

# Chronic Pain 35 – a unique high school credit course for teens with chronic pain<sup>(1)</sup>

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## Context

Teens with chronic pain struggle to complete high school  
We developed a group Cognitive Behavioural Therapy program to enhance their pain coping strategies (**Pain 101**)

## The Journey

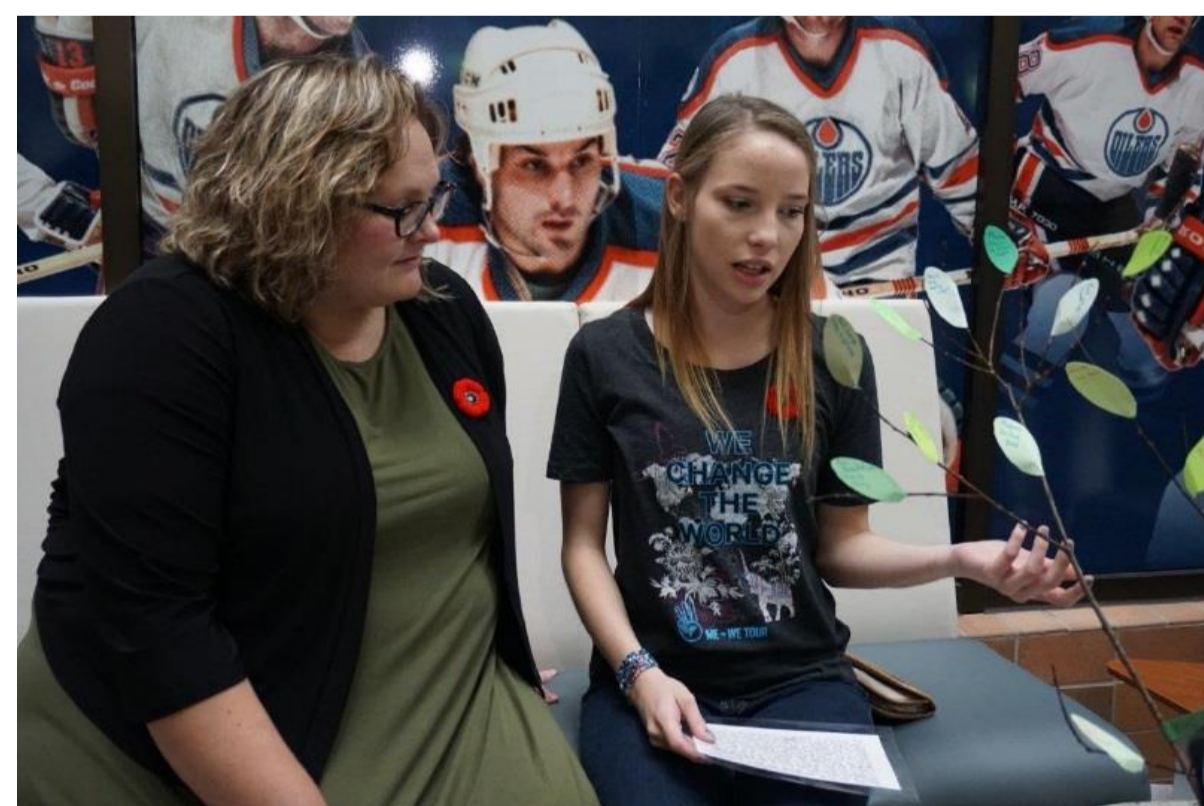
Starting in 2014, we worked with Alberta Education to develop a unique course, **Chronic Pain 35** which was approved in 2015

- Students who attend our program are eligible to register for **Chronic Pain 35** – a Grade 12- 3 Credit course
- Students register through the Alberta Distance Learning Program

## Requirements

- Attend all classes
- Complete treatment homework for each class
- Complete a project that demonstrates learning of key treatment concepts

This is the first successful collaboration between a pediatric hospital program and Alberta Education to integrate learning self-management and receive high school credits

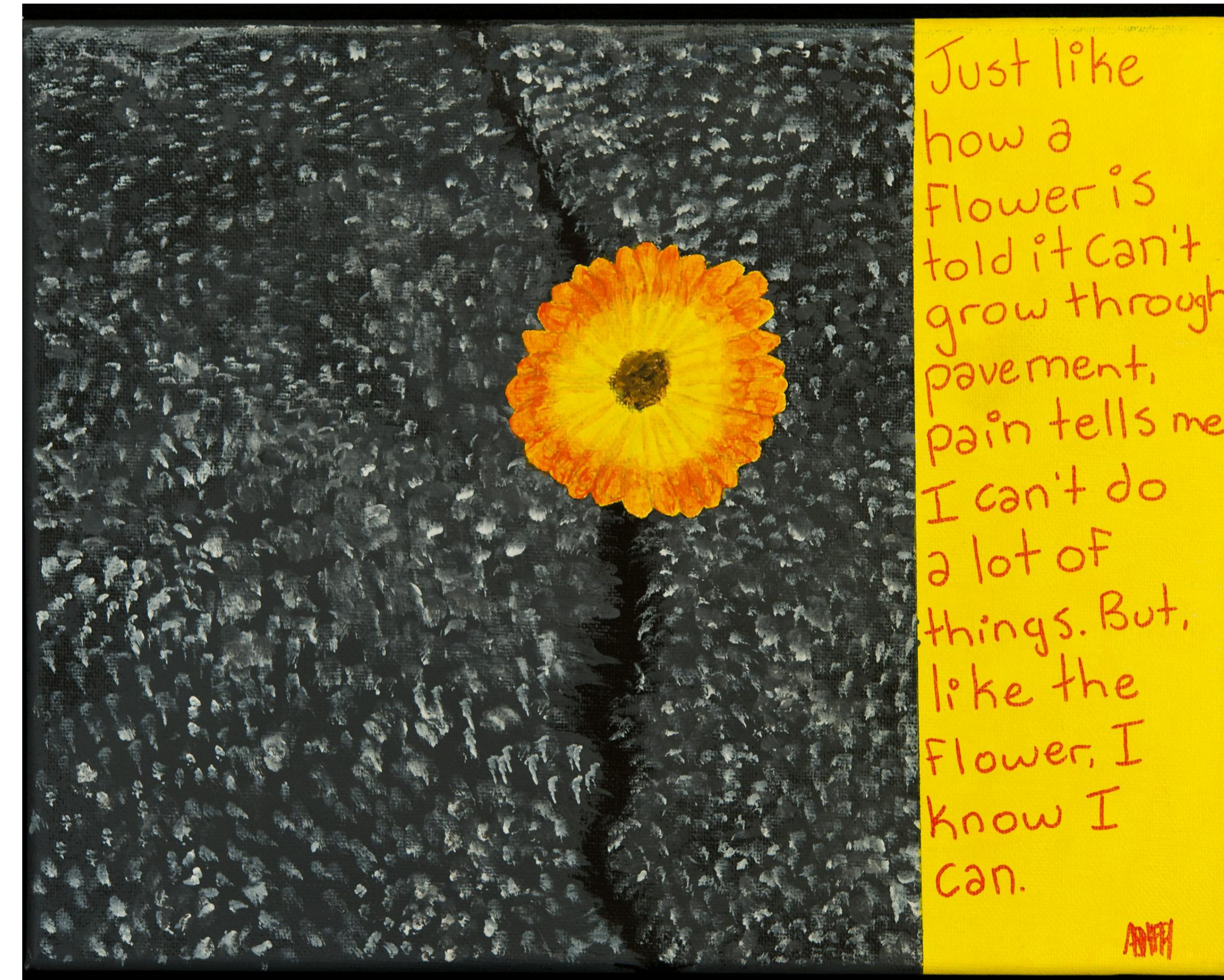


Media event, November 2015: The Honorable Sarah Hoffman (Minister of Health) and the Honorable David Eggen (Minister of Education) attended this important medial release with two of our graduates.

Affiliations  
1. Stollery Children's Hospital, Alberta Health Services Edmonton AB Canada  
2. Department of Anaesthesiology and Pain Medicine, University of Alberta Edmonton AB Canada



References  
1. Reid K., Simmonds M., Verrier M., & Dick B. (2016) Supporting teens with chronic pain to obtain high school credits: Chronic Pan 35 in Alberta. *Children* 3(31) doi:10.3390/children3040031.



## Impact

To date, 49 students have completed the course.

*“Mentally, physically and emotionally, I'm able to put more back into my life : I'm back in control of my life”*

## Lessons learned

This creative strategy engages teens in learning and adopting pain coping techniques

Teens have also learned to advocate for themselves in the schools and improve their teachers' understanding of chronic pain

Not all students are able to complete the course (missed classes, struggle to complete the project)

Not all schools have the necessary technology for students to attend virtually!

## Next steps

We have shared the program with Pediatric Chronic Pain clinics across Canada, and are currently working with Ontario to set this up. Stay tuned...

