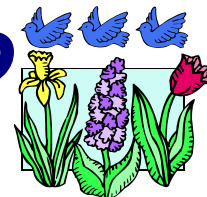




Wadd's New?



Volume 2 Issue 1

~ The BCCA Prevention Program Newsletter ~

Spring 2004



ere we are, well into 2004 and it looks to be another interesting and exciting year. Whatever else can be said about this job - it's never dull! As the programs grow into their communities, they seem to take on a life of their own - presenting us with rewards and challenges (fortunately, usually in equal measures!). This year, we can see that our networking is bearing fruit and there are several wonderful collaborations delivering programs and resources that would not otherwise be available.

All this means more work for our already hard-working community coordinators and their committees - so, I will take this opportunity to thank Wendy, Harold and Mary Beth and all the wonderful people who volunteer their time to the BCCA Prevention Program.

In this Issue:

- ✓ Kick the Nic and Other Stop Smoking Initiatives
- ✓ External Evaluation
- ✓ School Activities
- ✓ New SunWise Guys Website!

I am often invited to speak to various community groups and organisations. During the question period, I can guarantee that someone will ask me if I really think that cancer can be prevented. I now give the answer, "Well, yes and no ... there are some cancers that cannot be prevented, but there are many more that can be. We are trying to prevent *preventable* cancers ... if you modify your lifestyle according to the information that is currently available, you will considerably reduce your risk of cancer... but as with most things in life, there are no guarantees". The person who asked the question then usually gives details of something that they have read or heard regarding cancer causes and preventive practices. Unfortunately, most of these are dubious to say the least, and more unfortunately, the person appears to be utterly convinced that they work.

There are several reasons for this confusion. One is the way that research findings are presented to the public. We live in an age of the sound byte - little quick snippets of easily digested data. The problem is that most research findings are not quick and easy - they represent just one tiny piece of an incredibly large puzzle, and unless you know what all the other tiny pieces look like, you can end up with a very distorted picture indeed. This is why research findings often seem to contradict themselves - each piece is not meant to stand-alone, it is instead contributing that little amount to our understanding.

Another reason is that there is a lot of very iffy "information" out there. There are those people who, either because they do not put these little pieces together, or for more sinister motives, promote some guaranteed protection against cancer. These can be everything from crystals to special toiletries to dietary supplements. If you are confronted with this, ask yourself the three basic research questions: who is telling me this; where did they get their information; and why should I believe them? Add to this the question - are they trying to sell me something? If money is involved, stay well away - both from the idea and from the product.



Then there is the risk analysis problem. Most people rarely stop to think about the level of risk attached to their daily activities. Mostly because we don't have the time but also because we rarely have the information we need to do it. If the newspapers have been full of articles about the possible link between powerlines and cancer, then people will become more concerned about that unproven link than about their definitely high-risk smoking.

Finally, though I hate to say it, cancer prevention is just not sexy ... it's basically the stuff your grandma told you: eat a varied diet in moderation; don't sit around - get up and do something; get enough sleep; stay out of the hot sun. Add to that stay away from smoking and

you've got yourself a dandy prevention plan ... but try selling it to teens.

However ... we are making a difference (even at the teen level!). How much of a difference we will know in September 2004, when the external evaluation conducted by Dr Treena Chomik is completed. Many of you will be hearing from her and her colleague Heather McLeod. Your input is very valuable to us, please know that the information you give will remain confidential, but will be used to help us make future decisions. If you have any concerns about talking with Dr Chomik, please don't hesitate to contact me (Lynne Baillie) at 250 712 3925 or at lbaille@bccancer.bcca ~ Lynne

COMMUNITY NEWS

NORTH OKANAGAN (Wendy Aasen & Lori Borchert)

It's amazing how fast the time has gone! Wasn't it just Christmas? It's been busy-ness as usual in the North Okanagan!

I have been very involved with the School Food and Nutrition Policy Project at Silver Star Elementary in Vernon. The project is due for completion this month so our committee has been in evaluation mode! It has been very satisfying to receive such positive feedback from parents and students as well as support from staff. I will soon bow out of the school facilitator role and return to my parent role at the school. To ensure that the policy is sustainable, I will continue to serve on the

new "Healthy Living" committee that will now be part of the PAC. Working with the community nutritionist, we hope to take our success to the District PAC and encourage more schools to develop Nutrition Policies and form

Healthy Living Committees. This would be the beginning of a network among schools, where resources and experiences would be shared and the District could work toward District-Wide policy. One of the many side benefits

to being involved in this project was sitting on the Steering Committee. The IHA nutritionists were able to get more funding to involve more schools and I was happy to see that both Rossland and Summerland have pilot schools involved and that our review committee felt that their proposals should be granted! You can find out more about the project on the website www.dash.org



Silver Star Kindergarten students celebrate banana week with a special guest!

I have just finished some grant applications for our Tobacco Reduction Breakfast Club "Smoke-Free Zones" committee. We will receive a \$1,500 grant from the Clean Air Coalition and I have asked for an additional \$500 grant from the Kids Need Breathing Space campaign through IHA. Our committee wants to post Smoke-Free Zones signage at sports and recreation facilities and parks in the Vernon area. This will serve to move

smokers away from entryways and reduce the impact of second-hand smoke on patrons, particularly children and youth. It will also empower non-smokers and send a strong message to youth that smoking is undesirable and not the "norm". Our local politicians had some reservations about this initiative, so we will address their concerns and try to fund the entire project. This has been done successfully in the City of Kamloops. Salmon Arm has recently put up signage, and other North Okanagan communities have expressed interest. I'll keep you posted!

SunWise is adding a new twist this year. The Provincial Program has provided the funding to hire Ryan Maxey (former SunWise Guy) to do his University practicum with us and expand the SunWise Program so that it will be available for use across the Province. This will include a jazzed-up website, Power Point Presentations for use in Elementary and High Schools, and "Tool-Kit" of resources (pamphlets, information and other materials). Ryan will also produce some promotional items and brochures for our local programs. This year, as the program evolves with the community, we are directing some of our efforts into two new areas: looking at providing a demonstration shade structure in the Vernon area and building a research project around it, and also tackling the Indoor Tanning issue. However, we will still have our SunWise Guys in action - look for our teams again this summer throughout the Okanagan and check out the website at www.sunwiseguys.com



2003 SunWise Guys

The Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance is also getting organized in the North Okanagan and BCCA Prevention Program will likely play a role in future initiatives. We have met several times and are forming valuable networks in the community. Working together, I believe we can have an impact!

Clearing the Air ~Lori

Get ready to start your engines, but no idling please! We have received \$3,200 in interim funding from our local government to host the second annual Vehicle Emissions Clinic. I think it will take place in May, but Environment Canada has not confirmed the dates yet.

I have applied for funding from the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection and BC Transit to host a Clean Air Day event in early June. Clean Air Day (June 2) was proclaimed by the government of Canada to increase public awareness and action on two key environmental priorities, clean air and climate change. In partnership with the Okanagan Science Centre, we hope to purchase an interactive Air Quality and Climate Change display and curriculum. The display will be housed at the Science Centre, but can be taken to events and schools for workshops. On Clean Air Day, the program facilitator at the Science Centre will feature the display in a workshop for local grade 6 students. To highlight alternate transportation and ways to reduce local air pollution, the students will be transported from their school to the Science Centre on a city bus. Many children have never been on a bus! The kids will also receive maps of newly marked cycling lanes and receive hands-on bicycle safety training from a nationally certified instructor. Local television and print media have offered to feature our Clean Air Day event.



When we conducted our community research in 1998, we found out that air quality was one of the major cancer prevention concerns of our region. It continues to be and I had really hoped that the local Air Quality Stakeholder Committee would have been *Clearing the Air* by now, but funding for the committee, a very complicated matter, is not official. We were pleased to represent the public in consultation with two electoral area representatives regarding changes to local burning bylaws late last year. These representatives have announced that they will be reducing burning periods from a total of four months a

year to one month a year in their areas. These changes represent a huge step forward to clearing the air and decreasing health effects from months of smoke filled skies.

Other than that, we will be assisting the Regional District in hosting the annual Great Okanagan Wood Stove Exchange Program again this year. As well we will continue with Air Quality presentations to community groups to keep our finger on the pulse of the community around public perceptions around air quality issues. Kiss FM, a local radio station has agreed to announce the Air Quality Index and Smoke Control Index several times throughout the day and Wendy continues to write her Clearing the Air column for the local newspaper.

KOOTENAYS (Harold Stanley)

The Kootenays chapter of the Waddell Project continues to be a busy place with so much activity that we've had to cut down on the number of projects that we're working on. Lynne has told us on several occasions that it takes time to get the community involved and buying into what we're doing. It must be working as twice in a month I've been waiting in line at The Canadian Tire in Castlegar and overheard conversations about walking school buses!

Rossland Secondary School Nutrition Committee

This 5 member committee continues to meet on a bi-weekly basis to improve nutrition at RSS. One of our goals has been to replace the pop and junk food in the vending machines (the only source of food in the school since the closure of the school's cafeteria last year) with healthier options. To this end we've managed, with the cooperation and assistance of the school administration, to replace the pop in the machines with real fruit juice, water and "sports" drinks (which really aren't all that much better than pop - however we'll take it as a victory!). A milk machine is scheduled to be installed next fall.

The Committee received a big boost when it was awarded a \$1500 grant from the Directorate of Agencies for School Health (DASH) at the beginning of February. The money will be used to: pay a student to help us market a healthy food policy to students; pay for marketing supplies; produce and distribute a parent/student survey to find out existing eating habits and preferences for healthy alternatives at the school; buy water jugs for each classroom, and; tender a local contract to bring healthy fresh food into RSS that will replace the junk in the vending machines.

You Are the Target Tour

We're partnering with Interior Health and Health Canada to bring Ginny Lovell, author of "You are the Target, Big Tobacco: Lies, Scams and Now the Truth", and her You are the Target tour to the west Kootenays. Funding for Ginny's tour wouldn't have allowed her to do many of the schools in our area and by helping financially and

organizationally we've been able to book Ginny and her tour in schools in Castlegar, Rossland and Trail.

Ginny's presentations look at how big tobacco targets children as their next wave of customers. Studies have shown that telling children that using tobacco will lead to cancer and other health problems has little impact as they often see themselves as invincible and contracting a disease such as cancer in 10, 20 or more years seems like an eternity. However, according to Ginny, nobody likes being conned out of their money and their health! This approach has proven to be very successful and Ginny has taken her presentation around the world and will be presenting at a conference in India just prior to her visit to the Kootenays.

New Smoking Cessation Initiative to be Started

A steering committee is being formed, which I've been asked to sit on, to bring the Kick the Nic smoking cessation program to the West Kootenays. This program, developed by the Mayo Clinic, combines one on one counseling and peer



support with pharmacological therapy and has been shown to be highly effective in getting smokers to quit. Currently the only help available for smokers in the area is the BC Smokers Help Line.

Walking School Buses

Twin Rivers Elementary in Castlegar had its first "Walking Wednesday" on March 3. This walk, which will occur before and after school every Wednesday, was successful with over 20 students participating. It was also the first walking school bus in the area (there are 2 others in the area, in Rossland and Trail, that are in their second year of operation) to have bussed students dropped off at the beginning of the walk so they can participate. The walking school bus was given feature article exposure in the local newspaper. Kinnaird Elementary, also in Castlegar, will inaugurate its first Walking Wednesday on March 24.

A walking school bus is also being developed in Nelson and I've been giving advice and materials to the organizers who hope to get it up and "walking" this spring.

Community Partnerships

The Waddell Project will be working with Trail's "Rockwall Project" to promote the beautifully crafted rock walls which support development in historically and visually unique West Trail. We'll be helping to map out walking routes that will showcase the walls, stair cases and other historic sites in the area while promoting the benefits of walking.

The Trail Women's Walking Group has just started. This group of 15 to 30 women meets every Wednesday to walk around Trail's arena



(home of the 1962 world champion Smoke Eaters!) and hear presentations on health topics. The Waddell Project will be making a presentation on March 10 followed on March 24 by a full session of our "What's Your Cancer Risk?" game. We've agreed to promote the group's

activities and hope to involve them in helping us develop walking routes and tours around Trail, such as we're doing with the Rock Wall group.

Waddell Project in the News

At the beginning of February I started doing a monthly 250 word column in the weekly Coffee Mate newsletter about the Waddell Project's ongoing activities. The column appears the first week of every month and has included articles on walking school buses and the You are the Target tour. The Coffee Mate is distributed free to shops and restaurants throughout the Greater Trail and Castlegar area.

Vertical File Library

The vertical file library on cancer, cancer prevention and healthy lifestyles will be ready for public use at the Trail and District Public Library before the end of March. This file library, containing articles, studies and stats from files developed by The Waddell Project in the Kootenays over the past 4 years, will be given greater exposure and accessibility than at the Project's office in Trail. The A duplicate filing system will be developed at the Project's office and the Library files updated on a quarterly basis.

New Volunteer

Cindy Devine, a resident of Rossland, physio therapist and world champion mountain bike racer, has joined our Healthy Lifestyle Committee and the RSS Nutrition Committee. Cindy is very interested in primary prevention and is skilled at teaching people about how to improve their health. Cindy will be our "ringer" when she leads cyclists to school on our next International Walk (and Bike) to school day!



SOUTH OKANAGAN (Mary Beth Rutherford)

High School Initiatives

A Kick the Nic collaboration is Wadd's New! The seeds of the old Mission Possible and its blue ribbon campaign led to some interesting letters in the school paper about helping rather than preaching about quitting smoking. I don't remember anyone preaching but it did seem to get the students' attention! So for the student initiatives this year six students from the leadership class wanted to support their fellow students attempts to quit smoking. I contacted Susie Wilkinson our local Tobacco Reduction Coordinator through Interior Health and we started a Kick the Nic program with grant monies that are available.

The students stuck with it even with our first meeting being a 'no show' and now we have between four to six students regularly taking part in this ten-session program. The leadership students and I have discovered just how difficult it can be for

people wanting to quit smoking to succeed.

Our second initiative has been slow to get going but we are now looking into food policy issues and concerns at the high school. The group consists of several students and parents as well as one teacher. We are in the beginning stages of determining the issues of concern.

I am continuing to go into the grade 10 CAPP classes presenting the *Caging the Invader*

from one of the local elementary schools, Trout Creek, to promote health and student leadership. We have had some great successes and a few "we should try that a different way" events. The students have been active in assemblies presenting physical fitness and nutrition messages; they have lead the indoor game days for the grade 1-3, and they have been doing weekly healthy lifestyle information for the morning announcements. They have and will continue to be an active part of our **Food and Nutrition Policy** plans.

We received a \$1500.00 DASH Grant for Nutrition Policy and Promotion. Our focus will



Highschool students "Kick the Nic"



Students Perform a Health Healthy Foods Skit

Curriculum. I am always trying different angles to the same information to catch the student's interest.

Elementary Initiatives

K-2-5 Stay Alive Health Club has been a joint effort with the local Diabetic Nurse, Carol Stathers. We have been working with a group of grade five students

be on educating the school community on healthy lunches. We have several components to this grant initiative. The first initiative is based around placemats that display the Canada Food Guide. Each child will personalise and use these laminated mats this year and for the years that follow within the school. To establish a baseline of

current practise and to determine our progress we will have **BAG LUNCH CHECK INS** to determine if students are having three of the four food groups at lunch. We have already started our nutrition facts contest and have had quite a few winners. The school newsletter, *The Trout Speak*, is one avenue we will use to get information to the parents. In the fall we will be having a fair to connect and provide information to families. We also liked Wendy's idea of the fridge magnet reminder, so our students will have a contest to design a magnet about healthy food choices. It should prove to be a busy several months and then into the new school year.

I will again approach Giant's Head School about the 'walking school bus' now that our snow is starting to melt away. There was some interest in the fall when I introduced the idea but PAC

members felt spring would be a better time to start this program.

Partnerships

I remain connected with the Chronic Health Initiatives that are occurring in the South Okanagan. At our last meeting we began to discuss what we wanted to see and where we wanted to head with this alliance. We also altered the name to have more of an emphasis on healthy living to the South Okanagan Healthy Living Alliance. The focus will be on trying to have some collaborative events promoting healthy lifestyle choices within the various communities.

The community of Summerland has also been trying to establish a network to provide comprehensive programs for children 0-6. There have been two groups starting the process. I have been involved with the Communities for Kids

initiative. It is in the start-up stage of determining what we have and what we need in the community to meet the complete needs of our young children. So the group has set up a "toddler talk" to get information out about issues around raising a toddler.

Teen Support

We are working on an informational poster to promote the ideas of coping skills (self help) and being supportive of friends working through their grief. It is in the infant stages and I hope to have it connected to the website when it is up on the school site. Several of the students who worked on the website and attended the support workshop in Nov will be talking at a local "One Voice" workshop for girl students from the high school and the middle schools.



This space is for you!!

This is your newsletter – please send your comments, opinions, suggestions, concerns and I will print them here. You can do this either via your coordinator, or directly by sending it to lbaillie@bccancer.bc.ca