

Reach Out Psychosis – Okanagan Tour: December 3-7, 2007

Osoyoos Secondary School – December 6, 2007

One of the highlights of the 2007 Okanagan Reach Out Psychosis Tour was our visit to Osoyoos Secondary School. We arrived at OSS on Thursday, December 6th, 2007. They have a beautiful theater and stage area, and right away we felt welcomed and comfortable. Margie Nazaroff, our staff liaison, was friendly and accommodating. The students were more than happy to help us move tables and stage equipment around as we set up for the performance.

The entire staff and school attended the presentation, so we had a nice sized audience, all of whom were lively and attentive. The show was incredibly successful and many students asked insightful, meaningful questions about Psychosis, the negative stigma surrounding Psychosis, and ways of finding and receiving help.

A successful show is always satisfying, however, at OSS, our time spent with some students in the Alternate classroom with teacher Ardie, after the show, was particularly rewarding. Our band's Bass Player, Mike Young, discusses his experience with Psychosis related to Depression in high school during our show, and students always find his story fascinating. As we sat in a circle in the Alternate classroom, students asked Mike and me, (the show Coordinator & Emcee), various heartfelt and touching questions surrounding Psychosis and its impact on one of their students.

The student who had recently experienced Psychosis was courageous and direct as he spoke about his difficulties with school, friends and life in general. He was optimistic and confident about his future and his dialogue with the students and Mike was emotional and uplifting. The other students started to understand that a person who experiences Psychosis is very likely to have a full recovery with proper treatment, and can go on to lead a productive, healthy life. Also expressed was the importance of talking about Psychosis in an effort to erase the negative stigma that surrounds it.

The students were caring, sensitive and incredibly mature; they really care about their classmate, and that was evident during our discussion with them. Their teacher, Ardie, was compassionate and extremely invested in her students. I am very proud of the students at OSS, for their attentiveness and also for their caring, compassionate attitude toward this very serious brain condition. I feel incredibly confident in the powerful messages that the Reach Out Psychosis Presentation is sending to students around the province, and validated that our message is being heard – This program is making a difference in the lives of BC youth.