

**Featured In This Issue:**

Mapping Crime at the Neighbourhood Level - p. 1      Moving the Miracle North - p. 3      ESPC Staff Profile: Jayda Pinkoski - p. 9  
Board Member Profile: Beth Hayward - p. 2      Misplaced Priorities: Prison Expansions - p. 5      Demystifying Mental Illness and Crime - p. 11  
Safety and Harmony in Our Community - p. 8      Director's Message - p. 12

## Mapping Crime at the Neighbourhood Level

By Jayda Pinkoski, ESPC Summer Research Assistant



One of the first steps to preventing crime in the city is awareness of crime at the neighbourhood level. The Edmonton Police Service (EPS) has launched a service to make this information readily available to the city's citizens. In 2009, the EPS introduced an online crime mapping application which displays up-to-date crime data according to individual neighbourhoods. Each incidence of crime is represented as one dot, with multiple crimes at one location shown as an overlapping group of dots. Users can select up to eight subtypes of crime, which are indicated in different colours, and track them as far back as 90 days or specify a custom date range. The dots are not applied to the exact location the crime happened, in an effort to maintain privacy; however, they are placed within one block of the actual location. The actual location is within the neighbourhood boundaries so the overall count for each neighbourhood is unchanged by this deliberate misplacement of the location. This is noted in the disclaimer users have to click through before proceeding to the map.

The crime mapping application has many strengths, the primary of which is simply bringing about awareness about crime. As this tool is accessible to the public, there is great potential for neighbourhood and community leagues, as well as organizations like Neighbourhood Watch, to put what they learn to use. These groups can become aware of what kinds of crimes are going on in their respective areas and get an idea of what initiatives, if any, need to be carried out. For example, if there have been a high number of thefts from cars in a neighbourhood over a short period of time, residents can garner that they should be cautious to ensure

their vehicles are locked or expensive possessions are not left in them. The application is updated daily, so the information is current and relevant. The application also has a statistics tab; in this section, one can compare the numbers of crimes (and break that down to subtypes) to the numbers in previous months and years, as far back as 2009. The application uses Google Maps to lay out the data, a user-friendly service with which many people are already familiar. Data displayed visually is easier to process than written words, and may strike a chord more significantly with people who are viewing it than if they were acquiring the same information from a written source. Users don't even need to know the name of a specific neighbourhood as they can simply click on the general area on the map to be directed to that neighbourhood.

While the application is generally a strong tool, it does have some shortcomings. Seeing numerous spots in one neighbourhood may cause some concern, but it should be recognized that more densely populated areas (such as the Oliver or Downtown neighbourhoods) will likely have the most occurrences of crime. Population needs to be taken into account in order to give a better representation of how much crime is occurring. This could be improved by including rates for each neighbourhood (occurrence of crime per 100 or 1,000 people), rather than just supplying the raw numbers. The statistics section does not give any historical data, so comparison to years before 2009 is impossible; citizens and neighbourhood leagues would have a difficult time determining if the longitudinal trends have improved over time in each neighbourhood. The inclusion of historical data would be very beneficial.

*(Continued on page 2)*



## Lunch and Learn Series



In conjunction with the Edmonton Public Library, the ESPC continues the popular Lunch and Learn Series.

### Upcoming talks for fall 2011:

**September 28, 2011**

Topic: Mental Health Patients Advocacy  
Speaker: Fay Orr, Alberta Mental Health Patient Advocate

**October 26, 2011**

Topic: Poverty Gap in Edmonton  
Speaker: Kate Quinn, Executive Director, Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation (CEASE)

**November 9, 2011**

Topic: Shopping Local  
Speaker: Jessie Radies, Blue Pear Restaurant, Good Food Box, Original Fare

Place: Central Court, Stanley Milner Library

Time: 12:00 to 1:00PM

## Mapping Crime at the Neighbourhood Level *cont'd from page 1*

The crime mapping application could be improved and enhanced in a few ways. As mentioned above, the inclusion of rates, in addition to counts of crime, and historical data would give a clearer picture of the long-term and current situation in each neighbourhood. The addition of a feature allowing users to compare crime occurrences between neighbourhoods could encourage dialogue between neighbourhoods. One neighbourhood may have found success in preventing a certain type of crime, while another may be able to take advantage of their knowledge and experience in initiating certain crime prevention strategies.

Edmonton Police Service's crime mapping application, or "mapplication" if you will, brings home information about crime to the neighbourhood level. Hearing about incidences and rates of crime on the evening news or in the newspaper is one thing; being able to see it as a dot on a map of one's own neighbourhood is another. Ultimately, this tool succeeds in bringing about awareness about neighbourhood crime occurrences and hopefully, individual citizens and community leagues will be able to make use of this tool in an effort to prevent crime across the city.

Note: The crime mapping application can be found at [crimemapping.edmontonpolice.ca](http://crimemapping.edmontonpolice.ca)

## Board Member Profile: Beth Hayward



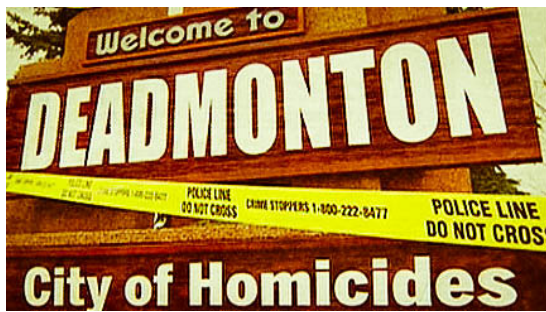
Beth is passionate about the challenges of promoting social justice and sustainable, inclusive development within our local communities and across international borders. She has worked with local organizations engaged in issues of gender equality, urban and rural poverty, and community mobilization in Canada, Guyana, China and Zambia. She has a Master's degree in International Development Studies from Dalhousie, where her research focused on participatory politics and the role of non-governmental organizations in political and social advocacy.

Last year, Beth returned to Edmonton and joined Charis Management Consulting, where she does evaluation, research and policy development work in the health and social services sectors. She loves Edmonton's farmers' markets, theatre scene and river valley. She and her husband, Malambo, are looking forward to enjoying the city together and building a life that bridges their families and communities in Zambia and Canada.

As a new board member, Beth is excited to learn from and contribute to the ESPC.

# Moving the Miracle North

By Christopher Rudge, Volunteer Writer



Edmonton's high homicide rate this year has been a source of much media attention, both locally and nationally. Whether such titles as "Deadmonton" are warranted - or even accurate - this recent and troubling spike in violence should certainly be a cause for concern for all residents, inner city or not. Edmonton is also by no means unique in experiencing a sudden elevation in crime; Calgary experienced a similar spike of 34 homicides in 2008 which subsequently dropped to 15 in 2010, and to the current four in 2011. Many examples can be found for such unexpected increases in violence; however, one such example is excellent in highlighting the proactive approach that a city can take in addressing such a problem head-on.

This well known example in violence reduction comes from Boston, in what has since been dubbed the "Boston Miracle". Plagued by an alarmingly high homicide rate through the 1980's and early 90's, Boston initiated a multi-stakeholder initiative aimed at reducing violence in inner city neighbourhoods.

Much of North America experienced a surge in violent crime at the same time Boston was struggling with its homicide rate. Attributed to the introduction of crack cocaine and coupled with poor police relation in distressed communities, Boston's homicide rate climbed to a high of 152 in 1990. By 1999, the homicide rate had plummeted, and the number of murders down to 31, none of which involve youth in the 24-and-younger age group, something that would have been unheard of just five years prior. At the centre of this success

was a partnership between the Boston Police Department and an inner city group of ministers known as the Ten Points Coalition. Originally formed after a gang attack during the funeral service of a rival gang member that shocked the local community into action, the Ten Points Coalition built a positive relationship with members of the police throughout the 1990's. Recognizing that some members of the local community were simply too dangerous to be in mainstream society, the Ten Points Coalition ensured that the Boston Police Department understood that the spike in inner city violence was caused by a small minority of individuals, and that the vast majority of community members were law abiding citizens that wanted safer neighbourhoods for their children.

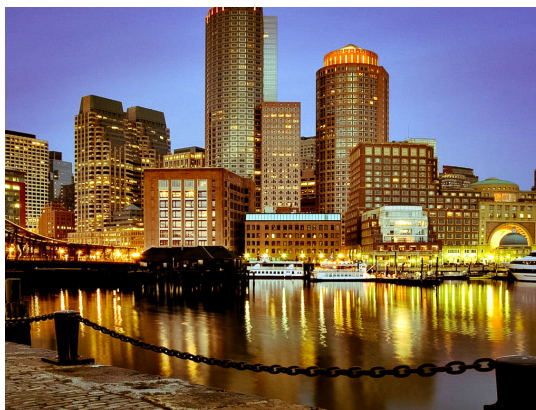


Photo by Jim Bosch - Boston Skyline

Cooperative services offered by this partnership included summer jobs for youth, increased access to drug rehabilitation and the development of a gang forum that would settle disputes and offer young gang members a way out of the criminal lifestyle. While Boston did subsequently experience an elevated homicide rate beginning in 2001, many blamed a sense of complacency in the multi-stakeholder initiative.

While Boston is a larger metropolis with different demographics and history, the lesson from the *Boston Miracle* is as relevant as it is simple: Cooperation and

(Continued on page 4)



## Quick Homicide and Violent Crimes Statistics for Edmonton:

- There have been 38 homicides in Edmonton so far in 2011
- Overall, the rate of violent crimes in Edmonton has decreased by one-third over the last decade
- While there has been a high number of homicides in 2011, other types of violent crime (including assault, robbery, and sexual assaults) have continued to decrease from previous years
- Based on the overall rate of change from 1995 to 2010, property crime appears to be on the decrease in 2011

Source: Edmonton Police Service and Statistics Canada



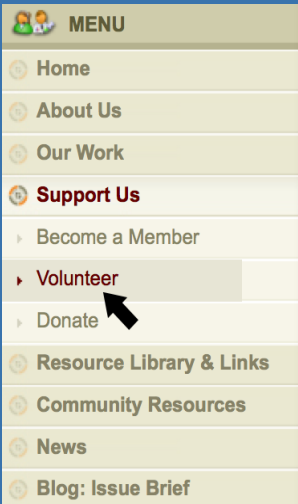
## Want to volunteer for the ESPC?

Get involved with some of our existing and new volunteer opportunities!

We are looking for people who can:

- research and / or write reviews
- help in the community
- serve on the board
- fundraise

For more information, visit [edmontonsocialplanning.ca](http://edmontonsocialplanning.ca) and fill out our volunteer application form (under the **Support Us** menu).



## Moving the Miracle North, *cont'd from page 3*

coordination between social services and law enforcement coupled with strong social programs. Such a system provides members of a distressed community the opportunities they need to re-establish themselves, allowing them to reduce their chances of being victimized. It must also be remembered that such programs are organic, constantly evolving and require ongoing commitments and consensus building from all stakeholders in order to ensure success.



In response to the current homicide rate, the City of Edmonton announced its “Violence Reduction Strategy” on August 10<sup>th</sup>. The strategy aims to refocus social programs for distressed communities and vulnerable segments of the population. As stated Edmonton Police Chief Rod Knecht at the programs announcement, “this is no quick fix, there are no simple solutions. This is a marathon, not a sprint”. As part of the City’s program, it will seek to establish 24/7 coordinated social services for the REACH program, initiate a family violence prevention strategy, increase police enforcement in “hospitality areas” (i.e. Whyte Avenue, Jasper Avenue), and increase the number of Neighbourhood Empowerment Teams. These teams involve members of the police department, a “community capacity builder” and members of a youth mobilization team who work to develop and implement Community Action Plans for distressed communities.

The refocusing and strengthening of these initiatives represents the same long-term planning and community coordination used in the Boston Miracle. Considering that 60% of all homicide victims in Edmonton this



Photo by Wayne Moser

year were either homeless or used shelter services at some time indicates the need for increased social services and community partnerships in our city’s “hot spots” of crime. While certainly a positive first step, it will take a continual and sustained effort by the city, community members and all concerned residents of Edmonton before real, long-lasting results are seen. Such an effort may lead to our own mini-miracle and a better more dignified life for all residents in this city.

### References:

Bass, Peter; Borgman, Dean. 2010. *The so-called Boston Miracle*. Centre for youth studies.

City of Edmonton. 2011 (August). *Violence Reduction Strategy*. Available at: <http://www.edmontonpolice.ca/vrs>.

Ibrahim, Mariam. August 10, 2011. “Edmonton’s crime strategy should advocate help for the homeless, inner-city advocates say”. *Edmonton Journal*.

Winship, Christopher. 2002. *End of a Miracle? Crime, Faith and Partnership in Boston in the 1990’s*. Available at: [www.wjh.harvard.edu/soc/faculty/winship/End\\_of\\_a\\_Miracle.pdf](http://www.wjh.harvard.edu/soc/faculty/winship/End_of_a_Miracle.pdf).

# Misplaced Priorities: Prison Expansions

By Raymond Cheung, Volunteer Writer



Photo from CBC.ca - Prime Minister Stephen Harper

For years, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has been pushing his tough-on-crime agenda without much success. Now that the Conservatives have a majority government, they have greater wherewithal to pass legislation and implement the agenda. As stated in their party platform, this program aims to “protect the vulnerable, and hold criminals accountable” by implementing “tougher sentences” arguing that the “punishment should fit the crime” (Conservative Party of Canada, 2011, 45). Clearly, Harper believes longer jail sentences will play a significant role in deterring inmates from reoffending. Therefore, the government is building new prisons and expanding older ones at an immense cost to taxpayers.

According to an article, the administration of the federal corrections system cost \$1.6 billion annually for the fiscal year of 2005-2006, which was around the time the Harper government took office. For 2013-14, the projected expense will jump to \$3.147 billion (National Post, 2011). As a part of this spending spree and under the banner of “Safety of Canadian Streets and Communities”, the Edmonton Institution is scheduled for a new 96-bed living unit slated for completion in 2013-2014 in addition to a 40-bed unit for the Edmonton Institution for Women (Correctional Service Canada, 2011). Judging by the financial commitment, Harper believes in the efficacy of this strategy. Regardless, a body of academic work exists that questions this efficacy.

A 1999 study revealed a 3% increase in reoffending, also known as recidivism, for offenders who spent more time in prison. Inmates who spent an average of 30 months in custody had a recidivism rate of 29%, versus 26% for those who spent an average of 12.9 months (Gendreau, Goggin, and Cullen, 1999). That is to say, the two groups virtually had the same rate of reoffending regardless of sentence length, thus nullifying the utility of longer sentences in reducing recidivism. Moreover, the use of longer sentences does not address the correlates of crime: mental disorders, substance abuse issues, lack of education, and/or lack of employment.



Photo from Parole Board of Canada

According to a 1996 census of all adult inmates in Canadian prisons, 37% of inmates had an education of grade 9 or less compared to 19% for all adult Canadians (Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 1999, 9). Consequently, it is not surprising that offenders had a 52% unemployment rate compared to 10% for the Canadian adult population. (Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 1999, 9). Based on data from a Correctional Service of Canada inmate survey of male inmates admitted from 1993-1995 and in-depth interviews of newly admitted male inmates from 1999-2000, about 49% of violent crimes such as homicide, attempted murder and assault and about 50% of gainful crimes such as theft, break and enter and robbery were attributed to alcohol and/or illicit drugs (Correctional Services Canada, 2007). This data highlights the importance of these risk

(Continued on page 6)



## Quick Prison Facts:

- 78% of inmates are non-violent in provincial prisons
- 31% of inmates are non-violent in federal prisons

Annual average cost of keeping an inmate incarcerated:

- \$83, 276 (2003/04)
- \$101,666 (2008/09)

Annual average cost when offender is maintained in the community:

- \$24, 825 (2008/09)

The ratio between sentences that resulted in offenders going to Federal vs. Provincial prisons in 2008/09

- 4% federal
- 96% provincial

- Average daily count of offenders in jail - 23, 901
- Number of offenders in remand - 13, 500
- Therefore, 57% of inmates in provincial jails have not been convicted

Source: Church Council on Justice and Corrections. 2010. *Prison Facts Infographic*. Available at <http://ccjc.ca/prison-facts-infographic>.



You Tube

Visit our YouTube Channel to view past Lunch and Learn talks and speeches made by the ESPC.

<http://www.youtube.com/edmontonspc>

flickr

All of ESPC's events are archived on our photostream at [www.flickr.com/photos/edmontonsocialplanning](http://www.flickr.com/photos/edmontonsocialplanning)

## Misplaced Priorities, *cont'd from page 5*



Photo from [edmontonjournal.com](http://edmontonjournal.com) - Edmonton Institution

factors in criminality.

Although Harper talks about substance abuse treatment, educational training, and so forth, his preoccupation with longer jail sentences tempers his support for these programs. For example, the Conservative platform states that the National Anti-Drug Strategy was designed “to help prevent illicit drug use and to support access to treatment for those [inmates] with drug dependencies” (Conservative Party of Canada, 2011, 46). In other words, the Party acknowledges the significant number of inmates with substance issues, significant enough to merit rehabilitation and treatment. The document then reads: “prisoners in possession of illicit substances will face appropriate additional charges and that parole applicants who fail drug tests will be denied parole” (Conservative Party of Canada, 2011, 47). The two passages contradict each other because Harper is punishing the offender for the act of drug possession and/or consumption without giving much credence to substance abuse issues that may have led to the act. Ultimately, the Conservatives are focused more on punishing the criminal act than addressing the deeper risk factors that inspired the act. It would be prudent for the Prime Minister to pursue an anti-crime policy that provides adequate support to programs that address those deeper risk factors instead of allocating additional funds to expand the prison system.

Regrettably, due to waitlists, only about 23% of Canadian inmates are enrolled in correctional programs that deal with substance abuse, family violence, education,

and or job training on any given day. Furthermore, “some offenders never benefit from correctional programming before being released to community” (Correctional Investigator of Canada, 2010, 46). This is unfortunate because, for example, inmate completion substance abuse programs offered in Canadian prisons have shown to reduce the recidivism rate by up to 50% (Griffiths et al., 2007, 6). With recidivism reduced, the need for more prison space would be diminished as jail would only be reserved for those who pose the greatest risk to society. Many would be surprised by the fact that approximately 68% of inmates at the Edmonton Institution and 87% of inmates at the Edmonton Institution for Women will eventually be released into the community (Correctional Services Canada, 2010). Indeed, the overwhelming majority of inmates who go to prison will eventually be released. After all, not all inmates are murderers.

Since Edmonton is home to the Edmonton Institution and the Edmonton Institution for Women, these inmates will likely encounter this city upon release. Therefore, Edmonton's safety needs would be served best not with more prisons, but with adequate support to those correctional programs that address the deeper risk factors of criminality.

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Conservative Party of Canada. (2011). *Here for Canada: Stephen Harper's low-tax plan for jobs and economic growth*. Available at: [http://www.conservative.ca/media/ConservativePlatform2011\\_ENs.pdf](http://www.conservative.ca/media/ConservativePlatform2011_ENs.pdf).

Correctional Service Canada. (2011). *Harper government announces action for safety of Canadian streets and communities*. Available at: <http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/text/media/rgnlrls/pra/11/01-10-eng.shtml>.

Gendreau, P., Googin, C., and Cullen, F.T. 2005. *The effects of prison sentences on recidivism*. Available at: <http://www.prisonpolicy.org/scans/gendreau.pdf>.

Griffiths, C.T., Dandurand, Y., and Murdoch, D. 2007. *The social reintegration of offenders and crime prevention*. Available at: <http://www.curtgriffiths.com/pdfs/Social%20reintegration.pdf>.

National Post. 2011. *Prisons costs soar 86% in past five years: report*. Available at: <http://news.nationalpost.com/2011/07/18/prison-costs-soar-86-in-past-five-years>.



Check out our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/pages/Edmonton-Social-Planning-Council/37296571206](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Edmonton-Social-Planning-Council/37296571206)



Join the online conversation with us at [www.twitter.com/edmontonsocialplanning](http://www.twitter.com/edmontonsocialplanning)

## Free Financial Information

### Ways to save and keep your money!

- Saving money on food
- How to get a pass to the City of Edmonton pools and leisure centres
- How to get free money for your children's education
- Opening a bank account
- Avoiding pay day loans
- What to do about debt
- Understanding your rights as a tenant



**Date:** Wednesday, October 12, 2011

**Time:** 11:00AM to 5:00PM

**Place:** St. Francis of Assisi Elementary School Gym (6614 -129 Avenue)

Brought to you by:



*Alberta Asset Building Collaborative, Edmonton*



*St. Francis of Assisi Elementary School*



# Safety and Harmony in Our Community

By Jaylene Ellard and Alanna Manchak, Edmonton John Howard Society



**REE\*START Program**  
(Resources, Education, Employment, Support, Teaching, Advocacy, Respect, Transition)

The REE\*START Program provides:

- Services for youth, 15-22 years of age
- Short and long term support
- Services delivered on a one-to-one basis
- Assistance in meeting self-identified goals

### Employment Preparation

- Create resumes for youth while working on job search, interview preparation and follow-up techniques
- Help youth to maintain employment and resolve workplace conflicts
- Provides ongoing employment counselling

### Support & Advocacy

- Encourage and teach youth to advocate for themselves
- When necessary, the Youth Transition Advisor will advocate on the youths' behalf.
- Support youth in achieving their self identified goals
- Work in collaboration with other youth serving agencies to provide comprehensive support to the young person

cont'd on page 9 sidebar



Edmonton John Howard Society Mural by Luke Ramsey and Josh Holinaty

A sense of security in life is what many of us need in order to feel safe. This is why we lock our doors, get involved in our children's lives, and watch for the latest news to find out what's happening in our community. When a part of our lives or the life of someone we know is impacted in a negative way, it causes stress, anxiety, sometimes a loss of money and a lack of that sense of safety we once felt. I have overheard a few people that have recently had their vehicle broken into saying they felt "violated". These types of violations can cause people to develop beliefs about offenders that are based more on emotional responses than facts.

Through our programs and services at Edmonton John Howard Society (EJHS), we work to prevent crime and help people affected by crime. In offering support to the community at large for both victims and offenders, our staff works towards a vision of safety and harmony in the community. In order to heal the wounds of a community, issues involving criminal justice need to be tackled and dealt with from their root causes.

Successfully reintegrating offenders into the community is one of the many ways EJHS helps. With offering this type of support, a level of understanding and empathy is a must. Yes, someone who has committed an offence has negatively affected someone in one way or another. This makes it easy to

believe that offenders are *bad* people. However, in working with our clients over the past two years, I have come to discover that, what is not bad is the person, but his or her actions. If you look at life as a pattern of cause and effect, you may see where I'm coming from:

*"Johnny" was sexually abused by his uncle when he was a child. Johnny has built up hurt and anger over the years and rather than getting the needed supports as a young adult, Johnny chooses to lash out against someone else. Johnny still needs to be held accountable for his behaviors, but without interventions and supports this same pattern of acting out due to hurt and anger is not likely to change. Johnny is then sentenced to a correctional centre for his actions. Due to the nature and structure of the facility and the time spent with other offenders that may or may not want to change their only known patterns, Johnny will have to adapt to his surroundings in order to survive. Just like putting on a coat because it's cold in winter, Johnny gains a 'jailhouse mentality' to cope with his environment. Now when Johnny is released, he will have to choose whether to continue on the same path or to rise above the pressures of his circumstances, seek out the support of community based organizations and find the motivation for change.*

Edmonton John Howard Society offers both residential and community supports for those looking to exercise their capacity for growth and change. In our correctional based residential facilities, individuals have access to treatment, counsellors, day programs, and a stable housing environment. These residences offer a deliberate approach towards successful transition back into mainstream society by addressing individual behaviors and bridging

(Continued on page 9)



## Safety and Harmony in Our Community, *cont'd from page 8*

the next steps to reintegration. After addressing certain root causes, the next steps to reintegration may include searching for a job, finding a new place to live, getting government identifications or looking for further counselling and treatment. While Johnny may be in his 20's or 30's and appears capable of getting a job, by the time he is accessing our services, he may have never been shown how to write a resume or apply for a job if he did not have the proper supports and has been in and out of correctional centres from a young age.



At EJHS, our community services help address these next steps. Whether a person has had justice status or not, individuals can access a variety of outreach services and supports in the community through the Intake and Employment Program for adults and the REE\*START Program for youth. Our Adult Transition Learning Centre offers courses to adult students looking at achieving their educational goals and our Family Violence Prevention Centre serves anyone who has been affected by family violence. EJHS believes we all have the right to live in a safe and peaceful society. By supporting individuals with our programs and services, we can achieve a healthy and safe society.

## ESPC Staff Profile: Jayda Pinkoski



Jayda Pinkoski joined the ESPC as the summer research assistant in June. She is a fresh and eager 2011 alumna of the University of Alberta, where she completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology with a minor in English. She spent a very enjoyable three months at ESPC, working on the 2011 edition of Tracking the Trends and the SROI Financial Proxies database.

Jayda started her degree at Red Deer College before transferring to U of A after her second year. During her time at the U of A, she became actively involved in Students Against Global Apathy, a student group dedicated to raising awareness

on social justice issues in the global community. She became passionate about global issues, but she always wondered about the local scene – that is, what is being done to better the situation in her own backyard. The summer position at ESPC seemed like the perfect fit, as it combined her love of social sciences, research, and social justice issues into one exquisitely tempting paid job opportunity!

While at U of A, Jayda was also a volunteer with the Heart of the City Piano Program, where she taught private piano lessons to inner-city elementary students. In her free time, she enjoys playing piano, reading countless novels and anything related to psychology or women's rights, writing poetry, and drinking tea. She rides a basket-bearing bicycle named Penelope and she frequents the city's farmers' markets, coffee shops, and locally owned restaurants. Jayda is considering furthering her education and pursuing her Master's in Public Health. In the meantime, she intends to prove to her parents that she can get a fulfilling job with her arts degree that will in no way be a part of the fast food industry.



*cont'd from page 8 sidebar*

### Identification & Training

- Provide assistance in obtaining identification and training for employment

### Goal Setting

- Work with youth one-on-one to develop an ongoing service plan
- Assist with education goals, as well as, bursary and funding information
- Encourage youth to improve personal and familial relationships
- Assist youth in successful completion of supervision orders

### Referrals

- Work with clients to identify community resources and link them to appropriate agencies
- Provide internal and external referrals as required


Visit <http://www.johnhoward.org/community-services/youth-program> for more information about the REE\*START program.



Want to check out more community events?

Visit our website at [edmontonsocialplanning.ca](http://edmontonsocialplanning.ca) and navigate our **Community Calendar** to see future events in the Edmonton community:

- Awareness Events
- Conferences
- Fundraisers
- ESPC Board Meetings
- ESPC Events
- Publication Releases
- Workshops

 **COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

September 2011						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

# Home Care for Seniors

## PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

Are you looking for a better understanding of home care for seniors?

Learn about...

- ... our current home care system
- ... changes for the future
- ... the experience of a caregiver who has used the home care system

**Tuesday, October 4, 2011**

7:00 to 9:00 PM

8421 -101 Avenue, Edmonton

Pastoral and Administrative Offices

Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton

Free parking on \_\_\_\_\_ street and in parking lot on east side of building.

**Free Admission**



**Presenters:**

*Dennie Hycha* MSN - Director Home Living, Seniors Health - Edmonton Zone, Alberta Health Services

*Baldwin Reichwien* - a Care Giver's Perspective

Baldwin Reichwein is a registered social worker, now retired, with an extensive background in social and health programs and services. He represents retired social workers in Edmonton on Public Interest Alberta's Seniors Task Force, and can offer personal and professional experience with health care services, including home care.

**Moderator:**

*Susan Morrissey* - Executive Director, Edmonton Social Planning Council

For more information, contact Don Mayne at [dmayne@shaw.ca](mailto:dmayne@shaw.ca) or Margot Herbert at [therbert@ualberta.ca](mailto:therbert@ualberta.ca).

Organized by:



Alberta  
Quality of Life  
Commission

Co-Sponsored by:



The Catholic  
Archdiocese  
of Edmonton  
Office for Social Justice



# Demystifying Mental Illness and Crime

By Michelle Harkness, Volunteer Writer

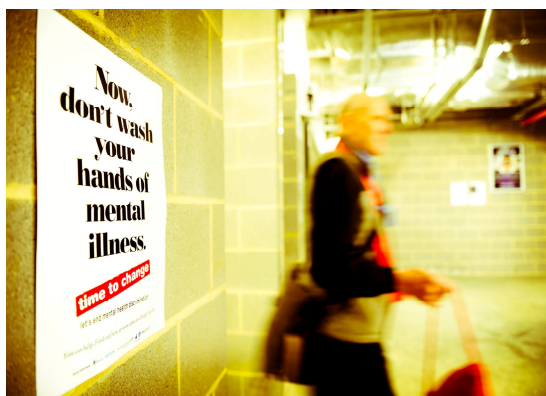


Photo from North Essex Partnership Foundation Trust

There is a stigma attached to mental illness, particularly when it comes to criminal behaviour. Mentally ill individuals commit no more or no less crime than mentally sane individuals. In fact, mentally ill individuals are more likely to be victims of, rather than, perpetrators of violence. According to the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), the mentally ill are 2.5 times more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators. This occurs because of other predicating factors such as gender, homelessness, low socio economic status, poverty and even substance abuse.

Only 3% of criminal cases can be attributed to mental illness directly. More often than not there are factors that influence violent behaviour, including substance abuse and or history of past violent behaviour. Past violent behaviour seems to be the strongest indicator of future criminal behaviour, not mental illness.

The incidence of crimes committed by mentally incompetent individuals is rare, of course, that is not to say it does not happen. In 2008, Tim McLean was murdered by Vincent Li, a schizophrenic, who was having a psychotic episode at the time of the crime. Nevertheless, mental illness is not a pre determinant of criminal behaviour. Statistically speaking, alcohol, drugs and/or violent behaviour are more of a precursor to criminal offences than mental illness alone. Indeed, mental illness is more common for offenders after incarceration.

Mental illness is a subject matter that is often shrouded in fear and misunderstanding. Media often perpetuates this fear. Media perception is that the mentally ill are “dangerous” and more likely to commit crime. The mentally ill are locked away in mental facilities and given drugs to reduce the incidences of mental episodes. Certainly, there needs to be some provisions in place for dealing with mental illness in the criminal sense. A legal frame work in the criminal code for example is necessary, however, mentally ill individuals are far more likely to harm themselves than others.

The consequences of this societal fear translate into a sense of shame for the sufferer of mental illness. Punishing the mental health sufferer through antiquated means of either lock up, drugs or by ostracizing them does nothing to reduce the shame that mental health sufferers feel and the shame that surrounds mental health on a wider societal level.

As a society, we need to replace the shame with communication and awareness. Hopefully through those means we can reduce stigmas associated with mental health and in turn improve our understanding and treatment options so that crimes committed by those labelled “mentally ill” are reduced.

## References:

Canada Mental Health Association. 2011. *Violence and Mental Illness*. Available at: [http://www.cmha.ca/bins/content\\_page.asp?cid=3-108&lang=1](http://www.cmha.ca/bins/content_page.asp?cid=3-108&lang=1).

Here to Help. 2011. *Mental Disorders, Addiction, and the Question of Violence*. Available at: <http://heretohelp.bc.ca/publications/factsheets/violence>.

Mood Disorders of Canada. 2009. *Quick Facts: mental illness and addiction in Canada*.



## Some Definitions and Facts:

- Mental illness is defined as being a serious disturbance in thought, feelings and perceptions that affect behaviour and or day to day functioning
- Percentage increase in mental illness among male offenders upon admission to federal prisons in the last decade: 71%
- Percentage increase in mental illness among female offenders upon admission to federal prisons in the last decade: 61%
- Percentage of offenders currently identified with a mental illness upon intake into federal prisons:  
Women: 26%, Men: 12%

For more information, see: Mood Disorders of Canada. 2009. *Quick Facts: mental illness and addiction in Canada*. Available at: <http://www.mooodisorderscanada.ca/documents/Media%20Room/>

# Director's Message

By Susan Morrissey, ESPC Executive Director

With the recent attention being drawn to the number of homicides in Edmonton, we decided to focus the attention of our *fACTivist* on crime and safety in our community. Now there are some who would say, "Edmonton isn't a safe place to live anymore" ... that with the rash of murders perhaps we should all sequester ourselves in our homes. I would suggest that this is the very time when we need to be out there working with the professionals and agencies in the community to address this issue. This is why we wanted to focus in on some of the initiatives that are taking place including REACH Edmonton which came about as a result of Edmonton Mayor Stephen Mandel appointing the 25 member Taskforce on Community Safety, which was given the goal of identifying ways to reduce crime and improve safety for Edmontonians. We have a new Violence Reduction Action Plan, unveiled in early August by our new Chief of Police aimed at addressing issues of crime from a multi-faceted approach.

I do not want to give the impression that the issues are not to be taken seriously, but I believe that we need to work as a community to become educated, make suggestions, get involved, and be the eyes and ears of our community. Edmonton is a great place to live, work, play, and to raise a family. It's our community.

## About the Edmonton Social Planning Council

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### our VISION

A healthy, just and inclusive community.

### our MISSION

The Edmonton Social Planning Council provides leadership to the community and its organizations in addressing social issues and effecting changes to social policy.

### by BECOMING A MEMBER, you will:

- support our efforts to remain on the forefront in dealing with social issues
- make it possible for us to distribute our materials freely and widely to all
- receive our newsletters, fact sheets and other publications
- be eligible to vote at ESPC AGMs and have a say in the direction of the organization
- be eligible to serve on the board of directors

Visit [edmontonsocialplanning.ca](http://edmontonsocialplanning.ca) > **Support Us** > **Become a Member** for more information.

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The screenshot shows the website's navigation menu on the left and the 'Individual Membership Form' on the right. The menu includes: Home, About Us, Our Work, Support Us (with sub-items: Become a Board Member, Become a Member, Volunteer, Donate), Resource Library & Links, Community Resources, News, and Issue Brief Blog. The form fields include: Member Type (dropdown), NAME, ORGANIZATION, POSITION, ADDRESS, CITY/TOWN, and PROVINCE, each with a required field indicator (star).

\* Articles, quotes, and commentaries in the *fACTivist* reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policy of the Edmonton Social Planning Council.