

Report to the Human Services Integration Forum
Northeast Regional Intersectoral Committee
October 2010

1. Highlights and Areas of Focused Attention

□ **Housing**

- The Northeast Outreach and Support Services (NEOSS) submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General and CMHC for funding to establish and operate a safe shelter from domestic and interpersonal violence. The proposal included over 25 letters of support by community organizations, integrated services committees, First Nations, provincial agencies and municipal governments.
- Following the completion of the Northeast Housing Research project the RIC set out to increase awareness of housing issues with municipal government. The RIC has received a number of invitations for presentations to Melfort, Tisdale, Nipawin Town/ City Councils or committees. Awareness building has contributed to community action.
 - In The Town of Tisdale is developing a list of available rental housing ready for inquiries. The City of Melfort requested information about Sask Housing rental development and repair programs to distribute to individuals making inquiries. The Town of Nipawin has proposed 2 bylaws intended to improve the condition of rental accommodation. A public meeting was held on August 30, 2010. This story has also been picked up by the Saskatoon Star Phoenix and the CBC radio.

□ **Early Years**

- The 0-3 Years Early Childhood Task Force coordinated a presentation on September 8th in Nipawin by Dr. Angela Bowen on Maternal Mental Health. This is the provincial initiative to increase awareness and build community capacity for universal screening and improved treatment options.
- Dr. Jean Clinton notable Canadian child psychiatrist will be speaking in Tisdale on November 5, 6th. The topic is: The First R: Relationships How Love Builds Brains.
- The Northeast RIC sponsored the federally funded Understanding the Early Years project (2005-2008). In October 2010 *Understanding the Early Years: Northeast Saskatchewan - A Community Research Report* was released from its federal government publication and distribution embargo. The report which represents the parent's perspective and the kindergarten children's skills assessments is now posted on the Human Resources and Social Development website. The Northeast RIC will distribute this report to communities in the northeast for discussion and to guide action plans to address the needs of children and families.

□ **Complex Needs Case Protocol**

- A Northeast Complex Needs Case Protocol has been developed and approved for adoption by the RIC September 2, 2010.

2. Challenges and Opportunities

□ **Northeast RIC development**

- At a RIC planning session on September 2nd our committee identified 3 areas of focused activity for 2010-2011. They are housing, early childhood and RIC member engagement.
- Related to increasing RIC engagement our committee will go through the process of developing a member charter.

□ **Affordable suitable housing**

- The Town of Nipawin has proposed 2 bylaws intended to improve the condition of rental accommodation. Nipawin Integrated Services Committee and Nipawin Interagency have expressed concern over the proposed bylaws. The bylaws do have the potential of improving conditions in private rental housing however the bylaws are also likely to increase homelessness as the number of private rental units will be reduced.

□ **Early Years**

- *Understanding the Early Years: Northeast Saskatchewan – A Community Research Report* highlights significant challenges identified through parent interviews and direct assessment of kindergarten children conducted in 2006-2007. The release of the report reminds our community of the urgency for action to improve outcomes for children.
 - There is high prevalence of children with low pre-literacy skills in language and numeracy 33 – 36% as compared to 15% for Canadian children.
 - In the Northeast there exists a high incidence of children with inattention problems, displaying depression and children who are physically aggressive as compared to the Canadian average.
 - 65% of the families in the Northeast use some form of child care arrangement while working or studying. Our communities need to be supported in the development of licensed childcare.
 - Only 60% of the parents read to their children once per day as compared to 77% for the Canadian average.

Respectfully submitted by: Brenda Ives, Coordinator
Northeast Regional Intersectoral Committee, Box 6500, Melfort, SK

Phone: 306-752-6135, Email: brenda.ives@gov.sk.ca