



UPDATE FROM CACAP EXECUTIVE

Fostering community through advocacy, education and collaboration

Dr. Jordan Cohen, Secretary, CACAP

Writing this communication on the weekend of Valentine's Day, Chinese New Year (year of the Ox) and Family Day while Vancouver was being covered in a warm blanket of snow, provided me the opportunity to appreciate what I have. As subspecialists, who care for the mental health of children and young adults throughout our country, we have a lot to be grateful for. We get the opportunity to interact with our patients not just to improve their health, but to help shape the next generation's view of the world. We are in particularly trying times these days with the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to challenge us as a society. The effect has been profound on our patients and their families. Children who should ideally be playing with peer groups have been confined to homes. Adolescents who normally are very interactive with peers in both school and extracurricular activities have been asked to limit any social interactions. Due to many schools and other activities shifting to online, the amount of screen time has overwhelmingly increased for this population. Many older youths who normally have jobs as their source of funds have lost their jobs or chosen not to work due to an older or immunocompromised loved one who also lives in their bubble. Despite these challenges the work we do with our patients helps build their resilience.

I am thankful for the opportunity to work with our academy, especially during this exciting time when we are discussing a name change that could more clearly identify the population we treat. This could open up more doors to future collaboration, education and advocacy as an organization with our members, patients/families and colleagues who also provide care to this population. This name change was

the topic of the recent organized debate that occurred on February 1st.

Without further ado, here is the update from "the great debate"!

We started with our CACAP president, Dr. Claire De Souza noting that the board feels strongly that changing the name of the Academy to include Youth will help maintain the Academy's relevance as an organisation, provide a home for youth psychiatrists and help facilitate collaborative education, research, clinical training and advocacy. She summarized the results of the fall 2020 survey that asked the membership for their opinions on changing the Academy's name. I must thank all the speakers who contributed to this activity. Drs. Peter Szatmari, Simon Davidson, and Andrea Levinson lead the debate Supporting the name change. Drs. John McLennan, and Peter Braunberger contributed to the arguments Against the name change. This was both an important intellectual exercise, but I believe most in attendance would also have said it was truly fun to watch. The board was very pleased that this event was well attended by our members. There is ongoing collection of comments from attendees and we hope to collate this information to share in the future.

At the end of the debate, we polled the participants with three questions: 1. Who won the debate?, 2. What age range should our Academy represent?, and 3. What terminology should we use in our name? I believe to the credit of our members who lead this debate, the decision was split at 50:50. Regarding the age range we represent, about 50% responded up to age 24 or 25 approximately 35% responded up to the age of 21, and approximately 15% responded up

to the age of 19 years. Attendees preferred the term “Child and Youth” (approximately 72%) to use in our name versus approximately 27% in of “Child and Adolescent”. The CA-CAP section of the Journal hopes to include an essay from the Supporting side and one from the Against side in the next issue due out this summer.

So, in this year of the Ox, who’s attributes include resilience, let me again applaud our group for their own resilience and industry to continue doing all we can to support the health and wellness of the population we serve. Let us remain optimistic over the next few months as our nation continues vaccinating our population against COVID-19. Let us continue to advocate for our patients/families and

one another. Please let us know what else we can do as an organization to add value for our members.

On a final note, I want to remind everyone of our upcoming annual conference this fall (September 11-14th, 2021) which will again be a virtual meeting. If it is anything like last year’s meeting, we are in for a treat. Abstract submissions are due by March 31, 2021.

Sincerely,

Jordan Cohen, MD, FRCP(C)

Secretary, Canadian Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry