



Suicide Prevention in New Brunswick Newsletter - Volume 1, Issue 1, Fall 2005

Message from the Minister of Health and Wellness

We are all aware of the tragic toll that suicide takes in our province. It is an impact that cannot be measured in numbers alone and behind each of these tragic deaths lies a tale of strong emotions and unbearable pain, not only of the victim but of their family, friends and the community at large as well.

As part of our Provincial Health Plan, *Healthy Futures*, we continue to be committed to providing suicide prevention activities and supporting community initiatives throughout New Brunswick.

On May 3 2005, I unveiled results of a study into the contributing factors leading to suicide and, more importantly, what we can do to improve our suicide prevention strategies. It provides us with important insights into the events and circumstances that can cause someone to take their own life and how we can try to prevent these tragedies.

Community involvement is important, for suicide is a societal problem and everyone has a role to play if we want to succeed in its prevention. There are 13 suicide prevention committees across the province, as part of our Suicide Prevention Program, which bring together people who are committed to lessening the frequency of these personal, family and social tragedies through prevention and treatment.

It is therefore crucial to keep abreast of suicide prevention programs and services available and I am confident that this first provincial newsletter will facilitate the sharing of views and ideas amongst suicide prevention experts, front-line workers, family survivors of suicide and various community members.

I applaud the work that is being done by members of Suicide Prevention Program across our province. They are all important participants in our health care system by providing a vital link to people in a desperate frame of mind, undoubtedly saving lives, and giving hope to survivors and their loved ones.

Please accept my best wishes for your continued efforts in addressing future challenges of suicide prevention in New Brunswick and in bringing hope and enlightenment to the people you serve.

Hon. Elvy Robichaud
Minister of Health and Wellness



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SUICIDE PREVENTION

Suicide in New Brunswick

Sadly, suicide in New Brunswick is a fact of life. Approximately 100 New Brunswickers die by suicide each year.

As in most other provinces, the risk of suicide is highest among men 20 to 40 years of age, young people, seniors, and those who have recently lost a close friend or family member through suicide.

The New Brunswick

Suicide Prevention Program

New Brunswick Mental Health Services recognizes three basic principles: New Brunswickers have a responsibility to provide alternative ways of addressing psychological or physical suffering in an effort to counter suicidal behaviours; suicide is a social problem; and suicide has multiple causes.

The New Brunswick Suicide Prevention Program mobilizes agencies and individuals who work provincially and locally. The goal of the program is to reduce New Brunswick's suicide rate.

In 1989, the New Brunswick government established a provincial committee to advise Mental Health Services on strategies to be developed, implemented, or reviewed with regard to suicide prevention. It also works with New Brunswick organizations to coordinate provincial efforts and to develop a common province-wide approach.

Thirteen Community Suicide Prevention Committees are in place throughout New Brunswick's health regions. They advise their local Community Mental Health Centre and the Provincial Suicide Prevention Committee on the actions required in order to meet the program's objectives. They also work with other regional organizations to coordinate their efforts.

Suicide Prevention Models

The New Brunswick Suicide Prevention Program is based on two models, one conceptual and the other intervention-oriented.

The conceptual model is based on one social science theory which argues that there are multiple and interacting causes of suicide, and that a person's environment is a key factor.

The crisis intervention model uses a psychosocial and community-focused approach. It involves three broad activity sectors: prevention/promotion, intervention, and postvention or follow-up.

Prevention/Promotion Activities

Measures designed to prevent the occurrence of a suicidal state in New Brunswickers. They help to minimize the risk factors by improving living conditions and strengthening the protective factors such as family support and community resources.

Public Awareness and Training

Public awareness and training sessions are offered regularly throughout New Brunswick.

Provincial Suicide Prevention Month

Since 2001, the Provincial Suicide Prevention Committee has sponsored a provincial Suicide Prevention Month in February. From 1995 to 2000, the Committee sponsored a provincial Suicide Prevention Week each year.

Protocols for the Referral of Suicidal Persons

Several hospitals, police forces, and other agencies have signed protocols with their local Community Mental Health Centre so that suicidal persons can be referred to the Centre and can obtain the appropriate services.

Treatment Services

The Community Mental Health Centres provide treatment for suicidal persons in crisis situations as well as treatment on a short-, mid- and long-term basis.

Suicide Intervention Workshops

These intensive two-day courses are aimed at helping participants recognize suicidal persons, assess the level of risk, and to intervene in the case of an attempted suicide.

Postvention or Follow-up Activities

These include direct services for suicide survivors (crisis intervention; debriefing; and therapy for individuals, their family, or their extended family) and intervention in environments such as schools or workplaces.

Debriefing Services

Suicide survivors and persons who were on site when the deceased was discovered can receive debriefing services from their local Community Mental Health Centre.

Self-Help Groups

There are self-help groups for suicide survivors in several regions of New Brunswick.

Community Mental Health Centres

Bathurst.....	547-2038
Campbellton.....	789-2440
Caraquet.....	726-2030
Edmundston.....	735-2070
Fredericton.....	453-2132
Grand Falls.....	475-2440
Miramichi.....	778-6111
Moncton.....	856-2444
Richibucto.....	523-7620
St. Stephen.....	466-7380
Saint John.....	658-3737
Sussex.....	432-2090
Woodstock.....	325-4419

COMMUNITY SUICIDE PREVENTION COMMITTEES

The 13 Community Suicide Prevention Committees are dedicated to working towards the prevention of suicide in New Brunswick.

Goal

To develop strategies within the community that will aid in the prevention of suicide.

Guiding Principles

1. Suicide is a societal problem that has multiple causes.
2. New Brunswickers have a responsibility to provide alternative ways of addressing psychological and physical suffering.
3. Resources and services to help vulnerable persons need to be available and accessible.

Examples of Recent Projects

- Suicide help cards for people in distress
- Development of a web page
- Suicide Prevention Month activities in February each year
- “Living Works” two-day workshop on suicide prevention for health care professionals
- Follow-up refresher for Living Works participants
- Public awareness campaign in high schools and the community
- Suicide bereavement kits
- “Suicide and Men” Workshop
- “The Link” Program for high school students, which connects them to community resources

Why Work Within the Community?

Broad community participation is a key component of the success of the Regional Community Suicide Prevention Committees. The members of these committees comprise people with different skills and back-

grounds, which ensures that the committees truly represent their communities.

Suicide Prevention Committees Include:

- Specialists from the Departments of Education and Health and Wellness (Public Health, Mental Health, and Addiction Services)
- Non-profit groups
- Clergy and pastoral services
- Seniors
- Service users
- College and university students
- Native persons
- RCMP officers
- Survivors

Community Suicide Prevention Committees

Fredericton/Harvey.....	453-2132
Saint John.....	658-3737
Sussex.....	432-2090
Woodstock.....	325-4419
Grand Falls.....	475-2440
Caraquet.....	726-2030
Moncton.....	856-2444
Bathurst.....	547-2038
St. Stephen.....	466-7380
Edmundston.....	735-2070
Campbellton.....	789-2440
Richibucto.....	523-7620
Miramichi.....	778-6111

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Guidelines for recognizing and preventing suicidal behaviour

Warning signs

The person is:

- depressed
- increasingly isolated
- giving away prized possessions
- doing poorly in school or at work
- making statements about wanting to die
- acting in an aggressive manner
- taking unnecessary risks
- threatening to commit suicide
- suddenly happy for no reason after a long depression
- abusing drugs and/or alcohol

More than one sign could mean that help is necessary. Note how long the signs have been present – how deeply the person feels about the things going wrong in his or her life, and how many signs are present at one time.

What you can do to help a depressed or suicidal person:

- Listen to the person with concern.
- Ask the person if he or she has ever felt unhappy for a long time and assure him or her that things can and will change.
- Be especially concerned if the person uses drugs and/or alcohol because his or her judgment may be impaired.
- Ask if the person has suicidal thoughts.
- Give the person the CHIMO provincial help-line number and make sure the person calls.
- Stay with the person. Do something together.
- If the person is suicidal and refuses to get help, tell a responsible adult or someone you trust as soon as possible.
- Make specific plans to see the person the next day so he or she has a reason to hang on for one more day.

What to say to a troubled person:

“I’m here for you.”

“I want to hear about what’s bothering you.”

“I really care about you.”

“Let’s talk and figure out how to make things better.”

“Things are tough now but they will change. You’ve got to hang in there and I’m here to help.”

“I would feel horrible if you hurt yourself and I don’t want you to die.”

“If I can’t help you, I’ll help you find someone who can help.”

“No one and nothing is worth taking your life for.”

Don’t

Don’t ignore the person.

Don’t put the person down.

Don’t change the subject.

Don’t try and handle it alone if the person doesn’t respond to your efforts to help.

Don’t suggest drugs or alcohol as a solution.

In the majority of suicides, drugs and/or alcohol are a factor. Be more vigilant if you know the person is using drugs and/or alcohol to deal with problems.

Where you can go for help

If you are concerned that a person is suicidal, REMEMBER – listen carefully, stay with him or her and get professional help as soon as possible.

You can contact:

Your local Community Mental Health Centre

The nearest hospital Emergency Department

Chimo Crisis Line (24 hrs) – 1-800-667-5005

Kids Help Phone – 1-800-668-6868

In case of emergency, call: 9-1-1

RCMP – 1-800-442-9722

The Canadian Mental Health Association

Mental Health Outreach Services

Department of Health and Wellness

Teachers or guidance counselors

Family physicians

Local clergy

REMEMBER - You cannot take responsibility for another person’s life – the decision is his or her own – you may, however, be able to help the person see other ways of dealing with his or her problems and pain.

Foreword

This study has been conducted to:

- Identify the personal and social circumstances that led a number of New Brunswickers to die by suicide.

The study charted:

- The development of psychosocial difficulties
- Mental health problems
- Help-seeking behaviors
- Consultations that marked the lives of the persons who died by suicide

There were 109 deaths by suicide in New Brunswick between April 1, 2002, and May 31, 2003. Our research team examined 102 of those deaths.

Background

The department of Health and Wellness, in collaboration with Chief Coroner Dianne Kelly, researchers associated with the McGill Group for Suicide Studies, the Centre de recherche Fernand-Séguin, including Monique Séguin, Ph.D., Gustavo Turecki, MD, Ph.D., and Alain Lesage, MD, conducted a study of suicide victims.

The purpose was to:

- Identify the personal and social circumstances that led a number of New Brunswickers to suicide
- To propose strategies for improving the services offered to suicidal individuals and their families.

Observations

Our study of 102 cases of death by suicide in the Province of New Brunswick over a 14 month period revealed the following:

- In the large majority of cases, the suicide victims had a long trajectory of difficulties throughout their lives, i.e., an accumulation of personal, family, relational, psychological and social problems.
- The large majority of them had been in contact with specialized mental health and addiction services, and more than 50% of them were in contact with specialized health services during their final year of life.
- Two-thirds of the suicide victims had long-standing addiction problems, making addiction one of the most prevalent factors. Despite previous contacts with addiction services during their lifetime, only 10% of them were in contact with those services during the year preceding their suicide.

- We note major difficulties in treating persons with multiple problems, meaning a combination of problems such as depression, addiction and a suicide issue experienced by the same person.
- Clinical practices for such individuals should shift from fragmentary treatment of single problems in silo mode to coordinated and continuing treatment of multiple problems.
- In general, members of the public can clearly recognize signs of distress and suicidal behaviors, but for many, the next step, i.e., getting a friend or family member to appropriate services, has not yet become a natural response.

Recommendations

We made the following recommendations to the Government of New Brunswick

Governance axis

- Develop and agree upon regional protocols for systematic coordination and management for all front and second-line practitioners involved in the case files of persons suffering from addiction and mental health disorder, with or without a suicide problem, in order to proactively refer those persons to appropriate resources, encourage them to stay in treatment, coordinate that treatment, maintain a fixed point of responsibility, provide follow up, and use an outreach approach if necessary. Achieving the objectives of this axis involved developing a provincial policy for addiction prevention and treatment, in conjunction with the policy on mental disorders, pursuant to the principles of hierarchy of care and areas of jurisdictions.

Intervention axis

Improve the availability, accessibility and relevance of treatment services for addicts and persons with multiple problems of mental health, addiction, and suicidal behaviors.

Prevention axis

- Implement preventive measures to better reach, identify, and intervene with persons at risk of suicide and persons with mental disorders and addictions, whatever their age group.
- Make family/friends, peers and the community more aware of the importance of getting persons presenting suicide-related problems, mental disorders and addictions to seek help from and maintain contact with health and social services.

To view the complete report visit the government website at: www.gnb.ca keyword health

Number of people that received the Two-day Suicide intervention training session in NB during 2004-2005

We currently have 13 suicide prevention committees in New Brunswick. The main role of these committees is to provide education and awareness to the community in regards to suicide prevention. We also have 42 people who are trained to offer the two-day ASIST suicide intervention training session and the refresher course. The following is a summary of the training sessions that took place in 2004-2005 in New Brunswick.

REGION 1

Moncton: Training was offered to the Atlantic Lottery Corporation. A total of 60 employees participated. Five sessions for the community were also offered to the Moncton region. The *Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick, Campus de Dieppe*, also offered the two-day ASIST training to students attending the correctional officer program. 14 sessions of the 2 day suicide intervention program and one refresher course were offered in Region 1. Seven of the 14 sessions were offered to students.

Kent County: One training session was offered to the community in general and 25 people participated.

REGION 2

St. Stephen/Campobello/Deer Island: The suicide intervention training was offered three times to the general population. A total of 75 people took it.

Saint John: The suicide intervention training was offered once during the fiscal year. The training was offered to Ridgewood and to the general population. The New Brunswick Community College, Saint John Campus, also offered the training to some programs.

Sussex: One session of the 2 day suicide intervention program was offered.

REGION 3

Fredericton: A number of training took place in the Fredericton area.

- The social workers working for the Department off Family and Community Services, including child protection, children in care, investigation and assessment and after hours' social workers, received the training. A total of five sessions took place and around 100 social workers were trained.

- Besides the social workers, 20 foster parents received the two-day suicide intervention training.
- The criminology student (21) from Compu College received the two-day training.
- Chimo Helpline offered the two-day training session to their new employees and volunteers.
- CFB-Gagetown offered three suicide intervention training sessions and a total of 77 soldiers and civilians on the base received the training.

Woodstock area: Two training sessions were offered to the social workers from the Department of Family and Community Services. A total of 50 employees took the training.

Nackawic: a two-day suicide intervention training was offered to the community. A total of 20 people participated.

REGION 4

Edmundston: One training session offered to the general population during the year. A total of 24 participants have received the training.

REGION 5

Campbellton: That region offered four suicide interventions training sessions to the general population. A number of 102 people were trained. The *Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick* in that region offered the training to the human resources counselors, correction officer program. The students have to complete the ASIST training prior to graduation to get their diploma.

REGION 6

Bathurst: The region offered one suicide intervention training session for the nursing student. A total of 21 participants took the training.

REGION 7

Miramichi: Two suicide intervention training sessions were offered to the general population and a total of 41 people attended.

First Nation training:

- A Five-day intensive training was offered (White Stone Program) for 24 youth around NB in regards to youth suicide prevention and resiliencies activities.
- A two-day suicide intervention training was offered at the Red Bank First Nation for the White Stone participants and the community at large. A total of 20 people attended
- Elsipogtog First Nation offered 2 two-day intervention training sessions to the community at large including mental health professional working on the reserve. A total of 25 people were trained

Refresher tune up course:

REGION 1

Moncton: Two refresher sessions were provided for the correction officers at the Moncton Detention Centre. A total of 30 employees received the refresher.

REGION 2

Sussex: One refresher course was offered.

REGION 5

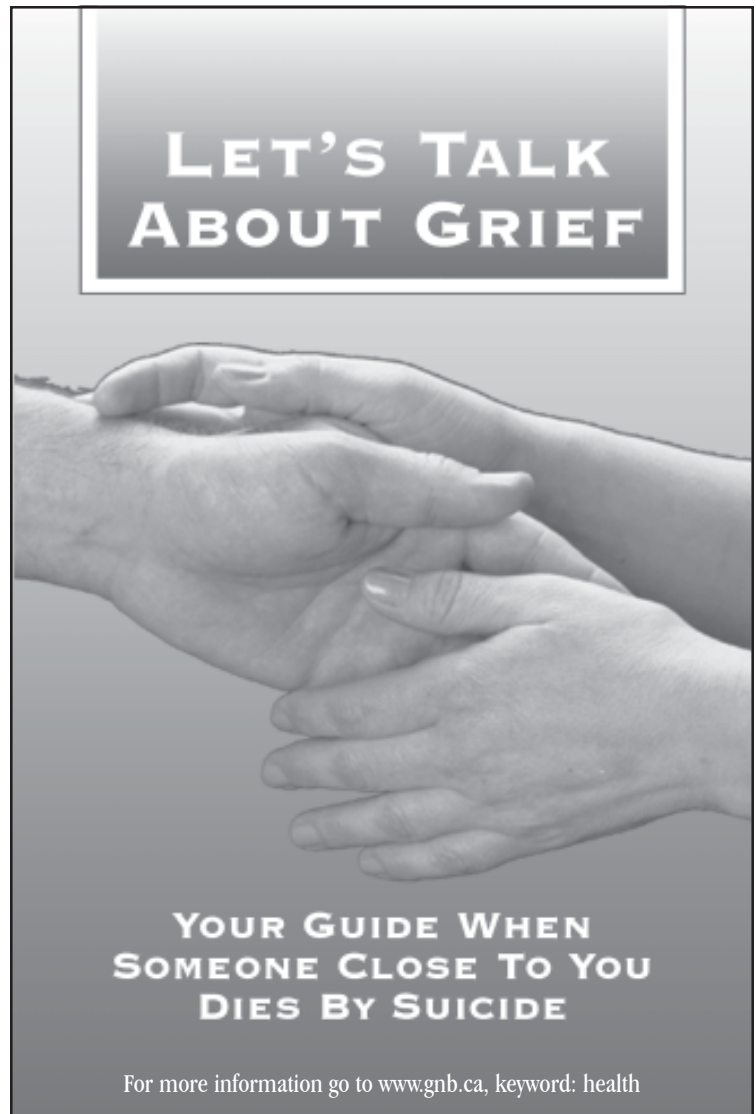
Campbellton: A total of 22 people received the refresher training over the past year.

REGION 7

Miramichi: A total of 13 people received the refresher training.

AWARENESS:

The Canadian Mental Health Association provincially provided some 3.5 hour awareness sessions on suicide prevention, 55 sessions of the two day suicide intervention have been offered and a total of 1,741 people participated.



Moncton Suicide Prevention Committee

Annual Report 2004-2005 - Region 1

Mission and mandate:

The mandate of the Community Suicide Prevention Committee (CSPC) is to advise the Community Mental Health Centers and the Provincial Suicide Prevention Committee regarding appropriate actions to meet its program objectives. Chief among these is to identify suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention needs in the community, as well as administration needs at both the provincial and regional levels. Three basic principles have been adopted to facilitate this process, namely, that suicide is a complex societal problem; that we have a responsibility to provide individuals with alternative means of dealing with their psychological and/or physical suffering; and that resources to help these vulnerable people are available. The primary goal of the program is to reduce the suicide rate per 100, 000 population in New Brunswick. The CSPC is composed of professional persons from various governmental sectors who meet four times per year to discuss strategies to help prevent suicide.

Annual report (April 1st, 2004 – March 31st, 2005)

The Moncton suicide prevention committee met two times in the last fiscal year. At our first meeting in December of 2004, the committee focused its attention on determining the main responsibilities that need to be undertaken. It was decided that focus would be directed towards updating “the helping tree” annually and distributing them to community agencies; to continue to allocate our entire budget towards funding the “ASIST” workshops; and to undertake a general mail-out campaign to both past and present members in order to secure an active committee membership status. The success of the committee and the work it can achieve its highly dependent upon a dedicated an active membership.

At our follow-up meeting in March of 2005 a noticeable difference was noted with regards to membership attendance, such that outside agency representation increased threefold. In addition, the helping tree was revised and 2000 copies were made, which are slated to be distributed to various agencies in the community. The committee also would have donated money to the Canadian Mental Health Association in order to sponsor public service announcements during the month of suicide prevention in February, 2005.

Kent Suicide

Prevention Committee

Annual Report 2004-2005 - Region 1

The committee has 10 members represented by the following agencies:

School District 11 & 16	RCMP
Public Health	HRDC
CMHC	Elsipogtog Crisis Centre
4Directions Family Services	Stella Maris Hospital
CMHA NB	

The following activities were done over the past year.

- Five articles, which were printed in l’Étoile weekly newspaper.
- Distributed 1066 yellow ribbons during February.
- Prepared a draft yellow ribbon awareness poster.
- Facilitated the following presentations:

Suicide Awareness:	21 presentations - 451 participants
Assertiveness:	1 presentation - 7 participants
Grief:	1 presentation - 9 participants
Mental Health:	3 presentations - 22 participants
Self Esteem:	4 presentations - 44 participants
Self Esteem & Stress:	4 presentations - 100 participants

These 35 presentations offered to 642 persons living in Kent County, were offered to the following groups:

Grades 7 & 8 classrooms students	Parents
School personnel	‘Centre Alpha’
Elsipogtog Youth Centre	EMT’s
Seniors	

- An information package was given to the 451 participants who attended the Suicide Awareness presentations.

There were 21 community volunteers who donated their time to help the committee with the preparation of the yellow ribbons and the making of the poster.

Upcoming activities:

- Printing & distribution of the yellow ribbon poster.
- Printing & distribution of a series of 8 various youth brochures.
- Increase yellow ribbon distribution campaign next February.
- Re-launch the Link Program in the schools next fall.
- Distribution of resource materials to libraries.
- Other awareness/educational activities.

Saint John Community Suicide Prevention Committee

Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 2

Some of the major highlights of this past year include our celebration and promotion of Suicide Prevention Month, our Survivor Committee work, an Essay Contest carried out with area youth in conjunction with the Teen Health Center and the organizing of our 8th Annual Suicide Conference and AGM.

Action 2004-2005

- Recruitment of new membership is ongoing in order to keep the committee relevant and growing in terms of our mandate.

Communications Committee 2004-2005

Operational Report

Communication Committee Goals:

To increase public knowledge of:

- Risk factors & symptoms of suicide;
- Existing resources available;
- De-mystifying the problem of suicide.

To define and facilitate the development of a public awareness and promotional program, emphasizing "resilience" factors and geared toward at-risk populations.

To increase the visibility of the Suicide Prevention Committee in order to emphasize suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention in our community.

Action 2004-2005:

Suicide Prevention Month:

- The communications committee, with the assistance of the survivors group provided awareness and education material at various venues during awareness month.
- The committee displayed materials during this year's Suicide Prevention Month and at other times to local area malls and community events, accompanied by its many brochures and information sheets promoting prevention and awareness issues.
- A lunch and Learn was organized by the committee in partnership with CMHA Saint John called 'Suicide Talk'.
- A Suicide Awareness presentation was given at Hampton High School by CMHA Saint John to Peer Helpers
- Signs were posted at Harbor Bridge during the Month of February
- An ASIST program was held in February
- Essay contest took place with area youth in partnership with local Teen Health centre
- Information tables put on by survivor's sub-committee.

Annual General Meeting/Conference:

- Special acknowledgment and thank you is extended to Paula Morrow and Lorene Johnson who have worked tirelessly and contributed so much energy to organizing this year's AGM and Annual Conference.

Survivors of Suicide Group: Community Initiatives

Special acknowledgement and thank you goes out to Katharine Chiasson, Ken Babcock, and Rosemary Williamson for the impressive amount and quality of work and volunteerism over the past year. They have contributed many hours of hard work, time and personal resources to bring the prevention message to the public. They participated in hosting information tables throughout the city over the past year.

Education Committee 2004-2005 Operational Report

Education Committee Goals:

Action 2004-2005:

- Committee committed to having Sherry LaPointe-Booy updated with regards to the ASIST Program
- Larger committee identified Cultural Diversity as a focal point for this year in terms of education the community.
- Awareness presentations were organized through CMHA during Suicide Prevention Month at Hampton High and the Teen Health Centre by Dean Mylalsingh.
- Local area Guidance Counselor wishes to begin work with committee in developing the Youth Decision tree in next fiscal year.

Training Committee 2004-2005 Operational Report

Training Committee Goals:

To increase training opportunities for front line workers (i.e.: nurses, teachers), which emphasize risk assessment skills, intervention strategies and referral services in the community.

To ensure that training opportunities focus on increasing favorable to Intervention; increasing knowledge about depression and the problem of youth suicide; improving competency in the identification and crisis management of potentially suicidal adolescents; and increasing awareness of helping resources.

Action 2004-2005:

- The committee under the administration of Paula Morrow has been able to provide two ASIST workshops to the general public during this Operational Year.

Charlotte County Suicide Prevention Committee

Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 2

The membership includes representation from:

Mental Health	Canadian Mental Health Association
Public Health	St. Stephen Volunteer Centre
Fundy Health Centre	Canadian Baptist Ministries
Charlotte County Hospital	United Church
Department of Education	Charlotte County Lifeline
RCMP	Charlotte County Human Resources
Town of St. George	Hospice of Charlotte
Family Doctor	Survivor

The committee has an Education subcommittee that meets weekly for six to eight weeks prior to Suicide Prevention month to plan prevention activities..

Suicide Prevention Activities for 2004-2005

ASIST Workshops

We held two Suicide Intervention workshops last year: one in February 2004 in St. Stephen (30 participants), and a second one also in St. Stephen at the request of the local hospital and group home (24 participants). We feel that these ASIST workshops are among the most important activities our committee supports.

Suicide Prevention Month

- 1) In 2004, we had over 60 entrants submitting their artwork to our annual "**Celebration of Life**" poster contest for students in grades 7 -12 in Charlotte County. Posters were displayed and judged in a public hall. Both years, the winners had their photos in the local paper. In 2005, the winning posters were displayed for 2 weeks at the Charlotte County Hospital in St. Stephen.
- 2) In February, 2004, we held a one-day community forum called "**On Thin Ice: Understanding Suicide**". We had four speakers: Barb Whitenect talked about suicide and youth; Muriel Jarvis spoke on workplace bullying; Greg Buck gave a talk on suicide and men; and Judy Armstrong spoke about suicide and the elderly. At the end, we held a panel discussion moderated by Brian Thompson during which we addressed the question of why community members are reluctant to attend public talks when the word suicide is openly mentioned in the title. During the Forum we had information booths set up in the lobby representing Saint John Aids, St. Stephen High School's Bully Busters, the Red Cross, and the Charlotte County Suicide Prevention Committee. *The Saint Croix Courier* sent a reporter to the forum that provided extensive coverage of the event.

- 3) The RCW for CMHA presented a suicide awareness program to all the grade 11 students in the district from February to May; 2005. It has been well received by the students and guidance counselors.
- 4) In 2004 and 2005, we contributed \$500.00 each year to the New Brunswick CMHA to help cover the costs of airing the Youth in Distress commercials on radio and TV.
- 5) Articles about suicide (the warning signs, contact numbers) were placed in two local papers each year.

Public Presentations

Lea Chamberlain, Director of the Bathurst Activity Centre will speak about living successfully with Bipolar Disorder.

Professional Workshop:

In 2004, we hired Stan Davis, a Maine educator and social worker who gives workshops all over Maine on the topic of bullying in the schools. He gave an evening presentation to parents followed by a lengthy question and answer period. He met with anti-bullying committees from the various schools to help them fine-tune or initiate their approaches. He gave presentations to students at St. Stephen Middle School, St. Stephen High School, and Fundy High School in St. George. Students from other schools were bussed into these schools to participate.

Plans for 2005-2006

- 1) **ASIST Workshops:** Thus far, an ASIST workshop is planned for Campobello, May 30-31. There will be at least one more ASIST for 2005-2006.
- 2) **Community Education:** We are now reviewing the results of the survey done regarding suicides in New Brunswick. In response to this, we are considering working on a project dealing with addictions and mental illness.
- 3) **Professional Workshop:** So far our workshops have been well attended and positively received by the professionals in our community.
- 4) **Link program:** We will be distributing the updated Link helping tree to the public, particularly students and counselors in District 10 by Sept-Oct., 2005.
- 5) **Interactive Theatre:** We are researching groups which would offer an interactive piece dealing with risk factors and warning signs of suicide to high school students.

Sussex Suicide Prevention Committee

Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 3

The Sussex and Surrounding Communities Suicide Prevention Committee was started approximately 12 years ago. The committee was developed to provide prevention, intervention and postvention information to local agencies, businesses and the public at large. We now have 18 members representing Mental Health, Public Health, School District 6, Sussex Health Center, Early Intervention, Portage, King's County Family Resource Center, Sussex Vale Transition House, CMHA, Victim Services, Crosswinds and a local pharmacist. We meet monthly (3rd Wednesday of every month) at the Sussex Health Center.

Highlights:

A. Guest Speakers

- France Daigle
- Krista Kolter – Community Inclusion Coordinator
- Jamie Stockton & Mary Magnus - Suicide in the Elderly

B. Programming

- ASIST Workshop
- Community Directory
- High School Initiatives:
 - Yellow Ribbon Campaign
 - CHIMO Presentations
 - Lunch & Learn (monthly get togethers)
 - The "LINK" Program
 - Student representation as a Committee member

C. Donations/Sponsored Programs

- Resources purchased & development of a lending library for community agencies
- High School Awareness and Education Programs
- Sponsored membership to attend various conferences/workshops
- "Living in Oblivion" Project

D. Miscellaneous

- Chairperson attended AGM & Chairpersons' Meetings
- Christmas Luncheon

Projection - April 1st, 2005 – March 31st, 2006

- Strategic Planning slated for May 18th, 2005 (3 year plan)
- Guest Speakers (3 per year)
- ASIST Workshop (2 per year including refresher courses)
- Newspaper articles (monthly publications)
- Sponsor Community Awareness Sessions
- Poster/Writing Contests

February is Suicide Prevention Month

Know the Warning Signs of Suicide

- Depression
- Loneliness
- Giving away prized possessions
- Poor performance at work or school
- Aggressive behaviour, mood swings
- Unnecessary risk-taking
- Threats of suicide, talking about death
- Abuse of alcohol or drugs
- Loss of interest in usual activities

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, get help — You don't have to do this alone.

CHIMO HELPLINE

1-800-667-5005 (toll-free provincially)
450-HELP (Fredericton Area)

Fredericton/Oromocto Suicide Prevention Committee

Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 3

This year the Fredericton/Oromocto Suicide Prevention Committee was revived. We held our initial meeting in January and we had 12 people attend from a variety of organizations including Chimo Helpline, People Link, Public Health, River Valley Health, Community Planning Group, Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, Mental Health, and members from the community including a private EAP consultant and suicide survivor.

To recognize February as Suicide Prevention Month, the committee placed the following ads on the local radio station (56 spots were purchased):

Most people think its a private issue, but it's not!! Last year eighty seven people in New Brunswick died by suicide!! There is help available within our community!! Call chimo at 450-help to find out more!! Sponsored by the Fredericton Suicide Prevention Committee, in recognition of suicide prevention month!!

Are you, or someone you care about, finding it difficult to deal with life issues?? We all experience distress, and there is help!! Call the 24-hour chimo help line at 450-help!! Sponsored by the Fredericton Suicide Prevention Committee, in recognition of suicide prevention month!!

During the month, there were also a number of newspaper articles dealing with suicide and an editorial from a committee member dealing with the topic.

11,000 Suicide Helping Cards (business sized cards with warning signs of suicide, what you can do to help someone who has thoughts of suicide and phone numbers of where people can get help) were produced and distributed throughout Fredericton and surrounding areas. Distribution included numerous workplaces, all the high schools in Fredericton and Oromocto (actually distributed to the schools' public health nurses), UNB, STU, RCMP and many other community organizations. Additionally the committee participated in the Fredericton High School's health fair.

Overall, Suicide Prevention Month was a success and the committee is looking forward to planning a bigger and better campaign next year.

One main focus of the committee was to increase our membership. In addition to those that attended our

first meeting we now have members or interest from the RCMP, Public Safety, the military, Family and Community Services, the Canadian Mental Health Association and numerous other community organizations.

We are looking to the future and plans are being strategized for a successful 2005-06 year. Plans include recognition of International Suicide Prevention Day (September 10), a postcard contest, Suicide Prevention Month activities, provide Suicide Intervention (ASIST) Training for committee and community members, production of updated Helping Trees and a reprint of the Suicide Helping Cards.

The committee has obviously been successful with the revival. There is a considerable amount of energy and enthusiasm to make it a great success while providing a valuable service to the community.

Woodstock Suicide Prevention Committee Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 3

The Woodstock Committee saw another productive year. Suicide Prevention Week was marked by distributing books to schools - all levels - and to various community groups. The books are the committee's way to provide resources on-site for the schools and various agencies. The topics included: men and depression, girls and self-image, building self-esteem in your child, teens and grief, etc. A mall display of pamphlets, balloons for the children and the yellow ribbon and cards for emergency numbers were distributed. A draw for a framed print was done, ads were run on the local radio station and an article appeared in the local paper.

The committee remains strong in membership with a good mix from the community, RCMP, School, Mental Health, CMHA, Hospital, Public Health, Early Intervention, Family Resource Center, Food Bank, FCSS, Clergy and Transition House.

The committee sponsored four people to attend the CMHA National Conference in Saint John - their feedback was very positive.

Madawaska Suicide Prevention Committee

Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 4

The Madawaska Promotion of Life and Suicide Prevention Committee is proud to present its annual report on the promotion of life and suicide prevention activities in the Madawaska region.

The year 2004-2005 was a year of change and reorganization. At the beginning of the year, the Committee underwent a number of changes, including changes to its internal operating structure and a change of co-ordinator at the Community Mental Health Centre. It is now operating with a regional committee of 20 members, with close to half of those being representatives from the community or private groups/agencies.

Each subcommittee has representatives on the regional committee. Their role has been defined, and each one drew up objectives for the year. Each of the members, the regional committee, and the subcommittees (Awareness, Link, Annual Yellow Ribbon and Suicide Prevention Campaign, and Special Projects) were very active, and all of the objectives identified were attained. Here is a summary of the objectives and activities for the past year.

Awareness subcommittee

Objectives

- Publicize the role of the Madawaska Promotion of Life and Suicide Prevention Committee.
- Raise awareness among the general public with the aim of counteracting suicide.
- Target various groups (e.g.: youth, the elderly, and males) and provide education on ways to promote life and prevent suicide.

Activities

- Prepared and distributed information kits on suicide prevention, screening, postvention, the regional committee, and community resources to physicians and other health care and social services workers. Over 150 information kits were distributed to physicians and workers in the region.
- Had various articles published in local newspapers concerning
 - suicide prevention and
 - public wellness in general and the promotion of good mental health.
- Raised youth awareness through the newspapers.
- Developed information for publication in the regional media.

Link subcommittee

The Link group partnered with a group from the community and receives part of its funding for the schools from the Club Richelieu.

Objectives

- Publicize the Link program in the schools in School District 3 in Madawaska and in the other post-secondary education institutions.
- Raise awareness among high school and post-secondary students of the aid and mutual help objectives of the Link program.
- Extend the Link program activities to a few businesses in Madawaska (e.g.: Fraser-Nexfor) and get ready to implement the program in the Madawaska Maliseet First Nation community near Edmundston.

Madawaska Suicide Prevention Committee

Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 4

Activities

- Completed implementation at CCNB-Edmundston and the Edmundston campus of the Université de Moncton.
- Maintained/developed various annual activities in high school and post-secondary educational settings.
- Prepared new material adapted to the new projects in the region.
- Prepared to implement the program at Nexfor-Fraser and in the Madawaska Maliseet First Nation.

Annual Yellow Ribbon and Suicide Prevention Campaign subcommittee

This new subcommittee was responsible for organizing Suicide Prevention Week in the Madawaska region. A total of 17,000 copies of a brochure were printed, 15,000 of which were distributed to all the homes in the Madawaska region.

We would also like to highlight the participation of many volunteers from the sheltered workshops *Les Hirondelles* in Saint-Jacques and *L'éclosion* in Sainte-Anne, who placed the brochures and yellow ribbons in the 15,000 plastic-coated envelopes that were delivered in the Ad-bags in the Madawaska region.

This committee was able to organize at least one activity per day during the Promotion of Life and Suicide Prevention Week.

It should be noted that the adult interactive theatre group, made up of mental health and health care workers and directed by Dr. Georges Henri Levesque, used some excellent skits to stimulate open dialogue with a group of one hundred students from the Edmundston Community College.

Special Projects subcommittee

A new subcommittee was formed of four representatives from the regional committee to study the feasibility of various projects. This committee decided to prioritize a student project for the summer of 2005. The Edmundston Community College agreed to present the project in its name and administer it provided that our committee supervises its execution. We are waiting for the project to be approved.

General activities

Here are some other concrete actions related to suicide prevention that took place in our region over the past year:

- Two half-day awareness sessions were presented to the Community College students.
- Suicide Prevention training (2 days) was offered to 25 participants. The region has an urgent need for new instructors. There is a significant number of suicides in the region. The demand for the two-day training and the awareness session continues to grow, but the current number of available instructors is not sufficient.
- Given the large number of suicidal persons who consult the Edmundston CMHC, a number of workers developed a commitment for clients to sign, promising not to engage in suicidal actions. The commitment is printed in a business card format (Appendix 5 – Commitment) and includes the telephone number of resources, the name of

loved ones who can act as support persons, and instructions to help the individual maintain control of his or her suicidal ideas. This is an excellent initiative that benefits all clients struggling with suicidal ideation or suicide plans.

- In addition, two members of the child and adolescent team at the Edmundston CMHC met with the 15 Grade 7 classes in the Madawaska region to raise awareness of suicide prevention. Through scenarios and simulations incorporated into the parent-adolescent communication program, the students were made aware of the things they can do when one of their peers confides having suicidal ideas or a suicide plan. This is an excellent initiative that reaches students at this grade level every year.

As shown by the regional committee's activities, the Madawaska region is very active in the promotion of life and suicide prevention. However, despite the combined efforts of suicide prevention resources and partners, the suicide rate in northwestern New Brunswick is still very high, one of the highest in New Brunswick for several years now.

Grand Falls Suicide Prevention Committee

Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 4

Our two subcommittees were very active:

The Link:

- In October, the video on the Link Program and the Web site www.programmelemaillon.com were launched.
- There were presentations in the schools to introduce these tools.
- Thanks go out to the Link Committee and the participating schools.

Future plans:

- Maintain the Web site.
- Purchase new materials.

Prevention for men:

- In February, we invited a reporter to take photos and write an article about the committee's prevention project.
- During Suicide Prevention Month, we presented an information kit to the medical staff.

Future plans:

- Distribute the poster to our partners.
- Meet with our partners during the summer season.

Campbellton Suicide Prevention Committee

Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 5

The Region V Promotion of Life and Suicide Prevention Committee is composed of 12 members from different community services working toward a common objective. The current members are as follows:

- CMHA regional community worker
- Social worker, Kedgwick school district
- Head nurse, RHC
- Nurse, RHC
- Crisis Service nurse, CMHC
- Social worker, FCS
- Social worker, Kedgwick CMHC
- Coroner
- Nurse, School District #5
- E.R. head nurse, CRH
- Nurse, Addiction Treatment Centre
- Consultant, CMHC

Restigouche West subcommittee (Kedgwick / Saint-Quentin region)

The Restigouche West subcommittee is made up of the following members:

- Director, Hôtel-Dieu St-Joseph de Saint-Quentin
- Nurse, Kedgwick CMHC
- SW, Addiction Treatment Centre
- Psychologist, Kedgwick CMHC
- Consultant, Campbellton CMHC
- CMHA regional community worker
- Parish of Kedgwick
- RSW, Kedgwick CMHC
- Nurse, Kedgwick CMHC
- Parish of Saint-Quentin

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) was presented as follows:

Three two-day workshops were offered, along with a refresher workshop.

April 29 and 30, 2004 - ASIST, 2 days, X Version (English)

Training cancelled owing to insufficient registrations (minimum of 15 participants recommended)
Facilitators: Cécile Goulette, Carole Gallant, Debra Wafer

November 22, 2004 - Half-day refresher workshop with 21 participants

Facilitators: Cécile Goulette, Carole Gallant, Debra Wafer

March 15 and 16, 2005 - ASIST, 2 days with 27 participants at the Campbellton NBCC
Facilitators: Cécile Goulette, Violette Desjardins

March 22 and 23, 2005 - ASIST, 2 days with 21 participants at the Campbellton NBCC
Facilitators: Carole Gallant, Debra Wafer

The Promotion of Life and Suicide Prevention Committee set up subcommittees to look after the different activities listed below:

- Helping tree: revision, correction and printing
- Recruitment of new members
- Suicide Prevention Month – February 2005
- Public annual meeting, September 10, 2004, at the Campbellton Memorial Civic Centre
- ASIST training and presentations

Annual General Meeting

Given the current restructuring in the province, the Provincial Committee decided to cancel the Annual General Meeting scheduled for September 10, 2004, in Campbellton.

Information kit

All new members who join the Promotion of Life and Suicide Prevention Committee receive an information kit. The kit contains a description of the provincial and regional committees as well as pamphlets and documents relevant to the regional committee.

Recruitment of new members

Following the departure of several members, a subcommittee was set up to draft a letter aimed at recruiting new members. Once the letter is written, it will be presented to the committee members for feedback and approval. The organizations we are targeting are those appearing on the helping tree.

Suicide Prevention Month activities - February 2005

A subcommittee met to organize activities for Suicide Prevention Month. The activities were as follows:

- Weekly newspaper articles, which people appreciated very much
- Advertising campaigns
- A radio spot on depression, presented by Cécile Goulette
- A radio spot on dependency, presented by Rachel Cormier
- Distribution of 5,000 placemats to local restaurants

- Articles in local newspapers (*L'Aviron*, *The Tribune*, and *La Voix du Restigouche*).

Revision of helping tree

The helping tree was revised, and certain telephone numbers were no longer in service. The tree continues to be a much appreciated work tool. With regard to its distribution, we are waiting for the transfer to the Regional Health Authority to be completed first.

Annual visit of Provincial Coordinator

On November 29, 2004, France Daigle, Provincial Coordinator of the Suicide Prevention Committee, participated in our meeting and met with a few of the committee members.

International Congress in Montreal

Cécile Goulette attended the International Congress on suicide prevention held from May 4 to 7, 2004, in Montreal. She gave us a great deal of information and presented all sorts of valuable documentation that she obtained while attending the conference.

Purchases 2004-2005

Videocassette: *Le Silence qui tue*

DVD: *Agir avant, agir à temps*

Yellow Ribbon bears

Yellow Ribbon T-Shirt

PROVINCIAL SUICIDE RESOURCE CENTER

For books, articles, videos, etc visit the centre
at CMHA NB Division

8:30-4:30 (Monday -Friday)
403 Regent Street, Suite 202
Fredericton, NB E3B 3X6

For those with mobility impairments,
Service is available on the ground floor
Master Log of resources is now available on the
web.

Website

www.suicideinformation.ca

Orders can now be placed online.
Resources will be shipped at no cost.

Miramichi Suicide Prevention Committee

Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 6

The Miramichi Suicide Prevention Committee met nine times during the fiscal year with 85 people in attendance. The following groups/organizations represent our members: CMHA, CMHC, District # 16, John Howard Society, FCS, Regional Health Authority (4 different units), Miramichi Police Force, Community at large, Schizophrenia Society-Miramichi Chapter, Burnt Church Wellness Centre, Miramichi Emergency Centre for Women, NBCC, New Brunswick Youth Centre and RCMP Neguac detachment. The following activities were carried out by the committee and the Regional Community Worker for CMHA NB Division:

Workshops

- 9 Suicide Awareness
- 2 Assist
- 1 Tune up

Public Service Announcements/Media

- 5 Public Service Announcements/Media of 30 seconds that were played for 4 months on CFAN radio (who is at risk, how to help, etc...)
- 2 Public Service Announcements/Media that were played on the CFAN radio/cable 10 (survivors of suicide self-help)
- 4 Ads in the Miramichi Leader/Weekend (Suicide Prevention Month)

Displays

- 4 pamphlet displays in the community (NBCC, Miramichi Mall, Northumberland Square, Region 7 Hospital)
- 7 in house displays (Miramichi Volunteer Services, Maison Lobban House, New Brunswick Youth Centre, Miramichi Emergency Centre for Women, John Howard Society, Family Place and Caring Friends)
- 300 bookmarks were put into any adult book being lent in our two public libraries.
- 4000 placemats were distributed to 18 restaurants (who is at risk, how to help etc...)

Self-Help Group

- 2 Self-help groups were held at Sobeys Douglastown in the community kitchen

Resource Material

- Purchased games and books that encourage youth to talk about their feelings, bullying, anger, violent relationships etc...these are to help in therapy and for prevention purposes (CMHC-child team).
- Purchased comic books "The Amazing Spiderman on Bullying Prevention" these are to be used for validation purposes for youth (schools, CMHC-child team, CMHA).
- Resource kit for the bereaved of suicide, delivered to English funeral homes in the region for postvention purposes. The kit contains 5 pamphlets, 1 booklet, several articles and order forms.
- Resource kit for Lunch and Learn to be given to participants that receive suicide awareness session for prevention purposes. The kit contains 10 pamphlets, CMHA library listing and several community resource lists.
- Purchased video tape series on anger, bullying and conflict resolution for prevention purposes with middle school youth (district #16).
- Purchased "Mental Health and High School" booklets that will be distributed to students or used by teachers/guidance counselors in lesson plan format to be determined in the fall (district #16).
- Purchased video tapes on grief to be used in the community at large for postvention purposes (CMHA)
- Purchased pamphlets for displays for prevention purposes.

Donations

- A donation was made to the CASP (community academic services program).
- A donation was made to CMHA NB Division for the provincial "youth in distress campaign".
- A donation was made the Miramichi Eating Disorder Work Group.
- A donation was made to The Acadian Peninsula Suicide Prevention Committee for the "Link" program that will be implemented in a school within our region, fall 2005.

Professional Development

- A committee member attended the CMHA/SSNB conference in the summer of 2004.

Acadian Peninsula Suicide Prevention Committee Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 7

Overall Impression and Operation of Committee

Talk about having the wind in our sails! For the committee, the year 2004-2005 was all about taking action.

Four subcommittees were set up, focused on:

- the Link program
- men's groups
- prevention/training
- finances.

Composition of Committee:

There were several changes in membership; two members left the committee, and four new permanent members arrived, representing the clergy, the RCMP, the community health centre, and the Accueil Sainte-famille (women's shelter). At present, the Committee is made up of 14 members from different agencies in the region, not to mention the addition of 12 more members (school principals, school psychologist and social worker, students) who are working actively on the subcommittee concerned with the Link program.

Suicide Prevention Month in February 2005 was considered a resounding success. The emphasis was placed on launching the project targeting men. The prevention-oriented newsletters and publicity were all prepared by men. The committee members worked very hard, and the media responded to our appeal. The month began with a press conference, designed to publicize the committee, its efforts, and its involvement in our community. A number of men from our community told us how much they appreciated this campaign, which seemed to "talk to them." In our opinion, that feedback bears witness to the success of our objectives. The month may be over, but the work and the project targeting men's groups has just begun.

Prevention activities during the month of February:

- 168 advertising spots on local radio station CKRO
- 12 advertising spots in *L'Acadie Nouvelle*
- Suicide awareness workshop - 300 young persons at École Marie-Esther, Shippagan.
- Suicide awareness workshop - 40 employees of the Community Health Centre in Lamèque
- Interview on the Rogers community television station
- Three radio programs on CKRO - "Entrevue"
- Interview and advertising spot on CHAU-TVA
- Coverage on "Ce soir Atlantique" TV program

Bathurst Suicide Prevention Committee Annual Report 2004-05 - Region 7

The Chaleur Regional Community Suicide Prevention Committee continued its efforts to promote prevention in our community. The members followed the work plan drawn up the year before and successfully organized a number of activities.

Public Awareness Campaign

This year, the members prepared a calendar for distribution in the Ad-Bag of January 8, 2005, to all residents of the Chaleur region. According to the comments received, the activity was a success, and it will be repeated in January 2006.

Training and Workshops

A two-day suicide intervention workshop was held in the fall of 2004 in the Bathurst area. Two other training sessions are going to be held, along with a refresher workshop. Julia Auclair, committee member and community worker for the Chaleur region, participated in an international symposium on innovative practices in suicide prevention in Quebec City in the spring of 2004. A presentation was then given to the committee members.

Reaching Men With Prevention

With the forthcoming closure of a large employer in the region, an action plan was prepared in order to reach men with prevention.

Activities Organized During Suicide Prevention Month

In closing, the committee members are to be congratulated on the efforts they put forth and the enthusiasm they displayed during the past year. It should be noted that the recruitment of new members is an ongoing objective and that Richard Vinet replaced Colette Robichaud as the committee coordinator in May 2004.