



Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder



Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale



Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada

Mental illness and addictions are 24-hour-a-day problems.

Now there's 24-hour-a-day help.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Visit us at:
Suite 3B,
219 Dufferin Street,
Toronto

Walk-in:
9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Monday – Friday

Support Line:
(Available in English only.)
3 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Monday – Friday

Information Line:
Staff-assisted calls:
9 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Monday – Friday

Recorded messages:
24 hours a day,
7 days a week

**Ontario Toll-free
Information and
Support Line:**

1 800 463 6273
or
in Toronto,
416 595 6111

Web site:
www.camh.net/McLaughlin



If you need someone to talk to about mental health or addiction problems, or just have a question, we can help.

Simply pick up the phone, your mouse or drop by our location in Toronto.

Real people with reliable answers. Totally confidential.

Sometimes knowing *who* to ask for help is hard.

Now finding *where* to ask isn't.



The R. Samuel McLaughlin Addiction and Mental Health Information Centre provides:

Up-to-date information on mental health and addiction problems, trends, facts, programs, treatments, and prevention strategies through a toll-free Information and Support Line, a Web site, recorded messages and storefront.

Confidential and anonymous telephone support.

Our recorded messages span a wide range of topics, including:

- *facts on mental health, alcohol and drugs*
- *information guides*
- *help for families.*

Information about prevention, support and treatment resources in Ontario.



There is help. There is hope.

Information is available in English and French.
Some services are available in a variety of other languages.



Dear Readers,

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health is proud to publish this series of mental health and addiction stories in photographs. It is our hope that the stories - which describe drinking, gambling, depression, drugs, and post-traumatic stress - will dispel common misconceptions about these illnesses, infuse hope that help is available and also stimulate action to secure such support.

Throughout the duration of this project, we collaborated with diverse community organizations to better understand the needs of each group. We hope that each language version provides helpful and accurate addiction and mental health information to communities that may not have had full access to such materials.

We would like to thank the many dedicated individuals, and community partners, who have given their time to assist us with the best approaches in disseminating this material for their respective communities. We also thank the Ontario Region Settlement Branch of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which generously funded this initiative.

My colleagues and I hope that these resources help you to meet your information needs in an effective and informative manner. We expect, however, that there is room for improvement. Please do not hesitate to suggest ways of improving these materials, or strengthening access to such information, if you feel that your community might be better served. Many thanks for your kind consideration.

Akwatu Khenti
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) managed the OASIS contract. The project manager was Antoine Dérose, Project Consultant for Central East Region, and Saroj Bains was the photo-novellas' Project Co-ordinator/Consultant. For the reprint and new translations, the project manager was Akwatu Khenti, Director of International Health, and Norma Hannant was the photo-novellas' Project Co-ordinator/Consultant.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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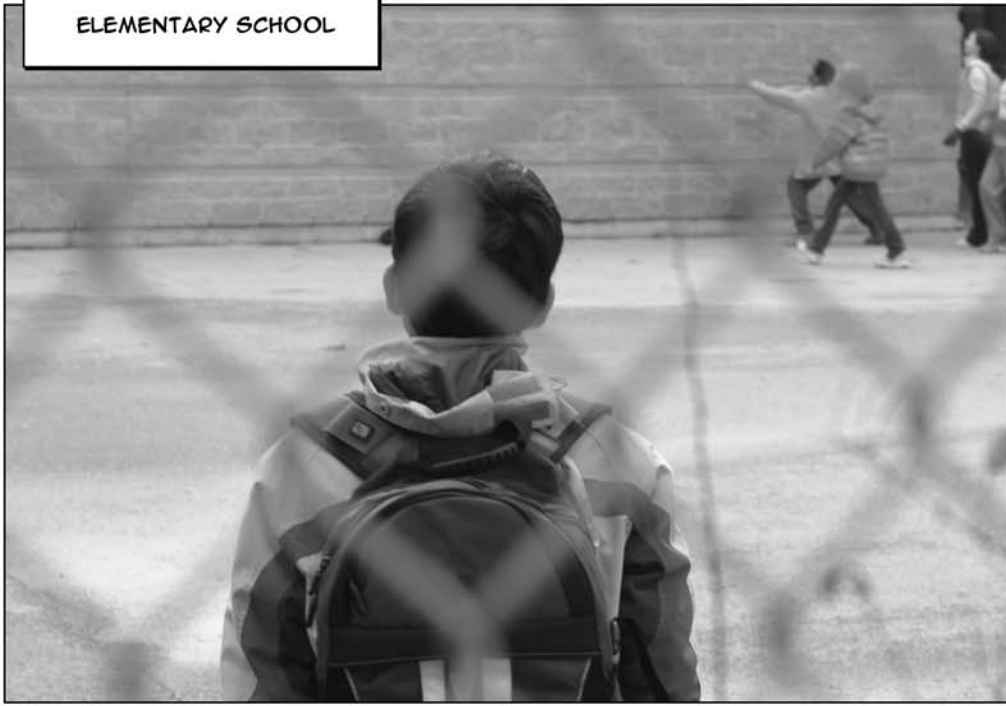
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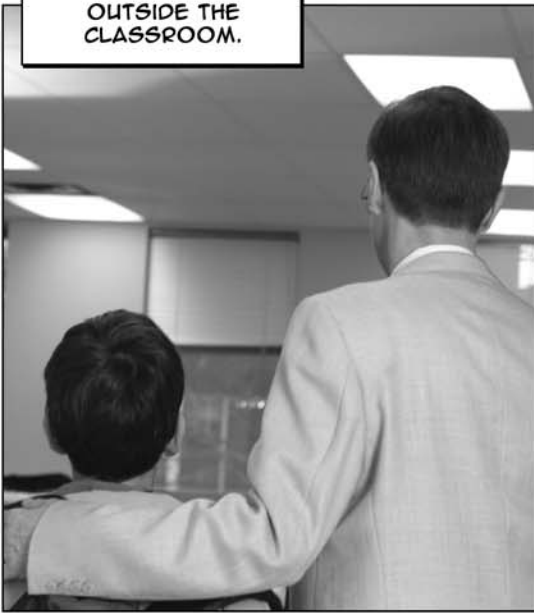
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



HEY CARLOS,
ARE YOU
LOST?

I'LL TAKE YOU
BACK TO CLASS.

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM.



GET LOST! I WAS HERE FIRST!



LEAVE ME ALONE! IT'S THE SEAT NEAR THE DOOR! IT'S MINE!



CLASS, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET CARLOS. HE'S NEW HERE. I'D LIKE YOU TO PLEASE WELCOME HIM AND HELP HIM IF HE NEEDS IT.



ALL RIGHT, GO AND SIT DOWN.



BEFORE WE GET STARTED, THERE'S GOING TO BE A FIRE DRILL THIS MORNING.

ALARM BELL SOUNDS



SCHOOL WASHROOM,
CARLOS TRIES TO HIDE.



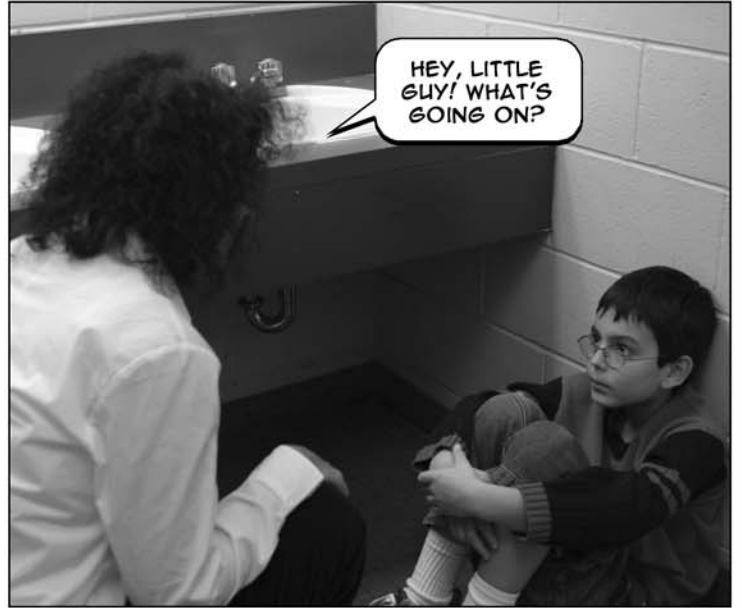
SOMETIME LATER



HELLO? IS ANYONE IN HERE?



HEY, LITTLE GUY! WHAT'S GOING ON?



ARE YOU OK? I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU. MY NAME IS NOELLA. I TAKE CARE OF THE CLEANING. COME HERE, DID THE NOISES SCARE YOU?





THERE, THERE.
CALM DOWN.
IT'S GOING TO
BE ALL RIGHT...

DO YOU WANT TO
TELL ME WHAT
HAPPENED?
WHAT'S YOUR
NAME?



CARLOS.

I'M SCARED. I
WANT TO GO
HOME. I WANT
MY MOM.

WHAT ARE YOU
SCARED OF?



WHERE I'M FROM, THERE ARE
SOLDIERS EVERYWHERE. IN
THE VILLAGE, A BELL RINGS TO
GIVE US A WARNING. I DON'T
WANT TO HEAR BELLS ANY
MORE. I'M SCARED...



YOU'RE SAFE HERE. THIS SCHOOL
WON'T PUT YOU IN DANGER.
WHAT YOU HEARD JUST A WHILE
AGO WAS A FIRE DRILL.

WE DO THAT REGULARLY TO TEST
THE ALARM SYSTEM AND TRAIN THE
STUDENTS AND STAFF TO REACT
PROPERLY. I PROMISE YOU THAT
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO BE AFRAID
OF HERE. DO YOU BELIEVE ME?



YOU WON'T HAVE TO FACE THAT HERE. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AT THIS SCHOOL?

ONE MONTH.

AND DO YOU OFTEN GET SCARED LIKE THAT?



ALL THE TIME.



YOU KNOW, IT HAPPENS TO A LOT OF PEOPLE, GETTING JUMPY, FOR DIFFERENT REASONS. LET'S TALK TO YOUR PARENTS ABOUT IT. WHAT DO YOU THINK?



I COME FROM CHILE. I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT. I WENT THROUGH IT, BUT IN A DIFFERENT WAY. FOR A LONG TIME I HAD NIGHTMARES.

I FOUND TALKING TO MY PASTOR HELPFUL. LITTLE BY LITTLE I FELT MORE SECURE.



YES.

HERE, BLOW YOUR NOSE. YOU'RE OKAY. WE SHOULD GET BACK TO CLASS. EVERYBODY MUST BE WONDERING WHERE YOU HAVE GONE.

OUTSIDE THE WASHROOM, CARLOS BUMPS INTO A CLASSMATE.



CARLOS!
WHERE DID YOU
GO?



WE WERE
WORRIED
ABOUT YOU,
YOU KNOW!

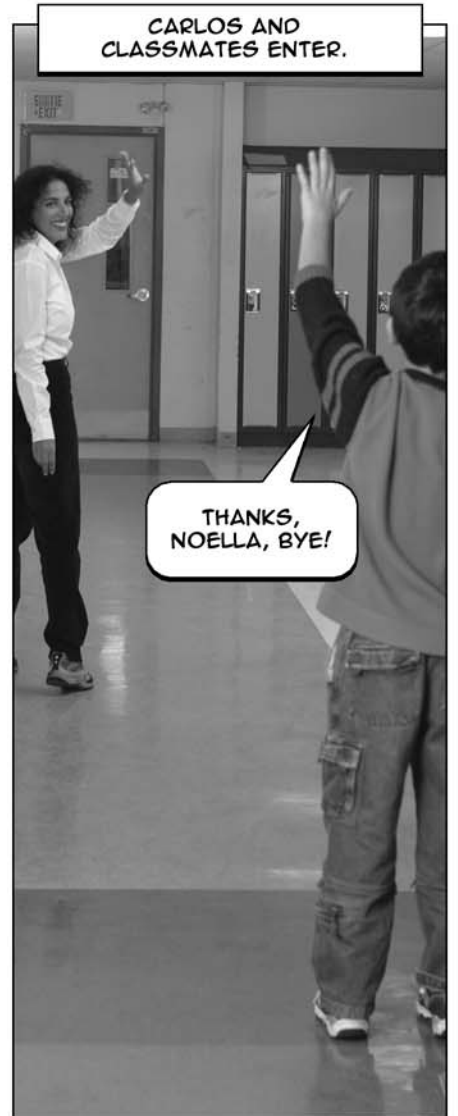
WE LOOKED
EVERYWHERE.



YOU MISSED A LOT
IN CLASS. MR. DAVID
SHOWED US SLIDES
OF DIFFERENT
COUNTRIES AROUND
THE WORLD. WE SAW
WHAT THEY LOOK
LIKE, WHAT THEY
PRODUCE. COME ON,
WE'LL FILL YOU IN.



YOU'D BETTER GET
GOING. WE'LL TALK
TO YOUR TEACHER
AFTER CLASS.



CARLOS AND
CLASSMATES ENTER.

THANKS,
NOELLA, BYE!

SEVERAL MONTHS HAVE PASSED.
A NEW BUILDING IS BEING BUILT
ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE
SCHOOL.



PASS THE BALL
CARLOS!



A TRUCK SQUEALS ITS TIRES
WHILE BRAKING



AT THE SAME TIME IT
RELEASES ITS LOAD WITH A
LOUD NOISE.



ARE YOU
OKAY,
CARLOS?



YOU KNOW IT WAS NOTHING. A TRUCK WAS DUMPING ITS LOAD. IT HAPPENS ALL THE TIME ON THE CONSTRUCTION SITE. NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.



THE STUDENTS SMILE.

NO, THAT'S RIGHT!

YOU JUMPED AS WELL, KHALID.

THAT'S RIGHT! I AM VERY JUMPY. TWO YEARS AGO I WAS IN A CAR ACCIDENT WITH MY PARENTS. I STILL DON'T LIKE THAT KIND OF NOISE.



MY PASTOR SAYS THAT IT'S OK TO GET NERVOUS AS LONG AS I KEEP TALKING ABOUT IT.



LET'S GET BACK TO THE GAME!



WHAT IS POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)?

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder. It affects people who have gone through trauma. Trauma is a terrifying event in which grave physical harm occurred or was threatened, and the person feels intense fear, helplessness or horror. The events that can trigger PTSD include domestic abuse, violent crime, rape, car or airplane accidents, terrorist bombings, war, genocide, earthquakes or other disasters. It can be a one-time traumatic event, or prolonged, repeated trauma as well.

HOW COMMON IS PTSD?

PTSD affects between two per cent and five per cent of the population. It was once thought to be mainly a disorder of war veterans who had been involved in heavy combat. But researchers now know that PTSD also affects both female and male civilians. About twice as many women as men suffer from PTSD after a trauma. PTSD can develop at any age, including childhood.

SYMPTOMS OF PTSD

The symptoms of PTSD usually appear within three months of the traumatic event, but sometimes they do not begin until years later. The symptoms include:

- difficulty falling or staying asleep
- unwanted thoughts, memories, images or dreams about the event
- acting and feeling as if the traumatic event is happening again
- extreme vigilance – feeling watchful all the time and being easily startled
- extreme distress when something reminds the person of the event (reminders or “cues” might be thoughts, feelings, situations, people, activities, or things that the person associates with the trauma)
- avoiding cues associated with the trauma
- emotional numbness and withdrawal; losing interest or not taking part in the important activities of life
- feelings of guilt
- memory problems and poor concentration
- anxiety, irritability or outbursts of anger
- sadness, spontaneous crying, a sense of despair and hopelessness.

CAN PTSD BE TREATED?

In some cases the symptoms of PTSD disappear with time. In others, they go on for many years. PTSD often occurs with – or leads to – other psychiatric illnesses, such as depression, or substance use problems.

Not everyone who goes through a trauma needs treatment. Some people recover from PTSD with the help of family, friends and support from their faith community.

However, there are effective medical treatments for people with PTSD who need them. These treatments include medications for depression and special types of psychotherapy, including cognitive behavioural therapy and exposure therapy.

WHERE TO GET HELP

Here are some places you can contact if you or someone you know needs help with post-traumatic stress disorder:

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Toronto: 416 535-8501

R. Samuel McLaughlin Addiction and Mental Health Information Centre

Toronto: 416 595-6111

Toll-free number: 1 800 463-6273

Website: www.camh.net

Across Boundaries

Across Boundaries provides supports and services to people from many ethnic and cultural communities who have mental health problems

Toronto: 416 787-3007

Website: www.web.net/~accbound

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture

Toronto: 416 363-1066

Website: www.ccvvt.org

Ontario Association of Social Workers

Toronto: 416 923-4848

Website: www.oasw.org

Ontario Self-Help Network (OSHNET) of the Self-Help Resource Centre

Toronto: 416 487-4355

Toll-free: 1 888 283-8806

Website: www.selfhelp.on.ca/oshnet.html

Assaulted Women's Helpline

Assaulted Women's Helpline provides telephone crisis counselling, information and support for women who have been assaulted/abused.

Toronto: 416 863-0511

Website: www.awhl.org

The 519 Anti-Violence Program

The 519 Anti-Violence Program provides assistance for lesbian or bisexual women experiencing violence.

Toronto: 416 392-6877 ext. 117

Website: www.the519.org

Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic

The Barbra Schlifer Clinic provides counseling, legal assistance and interpreters for women who are survivors of violence.

Toronto: 416 323-9149

Website: www.schliferclinic.com

Women's College Ambulatory Care Centre

Women's Recovering From Abuse Program (WRAP)

WRAP provides programs for women recovering from abuse.

Toronto: 416 323-6400 ext. 4863

Website: www.womenscolleghospital.ca/programs/program126.html

For information on addiction and mental health issues or other resources, please contact CAMH's R. Samuel McLaughlin Addiction and Mental Health Information Centre:

Ontario toll-free: 1 800 463-6273 • Toronto: 416 595-6111

To make a donation, please contact:
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Foundation
Tel.: 416 979-6909 • E-mail: foundation@camh.net

If you have questions, compliments or concerns about services at CAMH, please call our Client Relations Co-ordinator at:
Tel.: 416 535-8501 ext. 2028.

Website: www.camh.net



A Pan American Health Organization / World Health Organization Collaborating Centre
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