



Helping build inclusive, caring and safe communities

LCCJ Community Animator Report – September 20, 2018

Submitted by Andrew Lynch, Community Animator

Schools & Youth Centres News

Over the last month, I have been reaching out to teachers and administrators. I have shared the following information with all administrators with whom I have communicated:

Be Strong is entering its third year of implementation with the current funding contract expiring in January 2019. Though we have several irons in the funding fire, so to speak, we likely won't know for a few months what kind of financial support we will have. My goals for the balance of 2018 are threefold:

- 1. Meet the funders' data collection requirements by ensuring that pre and post surveys are conducted with students during that period.*
- 2. Support schools in implementing and expanding their implementation of restorative practices.*
- 3. Promote to the senior administration of school boards, likely through school administrators, the value of restorative practices in creating positive school climates and effective learning communities.*

I have met and begun planning with administrators and teachers at seven elementary and high schools to date. Restorative practice and circle work have begun at Almonte District High School, Arklan Community Public School, and Smiths Falls District Collegiate Institute. Other schools are identifying classes and interested teachers. Staff training in October and November is already scheduled at two schools. It is worth noting that UCDSB schools had no staff meeting or PD day prior to the resumption of classes. The first PD day was held on September 14. Many schools have yet to have their first staff meeting. This has delayed the implementation of *Be Strong* in those schools.

The evolution of restorative practices at **Maple Grove Public School** is largely due to the enthusiastic efforts and creative vision of Be Strong volunteer Laurie Clark who last school year collaborated with the principal to acquire funding for a peace garden and circle. She and some other volunteers engaged all of the students through a series of circle sessions to develop the plan and guide its implementation. Helen Mogford, one of the regular Be Strong volunteers at Maple Grove and I attended a dedication smudging ceremony during the Meet the Teacher evening last week.

Youth Centres:

Regular circle activities have resumed at WAK (Smiths Falls Youth Program) and at the Lanark Highlands Youth Centre.

Smiths Falls Shared Youth Services / Youth Campus – The steering committee of which Andrew is co-chair is prioritizing youth engagement and obtaining youth and community input into identifying the services the program should be providing for the foreseeable future. This is happening in partnership with staff and “Tell it to Me” student leaders from Smiths Falls District Collegiate Institute.

Numbers of Student / Youth Engagements - Our total is over 11,500 with approximately 5400 of those being high level, weekly engagements.

Volunteers We have a small, but dedicated group of volunteers. We need more and invite members of the board of directors to help get the word out.