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## CCFA Executive

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[Tanya Kirkland](#), Member at Large (Term Representative)

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## The Ombudsman Office at Camosun

Carter MacDonald, Ombudsman

When the Board of Governors approved the mandate of the Ombuds' office at Camosun College in October, 1992, the preamble referred to Camosun College's mission and values, notably:

Mission: "*The College provides challenging and supportive learning environments...*"

Values: "*A Focus on the Student*"...*the student must be the ultimate focus and beneficiary of our activity*"

The College and its People: "*It is the people who create the value in the learning relationship...*"

A Spirit of Respect: "*Everyone matters. We will act towards our students, the public, and each other in a spirit of dignity and respect, compassion, honesty, openness, and inclusiveness. We will celebrate the diversity of our community.*"

Under the policy considerations, "*Camosun College recognizes that members of the College community deserve to be treated fairly and that there may be times when a student believes that s/he has been treated unfairly. The role of an independent, impartial Ombuds has been created to assist students with matters of fairness.*"

These are laudable goals and it is to the credit of Camosun College that we are the only Community College in British Columbia that has a full-time Ombuds service for our students. I would also like to point out that the Ombuds office is also a resource to faculty who wish to consult regarding fair process towards our students, policy advice, or general consultation regarding best practices in dealing with seemingly complex or confusing issues regarding students (i.e. issues dealing with faculty notifications from the Disability Resource Centre for students, issues of fair process, or other issues of concern for faculty in regard to students.)

The Ombuds function should embody the values of the institution it serves. I have been in the position of Ombuds for the (soon to be) past eight years, having spent almost ten years as the Manager of College Safety prior to my tenure as Ombuds for the College. During my time in the Ombuds role, I have noted some general trends that students have brought to my attention as issues of concern around the concept of fair treatment. Statistically speaking, most of the concerns revolve around the issue of fair grades. There is a final grade policy that I explain to students, all the while explaining to them that any decision to proceed with this avenue of appeal rests entirely with them. I also explain that I will not take any action unless I have the expressed permission of the student. I let students know that my role is to attempt to come to an informal resolution of issues that they bring to my attention. I also explain that, in my role, I cannot tell or compel faculty as to what course of action they must follow.

There is also a statistically important number of complaints by students over what they perceive to be unfair treatment by instructors. One recurring issue

that I am involved with deals with the “duty to accommodate” for students with disabilities. The “duty to accommodate” is a very high standard, based in human rights legislation that requires us, as an educational institution, to accommodate students with disabilities up to a standard of “undue hardship.” I have found that this standard is not as well known or as well appreciated by some faculty members as should be the case. Understanding this standard and the corresponding need to respect it can assist faculty members in avoiding potential complications and formal complaints. My office is available to you for advice and consultation in any potentially contentious issues that you may be facing with student matters.

If students wish me to be involved in a clarification or attempted resolution of issues, I will agree, providing that fairness is the pre-eminent guiding principal factor for all parties involved, including faculty.

I am heartened by the number of faculty, chairs, deans, and senior administrators who regard the Ombuds Office as a resource for independent and impartial advice in the fair and equitable resolution of issues involving student’s concerns and issues. My role is to attempt to come to an informal resolution of issues so that more formal and adversarial alternatives can be avoided.

I welcome the invitation to contribute to the CCFA “Confluence” newsletter, and I invite members of the CCFA to contact my office with any concerns or questions you may have concerning the Ombuds function, policy considerations, or fairness procedures.

*If you have questions for Carter MacDonald, he can be reached at 370-3405 (Lansdowne) or 4444 (Interurban) or via email at [macdonaldc@camosun.bc.ca](mailto:macdonaldc@camosun.bc.ca).*

## President’s Report

Mark Kunen, CCFA President

### From the Executive:

CCFA members are now welcome to come to Executive meetings as observers. There will be a short time at the end of each meeting for comments or questions from observers. The idea is to increase members’ understanding of the work of the Executive. Perhaps greater awareness will lead to heightened interest in serving in executive positions. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 20th, with time and location to be announced.

The February 28th CCFA General Meeting reached quorum after faculty members responded to last minute efforts to increase attendance. Thank you to all who attended. Your presence enabled the members to vote on and carry the following motions from the Executive and the Negotiating Committees:

1. *That the CCFA establish a standing budgetary item of \$1000.00 to help students in emergency financial need in consultation with Student Financial Aid to take effect in this year’s budget.*
2. *That deferred SD for executive release be capped at 2 years’ entitlement.*
3. *Ratification of the Executive appointment of Blair Fisher to the position of Secretary.*
4. *That the CCFA authorize the CNC to put forward new proposals in the current round of bargaining as long as they are consistent with the overall bargaining objectives that were approved by the members at the 2014 AGM.*

The Emergency Student Assistance money will be administered by the Foundation and allocated by Financial Aid according to criteria to be developed by the CCFA. The money donated by the CCFA will be in addition to other sources of emergency funds. Funds unspent in a given year will be carried forward to following years. CCFA members will be informed when the fund is in place.

The Executive has appointed Valerie Montegue to be the CCFA representative on the Joint Occupational Safety and Health Committee and Eleanor Woodward as second CCFA rep. along with Brent Wassermann, on the Joint Rehabilitation Committee.

The Labour Management Committee met March 11th. (The committee consists of the CCFA president, CMC chair, and CNC chair for the union and the VP Education, Executive Director of HR, the Employee Relations Director, and a dean for the administration.) With several items sidelined by admin because of ongoing bargaining, the major item of discussion was the administration’s interest in learning more about student experience at Camosun through surveys or other means. The intention is that that any such approaches will not be part of or affect faculty evaluation. More discussion will occur at the next LMC meeting. In addition, the administration reported on the first stages of a review on Infosilem.

Also on March 11th, HR representatives and the three Union presidents met to discuss possible shared approaches to refinement of Respectful Workplace procedures and training. Ideas arising from this meeting

will be discussed with the Executive.

### From FPSE

FPSE is forming an ABE Caucus to share information and develop a useful response to the government's decision to allow colleges to charge tuition for ABE courses and programs. FPSE President Cindy Oliver has asked that the presidents of FPSE unions at colleges with ABE programming join that caucus.

Next Monday, FPSE will launch its public campaign to call for greater and more flexible funding for post-secondary education. A link to the on-line portion of the campaign will be available on Monday. It's worth a look and, if you're so inclined, some action, starting with an on-line petition.

Mark Kunen (kunen@camosun.bc.ca)  
Local 3594

## Faculty Spotlight:

*Kelly Pitman, Member at Large*

Last week I met with Heather Biasio, an instructor in the Nursing Department. After many years (45 in nursing, and 26 at Camosun) of serving both patients and students with grace and intelligence, Heather is leaving us at the end of March for her next adventure: retirement.

During her time at Camosun, Heather has contributed to the work of the CCFA in many ways. She was on the Contract Management Committee for several years and has also served on two administration/union committees: the Joint Rehabilitation Committee and the Joint Occupational Health and Safety committee (JOSH). This last assignment has been a long one, and I spoke with Heather about that work in particular.

JOSH is the committee that investigates and deals with issues in the workplace that affect or might affect safety and health. The committee gets regular reports from those in charge of first aid about safety incidents, including those affecting students, and then looks for patterns and makes recommendations. Heather tells me that physical safety at Camosun is more of an issue in the Trades and Technology area of the college, where students and staff working with dangerous materials are concentrated. Still, because it is an educational institution, Camosun has fewer of these sorts of incidents than do other kinds of workplaces.

In addition, JOSH looks at more widespread health issues. For instance, JOSH is responsible for the anti-smoking campaign at Camosun. For this work, Heather tells me, the college had funding from and the support of the British Columbia Lung

Association. Since the college decided not to go smoke-free, that funding has ended and the campaign has shifted its focus.

And speaking of widespread issues, I ask Heather to what extent concerns about the physical and emotional effects of stress have informed the discussions JOSH has had about workplace health. Heather replies that these issues are only beginning to come to the fore for us but acknowledges that with increased information regarding the effects of stress in the workplace (note that the rather vague term "stress" is anathema to medical professionals), such issues can and should inform the work of JOSH. It's tough, Heather and I agree, to look at psychological environment through the lens of health. Tough, but necessary, and not impossible. Heather, who has spent her adult life in the health education sectors, thinks it's an area that requires deeper analysis.



In our last few moments, I ask Heather, "What's the best part of your job at Camosun." Heather says it's the people. She says she sees this even more clearly as she prepares to leave Camosun and sadness mixes in with the more positive feelings. She smiles as she thinks about the people who have constituted a major part of her world for more than a quarter of a century. She'll miss them, and they'll miss her. As for JOSH, we are lucky to have Valerie Montague stepping into the role of CCFA representative on that committee. And as Heather prepares to pack up her books and photos, I am glad to have

this chance to say thanks for all she has done so quietly and caringly on our behalf.

## Safe our Out? Right or Right?

Mark Kunen, President

*I do not agree with what you have to say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it.* (attributed to Voltaire).

*I would never die for my beliefs because I might be wrong.*  
(Bertrand Russell).

When an idea, however hazy, comes to my mind for an article, I remember and notice things that help me clarify what I want to say. This time I've been thinking about the increasing number conflicts throughout the BC post-secondary system, including some intractable member-member conflicts. What's going on? That question has stimulated some childhood memories and some recent observations that suggest some answers. The Respectful Workplace Policy and procedures may or may not reduce workplace conflict. In any case, it would be better if we, the employees, could figure out ways to do that ourselves.

I'm about 12. My summer camp baseball team is locked in a tight game with a rival. We're in the 9th inning, one or two runs behind. We have men on base, and at bat is Louie, a diminutive player whose main strength is his speed. My friend Stanley and I are on the bench together hoping we'll get our turns at the plate. Louie grounds a ball to third base and zooms off for first. The infielder makes a good throw but maybe not fast enough to catch Louie. The play is close. The umpire, a camp counsellor not known for his powers of concentration, calls Louie, "Out!" Louie is shocked! Our coach rushes out to argue, followed by many of our players. Are you blind?! The other team's coach and players rush over to defend the call. He was out by a mile! Louie roots himself to the base, determined to withstand the storm around him. Stanley and I stay on the bench. We did not have a good view of the play, so we lack an opinion. We do note the phenomenon that all the people who insist Louis was safe were on our team, and everyone who disagree are on the other team. That's not surprising. Yet, in a way it's curious. There was only one play for everyone to see. Everyone seems so sure of their opinion. As Kelly Pitman sometime observes, "No one was lying. Everyone was right."

Now I'm in a grade 11 History class, studying the causes of World War I. Our text is a compilation of articles by various historians, each propounding a different principal cause. Was it German aggression? A strategy to thwart Communism? The system of alliances? The rapacity of capitalism? Political rivalries? The availability of fearsome new weapons? Our essay assignment requires us to take a position on what the real cause was. I don't do that. I ask instead, if the experts cannot come to an agreement, how am I supposed to know? I don't remember my grade, but I don't think my essay was well-received. "I don't know" was not an acceptable answer. You're supposed to take a stand.

Here's another sports story, a recent one. If you don't like professional sports, please try to look through the sporting event to the underlying theme. The New England Patriots won the National Football League championship this year. Just before they won, they almost lost. Tom Brady is the Patriots quarterback, an important offensive position. He made some good plays and some bad plays in the game, more good than bad, but the bad were very bad. When his team almost lost and then won the game, the defense, not Tom Brady, was on the field. Malcom Butler, a defensive player for the Patriots, turned night into day with a great defensive play. Almost immediately, newspapers deemed Tom Brady the greatest quarterback of all time because the Patriots won. He's now won four Super Bowls! Some writers even stated that Mr. Butler's play solidified Brady's reputation. Had his team lost, his record would have been sullied by the fact that he had lost as many championship games as he had won. His contribution to the winning play was to sit on the bench, like Stanley and me, cheer, and jump up and down in joy and relief.

Here's the text of a recent Cadillac ad in the New York Times Magazine, in full:

*"It is the weak man who urges compromise."* (Elbert Hubbard)  
CADILLAC.

General Motors paid a lot for that ad. They must have reasons for believing it struck a chord.

And of course there's the Middle East.

Is there any connection between these memories and phenomena and workplace conflicts?

These stories and observations leave me with these ideas:

Opinions are more provisional than we often think they are. It may be useful to remember that our opinions are strongly influenced by our allegiances and responsibilities. My uniform may blind me to the moment of the ball's arrival if it arrived too soon for my teammate to be safe. Discomfort with cognitive dissonance causes people to change their opinions when they change their roles. Some disputes are between people in different institutional roles. It may be useful for each to wonder if their grip on their respective opinions might loosen if their roles changed.

As in the football game, winning often depends on luck as much as on skill, but we live in a world that overvalues winning and has no patience for losing. To many, being right feels like winning and being wrong amounts to losing, so trying to see the other person's point of view creates a risk of becoming a loser. This observation may apply particularly to academia where status rests on expertise, and experts are supposed to be right. Few TV

“talking heads” will ever be caught saying, “I don’t know,” even though “I don’t know “ may be the right answer. Does the determination not to be revealed as wrong contribute to workplace conflicts? The risk increases for anyone who sees compromise as a sign of weakness.

Can science point the way? If light is a particle and a wave, if sub-atomic particles can be in two places and also nowhere at the same time, and if Schrodinger’s cat is both dead and alive (though hungry) in its mysterious box, can’t we assume that we can be simultaneously right and wrong?

Is this article of any use?

I don’t know.

## *Pension Advisory Committee - FPSE*

*Debbie Hlady, CCFA Representative*

February 27/28 Meeting

The Pension Advisory Committee (PAC) met February 27 and 28 in Vancouver for its second meeting of the year. A large part of the meeting was devoted to selecting a new pension trustee nominee to forward to President’s Council. There are three trustees from FPSE who sit on the pension board: Camosun’s Candace Fertile is one of them.

Other business consisted of electing a new PAC Chair for the coming year, and receiving reports from the trustees on investments and performance of the fund. You will be pleased to hear that your fund is healthy and performing well. The pension fund returned 10.2% over the last calendar year, and had over \$3.8 Billion in assets.

For those who hear references to “gold-plated public pension” in the media, rest assured that this is not true. About 70% of the fund’s worth is accumulated through investment gains, with the remaining 30% coming from your direct contributions and the employer’s contributions. The employer’s share represents deferred salary; in other words, we are accepting a slightly lower salary now in order to receive pension benefits later. The average retiree receives a pension of around \$30,000, which allows for a modest retirement. If we had no public pension, imagine how many of us would need to rely, at least in part, on the Guaranteed Income Supplement or other forms of government assistance. Public pensions are a good deal for taxpayers, and they regularly outperform private pensions, in part because of the accumulated investment power that comes from a larger group of investors.

This leads nicely into a discussion on the Canada Pension Plan that took place at the SHARE (Shareholder Association for Research and Education) conference I attended on February 27. SHARE helps investment funds integrate environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations into their investment strategy. (Check out their website at [www.share.ca](http://www.share.ca) for information.)

The conference featured, among other speakers, Carol Bellringer (Auditor General of B.C.), Chris Lawless (chief economist at the British Columbia Investment Management Corporation, and former chief economist with the B.C. Ministry of Finance), Irene Lanzinger (President of the B.C. Federation of Labour), Hassan Yussuff (President of the Canadian Labour Congress), and from Paris, Pierre Hubbard (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development).

The CPP is actually doing very well, and the Canadian Labour Congress has a campaign to increase CPP payments that needs the support of 2/3 of the provinces. ALL of the provinces support this, but the federal government has not budged. 3 out of 5 Canadians have no pension plan, and 2/3 of Canadian pension funds are in a deficit position. (Not yours!) Life expectancy is increasing, so more people are drawing on pension funds longer, and since many employers are not replacing retirees with new workers, the number of contributors to funds is decreasing. Essentially, more money is going out than coming in, which does not make for healthy funds. More and more Canadian retirees are having difficulty making ends meet, and the result is an increasing draw on government assistance. Increasing contributions to the CPP would mitigate this in a very cost-effective way. However, if people are putting more of their own money in the CPP, and using the CPP as their prime way of saving for retirement, that would mean they would be paying fewer financial fees to banks and insurance companies and mutual fund managers. Hence the intense lobbying by these groups against “payroll taxes” and “the nanny state”, and for “consumer choice” and “empowerment of individuals”. Check out the Canadian Labour Congress’s website, [www.canadianlabour.ca](http://www.canadianlabour.ca) for details on their campaign to Grow the CPP and provide retirement security for everyone.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Hlady

12:50 PM: Fisher 100 is dark. She flicks the switch as the door sighs shut. Has she erred? She fumbles her phone out of her pocket, hoping that she can confirm the time and location in Outlook. As she thumbs her way into her email account, the door swings open, and another person enters, then stops and lifts his eyebrows. "Is it at 1?" "I think so." They smile at each other. They're not wrong, just early. Thank god. By this point in the term, just locating a meeting seems an accomplishment.

She turns on more lights and trots down to the front of the room. The empty chairs make a neat pattern up the tiers, but the room without people is oddly purposeless, like a display in a museum of institutional culture.

A few more people trickle in and wander along the rows, looking for the ideal seat. Aisle seats will go first, as will those toward the back. The front row, she knows, will only fill up if the room is bursting, and the room won't be bursting.

1:00 PM: She is chatting with a colleague about the usual: midterms, failing students, prepping and marking at the same time, the utter reprehensibility of the ministry of education. The meeting is supposed to start now, but by habitual and mutual consent, everyone waits. Every few minutes, someone else will wander in. She smiles at each newcomer, but she has already started counting.



1:15 PM: They should have started by now, but no quorum yet. Those who are here are enjoying the socializing, but time is passing, and they're all thinking the same thing. How long is this going to take? If we don't get started, we'll be here forever. Meanwhile, that pile of essays, that full inbox, that report or set of minutes or classroom exercise, will not take care of itself. Also, they all imagine home. The week's worth of misplaced books and half-read notices, the kids' homework and the dinner preparations, the laundry and the gardening—all waiting for their due attention.

1:19 PM: No quorum. What to do. She signals to a colleague, and they go upstairs to the offices on the second and third floors. Most the doors are shut, no glint from below. Where they see a door open, they approach with apologetic smiles. "Hey," she or her friend says, "we're short of quorum for the CCFA meeting. Can you come?" The questioned hesitate, caught between one thing and another. Some can't come—they have a class, a lab, a meeting. A few others swiftly recalculate their obligations and agree to "pop down." Some just shake their heads and walk away.

1:23 PM: She arrives back at Fisher 100. Some of the new recruits are there already, as well as others who hadn't

been there when she left. Hope soars. She starts counting down the rows, and sees the heads of a few others bobbing along, doing their own count. Eyes meet, and they mouth numbers: 27, then 28. She sits. Discussion has started, but no minutes can be approved, no motions can be moved until they have 35 bodies in that room.

1:24 PM: Conversation meanders. "I'll go look for people," she says, and hustles down the stairs to the door. She runs across the quad to Ewing, climbs the steep steps to the second floor, and hurries toward the faculty offices: Math—one instructor in, but talking with a student and another waiting outside, ELD—all doors closed and the hallway dark, Business—quiet as a stilled abacus. She doesn't pause, just hurls herself down the stairs and out the door, heading for Young. She starts at the top, but everyone from that floor who's coming is already at the meeting, and the others have retreated into their marking and prepping. On the floor below, classes are just letting out. She spots a colleague through the windowed door of the lecture hall and peers in to see if he's finished, startling a group of students on their way to the door. She pushes through the throng.

"Hey," she says, we're a few short of quorum. He is surprised and promises to come. In the hallway, she passes another colleague, delivers the same message, gets the same surprised look and the same promise. She's making progress.

1:32 PM: She bursts back into Fisher 100. The meeting chair has sent an imploring message to faculty, which has brought a couple more people in. Now half the attendants are counting heads and mouthing numbers. 31. Really? That's it? Did someone slip the knot? They need 35. Less than 10%! She really wants to get started so they can finish and go home. She heads out again.

1:39 PM: A quick tour of the library reveals no CCFA members. She hoofs it over to Wilna Thomas. Closed door after closed door. She is thinking of Kafka at the place of judgement. She is thinking of those old films in which people run in and out of doors and never into each other. Where is everyone, she thinks, but she knows, for they're where she would be if it wasn't for the meeting, bent over stacks of paper at their kitchen tables, or reading the textbook to remind themselves what the students will read, or sitting at meeting tables, discussing student retention and department reorganization and curriculum. On the third floor, she finds a sympathetic colleague, but he has a meeting in five minutes.

She tries to be polite, but she's in a hurry. Down the stairs and across to the Paul Building, where she finds not one

person except a student nodding off between his headphones in one of the lounging chairs in the foyer. So she trots back across campus toward Fisher. A colleague approaches her, going in the other direction. "How's it going?" he calls. "We need quorum!" she gasps, "CCFA meeting." He gives her the "what-can-you-do" face and keeps going.

1:46 PM: She yanks open the door of Fisher 100 and throws herself into the room. She is already counting as she stumbles down the stairs. 34. No! No, no, NO! She doesn't have any more running in her. Her armpits are sticky. She's pissed. She gets that they're busy. But isn't she busy? Aren't all the people in this room busy? She gives up. She did her best. That's it.

The door opens, and there she is, number 35. They're saved. The meeting can go on. It will take longer than it need have. They could have been gone by now. They could have been home. She's in a bad mood, but tries not to let it interfere with her thinking. On the plus side, she got some exercise. It's a good thing, she thinks, that her body has benefitted, because her spirit is awfully tired.

## My Life with Teenagers

Erin Waugh, ACC, CPCC

When I tell people that I have two teenagers at home, I am often met with a head shake, raised eyebrows and some statement like "don't worry, it will be over soon." Every time I experience this I feel annoyed and I'll tell you why.

In a typical evening when both my children are home, I can expect the following:

- At least *one weight lifting technique* demonstration
- Some pliés, high kicks and/or pirouettes
- At least one Red Hot Chili Peppers song played really loud
- Kitchen dancing
- Dishes left on the counter, coffee table, shelving unit
- A Cliff Bar wrapper on the counter right above the garbage
- Cycling kit on a living room chair and the entryway floor – spilling into the living room
- An episode of the West Wing for the 4th time with smart, funny commentary
- A 20 minute rant about how disorganized rehearsal was or how hard dance class was
- An exaggerated statement on being *tired and sore*
- A story related to a descent on bike with cornering at 75km/h
- Someone doing sit-ups
- Someone using a foam roller
- At least one group belly laugh

This is my life with teenagers. It isn't what I braced myself for during their early years, nor is it what one might see on a sitcom about families. There haven't been huge fights with anyone storming out of the house. I haven't had to set a curfew or put in consequences related to drinking or drugs. There hasn't been any concern about sex-too-early or getting-into-the-wrong-crowd or poor performance at school. There is a limited amount



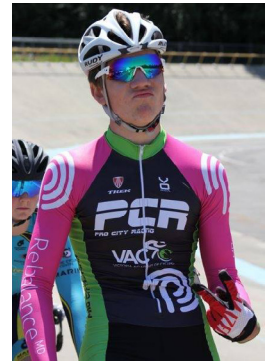
of eye-rolling and "god mom, you're so embarrassing." My kids aren't afraid to hug me in public and don't ask to be dropped off down the street from school.

At the risk of sounding like a mom who brags about her children, I have two very different, very passionate kids who are driven to succeed in their lives. One is a performer and has the potential to be an academic. One is an athlete who wants to ride for Canada at the 2020 Olympic Games. Both have a healthy sense of self and know that their success will depend on hard work, talent, and a lot of luck. Both have pragmatic back up plans. For this, I take some credit but for the most part believe that I was just lucky that I got these kids with their unique temperaments at this time.

I'll admit that I am torn in the moments when I am frustrated beyond imagining about their inability to clean up after themselves. How can I really be mad about the mess my son left in the garage (again) after he was cleaning his bike – the bike that may well take him to the Canadian National Team? He is 16 and his brain is still finding its way down the pathways that lead to "oh, now my bike is clean, I should return the space to the way I found it." So far, he only makes it down that path to the clean bike. Sometimes, he partially cleans up after himself and I think: "that's progress" just before I calmly remind him that he's not finished. I'm tired of reminding but then again...there is progress. I also remember something that their dad used to say: "every time I pick something up of theirs, I tell myself that I live with people I love." Powerful words and when I remember them the frustration disappears.

Despite the necessity to remind, remind, remind, I find myself searching for moments to *parent* them, because I think that maybe because I have teenagers, I should be *parenting*. When I say parenting, I guess I mean talking to them about good and bad choices, and setting limits, and enforcing those limits. Then I realize that I did a lot of that kind of parenting when they were little and the result is that I don't really have to do it so much now.

There's a lot my kids have to learn (after all, their brains are still developing): they are easily frustrated and don't always remember that sometimes you have to step away from something in order to calm down and solve the problem. My son's frustration has big male energy attached to it, my daughters emotional and dramatic; both fill the house. They haven't yet realized how their own emotional field fills the space around them and how to control their impact on others. They don't clean up after themselves without being reminded and sometimes even when reminded, they don't do it. They don't always budget their money and time so that everything that needs to get done, will get done. They still sometimes still need me to wake them up and help them with lunches. I still have to remind them to pack a toothbrush.



What I don't have to do is worry about them struggling to make good choices in the world and for that I am thankful. My kids carry with them the knowledge and comfort that they live in a community that for the most part treats them with respect. Because of that, they treat others with respect and kindness. They carry with them a passion for something that they were encouraged to find. They "walk comfortably in the world" and when faced with a challenge, they weigh their options with the help of their community and choose accordingly. Most of the time they choose wisely but when they don't, they learn from their mistakes.

I'm thankful that I'm blessed with the demonstrations and dancing, that my kids know who they are and that they like themselves. I'm comfortable with the thought of them someday soon going out into the world to live their lives. When that day comes, I'll be ready because they will be too. I'll miss the demonstrations though...they are the best part of my day.

When you hear me say that I have teenagers, please don't think "oh...poor you!" On the contrary: think "lucky her!" because I'm LOVING IT.

## *Call for Submissions*

Please consider submitting an article to the Confluence - email [Erin Waugh](#) or [Mark Kunen](#) with your feedback article, or your idea for an article. Don't forget that we want to hear about your SD project, your vacation, or really anything you'd like to share with your colleagues.