

# TRURO DAILY NEWS

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## Shubenacadie teen shares experience at drug rehab centre

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Published on June 16, 2016

**TRURO – Miranda Mullin owes her life to Portage Atlantic.**



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*Melissa Davidson, a clinical therapist with Mental Health and Addiction Services, catches up with Miranda Mullin following a presentation by Portage Atlantic. Mullin, 19, is a graduate of Portage Atlantic, a drug addiction rehabilitation centre for young people.*

The 19-year-old from Shubenacadie spent five months at the youth drug addiction rehabilitation centre two years ago.

“I struggled with addiction issues since I was about 13 or 14 years old,” said Mullin. “I had both an alcohol and drug addiction. It was pretty scary when I got there.”

Mullin spoke about her experiences recently to a group that included town officials, local police officers, politicians, and representatives of the Nova Scotia Health Authority. It’s the 20th anniversary of the centre, based in Cassidy Lake, N.B.

“The first little bit of the program took some adjusting. It was a different way of doing things. It was hard to get up at six or seven in the morning. I was used to sleeping in until about noon.”

Mullin, who now lives in Halifax and studies early childhood education, said there were a lot of meetings at the centre, but she was also able to earn Grade 11 credits, keeping her on track to graduating high

school on time.

“I don’t think I would’ve been able to graduate without Portage.”

Throughout her stay, Mullin found assistance in many of the other female participants, as well as her caseworker. Anything she couldn’t or didn’t want to share in group sessions, she was able to with the caseworker and other girls.

Since opening in 1996, the centre has served more than 2,000 young people between the ages of 14 and 21 from the Atlantic Provinces. The program is voluntary, with priorities created by the individuals themselves. The centre is a therapeutic community model-based centre, with youths working together through peer mentoring and positive role modeling.

For more information on the program, visit [www.portage.ca](http://www.portage.ca) (<http://www.portage.ca>).

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