# Psymposium

Volume 31 Number 5 - Jan 2021

Psychologists' Association of Alberta



## Understanding People | Working Together

How many sets of these chairs are in Alberta from the Canada Red Chair Program? Submit your answers to Simon@paa-ab.ca

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**Our Mission**
The Mission of the PAA is to advance the science-based profession of psychology and to promote the well-being and potential of all Albertans.

**Our Vision**
PAA & its members are recognized leaders in enhancing the psychological health of all Albertans.

### Stay Connected

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# Editor's Letter



***"Amidst these times especially, I am incredibly grateful to all our psychologists in the province of Alberta and to our colleagues worldwide."***

By Michelle Vandegriend, Ph.D., R. Psych

As psychologists we are in a unique circumstance of experiencing the compounding stresses and challenges from the pandemic along with our clients. There is certainly an ongoing anxious ambiguity that permeates the course of this pandemic, *how much longer will this continue*? as I often hear people ask. For many of us, our homes have become a workplace, a school, a gym, and hopefully a place of recovery too. Amidst these times especially, I am incredibly grateful to all our psychologists in the province of Alberta and to our colleagues worldwide.

As a profession, we have navigated through a rollercoaster of changes over the past year, and we stay committed to addressing the mental health needs of others while remaining mindful of and attending to our own self-care. I am thankful for the efforts of our profession and for the efforts of each psychologist, no matter how big or small their contributions, that have assisted individuals and communities to better cope, efficiently access supports and resources, and advocate for further mental health. In the crucible of this pandemic we have risen to the challenge of becoming "mental health warriors", reminding people of the compassion, healing, and hope in our world.

I hope you, your loved ones, and the clients you serve stay healthy and safe.

PAA Editor-In-Chief
*Michelle Vandegriend, Ph.D., R. Psych.*
*Certified Gottman Therapist www.stalbertcounselling.com*
*Email: mvandegriend@stalbertcounselling.com*

# Town Hall Meeting Dates

Town Halls offer members the opportunity to connect with PAA CEO Dr. Judi Malone and CAP CEO Dr. Richard Spelliscy. PAA & CAP join in hosting town halls in different communities in Alberta throughout the year.



# Alberta Psychology in The Media

Nov 2020 – Dec 2020

## Generated Through You - Media

13 pieces via

Global News Calgary
Indian Head-Wolseley News
Alberta Primetime
CBC Alberta@Noon
630 CHED Radio
CTV News Edmonton
CTV News Calgary

thanks to

Dr. Jeff Chang
Dr. Ganz Ferrance
Dr. Angela Grace
Dr. Laura Hambley
Dr. Linda Hancock
Dr. Laura Hambley
Nina Hornjatkevyc
Dr. Brent Macdonald
Dr. Michael Zwiers

## Generated Through You - Career Fairs and Public Speaking

| Psychologist | Venue |
|---|---|
| Jessica Pink | Provided PAA's display and mental health resources to a First Nations Community north of Edmonton |
| Dr. Judi Malone | 14th Annual Pain Society of Alberta Virtual Conference |

*If you or a colleague are interviewed through any media outlet (newspaper, radio, television), or if you have attended a career fair or public speaking engagement, please contact the PAA office to advise us so that we can include the information in our report.*

# 2021 PAA Recommended Fee Schedule

Effective January 2021 the recommended fee schedule will remain unchanged.

### 2021 PAA Recommended Fee Schedule

| Service | Per Session |
|---|---|
| Individual Therapy/Assessment | $200.00 |
| Couple/Family Therapy/Assessment | $200.00 |
| Group Therapy (per person) | $60.00 |
| Custody/Access & Legal/Forensic Assessment | $300.00 |
| Expert Witness Testimony (half day minimum fee) | $1200.00 |
| Expert Witness Testimony (full day minimum fee) | $2400.00 |
| Consultation/Corporate Services (half day) | $900.00 |
| Consultation/Corporate Services (full day) | $1800.00 |

- Report writing, telephone consultation, letters & form completion are billed at the rate of the service being provided.
- Billing can also occur in 10-minute increments for services done outside the therapy hour such as phone calls, letters & the like calculated at one-fifth the hourly rate for each 10 minutes.
- Incremental billings are also appropriate for services provided beyond a 50-minute session.
- Fees for specialized services & treatments not listed on the above schedule may exceed the current recommended guidelines.

# Notes From the CEO's Desk



***"When I look at the world, I'm pessimistic, but when I look at people I am optimistic"***

*- Carl Rogers*

By Dr Judi L Malone, PAA CEO
Registered Psychologist (AB/AUS)

How do you choose your physician? There are both private and public medical services in our province. That includes the ability to access psychologists for assessment and treatment from both public and nonprofit systems and those in private practice. What if the latter was not restricted to those with financial means?

There are many opportunities for advocacy in which both the College of Alberta Psychologists and PAA collaborate. I am often struck in these when Dr. Richard Spelliscy asks, "What if Albertans could choose a psychologist in the same way that we choose our physician? How might that improve the health of Albertans?"

**PAA Position Statement**

The services of psychologists, for the assessment and treatment of mental health problems and disorders of Albertans, should be covered by the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan.

I do not refute any of the critiques of our current provincial plan, AHCIP – that the process and structure are outdated, restrictive, and excessively bureaucratic, and that it does not cover sufficient medical care needs.

But I do support the ideal of the AHCIP. It is to serve Alberta residents by providing for medically necessary coverage and benefits that are universal and comprehensive.

Universal health care is a solution to the problem of sustainability – not its cause. The ideal of all universal health care plans includes comprehensive health care policies delivered on equal terms and conditions for all.

The services of psychology, despite being a regulated health profession with evidence-based practices and demonstrated benefits to health, are neither fully nor partially (like dental or physiotherapy) covered under AHCIP.

Psychology is health. Why isn't it as accessible as other forms of health care? Mental and behavioral health publicly funded services must reach parity with funding for physical health publicly funded services based on the burden of disease.

We can advocate for that change.

Together,

*Judi*

# Psymposium Trivia




Thank you to those who have submitted an answer! The question from our December issue:
*Do you know where this is?*

There are two correct answers:

1) Looking at Mt Rundle
2) On the Tunnel Mountain trail

The first member to submit a correct answer is: PAA Lifetime Member **Sherrie Banks!**

# Psychology Month



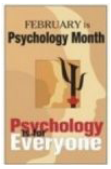

## February is national Psychology Month!

It is an excellent opportunity for all of us to let the public know what psychology has to offer. Psychology Month raises awareness of the role that psychology plays in our lives, our schools, our communities, & our employment.

*What might you do to promote psychology this February?*

The following materials can be obtained from the PAA office to assist with your promotional activities during Psychology Month:

**Psychology Month Posters** - 11 x 17inch posters produced by the Council of Provincial Associations of Psychology available to members at no cost




**Tent Cards** - Advertise Psychology Month and "what psychologists do"

**Bookmarks**

**PAA Brochure**

The Value of Choosing a Psychologist
PAA Postcards – 7 information brochures (depression, cannabis, substance use/abuse, OCD, chronic pain, etc.)
PAA Referral Service
School Psychology Service brochures
The Psychologically Healthy Workplace

**Power Point** presentation on the Psychologically Healthy Workplace: contact PAA to request the presentation and let us know when you have used it. Our Public Education & Wellness Committee would appreciate any feedback!

**Display boards** - Two professionally developed display boards for information sessions, trade fairs, public information sessions, or other forums.

**PAA Banner** - The PAA banner highlights "What Psychologists Do" and PAA's "Referral Service" for trade fairs, public information sessions, or other forums.

# Board Notes



***"Psychologists are in a strong position to bring awareness to this important issue and support the journey of change."***

By Nicki Wilson, R. Psych

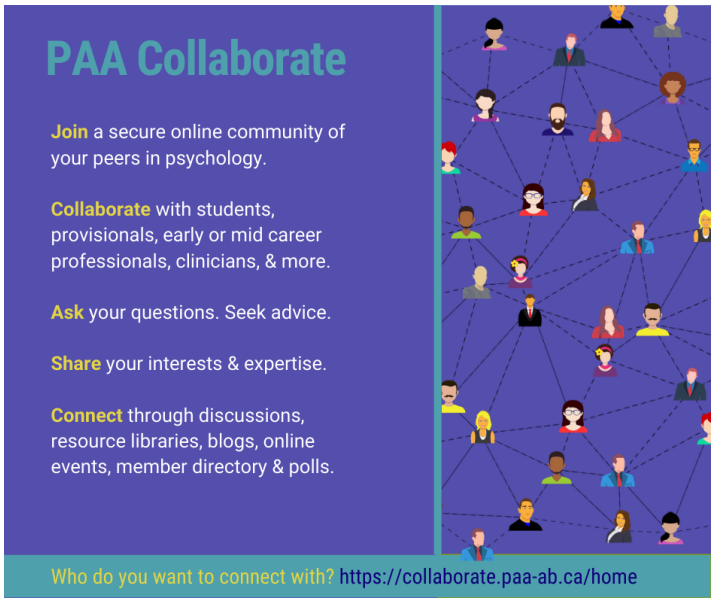
Our valued members,

The goal of collaboration is to work together to achieve mutual benefits. Psychologists, like all other professions, benefit from collaboration. It is our turn to take advantage of the fast-advancing technology that allows us to be more interconnected than before. The responsibility of psychologists is to empower ourselves with information and share our experiences and knowledge with others.

I am delighted to introduce to you our new members connect platform, the *PAA Collaborate*. The PAA Collaborate offers a secure online community for all PAA members to come together in conversation in various topics and fields of psychology. The platform offers a convenient and quick way to ask questions and share knowledge with other professionals in our field. As you know the PAA offers many membership types, so you can easily find your peers whether you have just begun your journey as an early career psychologist or if you are a veteran in the field with a lifetime membership.

As psychologists, we can see the many benefits of joining in conversation and sharing of information. Increasing interest and more visible member engagement and volunteerism will create a greater impact on our advocacy efforts in Alberta. Exchanging ideas and inspiring each other in a place that is accessible to our members will foster better professional connections between us and might lead to future initiatives. Collaboration is the tool of choice for us to use when we visualize a goal but cannot achieve it alone.

We look forward to seeing you on PAA Collaborate! For tips on getting started, view this "welcome video."




Your President,
*Nicki Wilson*

# Welcome New PAA Members

Alana Yee
Alberto Medeiros
Alicia Kassian
Amanda de Boer
Amy Ross
Andrea Vera Pomez
Anya Stang
Carly Prive
Carmen Ross
Carolyn Frew
Deema Qasqas
Desiree Kopp Olivera
Emma Donnelly
Jasmeen Malhi
Jessica Dostie
Jiwon You
Jordan Olischefski
Katherine Hewitt
Katherine Peterson
Lori Rutledge
Maria Veronica Del Peral Ramos
Megan Grudeski
Meghan Hole
Melanie Anglin
Melissa Fonseka
Michael Yankowski
Nicholas Breitenbach
Nishant Bhandari
Philip Chan
Ping Xu
Robyn Campbell
Ron Griffith
Sara Heitzman
Stephanie Caras
Tanisha Williams
Tatiana Lund
Tessa Wihak
Vanessa Lam

# EMDR Self-Care Protocol

***"The current pandemic has caused drastic shifts in the way we live, work, and socialize."***

By: Judy Moench, Ph.D., R. Psych
Olivia Billsten

We know that disasters like fires, earthquakes, and tornadoes present different challenges and have an immutable impact on the communities they affect (Shultz et al, 2017.) The COVID-19 pandemic, a biological disaster, is no different. The current pandemic has caused drastic shifts in the way we live, work, and socialize. Our ability to feel safe, secure, and stable have been disrupted and as a result, there are reported increases in symptoms of loneliness and isolation, fear and anxiety, depression and posttraumatic stress (Fiorillo & Gorwood, 2020). As a result of these life changes due to COVID-19, researchers anticipate suicide rates may increase over the next several years (McIntyre & Lee, 2020). This distress has only been exacerbated by self-isolation, quarantine, stigmatization and rapidly changing information (Shigemura et al., 2020). Mental health may be managing the psychological impacts of the pandemic into the future, as social distancing and isolation measures have impacted our ability to both access and provide mental health services to those who require assistance. Therefore, it is critical to develop and deliver effective interventions not only to the general population but also to clinicians that will help support their mental health and well-being to reduce the pandemic's mental health impacts.

The Self Care Traumatic Episode Protocol (STEP) was developed to meet the emotional health needs of mental health workers and physicians associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a remote intervention featuring a video series covering psychoeducation, stabilization, processing, and containment strategies within a 1.5 hour intervention (Moench, 2020a). STEP was adapted from the Group Traumatic Event Protocol (G-TEP) (Shapiro, 2014), which was developed from the Recent Traumatic Event Protocol (R-TEP) (Shapiro & Laub, 2014) and is based on the principles of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy (Shapiro, 1995). Like R-TEP and G-TEP, each level of STEP acts as a screening tool. Our goal is to assist an approach that quickly assesses those who may be suitable to process through events on their own, monitored by a clinician (STEP Solo), and those who may benefit from small group treatment, led by a clinician (STEP Together), and those who will likely require more comprehensive individual therapy using one-to-one, therapist directed trauma treatment.

The results of a randomized control trial examining the efficacy of STEP Solo as an intervention for mental health clinicians in the context of COVID-19 demonstrated statistically significant increases in general self-efficacy, coupled with statistically significant decreases in depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms (Moench, 2020b), (Moench & Billsten.) 94% of participants found the STEP intervention helpful, 86% reported STEP lowered their Subjective Units of Distress ratings, and 94% would recommend STEP to a colleague (Moench, 2020b), (Moench & Billsten). Feedback from further projects, including one at the national level and another with a group of staff members from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) who were in Beirut, Lebanon, at the time of the recent explosion, is promising and supports the use of STEP as an intervention for mental health clinicians. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues it is important to keep our mental health workers and other front-line staff healthy so they can continue to support our communities.

Take a moment and notice… How's your self-care?

**References available upon request.**

*Judy Moench, Ph.D., R. Psych. is the Coordinator of the Disaster Response Network for the PAA*
*and*
*Olivia Billsten is a Master of Educational Psychology in Counselling Psychology student at the University of Alberta*

# New Kids On the Block

## *A Column for Early Career Psychologists*

### The Practice of Telepsychology: Is it as Effective as In Person Treatment? A Brief Review.



***"What does the research have to say about the differences between in-person and virtual psychotherapy?"***

By Dr. Marc Ross (Ph.D. in Education) R. Psych

Although the practice of Telepsychology is nothing new in our field, it has taken on significant weight during the pandemic. Those of us who had some experience offering email, chat, telephone or video services often did so occasionally and sporadically; now these mediums of communication have swept the field. But what of their effectiveness? What does the research have to say about the differences between in-person and virtual psychotherapy?

First, it is important to say that there have been many concerns about offering therapy online over the years, and for valid reasons. The feeling that it can be cold or impersonal has long been a struggle for psychologists. Also, concerns about privacy and confidentiality are rightly debated and questions remain. Outside interruptions when providing/receiving therapy at home, for example, family members, pets, messages from other devices or apps, can often be part and parcel of the online space. And what can we say about nonverbal cues or those aspects of person-to-person interaction that are not visible when conducting therapy online? It is no surprise, then, that 76% of therapists say that treating people online is more challenging than seeing them in person (APA, 2020).

Challenging or not, during this pandemic, "Teletherapy is clearly an effective form of treatment for many of the most common mental health conditions. It provides access to care for many who cannot participate in in-person sessions" (Wiederhold, 2020, p. 656). A study conducted by the APA (2020) revealed that prior to COVID-19, approximately 64% of therapists did not provide teletherapy, but now, in the midst of the pandemic, that number has dropped to 1.9%. For therapists, too, there are reported benefits which include a more flexible schedule, the ability to sometimes see into clients' homes and spaces which may provide deeper insight or understanding, the convenience of being in touch online to provide better continuity of care etc.

Important as the above considerations might be, the question remains: Is teletherapy as effective as in person therapy? The answer, based on current research, seems to be yes. As discussed in Burgoyne and Cohn (2020), it has good user satisfaction (Campos et al., 2018; Holmqvist, Vincent, & Walsh, 2014), has been used with diverse populations (Alavi, Hirii, Sutton, & Naeem, 2016; Paris et al., 2018; Slone, Reese, & McClellan, 2012) and presenting problems (Carlbring, Andersson, Cuijpers, Riper, & Hedman-Lagerlöf, 2018; Pasarelu, Andersson, Nordgren, & Dobrean, 2017; Turgoose, Ashwick, & Murphy, 2018), and has been found to have outcomes similar to traditional face-to-face psychotherapy (Hilty, Ferrer, Parish, Johnston, Callahan, & Yellowlees, 2013; Irvine et al., 2020).

These results are fortunate, and likely confirm the experience that many psychologists have had over the last several months of the pandemic. We can still provide valuable services that help to heal those who are struggling psychologically. It will be interesting to see how many of us will return to strictly in-person therapy or, more probably, continue providing flexible access to both face-to-face and teletherapy. What will it be for you?

*References available upon request*

# PAA Awards Program

The nominations for the 2021 Awards are now open! Help PAA recognize excellence in the field of psychology! Our awards program recognizes companies, psychologists, and other individuals through a series of awards annually.
To find out more and to nominate a peer, visit https://psychologistsassociation.ab.ca/about-paa/awards-recognition/.

## Lifetime Achievement & Excellence Awards




**Psychologist of the Year**
*Is awarded to a PAA member in recognition of excellent work in psychology.*

**John G. Paterson Award**
*Is presented to a psychologist or non-psychologist for their exceptional contribution to portraying psychological knowledge to the public through the media.*

**Pettifor Lifetime Achievement Award**
*Celebrates a PAA member for outstanding career achievements in, or contributions to, the field of psychology.*

**Juanita Chambers Excellence in Community Service Award**
*In recognition of important work in advancing psychological health through service to the community*

**Excellence in Clinical Supervision Award**
*is presented to a registered psychologist for exemplary supervising performance.*

**Excellence in Teaching Psychology Award**
in recognition of outstanding psychology teaching in an Alberta Government approved post-secondary institution.



## Research Awards

**Undergraduate Thesis Research Award**
*Honours an undergraduate student for exceptional thesis research completed and evaluated during the past two years.*

**Masters' Thesis Research Award**
Recognizes a masters' level student's exemplary research thesis completed and defended during the past two years.

**Doctoral Dissertation Research Award**
*Celebrates a doctoral-level student's dissertation research completed and defended during the past year.*

## More Awards

**PAA Behavioural Science Award**
*The best senior project is given to demonstrate insight into the psychological study of behaviour, emotion, and/or cognition.*

**Psychologically Healthy Workplace**
*In collaboration with the APA, recognizes organizations for fostering employee health and enhancing organizational performance. Alberta applicants get assistance with their application from the PAA Public Education & Wellness Committee.*

2021 award winners will be recognized at the Annual Awards Event in October.
Nominations are open until 30 April 2021

# The Universe Within

## To My Colleagues



***"The pandemic has left me feeling that I live in a hall of mirrors."***

By Gwen Randall-Young R. Psych

I have been blessed to serve as a Registered Psychologist for 30 years and counting. I love this work, and it has enriched my life's journey beyond measure.

It has been a gift to extend a helping hand to so many along their journeys. When one practices so long, there is little that you have not seen or experienced. Until now.

The pandemic has left me feeling that I live in a hall of mirrors. From time to time, a client's story may reflect something we have lived through. Our own experience, combined with our wisdom and knowledge, allows us to ease them through their transitions.

We are now in the unique situation of living through the same challenges as our clients, with many of the same emotions and struggles, at the same time.

We are finding our own way through this labyrinth of uncertainty along with our clients. Yes, we have strategies for assisting others through their fears, anxieties and insecurities. Generally, when psychologists are called upon to help in traumatic situations, they have not themselves experienced the trauma, and can go home at night and separate themselves from the client's experience.

Now we are all in this together. It is like helping a person who has lost their home in a fire, when ours is burning too. This is quite a juggling act.

There is a rising pandemic of anxiety and depression. It exacerbates these conditions in those who already suffered with these, and brings a new wave of clients who are struggling with these issues for the first time.

Compassion fatigue is affecting many therapists. The pandemic impacts every role we have, as parents, grandparents, children, partners or friends. It brings feelings of being overwhelmed, powerless, angry, irritable and sad.

We can at times feel detached with reduced empathy, along with a reduced sense of personal or occupational efficacy. It may be harder to concentrate, focus or make decisions.

This can lead to feelings of isolation and withdrawal, reduced pleasure in activities we once enjoyed, conflict in relationships, and poor coping, such as self-medication and an increase in substance use.

The current situation in the world is creating mental health issues in mental health workers. Self-care is more important than ever. One of the greatest contributors to therapist burnout is the inability for us to recognize burnout in ourselves. It is our very ability to empathize that increases our potential for compassion fatigue. This in turn can make it harder to manage our own personal thoughts and feelings and crises of life.

We know all the advice and strategies to take care of ourselves. However, we are faced with an ever-growing tsunami of mental health challenges in our clients, families, and other relationships.

It's back to the basics, my dear colleagues. Get more sleep, eat healthy food, exercise, practice thought stopping, and stay in the moment. Focus on the blessings: how we are learning, growing and rising to the challenge.

Be well.

*Gwen Randall-Young is an author and Registered Psychologist in private practice. For articles, and information about her books, personal growth/hypnosis MP3s/CDs visit www.gwen.ca*

# Psychology Shaping the Landscape

*PAA gives you a voice at the table where it matters most to psychology.*

## Health Groups

- The Alberta Health "Valuing Mental Health" Committee Collaborative Practice
- The Alberta Pain Network & Opioid Crisis Task Force
- Collaboration with the other Health Professions Act Associations
- AHS Addiction & Mental Health Strategic Clinical Network
- AHS Cannabis Baseline Group

## Provincial Advocacy Groups

- The Palix Foundation
- The Autism Alberta provincial review
- CMHA Alberta
- Reforming the Family Justice System
- Alberta Workplace Wellness Network
- Alberta Palliative Care Competencies & Education Project
- Health Coalition of Alberta and AMHAC/psychiatry

## Psychology Groups

- The Canadian Psychological Association
- The Council of Professional Associations of Psychology of Canada
- The American Psychological Association
- AHS Psychology Professional Practice Council

## Targeted Response Groups

- The Canadian Red Cross specific to the Wood Buffalo 2016 Wildfire recovery
- Public Action Plan Ministerial Panel on Child Intervention recommendations
- Concordia University of Edmonton's PsyD Advisory Committee

# Collaboration

## Fostering the Profession: Learning - Leading Psychology as a Profession

*PAA, & our members, are committed to maximizing our impact through strategic relationships with other psychology groups in addition to maintaining a strong relationship with the College of Alberta Psychologists. That includes:*

**American Psychological Association**

- Dr Lana Hawkins was elected to the APA Council of Representatives
- Dr Judi Malone as the CESPPA representative for Alberta
- Nicki Wilson as Division 31 Representative

**Canadian Council of Professional Associations of Psychology**

- Dr Judi Malone serves as the chair of CPAP

**Canadian Psychological Association**

- Dr Judi Malone sits on the CPA board representing the provinces

**Alberta**

- Dr Judi Malone participates in the:
  AHS Professional Practice Council for Psychology
  AHS Clinical Strategic Network for Addiction & Mental Health
  Alberta Mental Health Research Hub -- Addictions & Mental Health

# Getting Schooled

## Alberta Student Wellbeing and Resilience During School Re-Entry

***"As Alberta secondary students returned to school this Fall, we addressed this lack of evidence and asked students about their learning, health, mental health, and relationships as they returned to school."***

By: Dr. Kelly Dean Schwartz, R. Psych,
Dr. Erica Makarenko, R. Psych,
Dr. Carly McMorris, R. Psych

The words "unprecedented," "historic," and "crisis" are tired words that have exhausted their usefulness in describing the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic. Since March, however, these words are likely to hold true for thousands of students who had their educational paths disrupted by school closures and online learning. Much conjecture and speculation about student wellbeing and academic achievement has been written since then, but little data has been collected to provide evidence of harm to students. As Alberta secondary students returned to school this Fall, we addressed this lack of evidence and asked students about their learning, health, mental health, and relationships as they returned to school.

We partnered with four metro school divisions – Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Catholic School District, Edmonton Public School Board, and Edmonton Catholic Schools – to ask students (age 12-18) about four main areas of their lives: their experiences of COVID-19 as it impacted themselves, their families, their education, and their health; their stress levels as it related to COVID-19; their mental and behavioural health; and their personal and social supports (i.e., resiliency) that are available and accessible. Over 2,300 students ($M_{age}$ = 14.5, Females = 1288) completed the online survey in September.

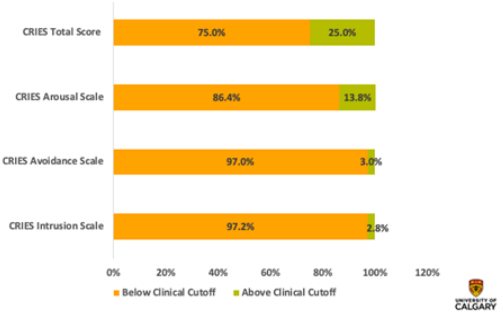
Preliminary results indicate 85% of students returned to school in-person, and the majority (75%) feel relatively safe during COVID-19, regularly using protective measures and practicing physical distancing, and are coping well with the stress. Approximately 20%, however, are experiencing moderate to severe stress (e.g., sleep disturbances, heightened tension) and have mental health symptoms above critical thresholds (see Figure 1). Females and older youth (age 15-18) reported heightened levels of sadness, withdrawal, worry, and nervousness compared to males and younger adolescents (age 12-14).

A uniqueness of the study is asking students to self-report personal, caregiver, and contextual factors representative of resiliency. Over three quarters of students (76.3%) self-reported that, during this period of school re-entry, they felt that their family supported them; less than one in 10 indicated little or no family support. Regarding friends, over two-thirds (68%) of students reported that they felt supported by their friends; just over one in 10 reported little or no support from friends during this return to school.

As student are now settling into the new school year, school divisions are seeking information to make data-based decisions about programming and supports for students. Our results serve to inform the measure and scope of school division responses and help to identify key areas of education, health, mental health, and resiliency that can be identified and bolstered. For students in older grades, and for females, additional efforts to monitor and support may be necessary. Results also suggest that training and psychoeducation would benefit frontline staff in schools, including administrators, student support service personnel, and teachers. Follow-up surveys throughout the school year (November, February, and May) will inform how COVID-19 is changing student experiences and behaviour and consequent programs and services.

Figure 1

- One in four (25%) students indicated that their self-reported COVID-19 stress exceeded the clinical cutoff
- One in 7 (13.8%) self-reported arousal levels above critical cutoff



# Timely, Topical, and even Controversial

## *Some "thinks" only a psychologist can believe!*

PAA podcasts by *Dr. Jon Amundson* have reached over 6,500 downloads! Thanks for tuning in!



Just a few recent topics:

- *Cannabis in clinical practice*
- *Eating together as a family*
- *Nootropics*

Visit http://amundson.podbean.com/ for more!

# Student's Corner

**Student's Corner is a section of Psymposium dedicated exclusively to information of particular interest to students. If you have any questions about the information shared here, or if you would simply like to connect, please feel free to email Chelsea Hobbs, Student Director on the PAA Board of Directors.**

That's me!



Looking for student resources? Check out our PAA Student Resources section of the PAA Website!

Interested in becoming a student leader with the PAA? Applications for PAA Campus Representative positions are due in March 2021. For more information click here!

Looking to connect with other psychology students? Join our PAA Student Facebook Group!

Want to connect with other Alberta psychology students? Join PAA Collaborate, the new online community just for PAA Members to connect, launch discussion, share resources and more.

Did you miss our "Psychology as a Profession" Webinars that took place this fall? Check out the recordings here!

Are you aware of all the benefits your PAA membership offers? Check out the Benefits & Services to learn what your PAA membership can do for you!

Did you know the PAA has a YouTube page? Check it out here!

# Committees & Task Forces

## Awards Adjudicating Committee

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Dr. Emma Climie
Dr. Kerry Mothersill
Dr. Lynda Phillips
Dr. Jessica Van Vliet
Dr. Erik Wikman

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Doris Bong
Sarah Hopkins
Dr. Patrick Keelan
Dr. Wence Leung
Marii-Heleen Motsmees
Derek Pierce
Kyle Poon

## PAA Social Justice Committee

Joanna Card (Chair)
Clayton Falk
Krista Forand
Dr. Taylor McInnes
Camille Mori
Andrew Nicholson

## Technology in Practice Task Force

Dr. Michael Stolte (Chair)
Dr. Trevor Josephson
Andrew Luceno
Eileen Noel
Zabrina Kwan

## School Psychology Committee

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Dr. Karin Coles
John Laing
Dr. Erica Makarenko
Dr. Ryan Matchullis
Sarah Nugent
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## PAA - CAP Joint Task Force on TRC

Wilma Spear Chief, R. Psych (AB)
Loretta McConnell, R. Psych (AB)
Janice Minoose, R. Psych (AB)
Meaghan Farquharson, R. Psych (AB)
Karlee Fellner, Prov. R. Psych (AB)
Dr. Judi Malone, R. Psych (AB), PAA CEO
Dr. Richard Spelliscy, R. Psych (AB), CAP CEO
Dr. Deena Martin, R. Psych (AB), CAP representative

## Mentorship Task Force

Katie Bradley
Patricia Cruz
Dr. Helena Dayal
Heather Gower
Jessica Heil
Chelsea Hobbs
Nathalie Mercier
Dr. Terilyn Pott
Julia Russell
Tamara Stuart

# Continuing Professional Development

## Primers

One-hour recorded overview of the topic. Watch anytime, anywhere. ($40 + GST).

*Trauma & PTSD in First Responder Populations* - **Dr. Meghan McElheran**
*Family Restructuring Therapy* - **Dr. Stephen Carter**
*Preparing for Cannabis Legalization in Canada: A Psychologists' Evidence-Based Guide* - **Dr. Igor Yakovenko**
*Psychology of Cannabis Addiction* - **Dr. Jonathan Stea**
*DIY Videos for Your Therapy Site or YouTube Channel* - **Dr. Kyler Shumway**

## Upcoming

### *The game of life: An introduction to using basic sport psychology principles in clinical practice*

**With Dr. Caelin White**
Online, TBD

### *Starting and Operating an Independent Professional Practice in Psychology*

With **Dr. Stephen Carter**
Online, 02, 04, 09, 11 February 2021 (more)

# Technology Task Force

## Choosing a Telepsychology Platform – Part 1





***"Telepsychology is a unique practice domain, with its own legal, ethical, and competency requirements."***

By Dr. Michael Stolte and Mr. Andrew Luceno

The declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 by the World Health Organization has had disruptive effects on the practice of psychology. This has resulted in the rapid adoption of telepsychology as one means of ensuring continued access to psychological supports. For example, Pierce et al. (2020) recently surveyed 2,619 psychologists in America and identified a 12-fold increase in telepsychology use during the pandemic - an increase from 7 to 85% in clinical practice!

One challenge in the rapid adoption of any new practice domain is that the likelihood for clinician error increases with the pace of change. Telepsychology is a unique practice domain, with its own legal, ethical, and competency requirements. With some serendipity, the Technology in Practice (TIP) Committee has been reviewing different telepsychology platforms, as well as identifying common ethical and practice pitfalls. By the time this article is released, you will have had the opportunity to participate in that review via a survey on your own telepsychology experience.

Data security is a primary theme of concern. Based on our introduction to this material, here are some initial factors to consider as you select your telepsychology platform:

1) **Are servers where the data is housed located in Canada?** To comply with provincial health care and privacy regulation, it is recommended data be stored in Canada and not routed through other international jurisdictions. This information is commonly found in the privacy and security section of the provider's website. Many large commercial vendors have servers in multiple countries. You may need to specify that you want your data stored in Canada.

2) **Are you sure data is not being sold to third parties without your explicit consent?** This is a common strategy to fund "free" services and is one reason they are generally not recommended for professional purposes. In the United States, this is one reason a Business Associate Agreement (BAA) is required – it prohibits the selling of data to third parties without your (or your clients') consent. You can find this information by looking for it in the detailed service agreement or by contacting the company directly.

3) **Does the provider ensure data is securely transmitted and stored?** In general, the healthcare industry standard is a minimum of 256-bit encryption. Many providers advertise "end-to-end encryption." This typically requires compliance with all available security features and for some platforms, the user must enable those features, pay for a more advanced version of the software, and have compatible hardware. Common tools to increase security and minimize the risk of a data breach during a virtual meeting include passkey protection, unique meeting identifiers, waiting room features, the ability to "lock" rooms after a meeting has started, and identity verification by the host prior to entry. If you are venturing into telepsychology, become familiar with these features BEFORE you use it in a professional setting.

Data security is complex and there are many other factors to consider. The TIP Committee will continue to report on our findings!

References available upon request.

# A Book Review

## Marche, S. (2020). *How Not to F*ck Up Your Marriage Too Bad.* Audible Original.



***"I feel so much more connected hearing the author's voice accentuate points, pause, and even occasionally curse in this case."***

Reviewed by Chris Shorrock R. Psych., CSAT

I am behind the times as this is the first audio series I have listened to; I worry the bar has been set very high. Stephen Marche asks 10 pertinent questions about modern marriage such as: *Should you even get married, How do we stop fighting, Can we f*ck other people, How do we live together, Whose money is it anyway, Should we get divorced*, and even *Can marriage survive death*? He asks experts (several psychologists), and people struggling with the questions themselves. The experts provide interesting insight that is relevant not only for our work, but for our personal lives. The stories and struggles are especially compelling. There are elements of humour, seriousness and conflict throughout. I especially appreciate the straightforward, pragmatic (and usually funny) way Stephen interviews experts and lay people alike. I found myself considering these direct, to-the-point questions and recalling how I have met similar queries in the counselling office.

My favourite episode is *How do we stop fighting*? We meet Richard who had fought nearly every day of his marriage for 20 years, starting (like many of us I bet) on day 1. "If you're a couple, you fight" (Ep.4, 2:21). Spoiler: Richard and his wife make huge changes and save their marriage. Throughout the series, and especially in this section we get insight into the author's own experiences. Stephen shares the impact of sitting on the top step of his home as a child and listening to his parents fight. He maintains they had a good marriage and were happy, however they still fought. I appreciate Stephen sharing directly how scared he felt as a child when hearing his parents fighting. I found it impossible to not continually consider my own marriage and wonder about what my twins will recall about my wife and I years from now…

Stephen interviews his own producer Chris, and his wife Suzanne. She describes Chris as fighting like "a really mean lawyer…You go in for the thing that you know is going to hurt me" (Ep. 4, 19:11). She owned escalating fights at times, and goes as far as saying, between tears, that there are fights that impacted their marriage. Chris asks what Suzanne would like him to do differently for the future. After a long pause and a deep breath, she replies "I guess listen to me; especially if it's... if it's something painful" (Ep. 4, 20:35). Stephen shows it is important to learn how to fight well. "You can either be right, or married" he emphasizes.

I had the absolute privilege of speaking directly with Stephen on the phone. He shared how simply asking questions in a non-judgmental way, and especially not knowing the answer helped him (and his team) get such amazing stories from people. While Stephen felt unsure about how helpful the interviews were for the people struggling, I maintained I am quite sure they did. I know I am helped in listening, and now cannot wait to listen to his first audio series, "How not to f*ck up you kids too bad".




PAA's success reflects the ongoing dedication and enthusiasm of our volunteers. Thank you for your dedication to the profession, and in particular all of you who help to serve:

- PAA's Board
- Committees & Task Forces
- Psymposium (Editor & Columnists)
- The PAA Practice Advisor Program
- PAA's Media Psychologist Program
- The Disaster Response Network
- Public Education Events and Presentations (Science Award Judges and Presenters, Public and Career Speakers and Exhibitors.)

We are so very proud of all our contributors, and especially grateful for your continuous support as we all move through these difficult times together.

# PAA Volunteer Opportunities

Consider joining your Peers!




**Quality volunteers are the bricks that hold non-profit organizations together. We couldn't survive without them!**

Want to help raise the public profile of our profession? Interested in sharing your expertise? Consider PAA volunteer opportunities!

**PAA Committees & Task Forces**
Committee & Task Force members aid PAA with various aspects of the organization such as awards, public education, and advocacy efforts.

**Career Fairs**
At career fairs, volunteers man the PAA display booth and may answer inquiries regarding careers in psychology and the psychology profession.

**School Presentations**
Various presentations at high schools and universities occur throughout the year on a variety of topics including the psychology profession, PAA, careers, and mental health.

**Public Presentations**
Public speaking presentations occur throughout the year to a variety of audiences on various topics. Examples of past presentations include: mental health awareness, organizational psychology, and psychology disorders.

PAA has several exciting opportunities that arise at different times of the year. To meet these requests, PAA needs a team of volunteers we can contact. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the office paa@paa-ab.ca to request an application.

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# ANNUAL PAA MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Easier Than Ever! Online membership renewal for the 2021-2022 membership year opened January 2021.

Visit your profile on the PAA website where you can renew your membership. At the same time, you can check out other features such as: PAA workshops registration, member benefits information, and much more.

Have we got your current profile information? While you are in your account, feel free to update your profile in the membership portal!

Early Bird Renewal: Renew your membership before 31 March 2021 and be entered to win a discounted registration to any of our Continuing Professional Developments during the 2021 membership year.

Membership fees are due on 31 March 2021. A late administration fee will be charged on all membership dues received after 30 April 2021.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding your renewal or the online renewal system, please contact your membership officer for assistance at Simon@paa-ab.ca or 1.780.424.0294.

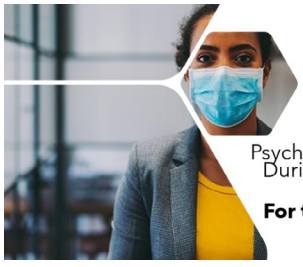
# PAA Resource Materials

**Promotional material at your fingertips! PAA has resources that can be obtained from our office to assist with your promotional activities.**

### PAA Brochure

- The Value of Choosing a Psychologist
- PAA Postcards: 7 topics (depression, cannabis, substance use/ abuse, OCD, chronic pain, etc.)
- PAA Referral Service
- School Psychology Service
- The Psychologically Healthy Workplace




**Power Point** presentations on Psychological Coping during a Pandemic; Psychologically Healthy Workplace

**Display boards** - Two professionally developed display boards for information sessions, trade fairs, public information sessions, or other forums.

**PAA Banner** - The PAA banner highlights "What Psychologists Do" and PAA's "Referral Service" for trade fairs, public information sessions, or other forums.

*All resources & materials are available to all our members by contacting our office at paa@paa-ab.ca*


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