own. When project members asked participants to reflect on what they are taking with them from the group as a whole, responses included:

curiosity
courage acceptance
connection
community
family

"I've noticed I am way more confident. When I went back to school, I had a drama class and had to get up in front of everyone on the first day. Usually, I would have been so nervous and worried what everyone would think of me, but I didn't feel that way. I did it and I was so proud".

"I've made so many friends here and I know they will continue to be my friends".

Sole Expression is planning to begin two consecutive group series in Barrie and Orillia in March 2018.

What's New?

Canada Hosts the 8th Milestones of a Global Campaign for Violence Prevention Meeting

The 8th Milestones meeting was hosted on behalf of the World Health Organization (WHO) by the Government of Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada. This year's theme was: "Translating Sustainable Development Goal Violence Prevention Targets into National and Local Action". The meeting was held in Ottawa, October 19-20, 2017.

The meeting reviewed progress on actions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) violence prevention targets. It was opened by the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Health.



The Global Campaign for Violence Prevention (GCVP) aims to implement the recommendations of the [WHO World report on violence and health](#) and the [Global status report on violence prevention 2014](#).

Resources:

[A tailored online safety and health intervention for women experiencing intimate partner violence: the iCAN Plan 4 Safety randomized controlled trial protocol](#)

[Reclaiming Our Spirits \(ROS\): Development and Pilot Testing of a Health Promotion Intervention for Indigenous Women Who Have Experienced Intimate Partner Violence](#)

[Equine Facilitated Therapy for Complex Trauma \(EFT-CT\)](#)

[Indigenous Communities and Family Violence: Changing the Conversation](#)

[WHO Clinical Guidelines "Responding to children and adolescents who have been sexually abused"](#)

Register Now: Knowledge Hub & Learning Network Webinars



Sexual Harassment and Precarious Workplaces

Date & Time: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 | 1:00 to 2:15 PM EST

Presented by: Kaitlyn Matulewicz, Retail Action Network

Webinar Description: How does an insecure and precarious work environment relate to unwanted or uncomfortable sexual experiences at work? Using restaurant work as an example, the webinar will explore the connections between precarious work environments, the law, and experiences of sexual harassment on the job.

Building Supports: Housing Access for Immigrant and Refugee Women (IRW) Leaving Violence

Date & Time: Tuesday, February 13, 2018 | 1:00 to 2:15 PM EST

Presented by: Hannah Lee, Louise Godard, & Sarah Yercich

Building Supports: Housing Access for Immigrant and Refugee Women (IRW) Leaving Violence is a collaborative, three-year, community-based project, co-led by the BC Non-profit Housing Association, the BC Society of Transition Houses, and the FREDA Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children. This project is focused on understanding the barriers to accessing secure and affordable house for IRW leaving violent relationships and considering possible recommendations for practice and policy to address those barriers. In this webinar, representatives

Registration Link: <http://www.vawlearningnetwork.ca/webinar-series>

Mark Your Calendars!

Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

Date & Time: Tuesday, March 20, 2018 | 1:00 to 2:15 PM EST

Presented by: Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA)

Murder/Suicide in Older Adults

Date: March 5, 2018 | 12:00 to 1:00 PM EST

Presented by: Sheila Schuehlein and Myrna Dawson



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