Chronic Pain 35 – a unique high school credit course for teens with chronic pain⁽¹⁾ Kathy Reid MN, NP^{1,2}, Dr. Mark Simmonds MB, FRCP^{1,2}, Dr. Bruce Dick PhD^{1,2}

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

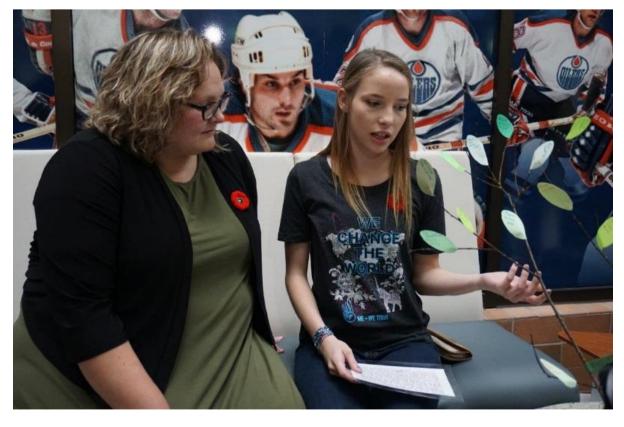
Starting in 2014, we worked with Alberta Education to develop ta unique course, Chronic Pain 35 which was approved in 2015

- 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

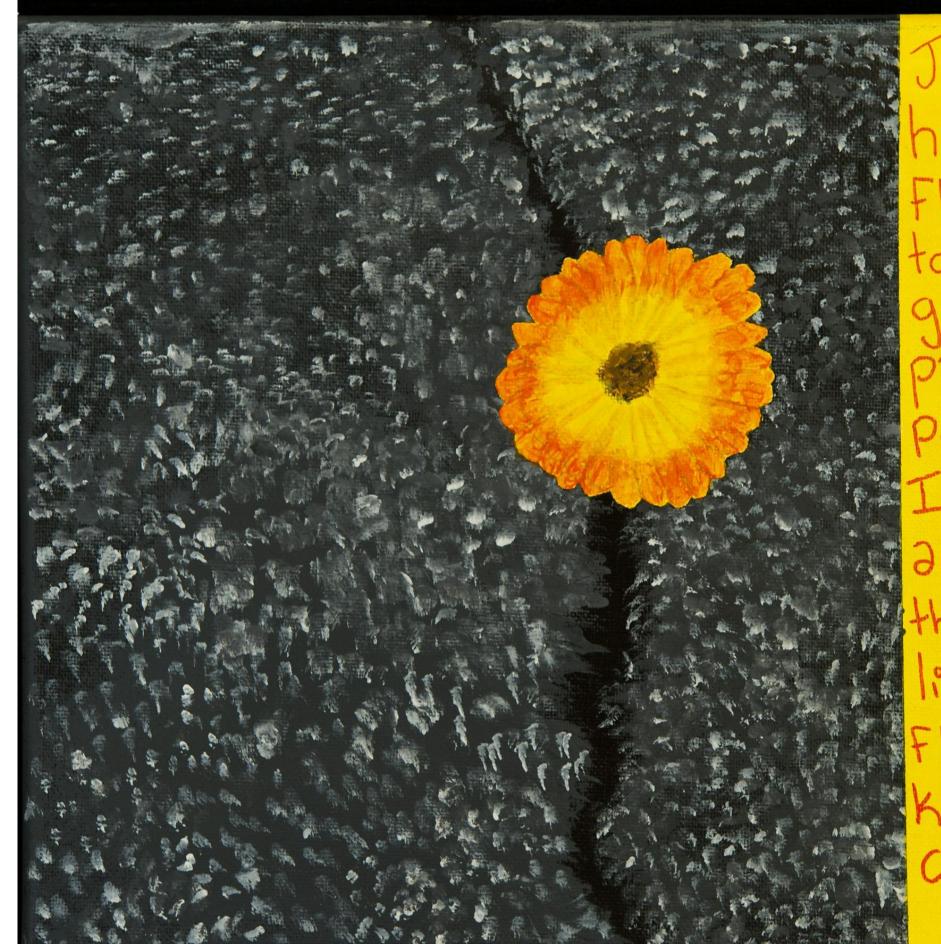
This is the first successful collaboration between a pediatric hospital program and Alberta Education to integrate learning self-management and receive high school credits

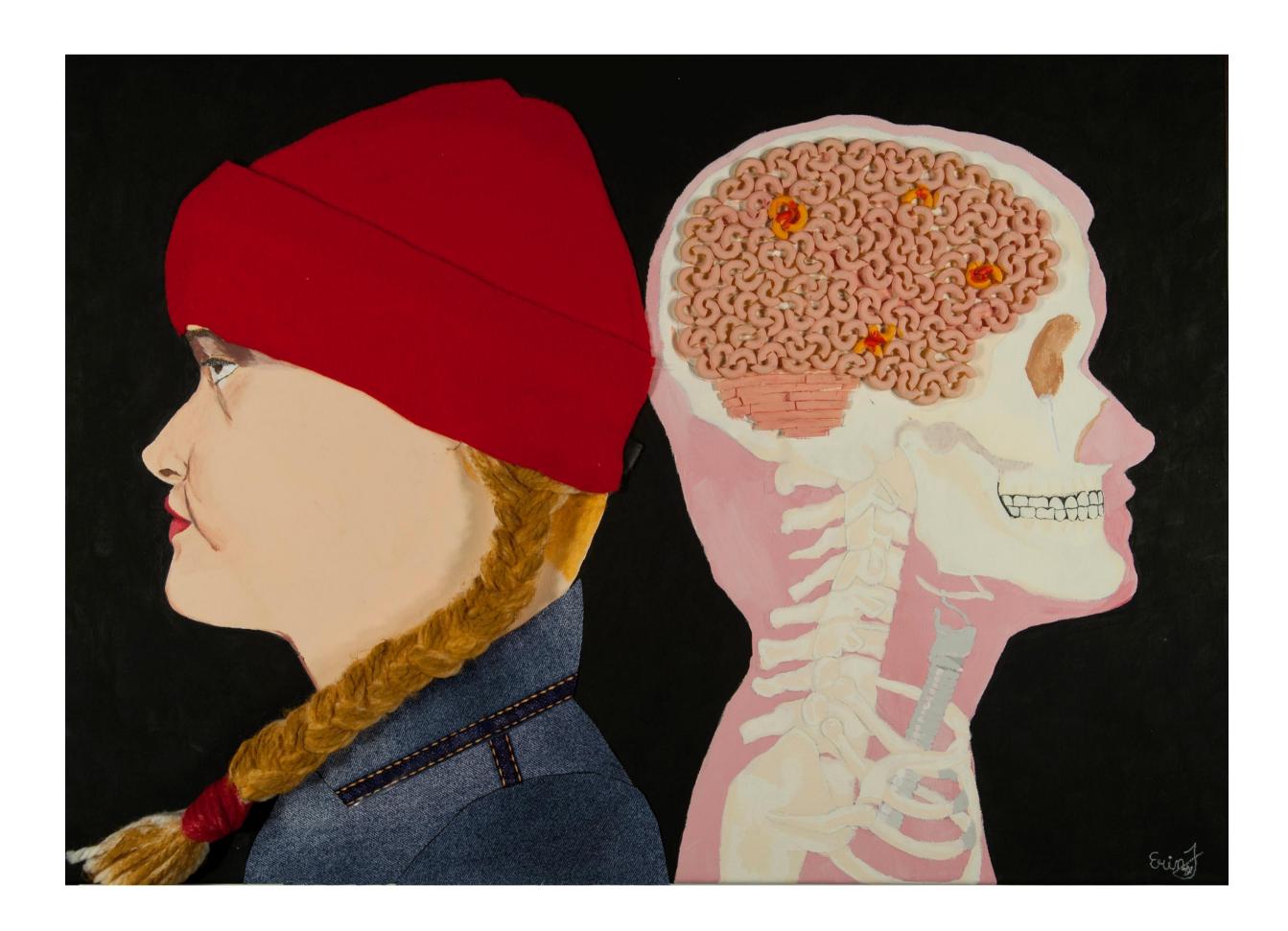




Media event, November 2015: The Honorable Sarah Hoffman (Minister of Health) and the Honorable David Eggen (Minister of Education) attended this important medial release with two of our graduates.



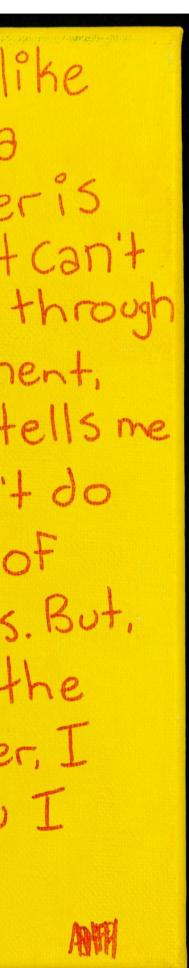








STOLLERY CHILDREN'S



Impact

To date, 49 students have completed the course.

"Mentally, physically and emotionally, I'm able to put more back into my life : l'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!

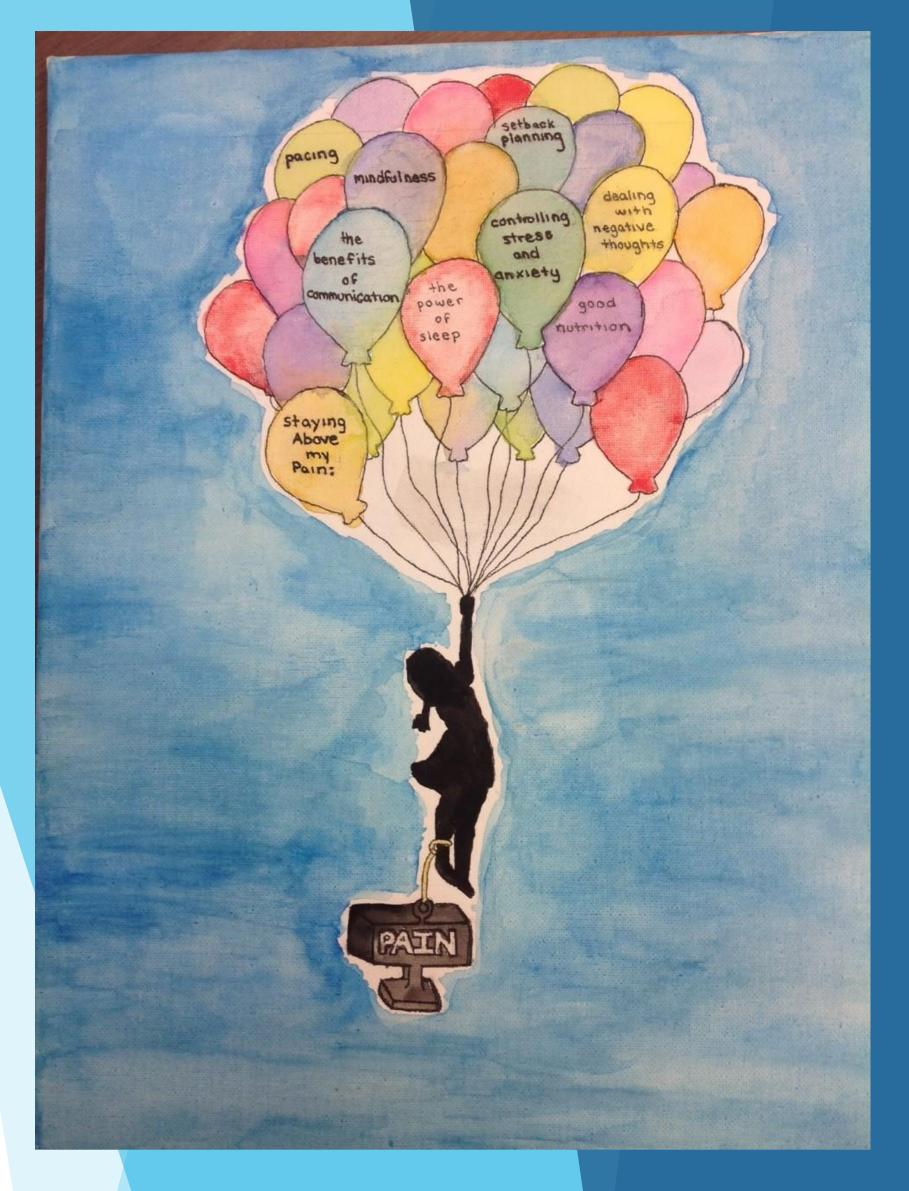
Next steps

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





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.



ill not romanticize my pain for the sake of a poer he pins and needles in my head isn't a love song Laying awake at three am

he pain elicits my profound isolatio As I try to remember what it is like ot only see a darkness I cannot climb out to be left with only more noi s the pain turning me inwards and inward in is to know that you are alone inside your bo where no one can access your consciousn

Even as I vell at the moon er to stop my mind from cycling and throbbi eel as if the pain is seeping deepe into my bones Although I know the moon won't take this pain away from me I know she said to me one night while I was asleep I hope the pain eases soon

I find comfort in these words That the essentially unshareable sensation is simply empathized I will try to shrink the space between my pain and your understanding of it but language simply does not suffice because language is always inadequate in the face of pain

> I don't need your understanding need to know that you're just standing beside me If I need you and nothing more (Written by CP, spring 2017)