

# **Questioning the Wellness of Children as Consumers: How Might Wisdom-Guided Pedagogy Enhance Well-Being?**

Mandy J. Krahn (University of Alberta)

## *Abstract*

Questions of what it means to live a meaningful and fulfilling life are inspired by a deeply human desire to live well in the world. This hermeneutic presentation is a response to the question: How and in what ways is the well-being of children who are immersed in consumer society affected by market-driven logic? I aim to imaginatively address data surrounding the health and wellness of pre-adolescents by exposing the realities Canadian children are exposed to, focusing on school settings in particular. This presentation will be a soulful performance that inquires into the troubling notion of children as consumers and juxtaposes this market-logic discourse with a wisdom-guided approach to a more holistic view of children's wellness and joy. My experience as an educator in international contexts, coupled with my overarching research interests, have led me to an appreciation of the pedagogical responsibility of educators to play a role in guiding the ethical well-being of children and youth. Thus, this presentation opens the door for educators to consider the holistic well-being of students more deeply. In so doing, the psychological and soulful well-being of our young may be enhanced. I will articulate wisdom-guided insights that value relationships and community in order to provoke a "collective wondering" (Donald, 2004, p. 24) about the impact of market-driven education on the well-being of our young. The presentation will braid together notions of well-being in the lives of children, the importance of soul in education and in living well, and the current emphases of consumer culture, concluding by outlining the role of wisdom in tying the braid together.