

For Immediate Release
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Kitchener, ON

Leslie Josling, Executive Director of KW Counselling Services, moves to Family Counselling Centre of Brant. Her last day at the agency is September 21, 2018.

In 2006, Leslie Josling became Executive Director of KW Counselling Services. The agency had just moved from UpTown Waterloo to its current home in Kitchener in a brand new building designed with counselling in mind. Josling took the reins from Bernard Porlier who had served as Executive Director from 1976-2006. Including Josling, the agency has had only three executive directors since it was founded in 1950.

KW Counselling Services' Board of Directors began the process of selecting a new Executive Director over the summer months but they do not anticipate having a successor in place until into the new year. In the interim, Diane McGregor and Noel Blake will serve as Interim Co-Executive Directors. McGregor has been with the agency for more than five years, serving as director of its parenting education programming. Blake has been with the agency just over two years, serving as Director of Finance & IT.

Josling leaves to take on the Executive Director role at Family Counselling Centre of Brant. Josling lives in Brantford and cites the commute as one reason the new role was attractive to her. "I leave KW Counselling Services," says Josling, "confident in its future, knowing that it is in the hands of good stewards. The agency is a fine catch for a new leader and I am eager to see it thrive under new leadership in the future."

Paul Rossi, President of KW Counselling Services' Board of Directors says, "we are saddened to lose Leslie. She has provided excellent leadership over the past 12 years. Our Walk In Counselling Clinic was developed by Leslie and the research showing its clinical effectiveness has led to similar clinics being created throughout Ontario, across Canada, and even in other countries!"

Josling notes that, alongside the Walk In Counselling Clinic, one of the programs she is most proud of is OK2BME. "OK2BME began as a program to support LGBTQ2+ youth in our community and, in the last several years, we have managed to find grants from partners like the Ontario Trillium Foundation, RBC Foundation, the Astley Family Foundation, and KW Community Foundation to expand it." Josling is quick to add, "we have come a long way towards acceptance for LGBTQ2+ people but we still have a long way to go. Local and international hits on our website always climb based on events across the world. For example, India's recent decriminalization of gay sex, or the Pulse massacre in Orlando. Ideally, we would spread the message that it is OK2BME not only within Waterloo Region but across the country, and to other nations."

A farewell gathering was held for Josling at the Delta Waterloo on September 13th. In attendance were representatives from House of Friendship, United Way Waterloo Region Communities, KW Community Foundation, Women’s Crisis Services of Waterloo Region, and the Ministry of Community and Social Services. At this gathering, Rossi said, “Leslie will be sorely missed, as I’m sure all of you agree. We have our work cut out for us to fill her shoes.”

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About KW Counselling Services

KW Counselling Services is a multi-service agency offering counselling supports to individuals, couples and families in the Waterloo Region. In addition to our counselling work we offer a variety of parenting education workshops, leadership training for members of the multicultural community, and community development support for newcomers to Canada and the LGBTQ2+ community. We are proud to have been supporting children, youth and families in this community since 1950.

About Leslie Josling

Leslie’s academic and work history is varied, with training and a career that has taken her to Austria, Great Britain, the United States and Canada. She was raised in Vienna, Austria, where her father worked with the United Nations, and returned to Canada to complete her undergraduate degree in Geophysics at the University of Western Ontario. After discovering her passion for working with people, Leslie completed her Master’s degree in London, England and Boston, Massachusetts where she specialized in counselling children and families in hospitals.

After a number of years working in hospitals, Leslie accepted employment at Haldimand Norfolk R.E.A.C.H, a rural multi-service agency. She was initially the director of Children’s Mental Health and later assumed responsibility for Family Services with individuals, couples and families. She spent 15 years at R.E.A.C.H. prior to coming to work as Executive Director at KW Counselling Services.