



Raylynn Delaronde and Mary Anne Sinclair, community liaisons, at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual SCSPT Meeting

## Meet Your Community Liaisons

As part of our work with the Swampy Cree communities, we have established a community liaison position for each community. Community Liaisons are the link for the project between the University of Manitoba, Cree Nation Tribal Health and the communities. The liaisons participate in monthly conference calls and attend annual conferences for the project. Liaisons are also working towards establishing Community Advisory Councils within each of the communities to work on community-level suicide prevention activities and programs.

If you have questions about the Swampy Cree Suicide Prevention project, please contact your Community Liaison.

### Swampy Cree Suicide Prevention Team Community Liaisons

Marcel Colomb Cree Nation	Sara Copaypay	204-356-2439
Mathias Colomb Cree Nation	Lloyd Daniels	204-553-2256
Misipawistik Cree Nation	Steve Martin	204-639-2417
Mosakahiken Cree Nation	Naomi Sanderson	204-678-2098
Opaskwayak Cree Nation	Marlene Dick	204-627-7410
Sapotawayak Cree Nation	Mike Campeau	204-587-2026
Wuskwi Siphik Cree Nation	Robin Kematch	204-236-4894
Chemawawin Cree Nation	Gerald Houle	204-329-2800

Thank you to our past community liaisons, Raylynn Delaronde, Fred Stevens, Elise Colomb, Mary Anne Sinclair, Hazel McNabb and Pamela Whitehead, who are moving on this year but have done a fantastic job and have been an integral part of this work.



### Swampy Cree Suicide Prevention Team

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Have you noticed people wearing the SCSPT t-shirts in your community?



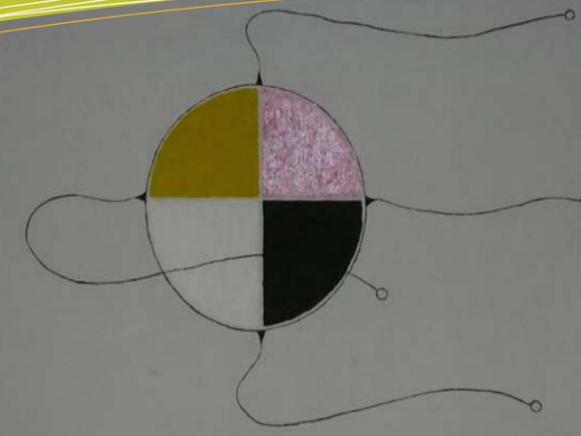
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A University –  
First Nations  
Community  
Partnership

# Swampy Cree Suicide Prevention Team Updater



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## Update on Circle of Life

Thank you to all participants, liaisons and our Community Facilitator Ron Cook for helping to complete the Circle of Life project. A total of approximately 50 Swampy Cree community members participated in either the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training workshop (ASIST) or the Resilience Retreat during the summer of 2010. Follow-up questions were completed during the winter of 2011. Results of the study will be presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Swampy Cree Suicide Prevention Conference in October 2011.

## Culturally Based, Family Centered Mental Health Promotion for Aboriginal Youth

The goals of this project are to develop and test a culturally-based, family-centered mental health promotion and suicide prevention program. The program will be designed to enhance psychological, social, and emotional well-being among Aboriginal youth, their families and communities. To meet these goals, trained community members will conduct focus-groups with selected community members to identify cultural issues and priorities, and then culturally adapt and test a 15-session program for children ages 10-12 and their parents. We will try to learn from the process of cultural adaptation and running the program, and will look at the mental health outcomes of this program. We expect to find improved mental health for youth and families in Aboriginal communities, including reduced suicidal behaviour, less substance abuse, better school performance and psychological wellbeing.

We will be asking for community input, facilitated by your community liaisons, for adapting the manual for this intervention and will then be asking for 20 families from each community, with a child between the ages of 10-12 to participate. Trained individuals from your own communities will deliver the intervention.

Keep your eyes and ears open for announcements surrounding this project or approach your community liaisons with any questions.

-Dr. Laurence Katz, Co-Investigator



Swampy Cree Suicide Prevention Team

## Upcoming events

Oct 3-5, 2011

Swampy Cree Suicide Prevention Team 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Winnipeg

Keynote speakers:

Les Whitbeck and Melissa

Walls



Steve Martin, community liaison, at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual SCSPT Meeting

## Editor

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If you have any suggestions for an upcoming issue or need to report an error, please contact Shay-Lee.

## First Nations Youth Suicide study supported by RBC Foundation

We thank RBC for their continued support for this important research.

RBC's investment (\$40,000) will play a significant role in providing these First Nations communities with evidence for policymakers to make decisions that will reduce the risk of suicide among youth groups determined to be at risk.

"I hope this is a stepping stone to find answers and create healing among Swampy Cree children and communities," said Holly Toupin, Regional Vice-President, RBC Royal Bank.



Left to right: Christine Henrikson, Natalie Mota, Shay-Lee Bolton - SCSPT members 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual SCSPT Meeting

Suicide in Aboriginal communities is a growing problem. The rate of death by suicide in American Indian communities is now about *double* that of the rest of the US population. Because of these high rates, we need to do something to prevent these deaths. However, we do not know whether American Indians are also thinking about suicide and attempting suicide more often. We are also unsure if the factors that predict suicide in the rest of the US population, like younger age and being poor, will be the same in American Indians.

This study is the first one of its kind to compare American Indians with the US general population to find out whether rates of suicidal behavior (thoughts and attempts) and those things that predict these behaviors are different.

The study found that American Indians were less likely to have suicidal thoughts than the rest of the US population. However, the one American Indian tribe was more likely have attempted suicide in their lifetime.

**American Indians were more likely than the rest of the US population to say that they had not thought about suicide before making a suicide attempt.**

Interestingly, the factors that predicted suicidal thoughts and attempts were the same across the groups.

This study tells us that suicide people who are trying to prevent suicide in Aboriginal people may need to be aware

### Prevalence and risk factors for suicidal ideation and suicide attempts: How do they compare within two American Indian samples and a General Population Sample?

"Improvement is needed in our ability to predict and prevent suicide and suicidal behaviors."

that many American Indians who try to take their own life may not have thought about suicide before they act.

*Most importantly, it is not enough to focus our efforts on those who say they are thinking about suicide.*

Programs need to pay more attention to making people healthier and more resilient to life troubles, rather than looking for thoughts of suicide to start to intervene. If we do wait, it may be too late.

--Shay-Lee Bolton MSc

*Shay-Lee Bolton is a PhD candidate in the Department of Community Health Sciences in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Manitoba and is a member of the Swampy Cree Suicide Prevention Team.*



Participants at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual SCSPT Meeting

### Examining Suicidality in First Nations Adolescents

Indigenous youth around the world engage in more suicidal behaviour and suicide completion than other adolescent samples. Understanding the factors that are linked to either increased or decreased suicidal behavior is important because it can help to create ways to prevent suicide in these communities. Ms. Natalie Mota and other members of the SCSP team conducted a study where they looked at how a range of individual, friend/family, and community/tribe factors related to suicidal behavior (thinking about suicide and/or engaging in an attempt) in over 1,100 on-reserve First Nations youth throughout the province of Manitoba. They found that youth who had reported being in a depressed mood for two weeks or more, had experienced abuse or fear of abuse, had a hospital stay, and had used drugs or alcohol were more likely to have engaged in suicidal behavior. Girls were also more likely than boys to report suicidal behavior. On the other hand, perceived community caring, which included things like safety and connectedness to the community, was found to be associated with a lower likelihood of reporting suicidality. These findings may be important for guiding First Nations and government policy when implementing and developing suicide prevention strategies in Manitoba First Nations communities.

Natalie Mota is a PhD candidate in the department of Clinical Psychology at the University of Manitoba and a member of the Swampy Cree Suicide Prevention Team.

Natalie Mota's paper will be published in an upcoming issue of *American Journal of Public Health*



Dr. Frank Deane  
Keynote Speaker at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual SCSPT Meeting  
Professor in Psychology  
Director of Illawarra Institute for Mental Health  
University of Wollongong, Australia

## SCSPT 3rd Annual Meeting

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Swampy Cree Suicide Prevention Team Conference was held in Winnipeg in October 2010. In attendance were community liaisons, elders and youth as well as several chiefs, university researchers, and representatives from the AMC, provincial government and project donors (Royal Bank of Canada and the Health Sciences Foundation).

The keynote speaker was Dr. Frank Deane, a youth psychologist who works with Aboriginal communities in Australia.

Dr. Deane gave a very interesting presentation on a project he did with high school students and help-seeking behaviour for suicide.

An update on the Circle of Life project was presented by Dr. Jitender Sareen, followed by a discussion and feedback with community members.

In addition, an overview of the upcoming Family-based Intervention project was given by Dr. Laurence Katz.