

# Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association



Dear Colleagues,

Buddhist teacher Sakyong Mipham in his book, *Running with the Mind of Meditation: Lessons for Training Body and Mind* says, "The bones and tendons of the mind are mindfulness and awareness. Mindfulness is the mind's strength, and awareness is its flexibility. Without these abilities, we cannot function."

One would expect that in our technologically advanced and prosperous world we would have achieved a kind of utopian society where we would be free from the stresses of daily living and our lives would be easier. At least that's what some futurists promoted. And yet we know that such is not the case. Life is busier and demands have multiplied. If anything, stress and anxiety have increased to almost epidemic proportions. This is no less true for teachers and students. Mental nervous disorders are the main reasons we have seen a rise in teachers accessing EAP services and using long-term disability. Teachers are also concerned about the mental well-being of their students. In a recent survey by the Canadian Teachers' Federation teachers identified child youth mental health as the number one concern. The fact that a local elementary school hosted a forum on youth mental health indicates just how serious the issue is for teachers.

The question is, "What do we do about it?"

While there are never any easy solutions, this year's conference with its theme "Flex: Building Your Emotional Muscle" offers guidance. The fact is we have no real control over the events, stresses and demands of the world around us; we only have control over our reaction to them. I believe it is the latter that is the basis of resiliency and emotional intelligence. Your conference offers practical sessions on how we can achieve mental resilience in dealing with the significant stresses of our modern world.

Since 2011 I have had the pleasure of attending several of the NLCPA conferences to bring greetings on behalf of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. As I noted in last year's conference program, I have always been impressed by the thoughtfulness and relevance of the conferences and of their themes to the everyday life of a school. This year's conference is no different.

On behalf of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association I welcome you to the Annual General Meeting and fall conference of the Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors' and Psychologists' Association. NLCPA's commitment to professional development is crucial not only in promoting mental health and awareness among our students, but also in creating a healthier society.

I congratulate the NLCPA for organizing this conference. Your commitment and dedication to the mental well-being of your colleagues and to the children of this province is outstanding. To the organizers, delegates and other participants, I wish you an enjoyable and successful conference.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James Dinn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

James Dinn  
NLTA President



A Message From  
**DARRIN PIKE**  
CEO/DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

On behalf of the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District, I welcome you to the Fall Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors' and Psychologists' Association.

We know that now, more than ever, counsellors and psychologists are needed in our schools to help students and staff through the daily pressures of a dynamic and challenging society. Not only do our students face the day-to-day pressures of academics, they are influenced by a wide variety of societal factors which can impact their success in the classroom. As our world shrinks, our students face new obstacles that they must overcome and your help and expertise is instrumental in allowing them to do so.

The influence of counsellors and psychologists within our schools is ever-present and helps many people who are struggling learn new ways to approach challenges, to cope with stressful situations and to recognize that some levels of anxiety are indeed ok and manageable. You are our steady hands, the ones who create calm and help students to help themselves.

Flex: Building Your Emotional Muscle is an appropriate theme for the conference and one I hope you keep in mind throughout the week. The agenda put together by the NLCPA will certainly help you improve your professional and personal well-being, and thus allow you to better serve the students of our district. Be engaged in the sessions offered and take the knowledge learned back to your schools to complement the already tremendous work you do each and every day.

I encourage you to contribute and learn throughout the conference sessions and to enjoy the professional learning opportunity provided to you by your society. Sharing the strengths you each possess will make every one of our counsellors and psychologists better practitioners within our schools.

Regards,



Darrin Pike  
CEO/Director of Education



## Message from the Minister

I would like to welcome all delegates and participants to the Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors' and Psychologists' Association's 2015 Conference and General Meeting. This year's theme is *Flex: Building Your Emotional Muscle*.

As mental health awareness is growing throughout the province, it is important for our educational communities to nurture social emotional learning and resilience in our students. This conference will provide members with valuable information and insight to enhance both their professional and personal lives.

Through positive partnerships and a continued commitment from groups like yours, our education system continues to progress and support students, parents and teachers. I would like to extend my gratitude to the Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors' and Psychologists' Association for your continued support of our school and educational community.

I wish you all the best for a successful and productive conference.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Sullivan".

The Honourable Susan Sullivan  
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

[www.gov.nl.ca](http://www.gov.nl.ca)





## Greetings from the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association

On behalf of the over 5,500 members of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA), I am delighted to extend my very best wishes to the Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors' and Psychologists' Association (NLCPA) on the occasion of your 2015 Conference in St. John's which centers on the theme of "FLEX: Building Your Emotional Muscle". The outstanding range of engaging and proficient pre-conference and conference speakers will undoubtedly create a rich professional development opportunity for all delegates. The conference's balanced focus on care for the client and care for the practitioner will be both informative and restorative.

Congratulations to the counsellors and psychologists of NLCPA for your collaborative efforts in advancing the mental health agenda in the province and addressing the mental health needs of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Thank you/Merci/Meegwetch,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Natasha Caverley".

Natasha Caverley, PhD, CCC

President, Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association