

Child Advocacy Centres Knowledge Exchange, Ottawa

Tuesday morning, March 1, 2011

**Panel # 4: *Counselling and Therapeutic Treatment for Children, Adolescents and their Families***

**Lucie Joyal**, Directrice Générale, Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent, Montréal, QC

*See Presentation :* **[Joyal]** [Montreal – Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent – Services for young sexual assault victims](#)

**Karyn Kennedy**, Executive Director, BOOST Child Abuse Prevention & Intervention, Toronto, ON

*See Presentation :* **[Kennedy]** [Toronto – BOOST – Support, Assessment, Treatment](#)

*See full paper :* **[Kennedy]** [Developing Toronto's CAC](#)

**Karyn Kennedy** explained that there is currently no CAC in Toronto, but they are getting closer to that goal. She spoke first about the essential elements of a CAC, and then discussed how they are working to improve the gaps in Toronto's system.

She explained that a CAC can be a solution to current issues that include: Investigative interviews are being done in police stations, where there are some child "soft" rooms, but not a child-friendly environment. In regard to counselling, there are few services for non-offending parents. There is little communication between the many agencies that deal with children in crisis in Toronto. There are few opportunities to provide interventions for a child and family in a crisis that occurs after regular office hours. She also noted that case management is fragmentary.

She reported that their group is working to develop consistent and coordinated response and supports for the child and family from beginning to end of their involvement in the justice process. In the development of their CAC services, she noted that a child advocate will play an important role in this process. She described this role which includes: case management; support to child or youth and family; assistance with crisis intervention; family liaison which involves collecting consent, assessing family needs, and making referrals. The child advocate is the consistent contact for the family as they move through the system.

She also described Boost's trauma assessment and treatment program and noted that Boost has developed trauma assessment packages for children and youth of different ages.

A trauma assessment is conducted to evaluate:

- current family functioning (includes attachment and overall quality of relationships in the family);
- historical victimization of the child and/or caregiver;
- disclosure information;
- symptom presentation;
- trauma-related cognitions;
- affect regulation and expression;

*This slide from Karyn Kennedy's presentation provides an overview of trauma assessment evaluation-Boost in Toronto.*

In closing, she emphasized how important it is to identify, assess and provide appropriate and comprehensive intervention services for children, youth and their families. For more details, see her [PowerPoint](#) presentation and the Boost Centre's website at <http://www.boostforkids.org/>

**Luice Joyal** presented a video about the Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent in Montreal, and described the different programs their agency provides. She stressed that there is a strong focus on research which includes examining the profiles of sexually abused children and their families and their specific needs. They also explore the different developmental trajectories of children who have been sexually abused.

The Centre carries out extensive evaluation of their services, in collaboration with researchers at the Université de Montreal and Université du Québec à Montréal.

They have almost 20 inter-sectorial partnerships that include police services, medical, social-judicial, psycho-social and university sectors.

## **VSA treatment choice**

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- Trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy approach (TF-CBT; Cohen, Deblinger & Mannarino, 2005)
- Evidence-based practice
- Support during implementation and supervision
- Unique treatment
- Tied to an assessment (pre, post, around 3 months, 1 year, 2 years)

*This slide from Lucie Joyal's presentation describes the assessment and treatment process at the Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent in Montreal.*

The Centre d'expertise provides services to children ages 12 and under, and their families, and work primarily with children who have experienced sexual abuse. Services are provided in both languages.

An assessment on the needs of both the child and family is carried out before specialized, evidence-based treatment is initiated. Based on identified need, the family may have up to 12 or 15 sessions at the Centre. For more details, see the [Powerpoint presentation](#) and the Centre's website at <http://www.ceasmv.ca/en/welcome.php>

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For a summary of the discussion on these topics at the Round Tables, see:

**[Round Table Summary 3 – Counselling and Therapeutic Treatment](#)**