



CANADIAN COUNSELLING AND  
PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION  
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DE  
COUNSELING ET DE PSYCHOTHÉRAPIE

## **Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association Applauds Government of Nova Scotia's Commitment to Improve Youth Mental Health Services**

### *Nova Scotia Premier Announces \$14 million to Help Support Students*

OTTAWA (August 15, 2013) Today, the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) congratulates the Government of Nova Scotia following yesterday's funding announcement to increase the number of guidance counsellors, mental health clinicians and youth health centres in Nova Scotia schools.

"We applaud the Government of Nova Scotia for taking this vital step in the right direction," said CCPA President, Blythe Shepard. "We know that through comprehensive and developmental guidance and counselling programs, early intervention and education, and ongoing support by trained professionals, school counsellors can make a positive difference in the lives of children and youth, both as independent professionals and as part of student support teams and referral agents."

As a national, bilingual association for the counselling and psychotherapy profession, CCPA's focus is on professional learning, research, and advocacy in all areas of the profession. The Association includes a dedicated chapter specifically for school counselling, and has a vested interest in ensuring that all children and youth have access to trained school counsellors in every school.

Research indicates that at any given time, approximately one in seven Canadian children and youth under the age of 19 are likely to have a serious mental disorder that hinders their ability to perform common tasks and disrupts their day-to-day activities. Unfortunately, only one in five Canadian children who need mental health services currently receive them.

Premier Darrell Dexter highlighted that the funding increase, to take effect starting in the 2014-2015 school year, will include \$4.6 million which will allow school boards to increase the number of guidance counsellors. An additional \$9.4 million will go towards hiring mental health clinicians and youth health centre coordinators.

"We commend this movement towards increasing the number of guidance counsellors in Nova Scotia's schools," added Shepard. "Young Canadians require and deserve the services of qualified school counselling professionals. Qualified counsellors have knowledge, skills and training beyond those of the regular classroom teacher and are required to engage in ongoing professional development in the area of counselling and mental health."

While mental illness and mental health issues pose substantial risk factors to today's school-aged children and youth, early intervention can have a significant impact by increasing opportunities for positive change and wellbeing, reducing the impact of critical incidents, interrupting the negative course

of some mental illnesses and in some cases, lessening long-term disability in children and youth. Access to services by qualified professionals is paramount.

CCPA's School Counsellors Chapter allows school counsellors from across the country to discuss programs, strategies, new counselling techniques, developing issues and solutions in schools. CCPA's nationally recognized standard, Canadian Certified Counsellor (CCC) provides evidence of qualified training and experience as a counsellor to teachers' unions, school boards, students and their families.

"We have CCPA Canadian Certified Counsellors in schools across the country," concluded Shepard. "Our goal is to assist governments, institutions, agencies, and the public in understanding the important role that certified counsellors and psychotherapists play in mental health and to ensure access to qualified school counsellors for Canadian students in every school."

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*The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is a national bilingual association providing professional counsellors and psychotherapists with access to exclusive educational programs, certification, professional development and direct contact with professional peers and specialty groups. CCPA promotes the profession and its contribution to the mental health and well-being of all Canadians.*

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