



# Families for Addiction Recovery

Newsletter Winter 2018



## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1** Meeting with Premier Wynne
- 2** Summit on Protecting Addicted Youth
- 3** Recovery Days 2017
- 4** School Presentation
- 5** Submissions
- 6** FAR in the News
- 7** Parent to Parent (P2P) Support

## 1 Meeting with Kathleen Wynne

Families for Addiction Recovery (FAR) met with Premier Kathleen Wynne on Jan. 26th, 2018 to **request** that:

- all provincial cannabis profits go to the treatment of addiction and mental illness until health care funding matches the burden of these conditions;
- the Ministry of Health approve funding for more beds to treat addicted youth submitted by Bellwood Health Services and Pine River Institute;
- two medications to treat alcoholism, naltrexone and Acamprosate, be added to the Ontario Drug Benefits Formulary; and
- FAR be given a seat at the table to represent families affected by addiction.



From left to right: Dr. Barb Watts, FAR Board Member, Cara Vaccarino, Executive Director of Bellwood Health Services, Premier Kathleen Wynne, Angie Hamilton, Executive Director of FAR, and Gail Czukar, CEO of Addictions and Mental Health Ontario

## 2 Summit on Protecting Addicted Youth

FAR met with MP Rob Oliphant on Dec. 8th, 2017 to [request](#) that:

- all federal cannabis profits go to the treatment of addiction and mental illness until health care funding matches the burden of these conditions;
- the federal government take an active role in facilitating national discussions on decriminalizing the possession of drugs for personal use;
- the federal government establish a task force to determine best practices to protect youth struggling with addiction who are not seeking treatment; and
- FAR be given a seat at the table to represent families affected by addiction.

As a result of our meeting, we are excited to report that MP Oliphant will be hosting a summit on May 11th, 2018. The summit will explore options on how to protect addicted youth, including those who are not seeking treatment. FAR will be involved in organizing this event and an active participant. The goal of the summit is to report to the Ministers of Justice and Health on actions the federal government can take to minimize the impact of addiction and mental illness.



From left to right: Louise Lemieux White, FAR Board Member, MP Rob Oliphant, Angie Hamilton, FAR Executive Director, and Peter McCarter, FAR Board Member



### 3 School Panel Discussion on Youth Drug Use

FAR organized a panel discussion on drug use by Canadian youth for Toronto French School. The event was held on February 21st. The panel consisted of two FAR volunteers with lived experience as parents of teens who have the disease of addiction and representatives from both Parent Action on Drugs and Drug Free Kids Canada. There was an overwhelming response from the school community given the pending legalization of cannabis and the opioid overdose epidemic. Want to book your child's school? Let us know.



From left to right: Sydney Graham, Louise Lemieux White, Norman Gaudet (principal of TFS), Marc Paris (DFKC), Suzanne Witt-Foley (PAD)

### 4 Recovery Days 2017

FAR was a proud partner of Recovery Day Ottawa on Sept. 23rd and a proud sponsor of Recovery Day Toronto on Sept. 30th. Recovery Days provide an opportunity for those in recovery to be role models and give hope of recovery to those still struggling and their families.

FAR's co-founder, Louise Lemieux White, and her daughter Chloe, spoke at Recovery Day Ottawa about what recovery looks like. Our Executive Director, Angie Hamilton, spoke at Recovery Day Toronto about what it is like having a child in active addiction and in recovery. She also said the greatest enabler of addiction is the lack of treatment. You can watch their talks on FAR's [YouTube Channel](#).



From left to right: FAR volunteer, Doug Hunter, Attorney General, Yasir Naqvi, and FAR co-founder, Louise Lemieux White at Recovery Day, Ottawa.

## 5 Submissions

On January 15th, 2018 FAR made a [Submission](#) to the Department of Justice, Canada regarding the transformation of the criminal justice system. Our main recommendations were:

- adopt a public health approach to drugs and drug policy and decriminalize the possession of all drugs for personal use.
- control and regulate the distribution of currently illegal drugs according to their respective risks and harms as part of an evidence-based, public-health approach to drugs and drug policy.
- collaborate with the Ministries of Health at the federal and provincial/territorial levels to ensure those who commit crimes due to untreated addiction and/or other mental health conditions are not criminalized but receive the treatment that they need and deserve.
- ensure that those who are incarcerated or temporarily detained and have addiction and/or other mental health conditions have timely access to evidence-based treatment, including medication assisted treatment (MAT), for these conditions while incarcerated or detained.

On January 20th, 2018 FAR made a [Submission](#) on Cannabis Packaging and Labelling to Health Canada which recommended the least amount of branding and marketing as is permitted by law.



Angie Hamilton, Dave Addison, Kathy Voudouris and Louise Lemieux White at Recovery Day, Toronto.

## 6 FAR in the News

FAR's advocacy work made headlines in the Hamilton Spectator. "Parents Push Premier To Fill Treatment Gaps For Addicted Teens" illustrates the plight of parents of addicted youth.

“The wait-list for government-subsidized beds at Pine River Institute, Ontario's only long-term residential treatment program for kids 13-19 with substance abuse problems, is 12 months for girls and 15 months for boys. That can be a death sentence for struggling youngsters, says an advocacy group pushing the Ontario government to improve services. 'I think that's unconscionable,' says Angie Hamilton, executive director of Families for Addiction Recovery (FAR), which met with Premier Kathleen Wynne in January.”

Check our website for a 15 minute radio [interview](#) for our Executive Director with Ted Michaels 900CMHL Hamilton.

## 7 Parent to Parent (“P2P”) Support

Are you the parent of a child (of any age) who is struggling with addiction? Are you feeling alone, stressed or hopeless? We want to support you. FAR will match you to one of our trained parent volunteers who knows what you are going through. Talk to your supporter over the phone from the convenience of your home. No judgement; just understanding. You can sign up on our [website](#).

This newsletter is available on our website:



[www.farcanada.org](http://www.farcanada.org)

Suite 200, 100 Consilium Place,  
Scarborough, ON Canada, M1H 3E3