

DMFS Update

Stop! Look! Read!

STOP! Don't delete this newsletter. I understand that it is one of probably a dozen that cross your desk, but please don't delete it.

STOP! I can see you putting it in the circulation file without reading it first. There are all sorts of tricks out there to get people to read a newsletter right away. "Be the first to spot a spelling error and receive a prize." "Find the loonie in the photo."

We think that the best way to make sure our newsletter gets read, is to pack it full of up to date, relevant information. Unfortunately, our message is still not getting through. Do you know that DMFS is

working on its own partnerships? (DMFS Update April 2005, Director's Cut, p.2) Did you read that C/MFRCs could purchase additional resources? (C/MFRCs In Focus, p.11) Have you read about the way ahead for evaluation and accountability? (DMFS Update, December 2004, p.8)

Why send out a newsletter anyway? Well, we think that is the best way to send out information that pertains to everyone without overloading your email system. Imagine getting an additional twenty or so emails every month just from DMFS. It is also our way of telling you what we're working on and what the status is of our various projects. We also

try to highlight where your input or action may be required in the future. And, finally, we use the newsletter to recognize significant achievements or events in our world.

So, don't delete it. Don't file it. Don't just put it in circulation. Take a good look, there's sure to be something in it that's important to you, your Centre and your CF families.



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The Director's Cut

Sometimes you need to go somewhere else to get a slightly different view of the world ...



Celine Thompson, Director and her new Australian friend.

Recently, we had two DMFS staff attend the Family Support America conference, and (as you can read on page 7) we were also invited to Australia to showcase Centrepointe, and meet with our military family services colleagues with the Australian Department of Defence. Both opportunities provided a renewed perspective.

Our purpose for participating in the Family Support America conference was to inform our practice using the knowledge and experience of the experts in the business of family support. As family support organizations in the U.S. are being increasingly challenged to "show results," however, my staff were actively sought out as the other attendees became aware of our accountability framework. Viewed as 'cutting edge' and highly credible, suddenly we were not only there as participants and

students, but as leaders. It was this enthusiasm and endorsement of our work on the MFSP service model that made us realize how far the yardsticks have moved in a very short amount of time.

Later, as I found myself being very graciously hosted by the Director General - Defence Community Organizations in Australia, I had several 'epiphanies' that I'm still musing in terms of their implications for this Program. First, I came to terms with the fact that, no matter where they are, military families are universally confronted with similar issues. But I also realized the extent to which *how* we choose to deliver the service frames our outlook of the world. Their approach, very social work-driven, has resulted in an emphasis that is, by and large, 'clinical' and issues-oriented. Ours, conversely, is community driven and strengths-based.

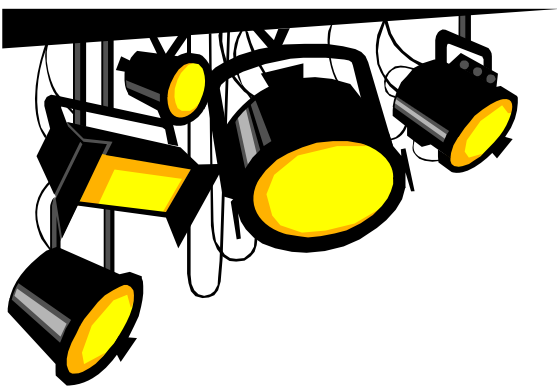
As we discussed the strengths and challenges of our respective approaches, this in turn caused me to wonder: how much does our emphasis on *how* the services are delivered enhance or

detract from our *raison d'être*? That is, how much effort and focus is expended on the delivery agent ... and does that ever move us away, rather than toward, our aim: the health and well being of military families?

One solace in all of this pondering is that ***MFSP: Parameters for Practice*** compels all of us (C/MFRCs and DMFS) to ultimately focus on, not ourselves, but rather on families. Our accountability framework will not be asking how well *we* feel we've done; rather, it will be asking families how *they* are feeling. Their responses and reactions will guide our work, and ensure that we always stay focused on the vision:

Confident, capable and resilient families in a supportive Canadian Forces community.

Please take some time to view our plan for rolling out the accountability framework a bit later in the year. Current details are on page A2; you'll find an excellent historical summary and rationale in the DMFS Update December 2004 edition (pages A1-A3).



The Main Event

The rehearsals are over, the curtain has risen and the performance is in the hands of the performers. The transition of the Military Family Services Program (MFSP) is DMFS' primary strategic priority. "The Main Event" will keep you informed about what's happening on various stages to ensure a successful run.

Centre Stage

Annual Formal Site Visits Are Underway

Sue McCormack, DMFS Field Operations Manager

DMFS Field Operations Managers have begun the first round of annual Formal Site Visits, intended to monitor the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding and Service Level Agreements and to assess the progress of all centres as they begin to implement the *MFSP: Parameters for Practice*.

The three objectives of the visits are:

- Verification that required elements of the MOU and Service Delivery Agreement are being met;
- Verification that C/MFRCs are meeting the requirements of the MFSP in accordance with *MFSP: Parameters for Practice*; and,
- Provision of support to C/MFRCs to enhance delivery of the MFSP to Canadian Forces families.

The visits are designed to be a positive and learning experience for centres and for DMFS. We encourage your feedback on the approach and tools used during the visit, and will use your responses to adapt the process in the future, with the overall goal of improving services to CF families.

Field Operations Managers have been connecting with centres to set the schedule of site visits, which will be completed between May and October for the 05-06 fiscal year. These visits provide a valuable opportunity for centres to highlight their accomplishments and successes, and for Field Operations Managers to meet key stakeholders, including families and community members. Your cooperation and assistance in preparing for these visits is greatly appreciated. If you have specific questions about annual Formal Site Visits, please contact your Field Operations Manager.

Family Violence Research Day

The Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research will be holding a research day at the University of New Brunswick 7 November 2005. They have issued a call for papers on the subject of "Violence Against Women and Children: Partnering for change" due 15 August 2005. For more information go to <http://www.cfpsa.com/en/psp/dmfs/>.

Back Stage

Program Evaluation and Accountability

In December 2004, DMFS endorsed a national accountability system using one national data collection instrument as presented by Dr. Gabor to the Advisory Committee/Task Group. Dr. Gabor's proposed methodology is modeled on the process used in universities by students to evaluate their courses and professors. In addition to the obvious reasons, this particular method appealed to the Advisory Committee/Task Group because it was not labour intensive and required minimal commitment of resources on the part of Centres. This evaluation would eliminate the need for Centres to submit quarterly service reports to DMFS, as outlined in *MFSP: Parameters for Practice*.

The Advisory Committee/Task Group recommended that the timeframe for data collection be the same for all Centres, and suggested a three-week period sometime during the last quarter (January – March) of the fiscal year. DMFS concurs with this recommendation, which is targeted for implementation in January 2006. The choice of the three-week period within that quarter will be left to the discretion of each Centre. Although somewhat of a prescriptive approach, it was agreed that the benefits of the methods outweighed the disadvantages.

As a result, this “national approach” will not only provide the data required by DMFS for its own accountability purposes, but will also provide data that could be used for marketing the Program and communicating its future needs. Members of the Advisory Committee/Task Group also concluded that more in-depth service evaluation at the Centres' level would be required to meet their local needs, and recommended that DMFS consider developing an evaluation “tool box” to support local efforts.

Since last fall, the Accountability Framework and Evaluation Task Group has approved and endorsed the final version of the national accountability system and data collection tools. Currently the CFPSA IT team is developing a database, which would accept the data yielded by the data collection tools, organize it, analyze it and produce required reports. Regional training in the use and administration of the accountability system and tools is being discussed and will likely occur over the fall – October to early December. More information will be available in the next DMFS Update.

\$\$\$\$\$ REMINDER \$\$\$\$\$

MFRCs are reminded that the Quarterly Expenditure Report and if required, the Request to Retain Surplus Funds forms were due 15 May 2005. Centres who have not submitted the required documentation may experience a delay in receiving their second quarter payment. Further, Centres are reminded that DMFS will recover surplus funds, as well as any reported surplus SLT and ECC funds, in the second quarter payment. Recovered funds will be held in the Contingency/Project fund. Information on disbursement of these funds will be circulated at a later date.

MFSP Symposium on Family Violence Prevention – Next Steps

Participants at the MFSP Symposium on Family Violence Prevention held in March 2005 in Ottawa had opportunities to discuss the successes and challenges associated with their work at the local level. They also made suggestions about the role of the MFSP and of individual C/MFRCs in taking action on family violence prevention and intervention.

Many participants commented on the need to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the various service providers in the military community at the local level: MFRCs, Health Promotion, military social workers, military police, padres, and coordinators with Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS). Based on participants' comments, it appears that Family Crisis Teams either are not established or not functioning effectively at many CF locations. Some participants also noted that service provision is fragmented as some military social workers will only see CF members while some MFRCs view their role as limited to family members.

While there was interest in working towards the promotion and effective

implementation of the DAOD 5044-4 on Family Violence, there was little interest in the development of specific MFSP policies on family violence.

Participants expressed interest in and support for:

- national research on family violence issues within CF communities;
- standardized training for local CF community service providers;
- funds for training of MFRC staff and special projects at the local level;
- the development of nationally-produced awareness and referral resource materials and products designed for community members;
- initiatives for CF youth focused on developing healthy relationships;
- ongoing access to information on the Canadian Forces Family Violence Advisory Committee initiatives, and other civilian family violence prevention initiatives, resources and research (through links on the DMFS web site);
- briefings throughout the CF system to raise awareness of family violence, the DAOD and available support services at the local level; and
- further consultations to determine what, if any,

MFSP resource materials should be developed for C/MFRC staff.

DMFS intends to establish an MFSP Working Group on Family Violence Prevention and Intervention in order to move forward with these, and other initiatives. The Working Group will include representatives from MFRCs, academia and DMFS but will be kept relatively small in numbers. DMFS will also continue to work closely with the CF Family Violence Advisory Committee.

MFRCs that would like to participate in the Working Group should identify themselves to their Field Operations Manager by 24 June 2005. DMFS will establish a terms of reference and will select Working Group members.

Symposium participants also made a number of practical suggestions about ways C/MFRCs could improve family violence prevention and intervention at the local level. Centre staff should review the Symposium Discussion Group Notes recently forwarded by DMFS to C/MFRCs, particularly pages 15-17, for suggestions that can be implemented at the local level.

The Government of Alberta is proud to present the **World Conference on Prevention of Family Violence 2005** Banff, Alberta, Canada, October 23 to 26, 2005 See www.wcpfv2005.ca/en_home.cfm for details.

Providing services to CF families that are part of official linguistic minority groups

MFRCs who are interested in participating should contact their Field Operations Manager by the end of June.

Some MFRCs may face challenges when providing services to CF families that are part of official linguistic minority groups. What are these challenges? How can they be met?

DMFS is sponsoring an action-based research project to explore these questions. The research will be conducted by Emmanuelle Ladouceur, as part of a *Master of Arts in Leadership and Training* program of the University of Royal Roads in Victoria, BC.

Emmanuelle worked at the Esquimalt MFRC from 1997 to 2004, and experienced being part of a linguistic minority community for eight years as the spouse of a CF mem-

ber. She comments: “My personal experiences have contributed to raise my awareness about the complexity of living as a linguistic minority and the challenges of delivering services to CF families that are part of this group.”

The research will be conducted over a six-month period from September 2005 to March 2006. The objective is to provide recommendations to practical workplace problems or opportunities. As a result, the recommendations of this research could be potentially used to develop best practices.

The project is in its preliminary phase and the final project proposal is subject to the approval of

the University and DMFS. Consequently, information on methodology, and other research details can’t be confirmed at this stage of the process.

Emmanuelle comments: “I value the work of MFRCs. They play a major role in strengthening the military community. I believe that this project will be beneficial to MFRCs and impact positively on CF families.”

The participation of MFRCs and other stakeholders will be voluntary. MFRCs who may be interested in participating should contact their Field Operations Manager by the end of June.

Second Language Training Just In Time

Ever noticed that no matter how much storage space you have, it’s always full! That’s the case at CFPSA headquarters. Our SLT modules are taking up too much space. So, starting immediately we will no longer be keeping stocks of modules. They will be printed only after being ordered through the web site. This means that you will receive your manuals two to three weeks after they have been ordered. So, plan well and order early to receive your resources “just in time”.

BREAKING NEWS: Centrepointe Goes Under Down Under, That Is!

With several years' experience under our belts, it's not surprising that others are turning to us for advice on portals. We have, after all, journeyed the off-roads – overcoming some reluctance and resistance since our early days. Yet when Terapinn – an Australian business media company – invited us to present a case study at its conference in Sydney, we were...well...shocked.



Touted as Asia Pacific's leading enterprise portals and content management event, this conference would unite "key decision-makers to share their expertise." Delegations from IBM, New Zealand Defence Force, Yamaha, etc. would attend and the proposed speakers list read like an A-list from Pan-Pacific governments and top-flight industries. Talk about external affirmation of your work! That our experience with Centrepointe was of direct interest to other or-

ganizations at various stages of their portal implementations was certainly a huge, and unexpected, feather in our cap.

Having just authored a case study for EI magazine in London, England, and on learning that Terapinn would cover some expenses, our reply was quick; a more emphatic YES has never before been seen.

Shortly thereafter, though, the conference program changed. The new line-up had us delivering an international keynote address on *Building a Portal with a Purpose*, as well as sitting as panellist on a discussion about *Avoiding the Empty Portal Syndrome*.

Despite this huge departure from our standard site briefings, the event went tremendously well.

In the keynote, we provided insight into what companies should consider throughout the development and implementation process in order to deliver full portal value. We explored some of the complexities of portal implementation and what can be done in advance to ensure a smoother rollout. We of-

fered a non-technical perspective, with some proven strategies on how to move forward in the absence of a dedicated IT department.

The flurry of positive feedback from delegates afterwards verified that we had addressed many of their immediate concerns.

In the panel discussion, delegates delved deeper into our experience, extracting more advice on portal personalization, moderating discussions and workflow processes.

Not only did this event allow us to share our experiences on an international stage and hear about other best practices, it prompted us to reflect on our past and realize that not only do we know about building a portal with a purpose, we've done it -- and continue to do so -- with much success.



Karen Dooks,
Centrepointe Managing
Editor

The Signage is Coming, The Signage is Coming ...

In his Military Family Services Program Evaluation (2001), Dr. Clark observed that the public funding of the MFSP was



Alla Ivask, Celeste Gotell and Celine Thompson, Director show off one of the new signs.

not being given sufficient visibility. It was Dr. Clark's assessment that families and other stake-

holders were unaware that the Department of National Defence/Canadian Forces provided significant support to the MFRCs and to the Military Family Services Program. He also ob-

served that the MFRC "ownership" and governance was a source of considerable confusion.

His observations resulted in recommendations, subsequently sanctioned by the Family Services Review Working Group, that compelled DMFS and the MFRCs to increase the visibility of public support in general, and specifically to develop an 'Information Document' that would be "prominently displayed in bilingual format at every MFRC."

In response to these recommendations, DMFS has developed signage that acknowledges na-

tional and local public funding/support, and that indicates to all of our stakeholders that the MFRCs are non-profit organizations governed by a Board of Directors, the majority of whom are civilian spouses of full time serving Canadian Forces members.

MFRCs will be receiving their individualized signage within the next week to two weeks, and are requested to display it prominently within their facility. This new signage does not preclude MFRCs from promoting other sources of support or revenue.

OP SANTA CLAUS 2005



Op Santa Claus 2003. Photo: Lyndon Goveas, CFPSA

CFPSA Deployment Support Unit recently launched operation Santa Claus for Christmas 2005. Since 1993 this special operation has brightened the lives of Canadians serving overseas at Christmas time.

Last year, 1,980 Christmas gift packages were distributed to 16 locations filled with gifts donated primarily by Canadian companies.

C/MFRCs are encouraged to participate by gathering letters or cards from children in the community, which are then distributed through gift boxes to all deployed CF members. Many Centres capitalize on organized summer activities where children create the much-appreciated inserts. Normally, the children participating are up to 10 years of age.

This year's deadline is 30 September. Letters and

cards should be sent in bulk to:
Operation Santa Claus
25 Canadian Forces
Supply Depot Bldg #6
South
6363 Notre Dame East
Montreal PC H1N 3R9
Attn: Mr. M. Millette
Operation Santa Claus is just one example of the benefits of partnerships. With the combined efforts of C/MFRCs, CFPSA and the CF, there are sure to be many more smiles this Christmas.

“Strengthening the Forces” Health Promotion Getting “PREPed”

The 2004 HLIS results indicated that 72% of CF members are in committed relationships. Despite the fact that a large number of CF members believe they have a good marriage/partnership (84%), that their relationship is stable (82%), and strong (81%), and that everything considered, they are happy with their marriage/partnership (86%) (Dunn, 2004), qualitative results indicate that an overwhelming number (73%), agree with the statement that military family breakdowns are occurring at an alarming rate, and that a state of crisis exists amongst CF military families as a result of the demands of military life (Dunn & Morrow, 2002). To support CF members and their families, Director Force Health Protection (DFHP), Health Promotion staff is developing a CF version of the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP), a research-based and empirically tested approach to helping couples prevent divorce and pre-

serve a lasting relationship. Based on 20 years longitudinal research out of the University of Denver, and tested across the American military, the integrated, preventive, and holistic approach of PREP, combined with effective implementation at the local level poses tangible benefits. Base commanders recognize that soldiers who know their families are equipped to handle the challenges of deployments are more mission focused and that spouses/partners who are more self reliant and resilient, are more capable of handling deployments and subsequent reunions. DFHP, through the CF Health Promotion Program, Strengthening the Forces, will be providing facilitators' training for local Health Promotion delivery staff and partners in July and October 2005 and hope to officially launch the program during National Family Week Oct 3-9, 2005, in collaboration with DMFS and DQOL. Individual motivation and

success in modifying behaviors depends on both individual efforts and a supportive environment. Designed to enhance operational readiness and improve the well being of military couples, PREP seeks to support and strengthen program participants and their partners through three major program components: relationship building, health promotion, spiritual encouragement and support. A key tenet to PREP is senior leadership support and the reduction of barriers for participants, such as time to participate. Such support would also help create a supportive environment among peers and supervisors and lend credibility and publicity to the program. PREP provides an effective platform for early introduction and referral of participants to existing helping agencies, such as Military Family Resource Centres, increasing their understanding of the role of these agencies and providing the opportunity for improved utilization of related health services.

**STRENGTHENING
THE FORCES**
ÉNERGISER LES FORCES



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Changes In The Research, Policy And Program Development Team – Good News And Bad

Alla Ivask, Senior Manager, Research, Policy and Program Development

I am pleased to announce that the vacancy on the team created by Ann-Marie Vaz's departure last year has been filled. Dean McCuaig, former Executive Director of the NCR MFRC will be joined the team on 6 June. Please join me in welcoming him aboard. We'll introduce Dean in the next DMFS Update.

It is with great regret that I inform you that Maureen Kellerman has accepted a new and challenging position with United Way Canada and is leaving DMFS. This is an unfortunate development for DMFS and the Research Policy and Program Development Team, however we wish her all the success in her new position as Senior Manager, National Early Years Initiative.

The following documents have been distributed electronically to all C/MFRC Board Chairpersons and Executive Directors between 1 March and 31 May 2005. If you did not receive a copy please contact Francine St-Amour at St-Amour.FC@forces.gc.ca

General Documents	File Number	Date Sent
MFSP Graphic Standards Manual—Version 2 Letter	5390-26	1 Mar 05
National Youth Model Training Strategy	5390-8-5	7 Mar 05
National Youth Model Update	5390-8-5	21 Mar 05
DMFS Update April 2005	5390-12	7 Apr 05
Mental Health Week Letter	1000-1	25 Apr 05
National Youth Model—Community Youth Needs Assessment	5390-8-5	27 May 05
Deployment Support –OPERATION SANTA CLAUS	5390-1	30 May 05
National Youth Model Training Strategy—Staff and Volunteers	5390-8-5	30 May 05

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