



A message from Dr. Shirley Sze

I am a long-time family physician in Kamloops who has been active in continuing professional development, locally, provincially, and nationally. I see a huge need to spread learning amongst Justice and Health Care practitioners around the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), buffering effects of Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) and the holistic "Trauma aware and trauma sensitive" approach both sectors can practice in dealing with our clients/patients.



I moved into system level work by being a Board member of Doctors of BC and BC Family Doctors. I'm the past Chair of the Health Data Coalition and founding past Chair of the Thompson Region Division of Family Practice. As founder of this Division, I contributed to the Child and Youth Mental Health and Substance Use (CYMHSU) Provincial Collaborative that ran from 2015-2018. I continue to be on the Steering Committee of the CYMHSU Community of Practice and Chair of its ACEs Working Group.

A2JBC invited me into the TFJS Collaborative. This evolved into leadership of the Health Justice Alliance (HJA), an initiative supported by the Shared Care Committee, a joint Doctors of BC and Ministry of Health committee. I am committed to the HJA as part of my ongoing work to improve child and youth mental health. Listening to families lived experiences of separation & divorce. I've witnessed the devastating harms of ACEs, especially in the adversarial environment of the family justice system. I am motivated to change the trajectories of young peoples' lives and thankful for all the others involved, with a similar passion for family, child and youth well-being!

The chrysalis represents a transitional state & space during which renewal & rebirth can happen.

Exploring your adverse experiences, telling your story, in order to understand and better work through the past, is a crucial step in healing.

- Donna Jackson Nakazawa



Participant Perspectives: Dr. Ramneek Dosanjh



I am a passionate advocate at the intersection of health and justice, driven by my belief in the profound impact that integrated, compassionate care can have on individuals navigating complex systems. When my colleagues voted for me to represent them as the President of the Doctors of BC for 2022, I brought a combined perspective to my leadership, drawing on my medical expertise and my deep understanding of the challenges faced by those in the family justice system. This led to my role in the creation of HJA alongside colleagues, such as the Hon. Justice Lisa Hamilton KC (then the President of the Law Society of BC).

The HJA was inspired by work and conversations on mental health and on systemic access barriers for vulnerable populations to health care and legal support. My involvement in the Collaborative and the HJA is a natural extension of my commitment to improving the well-being of all and the creation of systems that are responsive to families and individuals. When both sectors work together using a trauma-informed lens and offering holistic solutions, experiences improve. Looking ahead, I see the HJA creating systemic change to prioritize the health, safety, and dignity of those with multifaceted family justice needs. I am so honoured to be a part of this movement.



Recent & Upcoming HJA Activities

Over the next 2 years, the Health Justice Alliance (HJA), a shared effort of BC doctors and lawyers, aims to improve the experience and enhance the well-being of BC families - parents, children, and youth - going through parental separation or divorce.

To do so, the Alliance is developing a family-centered, health justice strategy and focused on increasing: (1) awareness of the brain science of adverse and positive childhood experiences (ACEs), (2) available supports and resources to reduce the negative impacts of separation or divorce and (3) coordination between family physicians, specialists, family law lawyers, and others in the family justice system.

We summarize three key activities that are underway, here:

Activity #1 - Family experience mapping

Hearing diverse family storytellers and jointly identifying family-centered systemic and practice strategies based on leverage points identified in the process and rooted in past identified strategies in each sector.



Activity #2 - Public education through linking cross-sectoral networks

Leveraging health and justice networks to increase parental and service provider awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and of available strategies, resources and supports to reduce their impacts.



Activity #3 - Professional continuing education webinars

Jointly developing and delivering webinars focused on the family law system and its links to health and well-being to support current HJA activities as well as increase cross-sectoral relationships and collaboration.



Updates & News

The Alberta Family Wellness Initiative is offering virtual Resilience Scale Masterclasses. Develop your foundational knowledge and understanding of key concepts and approaches connected to resilience:

[Jan. 20 at 3-5:30pm PST \(register here\)](#) &

[Jan. 30 at 8:30-11am PST \(register here\)](#).

Transforming the Family Justice System: Continuing to Innovate to Support Family Well-Being - Check out this podcast by the Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice (CIAJ) about our ongoing work.

National Access to Justice Week was from Oct. 28 to Nov. 1, 2024. Check out the session recordings related to our strategies:

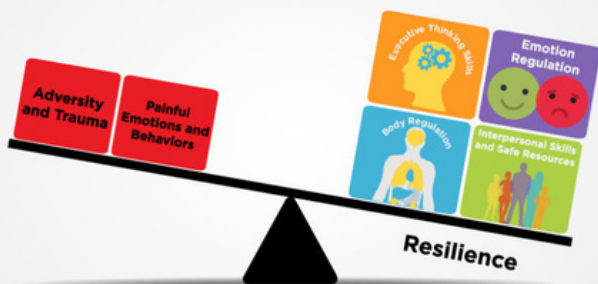
[Indigenous Worldviews are Transforming Justice: What can it mean for A2J?](#)

[Family Law Services: Pathways to Healthy Separation](#)

[Building a 'no wrong door' legal service delivery system](#)

The Health and Justice Alliance's **Family Experience Mapping Event Report**, from an in-person convening on October 25, 2024, will be on our website soon!

Tipping the Scale for a Healthy Future



"In the same way that the weight sitting on a scale or teeter-totter affects the direction it tips, the factors that a child is exposed to affect the outcomes of their development. A child's scale is placed in a community and has spaces on either side where environmental factors get placed. These factors influence which direction the scale tips and the outcomes of the child's development."
(Kendall-Taylor, 2012)

Upcoming Events

- Jan. 17, 11am-1pm - **Support Finder Community of Action** meeting
- Jan. 28, 1-3pm - **Intersectoral Family Justice Community of Action** meeting
- Feb. 6, 5-6pm - **TIP/ACEs Joint Curriculum Development Group** meeting
- Feb. 3 to 7 - **Access to Justice Week BC** - Sign up for free in-person & virtual events!

We acknowledge the ancestral & unceded territories of many Indigenous Peoples that our participants gather on. We are committed to engaging with Indigenous Peoples and applying Indigenous legal principles in our work.

www.tfjscollaborative.com

Express your support, [here](#).
Reach out at contact@accesstojusticebc.ca