



New Brunswick Human Rights Commission

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Partnering with schools

Well I think we've already started it; it's *ad hoc* and maybe not as structured as it needs to be. That comes back again to resources—people wise and money wise. That's that I would say, in my mind, the public school system and post-secondary school system need to have a component of human rights training and practical information right from elementary level all the way up to post-secondary. It's great to see, for example, a couple of our post-secondary institutions offering courses and formal training on human rights law and issues, but we need to reach people younger, before all of their values and their perspectives are set in stone. It's easier to help shape them than it is to rebuild them later in life when they've already been hard-wired into certain ways of thinking. I think again it comes back to what the Commission has always tried to do: to create more awareness and education about the value of human rights, not just what they are but also what they contribute to humanity and democracy, but also to make sure that people know that they have an obligation and responsibility to make sure that not only their own human rights are protected and enforced but all the other people that they come in contact with, either in a casual or more regimented relationship, such as an employer-employee or landlord-tenant, etcetera.

I think that work will never be done, because there's always going to be new people born and coming into the system and new information developed. We also have to be vigilant in making sure we keep aware of what's happening in other jurisdictions, particularly North America in terms of positive things that we can copy and move more quickly to implement, because of the research and work of testing concepts being done, but also to be aware of negative things happening in other jurisdictions, so that we have the arguments and the preparation and the information ready to debate those issues when they spill over here in our jurisdiction. The reality is, with the global world today, with the Internet, mass media and what-have-you, territorial boundaries don't mean as much as they used to in terms of the impact that information has on either negatively or positively influencing individual citizens across the province.