



**Ontario Association of Young Parent Agencies**

*serving infants, children and young parents - together*

**l'Association Ontarienne des Agences pour Jeunes Parents**

*servir nourrissons, enfants et jeunes parents - ensemble*

## MARCH 2024

### AT A GLANCE

- Feb. 29th Member Meeting and Strategic Plan
- Ujima Project Update
- Screening for Success
- Universal Trauma Screening Virtual Talk
- For the Culture: CBC Documentary
- Resources
- Significant Dates
- Professional Development

## What's New



### **Member Meeting and Materials (February 29, 2024)**

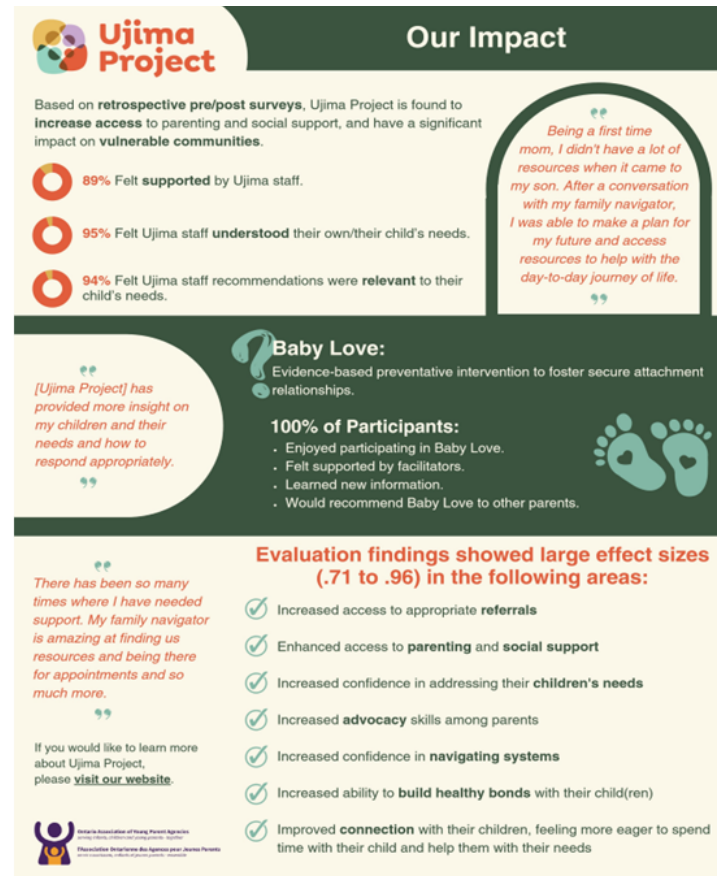
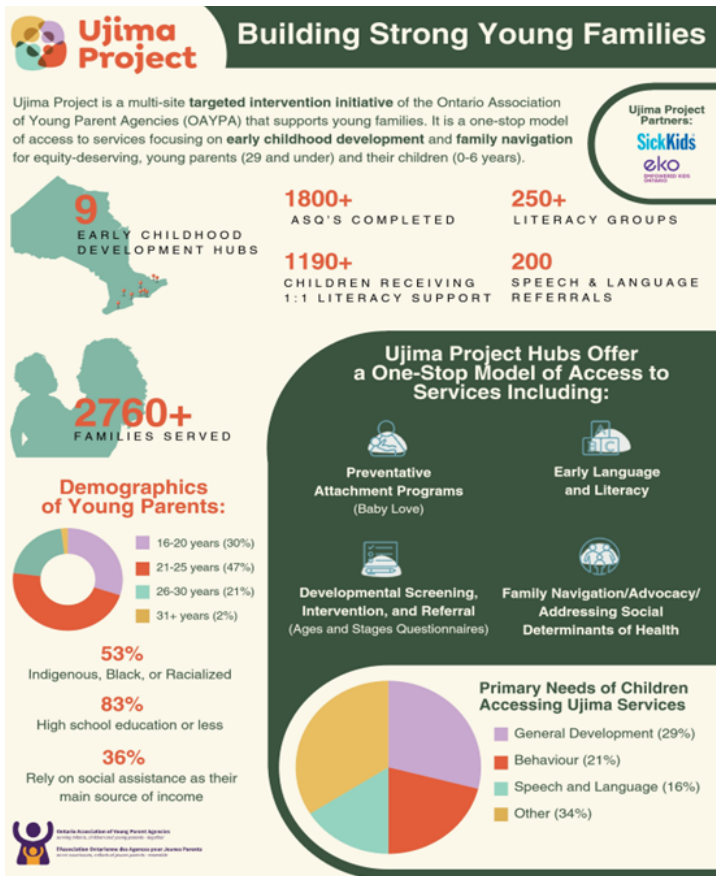
Great to see so many of you at our Feb. 29th member meeting. For those who missed it, here are the links to the meeting [minutes](#) and [recording](#). The 2024 – 2027 Strategic Plan was the major focus of our member meeting, and we were able to finalize our new [Mission and Vision](#) as well as the [Strategic Directions](#). Thank you for everyone's contributions to this process!

The Executive Committee also provided an update on the status of the policy paper, timelines and commitment. We are very grateful for the support many of you have already provided towards the costs of this important advocacy tool. If you haven't already confirmed your support, a member of the Executive will be reaching out in the coming days.

### **Ujima Project – Our good news story is being told!**

Since our start in April 2022, the Ujima Project has reached over 2,766 vulnerable young families, providing high quality, evidence-based programming to address their mental health and early childhood development needs and tackle the systemic barriers that prevent many from accessing specialized services. We are proud of how far we have come as a project and of the significant impact the Ujima Project is having across the province. As a result of the success of the Ujima Project, our young parents report having increased access/confidence in navigating systems, increased awareness/advocacy of needs, and improvements in positive parenting techniques. The evaluation

also points to the effectiveness of the Ujima Project in serving vulnerable communities. Please stay tuned for more information about a Impact webinar, report and infographic!



## Hot Off the Press – A Policy Brief on Implementing Developmental Screening for Children Aged 0-6



Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion; SickKids Learning Institute are thrilled to share their insights from their recently released Policy Brief, *Screening for Success: Early Intervention for Child Development*. This comprehensive report delves into the critical importance of early identification and intervention for young children facing developmental challenges.

[Screening for Success: Early Intervention for Child Development](#); This comprehensive report delves into the critical importance of early identification and intervention for young children facing developmental challenges.

Recommended reading for all members, this report highlights some very important points:

- A cost-effective approach to early intervention consists of targeting these interventions to children at risk. Developmental screening not only identifies these children, but even points to at-risk developmental areas for a child. This could mean a specific path of referral for a child but

also early childhood educators, teachers, and caregivers tailoring their teaching and strategies to meet the child's particular needs.

- Developmental screening during infancy and early childhood allows for the early detection of developmental delays before they become more pronounced or difficult to address.

Recommendations from leading organizations advocate for routine developmental screenings at key milestones during well-child visits. Collaborative efforts between stakeholders, including government bodies, healthcare providers, educators, and community organizations, are essential for implementing effective screening programs and support systems.

### **Universal Trauma Screening in Preschool Speech and Language Services**

Ujima Project partner, Anna Rupert from the [George Hull Centre Institute of Childhood Trauma and Attachment](#) is holding a virtual talk and discussion focused on the foundational relationship between communication development and skills, mental health, trauma and attachment. This includes the implementation of universal trauma screening in preschool speech and language services, the associated research occurring at the George Hull Centre and preliminary research findings.

Tuesday April 16, 2024

1:00 pm – 2:15 pm

Register Here: <https://forms.office.com/r/QC2cL6S8T7> (If you are unable to attend, know the event will be recorded and made available to all those who register.)

### **For the Culture with Amanda Parris**

An adventurous, insightful and personal [CBC documentary series](#) where Amanda goes on a revelatory journey into some of the most important stories impacting Black people around the world. Episode 5 of the series is about the healthcare system. [This 5th episode addresses the question; What will it take for Black birthing people to feel safe?](#)

## Resources



Mental Health Commission of Canada recently released a Policy Brief entitled [Mental Health and the High Cost of Living](#). The high cost of living in Canada has led to increased financial insecurity, pressures on food and housing affordability, and income inequality, which all significantly impact mental health and well-being. “Children and adolescents under 18 in food-insecure Ontario homes made 55% more visits to doctors for mental health reasons compared to those who had enough to eat” [Read more here.](#)

## Significant Dates



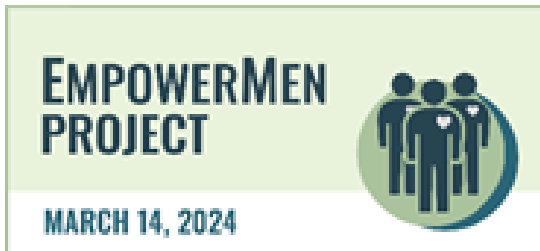
- March 8 - [International Women's Day](#)

- March 21 - International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination [International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - Canada.ca](https://www.un.org/en/observances/erad)

# Professional Development

## **SickKids Provincial Education Sessions**

- Mar 12 - Pornography/Sexual Curiosity - Register [here](#)
- Mar 26 - Supporting Newcomers in Mental Health - Register [here](#)



**Engaging Men and Boys to Prevent Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Women, Girls and Gender Diverse People.**

The EmpowerMen Project started in 2022 and focuses on engaging men and boys to prevent sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of women, girls and gender-diverse people. Men create most of the demand for paid sexual services and exploitation, yet very little attention is focused on this group. Through consultations with survivors, professionals and men, we created an intersectional approach for the education field, social services, police, business and civil society. The EmpowerMen Project believes that this will lead to increased safety and wellbeing for women and girls and reduce the exploitation because of less sex purchases. It will also increase the understanding amongst men and boys on the impact of the sex industry on everybody involved, including themselves.

### The workshop will highlight:

- The role of sex buyers - who are mostly men - in exploitation and trafficking
- Reasons why men buy sex
- Social, legal and other community responses to the demand of paid sexual services

Date: March 14 (Thursday), 2024

Time: 2:00 - 3:30p.m. EST

Register [here](#)