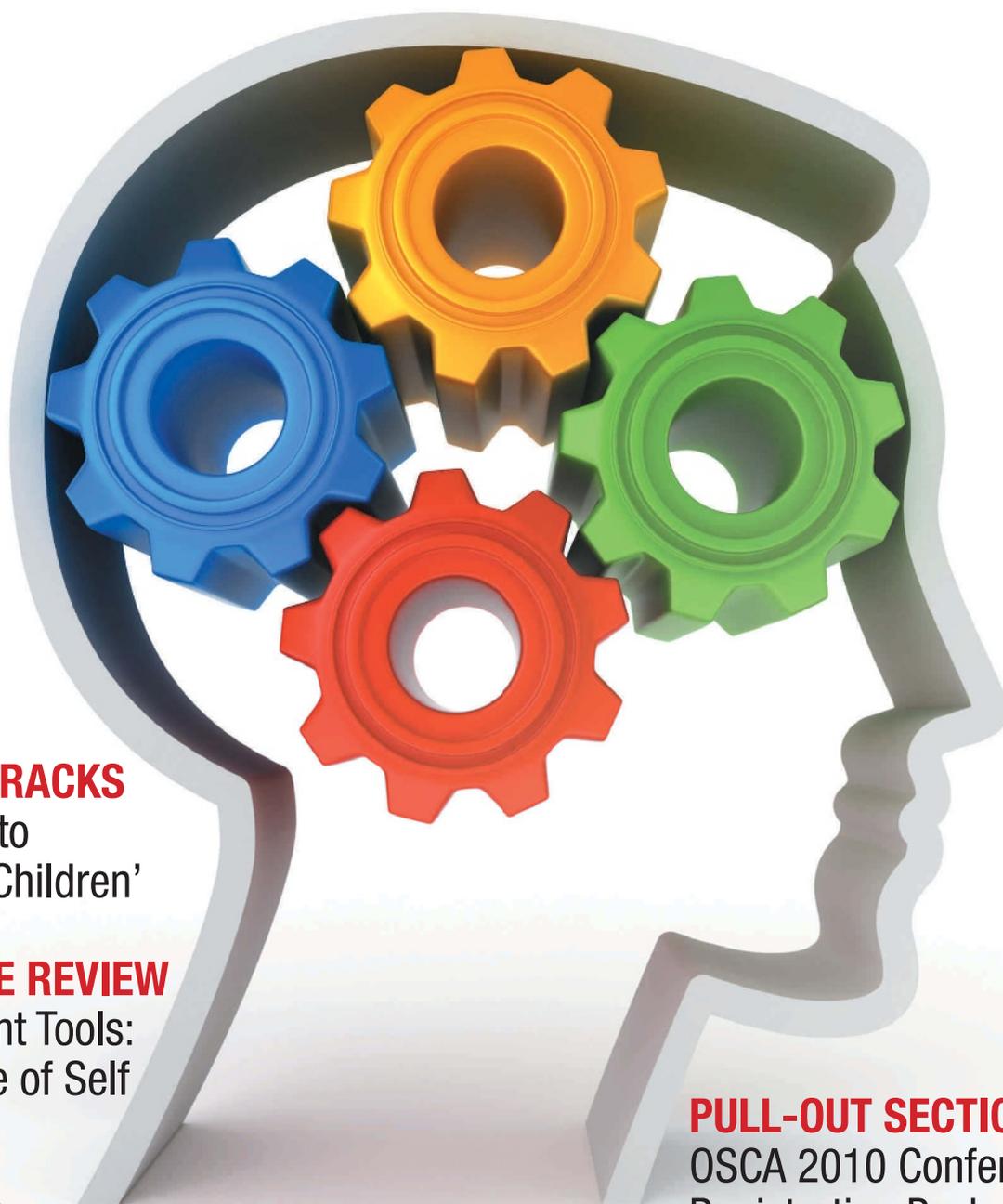


OSCA *TODAY*



CAREER TRACKS

On a Path to
'Free The Children'

RESOURCE REVIEW

Assessment Tools:
Knowledge of Self

PULL-OUT SECTION

OSCA 2010 Conference
Registration Package



Send Your Students on a Journey of Self-Discovery

By Molly King, PDSB; Richard Coulson, DDSB; and Kelly Clark

Everything that gets in the way of students reaching their potential is due to lack of knowledge of self. That's a heavy statement, but consider this:

It is well documented that **respect** is the number one indicator for success. Without respect, students have low self-esteem, give into peer pressure and are affected by bullying. With respect, students are open to learn and share with their peers. This helps everybody discover their interests and gain the knowledge of self necessary to make career choices and future goals that align with their potential.

Pause for a moment and think of a student at your school who is truly happy.

Their happiness is built on their interests and pursuing their interests—things that are earned and lasting. There is something really fair about this that levels the playing field. Everybody has interests—you can't buy interests and you can't sell interests. They are there for everybody to discover and share.

While teaching in Canada and England as a full-time teacher and supply teacher my experiences ranged from Kindergarten to Grade 12 Classes for Special Education to Gifted and ESL Students. It was amazing because regardless of age, ability or demographic - you see the same things in every classroom: Everybody knows that respect is important, but there is a lot of confusion around 'how' to build respect.

It's so frustrating to see students focus so much time and energy



Gr. 6 DSBN Teacher Wayne Hodgson with Nicole Wachner, Liam Pollock & NOBODY turned SOMEBODY!

trying to 'fit-in' by being *the same* as everybody else. All this lost opportunity to figure out the interests that make them unique and then reach their potential by using their 'differences' to make a difference.

All the stories we love center around this universal challenge of self-discovery and the roller-coaster rides we go on in order to get there. The success of 'The Breakfast Club', 'Pretty in Pink', and other John Hughes Films reflect this common experience. We cheer on the main character and finally they come back to the age-old conclusion: how exciting and simplified life becomes when you finally decide to relax and 'be yourself'.

So much of this heartache can be avoided by simply giving students the opportunity to explore who they are.

As educators we have an incredible opportunity and responsibility to steer students away from the age-old epidemic of trying to build self-esteem through superficial means that preoccupy students from gaining knowledge of self.

But how do we give students this opportunity? Classes have up to 30 students and only one teacher. With the entire curriculum to cover, where is there time to guide each student in discovering their very personal interests and experiencing them in action?

continued

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

By: Molly King, PDSB

Our school Guidance Counselor, Chris Casey, came to me with a program called *Who Is NOBODY?/Qui est PERSONNE?* that has sent each of my students on a journey of self discovery.

The whole program is based on 5 choose-your-own-adventure steps

that support students in discovering their strengths and using them to help others.

For example, a student in my class loves art but didn't realize how empowering her interests were until it was her turn with *Who Is NOBODY?*'s decision-making materials that helped combine her artistic talents with her love for animals! She painted beautiful posters asking students to recycle

towels to be donated to the Humane Society.

Suddenly a shy student in my class became the leader of an initiative that would help an organization she cared about in her community. It was amazing to see her self-esteem develop through her knowledge of self applied to a practical experience.

Lia collected over 80 towels from students in Grade 1 to 8 at our school. This is just one of the 27 different projects my class created using the *Who Is NOBODY?* Self-Discovery Vehicle.

SECONDARY SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

By: Richard Coulson, DDSB

Mandatory Community Involvement Hours offer a great opportunity for students to begin a journey of self-discovery. However, the success of this experience hinges on the choices students make. Over the years I've seen students choose what is 'easy' rather than taking time to consider what they are really interested in and how it applies to their future.

When my Grade 11 Class participated in *Who Is NOBODY?* the program steered decision-making towards things that were personally impacting their lives and gave them a first-hand opportunity to experience the excitement of making a difference.

Who Is NOBODY? jump-started my class in identifying their interests so that they could pursue them via real-life experiences. *Who Is NOBODY?* also gave them the chance to reflect on what they accomplished, then share and celebrate with the class so they could all learn from each other. Many of my students completed their hours and continued volunteering! 

For more information, please visit www.whoisnobody.com or email info@whoisnobody.com.



AMERICA'S LEADING COLLEGE FOR STUDENTS
With Learning Disabilities and AD/HD

For more than 20 years, Landmark College in Putney, VT has been the leader in the creation of successful learning strategies **exclusively for students with learning disabilities and AD/HD**. More than eight of every 10 of our graduates go on to pursue bachelor's degree studies at the college of their choice.

**To Learn More
Visit One of Our Open Houses**

For information and to register, contact us at
PHONE **802-387-6718**
E-MAIL admissions@landmark.edu

