

Self-esteem problems trouble all ages



JENNIE ORMSON: Stouffville social worker worked in hospitals in England and Ireland.

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

Jennie Ormson knows how to listen.

The registered social worker has made it her mission to hear how people attempt to make sense of their life experiences.

She joined John Barnett's Individual and Family Counselling in Stouffville

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Jenny Ormson
Stouffville Social worker

last year and sees clients Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Unhealthy relationships, self-esteem problems, anxiety and family discord are what bring most of clients to her, she noted.

Through her work, Ms

People

Ormson has found poor self-esteem affects teenagers through women in their 60s.

"If you don't have good self-esteem, you don't expect to be treated well," the Toronto resident explained.

In addition to being trained in child and family therapy, she's counselled people in crisis situations.

While working in hospitals in Ireland and England, she worked with critically ill patients and those diagnosed with fatal diseases.

In the emergency department, she counselled people with traumas from car accidents or attempted suicides.

"Patients will just say they're fine and won't talk," Ms Ormson said, "but the family is really worried and scared and that is where the social worker would come in."

In her practice, she works closely with guidance counsellors at Stouffville District Secondary School, who refer teenagers and families. Referrals also come from family physicians.

"A number of families have come to me who are on the waiting list at the child and adolescent clinic at Markham Stouffville Hospital, who can't wait for months," she said.

An important part of her

work is counselling girls in unhealthy relationships. She talks to parents of teenagers when needed.

Speaking with guidance counsellors at SDSS is the starting point for teenagers who are experiencing major problems.

"Most teens come in knowing what they already want," said Janet Sherman, head of guidance at SDSS.

The office can refer teens to John Barnett's counselling

service, the child and adolescent clinic at the Markham Stouffville Hospital, Pathways if they need housing, welfare or the Neighbourhood Employment Resource Centre.

Peer pressure is an even bigger problem than difficulties with parent-teenager relationships, Ms Sherman said.

Ms Ormson can be reached at 647-295-8046.

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