



Marielle: New Brunswick's First and only Justice Facility Dog

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What is the Courage Centre?

- ▶ The Courage Centre is a new 19,000 square foot facility offering several programs and services for victims of family violence along with their children, as well as those suffering from emotional difficulties. The Beausejour Family Crisis Resource Centre operates the services found within the Courage Centre through a strong multidisciplinary and collaborative approach with various community and government partners.
- ▶ It is the only facility of its kind offering all services under one roof, which allows the client to focus on healing.
- ▶ Provincial pilot model



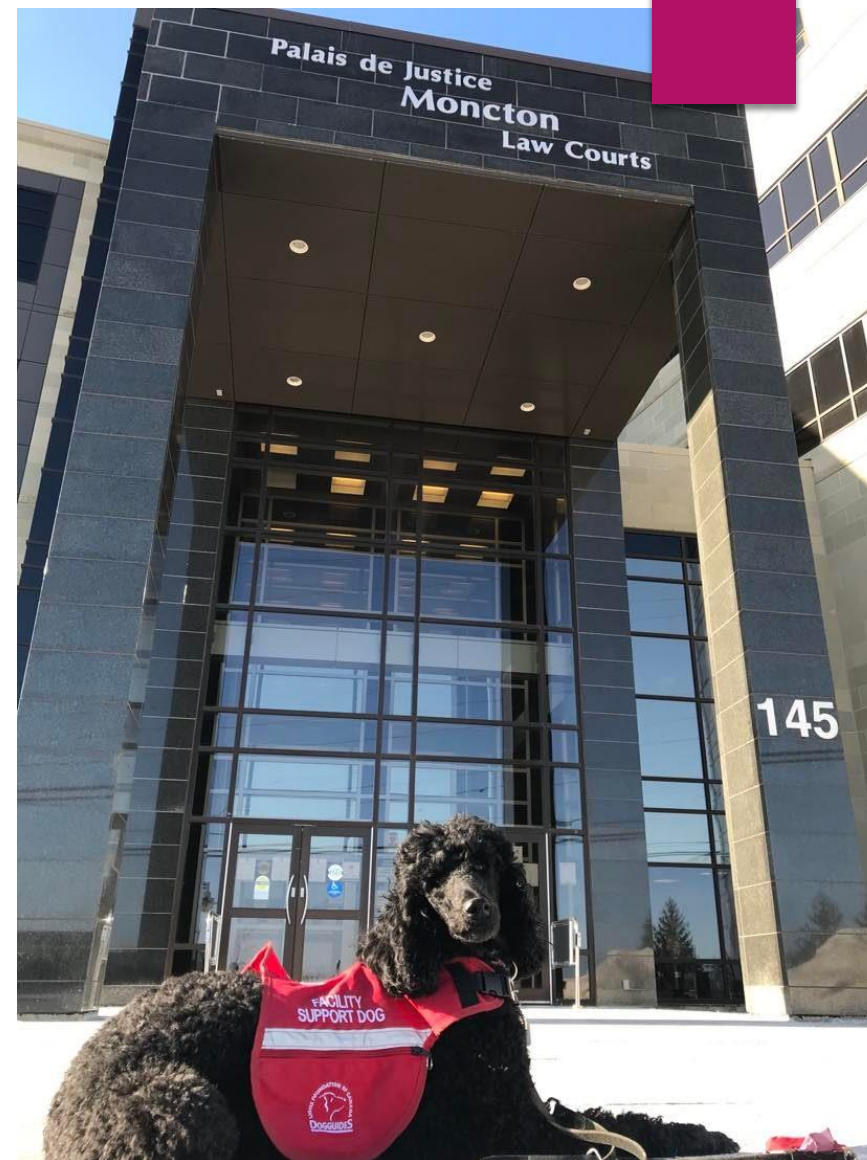


Justice Facility Dog Program

The Centre provides a specialized canine, bred and trained from a school accredited by Assistance Dog International, to provide support to child and adult victims of violence as they navigate the criminal justice process.

Program standards for Justice Facility Dogs

1. Dog is a graduate of an accredited assistance dog school. These schools are non-profits that are accredited by **Assistance Dog International**.
2. The dog's handler is a working professional in the criminal justice setting who has received specialized training in handling as well as in being a testimonial support person ensuring the preservation of legal proceedings.

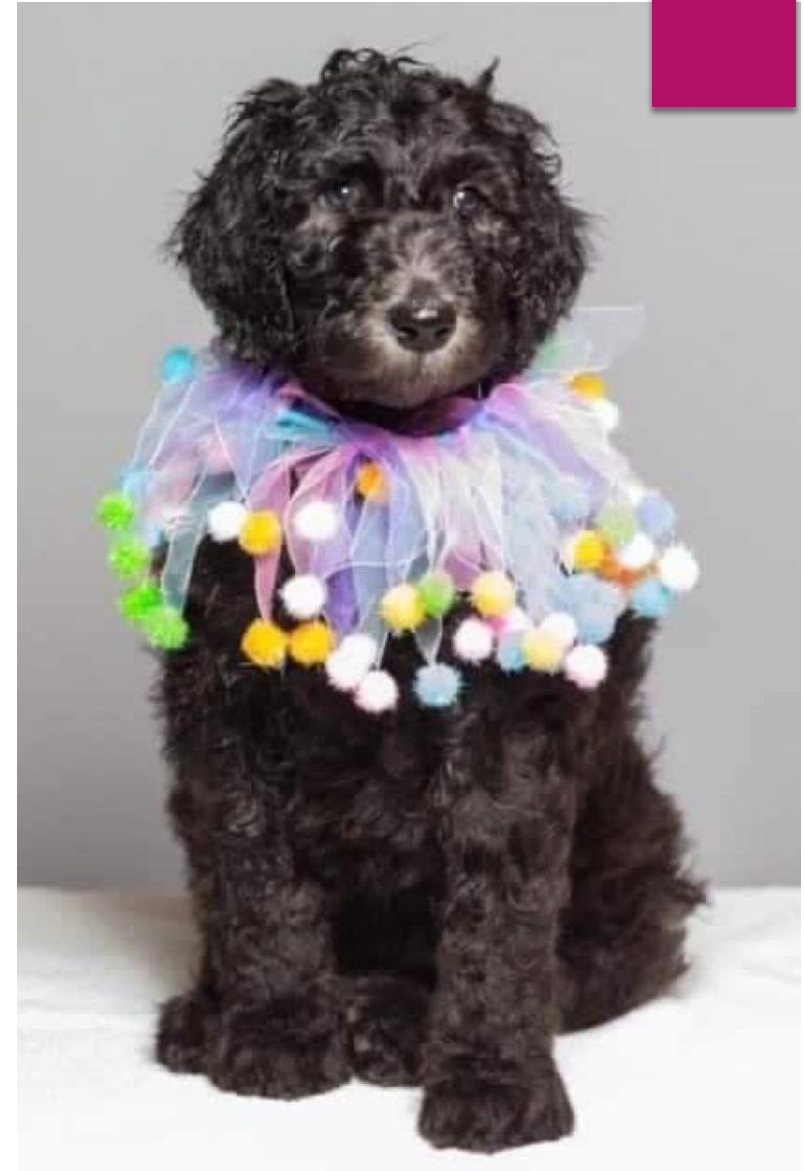


Current list of ADI schools placing Facility Dogs in Canada and United States

- ▶ Autisms Assistance Dogs (SW Ontario, Canada)
- ▶ COPE service dogs (Within 3 hrs of Barrie ON)
- ▶ Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides (Canada)
- ▶ Dogs with Wings (Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba Canada)
- ▶ National Service Dog Training Centre (Canada)
- ▶ Pacific Assistance Dog Society (PADS) (Canada)
- ▶ DUO dogs (Canada and U.S.)
- ▶ Guide Dogs of America (Canada and U.S.)
- ▶ Paws4 people (Canada and U.S.)

The training of the dog from an assistance dog school

1. The training starts at the DNA level – who is the mom and who is the dad. Looking for specific set of traits. Dogs are born directly at the ADI facility via breeding program.
2. Volunteer cuddlers direct from birth.
3. Constantly assessing the dogs.



The training timeline

Birth to 8 weeks (early scent work, training starts at 3 days old)

8 weeks to 12-15 months: Puppy raising in community

Testing 4 times during puppy raising- can be career changed at anytime

Final testing between 12 to 15 months
a. Recall for official training at campus
b. Career changed

Campus training for specific skills (8 to 10 months). Can be career changed at anytime

Handler attends on campus training (3 weeks)
a. Graduation (past public access test)
b. Career changed

Why utilize a facility dog from an ADI school?

1. Purpose-breeding
2. High training and testing standards
3. Must pass yearly public access testing (40 items) part of the ADI standards
4. Close to 50% assistance dogs in training will not pass (career changed). High percentage of even purpose bred, highly trained and tested assistance dogs close to 3 years in training are not chosen. THEREFORE, most dogs trained from a non-ADI school would be deemed inappropriate for working in a professional capacity.
5. These are not dogs placed in a professional setting as a puppy (cannot see into the future on a dog this young)
6. Specialized training for victims and those working professionals with trauma history- Extreme emotion, crowds, sitting still for HOURS at a time, loud sounds.

Why utilize a facility dog from an ADI school?

- ▶ Assistance Dogs International schools – high standard in multiple areas including: record keeping, human resources, facilities, dog training, dog health and safety, **INSURANCE AND LIABILITY******
- ▶ How does the front line professional guarantee the standards, health and safety, and liability if non-ADI dog is used?
- ▶ We have a responsibility to our community, to our most vulnerable, to our front line professionals that they have the best dog for the job (ADI accredited). Anything less is a disservice to those we serve.
- ▶ Consequences of not using ADI facility Dogs – mistrials, confusion etc

Meet Marielle:

- ▶ Born January 25 2016
- ▶ Raised and trained by the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides in Oakville, Ontario (ADI accredited)
- ▶ Graduated on April 7 2019
- ▶ Marielle takes a “Public Access Test” in order to gain access to do her work in various public building
- ▶ She is NOT a therapy dog, nor should therapy dogs ever be granted to do work with victims of crime.
- ▶ Both handlers have been trained on being designated support persons during criminal justice proceedings so as not to interfere with the administration of justice.
- ▶ Program partners include police, SANE, Justice and Public Safety, and the United Way of GM/SENB



Meet the handlers

- ▶ Primary: Kristal LeBlanc, BA, MAHSR
- ▶ Secondary: Chantal Thanh De Alba, BSW, RSW



Marielle: From crisis to conclusion

- ▶ Crisis Intervention
- ▶ Client Meetings
- ▶ Agency walk-throughs
- ▶ Forensic Interviews
- ▶ Hospital Examinations
- ▶ Pre-Trial Interviews
- ▶ Court Orientation
- ▶ Court Waiting
- ▶ Court Accompaniment
- ▶ Courage Celebrations
- ▶ Mass casualty and crisis response (ex Schools)



Court deployment

- ▶ Testimonial accommodation.
- ▶ Victims have the right to request testimonial accommodations (TA) when appearing “through the mechanisms provided by law” (Bill C-2).
- ▶ The TA must not inhibit the administration of justice.
- ▶ Witness categories:
 - Victims and witnesses under 18 years old. (shall have a TA)
 - Adult victims and witnesses without a disability. (may have a TA)
 - Adult victims and witnesses with a disability. (shall have a TA)
- ▶ Use of an Accredited Facility Dog is in accordance with the spirit and intent of the TA legislation which ensures that witnesses who are most vulnerable are provided supports to ensure their ability to provide a full and candid account of their testimony.
- ▶ Testimonial accommodations include:
 - Testifying behind a screen;
 - Testifying via closed-circuit TV;
 - Have a support person present such as Marielle and her handlers.



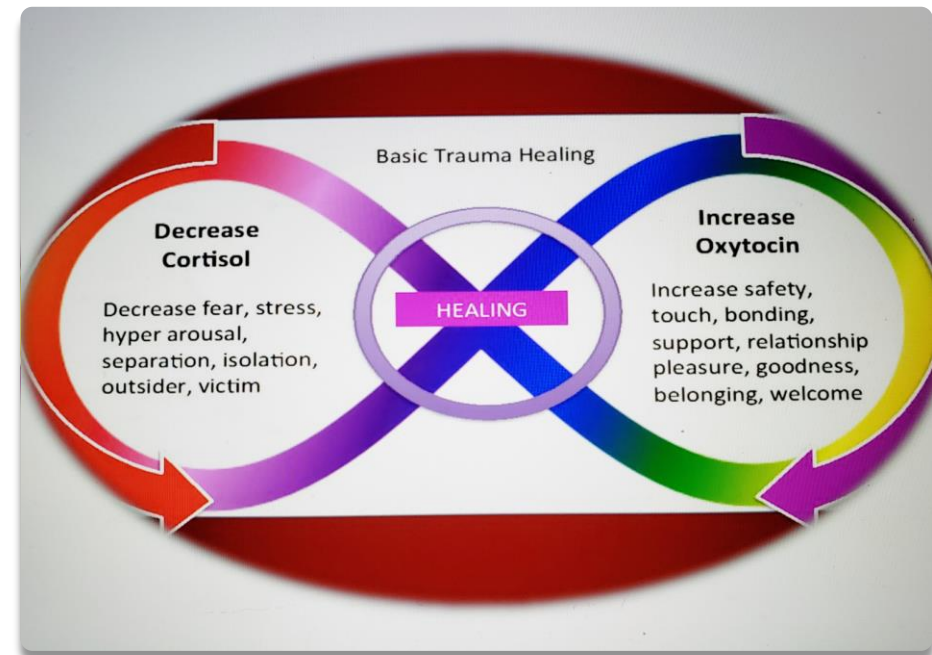
Lets talk numbers...

- ▶ Over 50 Justice Facility Dogs currently deployed in Canada.
- ▶ Close to 400 working in the U.S., U.K., EU
- ▶ Marielle has been deployed for 77 trials to provide support during direct testimony
- ▶ Deployment in N.B Provincial Court, N.B. Court of Queens Bench, judge alone, judge and jury trials (X3), Bridgewater Provincial Court (N.S.), N.S. Supreme Court.
- ▶ Other deployments include police, forensic exams, court preparation/meetings with Crown, critical incident response, agency visits, death notifications etc
- ▶ Marielle was deployed and made N.B history supporting a victim in the witness stand on May 31 2019.



Canines and the human brain

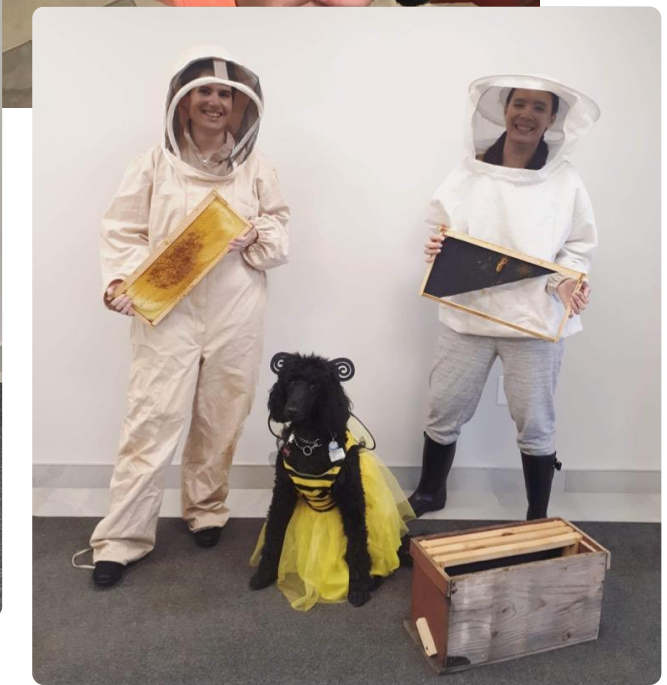
- ▶ Marielle utilizes pressure points in the witness/victim via such commands “hugs”, “mat” and “visit” to reduce cortisol levels and increase oxytocin levels
- ▶ Cortisol often shuts down memory recall.
- ▶ Oxytocin allows the brain to remember traumatic events as it is the hormone emitted when one feels safe, supported, and loved





Lets talk
about
Katie....

Community outreach and mini-Mari mania



Helpful links

- ▶ <https://justicefacilitydogs.ca/>
- ▶ <https://www.dogguides.com/>
- ▶ <https://assistedogsinternational.org/>
- ▶ <https://www.facebook.com/labellemarielleNB>

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Le personnel du Centre
Courage est à votre
disposition **24 h sur 24,**
7 jours sur 7.

The Courage Centre staff
is here for you **24h a**
day, 7 days a week.

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