

Ontario Association of Young Parent Agencies
serving infants, children and young parents - together

May 2026 Newsletter
L'Association Ontarienne des Agences pour Jeunes Parents
servir nourrissons, enfants et jeunes parents - ensemble

19 min read

As we recognize Children's Mental Health Week, we are reminded of the critical importance of nurturing the mental health and well-being of young parents, infants, and families across our communities. For OAYPA and our members, this week is not only a time of awareness, but a call to action, one that reinforces our shared responsibility to advance equitable, trauma-informed, and anti-oppressive approaches that truly reflect the realities of the young families we serve. Meaningful system change requires us to center lived expertise, ensuring that services are shaped by those with direct experience and deep insight.

This month, we are proud to highlight two powerful young parent voices whose contributions reflect the strength, leadership, and vision within our community. Janice Appiah (Promise U Now) has been supporting OAYPA on several initiatives, including supporting knowledge exchange for OAYPA's Policy Brief and development of our Anti-Oppressive Toolkit, bringing invaluable lived experience to this critical work. We also feature Nimrah, OAYPA's first student practicum participant, who shares a thoughtful reflection on what Children's Mental Health Week means to her - as a young parent navigating systems, advocating for her child, and building her own path forward.

We invite you to read, reflect, and carry these voices into your work. Together, by amplifying young parent leadership and continuing to learn from one another, we strengthen our collective capacity to create more responsive, compassionate, and inclusive systems of care.

Children's Mental Health Week Reflection

By: Nim K

Children's Mental Health Week, to me, is more than a moment of awareness; it's a meaningful opportunity to pause and reflect on how far I've come, both personally and professionally and not only as an intern at the Ontario Association of Young Parent Agencies, but also as a young parent.

In both roles, I've had the privilege of supporting young parents and their children while continuing to navigate my own mental health journey.

Being a parent has deepened my understanding of how important it is for children to feel seen, supported, and heard, and how closely their well-being is connected to our own.

Having experienced my own challenges, I recognize that mental health begins early, and that healing and growth take time, patience, understanding, and care.

As a parent, I'm reminded daily that it's often the small, consistent moments like showing up, listening, offering comfort, that make the biggest difference in a child's life.

Children's Mental Health Week also highlights the impact we can have as a community by creating safe, nurturing spaces where children and families feel valued and understood.

Through both my work and my lived experience, I see how leading with compassion and empathy helps build stronger foundations for lifelong well-being and reminds families that they are not alone.

This week is not only for reflection, but for recommitment: to continue learning, growing, and showing up for the families I support, for my own child, and for myself. Progress isn't always linear, but every step forward deserves recognition.

Above all, Children's Mental Health Week reminds me of the resilience and strength of the children and families we encounter every day and the powerful difference we can make by being present, patient, and compassionate in all the roles we hold.





My reflection on the CMHO Conference

Written by Promise U Now (Janice Appiah)

I recently attended the CMHO Conference in Toronto (April 20-21) and I've been sitting with a lot of what I experienced last week. Much of my learning came from conversations with community organizations and providers at the booths. Those conversations gave me a real sense of what's happening across the sector, from the supports that exist to the gaps that continue to impact families. A recurring theme in my conversations was the consistent pattern around access and system fragmentation in our province. Youth mental health continues to be shaped by broader social conditions like systemic inequities, poverty, housing instability and racism, all of which directly impact how and whether families are able to access support. For young parents, these challenges are often layered as they navigate their own lives while raising their children across systems that are not designed with their realities in mind. There is a clear need for stronger alignment across services, not only at the agency level but across the system as a whole.

There was also a growing focus on infant and early mental health, particularly the importance of early intervention in shaping long-term wellbeing and outcomes. This felt closely aligned with what I see through OAYPA's work, especially the importance of strengthening early and accessible supports for families.

I was excited by the range of work happening across organizations. There is a shift toward more community-based, relationship-centred, and culturally responsive approaches to care. A key theme in many conversations was the move away from doing work for communities toward doing work with communities, centering co-creation where young people have meaningful ownership in the design and delivery of services. This deeply resonated with me and reflects the work I've been a part of through OAYPA with the Anti-Oppression Toolkit, where the focus has been on ensuring young parents are not only informing the work, but actively shaping and leading it. There was meaningful engagement at our poster which reinforced the relevance and need for this work.

There was discussion about more universal approaches to care and what it would look like to create safer, more responsive spaces for families affected by trauma across the mental health system rather than relying on disclosure before support is available.

A powerful reminder for me, connected to the work of Cindy Blackstock, is that systems don't create change, people do. That change happens when we humanize what families are experiencing, listen to their voices, and become more intentional in how we respond with urgency and care.

Attending the conference also felt personally affirming. Being in a space with diverse leaders, including Black women (who were young mothers) in executive roles, really stood out to me. It reinforced how important representation is and how it shapes both connection and what feels possible within this work. It also highlighted the value of continuing to build pathways for leadership, mentorship and advocacy within this field for young, racialized parents. That representation aligns so closely with what OAYPA is already doing and reminded me that this work truly matters.

Overall, attending the conference was both grounding and affirming for me. It deepened my understanding of the sector and reaffirmed that the direction we are moving in, centering equity, strengthening connections across systems and supporting young parents in more coordinated and meaningful ways, is not only aligned with where the field is going, but necessary. There is still work ahead and I'm hopeful about the progress we are making.



Significant Dates

May 4-10 [Mental Health Week](#)

May 5 [National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQI+ People \(MMIWG2S\) \(Red Dress Day\)](#)

May 7 [National Child and Youth Mental Health Day](#)

May 10 [Mother's Day](#)

May 14 [Ontario Child and Youth in Care Day](#)

May 15 [International Day of Families](#)

Member Updates

Reminder: OAYPA Sector Survey

This is a reminder to complete the OAYPA Sector Needs Assessment survey. Thank you to the six agencies who have completed it! We would like to hear from more of you, so have **extended the deadline to May 15th.**

Your insights as sector leaders are critical to understanding the current landscape of service delivery, how agencies are aligning with the updated service framework, and opportunities across our member agencies. The assessment will also help us identify the assets, expertise, and existing staff development resources across our association, to share knowledge and build collective capacity across our sector. If you have any questions, please contact Tamar.

Complete the [OAYPA Sector Needs Assessment Survey](#)

Reminder: 2026-27 Membership Dues

A reminder that your 2026 membership fees are due. Your membership helps drive our mission forward, and together, we'll continue to work passionately with government bodies and funders to make a lasting impact on behalf of all our members. **Please access the [Membership Renewal Form](#) [here](#).**

OAYPA Resource Hub

Members are encouraged to explore the [OAYPA Resource Hub](#), which contains a rich and growing collection of professional development tools to support and inspire your work. The hub features a variety of materials, including recorded education sessions from SickKids, along with content on advocacy and communication, governance and administration, and examples of research grants and proposals. Whether you are looking to deepen your knowledge, spark new ideas, or strengthen your practice, the Resource Hub offers something for everyone. If you are having difficulty accessing the Resource Hub or have staff you would like to access, please email Bev or Tamar.



Infant and Early Mental Health Initiative – Lead Agency Consortium

The Lead Agency Consortium (LAC) is working with provincial partners (Knowledge Institute and Children’s Mental Health Ontario) and the Ministry of Health (Mental Health and Addictions Branch) to establish a province-wide, evidence-based, consistent IEMH model of service delivery that:

- Is designed to ensure high quality service delivery
- Includes clear service expectations for MoH-funded agencies providing infant, child and youth mental health services in the community
- Works in a coordinated, aligned way with early years programs funded by the Ministries of Education and Children, Community and Social Services
- Is focused on improving seamless access to care
- Will produce positive outcomes across the life course

Co-led by Lori Kempe, Co-Chair and Purnima Sunda Managing Director of LAC, this work is rooted in an implementation science framework that provides a roadmap to guide various activities ensuring that this standardized program “will stick” in communities across the province.

Three main groups (comprised of representatives from lead and core service providing agencies, IEMH experts, provincial partners and families) will move ahead various work streams:

- A Clinical Task Group will create an evidence-based service delivery model (including screening tools, relevant measures, training, engagement and clinical supervision) to respond to the unique mental health needs of infants and children under age 6, and their families.

- An Implementation and Evaluation Task Group will provide guidance and advice on the implementation and evaluation of the new IEMH service delivery model for infants and children under age 6, and their families across the province.
- A Steering Committee will make recommendations to the Ministry of Health on the proposed service delivery model, along with guidance on the implementation and evaluation of this approach for supporting the mental health needs of infants and children under age 6, and their families.

This work will be carried out over the next year (to March 2027). The end result will be an integrated approach to which will enable high quality, seamless care to infants and children under 6, and their families, in every community across the province.

Purnima and Lori will be joining our May 28th member meeting for a sector consultation. OAYPA looks forward to working collaboratively with LAC throughout this initiative to ensure that our sector is meaningfully included in this work. We see strong opportunities to explore synergies between this emerging IEMH service delivery model and the specialized supports provided by YPIAs, particularly in advancing equitable access, relationship-based care, and positive outcomes for young parents and their children. We welcome ongoing dialogue to align efforts, share expertise, and contribute to a coordinated, responsive system that reflects the unique needs and strengths of young families across Ontario.



CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK 2026

Come Together. Stronger Connections. Better Mental Health.

Join us for a week of learning and reflection to support children's mental health—together.

Staff Webinar Series

May 4-7th, 2026

MAY 4 10:30-11:30AM	Hold Them Both: Relationship Matters from the Beginning Seeing, supporting, and surrounding the baby and mother with collective care Presented by: Mary Rella
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MAY 5 10:30-11:30AM	Unnecessary Hospital Formula Supplementation is a Health Equity Issue Presented by: Jessica Zimmer & Alison Mildon
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MAY 6 10:30-11:30AM	The Rhythm of Relationship: Using Storytime & Play to Help Families Wiggle, Giggle and Grow Presented by: Sarah Yellan
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MAY 7 10:30-11:30AM	Supporting Infant and Early Mental Health Through Routines & Co-regulation Presented by: Maureen Ringlein
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For more details and updates about these events, please visit our website or follow us on social media.



OAYPA Exchange featuring Abiona Centre!

Abiona Centre is pleased to invite members to attend its **Children's Mental Health Week (May 4-7) Staff Webinar Series**. Register [here](#).

This webinar series offers an opportunity for staff across our member agencies to come together for shared learning and dialogue focused on infant and early childhood mental health, a critical foundation for the young families we support across Ontario. These sessions are designed to strengthen practice, deepen understanding, and support high-quality, responsive care for young parents and their children. Feel free to share this opportunity with your teams and broader networks to extend its impact across the sector.

May 4: Hold Them Both: Relationship Matters from the Beginning 10:30 - 11:30 AM

Presented by: Mary Rella, Registered Psychotherapist — Explore the importance of nurturing the relationship between mother and baby from the very beginning, highlighting the power of collective care.

May 5: Unnecessary Hospital Formula Supplementation is a Health Equity Issues 10:30 - 11:30 AM

Presented by: Jessica Zimmer, Infant Feeding Coordinator at Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre, and Alison Mildon, Postdoctoral Researcher at University of Toronto — Explore how unnecessary hospital formula supplementation

impacts health equity and infant feeding practices.

May 6: The Rhythm of Relationship 10:30 - 11:30 AM

Presented by: Sarah Yellan, Speech and Language Pathologist at the Hanen Centre — Discover how story time and play can strengthen relationships and support early communication and development in young children.

May 7: Supporting Infant & Early Mental Health through Routines & Coregulation 10:30 -11:30 AM

Presented by: Maureen Ringlein, Director, Infant and Early Mental Health at Abiona Centre — Learn how daily routines and co-regulation support infants' emotional well-being and early relationships.





**Canadian Mental
Health Association**

May 4–10, CMHA is inviting all of Canada to Come Together because stronger connections mean better mental health for all of us. A reminder that small moments of connection can make a big difference in someone's life. Whether it's a phone call to a friend, a check-in with a colleague, or getting involved in your community, every act of connection counts. All toolkits, resources and everything you need to get involved during Mental Health Week are available to download at mentalhealthweek.ca.

The [Canadian Institute for Health Information 2025 Child and Youth Mental Health Report](#) indicates that while hospital ER visits have dropped, there has been an 8% increase in children and youth accessing mental health support through community-based physicians and practitioners. This underscores the need for "life-space" workers to be equipped with high-level clinical communication skills.

Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)

CCDI Diversity Calendar - April 2026 update

The comprehensive Diversity Calendar has been updated with the most current dates and information. Please access the updated calendar [here](#).

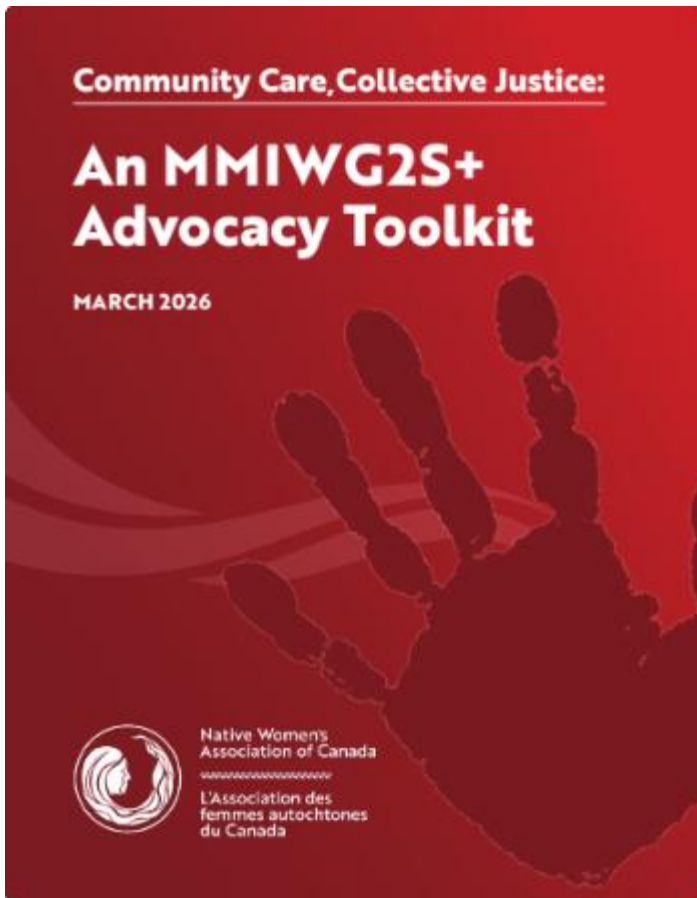


**Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth
Mental Health and Addictions**

**Institut du savoir sur la santé mentale et les
dépendances chez les enfants et les jeunes**

Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth Mental Health and Addictions

The Knowledge Institute is excited to share a new resource to support understanding of AI in the youth mental health and substance use health sector. You are invited to access [AI for youth mental health and substance use health: A primer](#) live on the resource hub. This primer, created for leaders and decision-makers, focuses on introducing new concepts related to the use of AI and offers an overview of



opportunities, considerations, and practical suggestions. This is the first resource in a three-part series designed to support our sector in understanding AI.

Coming later this year:

- The second resource in this series will be for agencies and providers, exploring the in-depth use of AI, including opportunities, considerations, and practical suggestions within community-based agencies.
- Young people and families will be the focus of the third resource in the series. It will explore the use of AI at an individual level, specifically, the potential impacts of AI on young people and families through the lens of the sector's services.

New advocacy toolkit by Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC)

NWAC has released a new MMIWG2S+ Advocacy Toolkit. The toolkit is meant to support Indigenous-led advocacy and community-led action on missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirited plus peoples. It brings together practical tools to support communities, organizations, and advocates in continuing the work and pushing it forward. Available in [English](#) and [French](#).



Happening Tomorrow! Art-Based Approaches with Young Parents

When: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 3:00 – 4:00 PM

Registration: <https://forms.office.com/r/FWCj6bnD7G>


OAYPA is pleased to partner with Dr. Amelia Eppel will share insights from her doctoral research with young mothers who used artmaking as a way to reflect on their journeys into parenthood, their past experiences, and hopes for their children's future.

Drawing on her doctoral research, Dr. Amelia Eppel will share insights from young mothers who used creative practices to reflect on their journeys into parenthood, past experiences, and hope for their children's futures. She will also explore practical, art-based strategies to support engagement and reflection.

A Part 2 follow up session with Dr Amelia Eppel will offer a deeper exploration of how art can be integrated into practice with young parents. Artmaking is an

ART-BASED APPROACHES WITH YOUNG PARENTS

When:
Tuesday, May 5, 2026
3:00 – 4:00 PM
Registration Link:
<https://forms.office.com/r/FWCj6bnD7G>




PRESENTER:
Dr. Amelia Eppel
Lillian Meighen Wright
Postdoctoral Fellow,
Maternal-Child Health
York University

WEBINAR OVERVIEW

In this session, Dr. Eppel will share insights from her doctoral research with young mothers who used art-making as a way to reflect on their journeys into parenthood, their past experiences, and their hopes for their children's futures.

Drawing on doctoral research, Dr. Amelia Eppel will share insights from young mothers who used creative practices to reflect on their journeys into parenthood, past experiences, and hopes for their children's futures. She will also explore practical, art-based strategies to support engagement and reflection.

A follow-up session (Part 2) will offer a deeper exploration of art-based approaches and how they can be integrated into practice with young parents.



PRESENTER

Dr. Amelia Eppel

Dr. Eppel completed her PhD in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University, focusing on the experiences of young mothers with histories in the child welfare system.

She is also a birth and postpartum doula with over 16 years of experience supporting children and families as a nanny and early childhood educator. Her work integrates research, creative practice, and frontline experience to support young parents in meaningful ways.

accessible way to create space for reflection by young parents and practitioners alike.

This session will show you how to offer a simple prompt on a topic to create a reflective art-making session. We will also discuss how to use solution-oriented dialogue to process the responses and make most effective use of the session. Resources to conduct your own sessions will be provided. Please come to the session prepared to make art. A sheet of paper and whatever materials you have available (pencils/pens/ pastels/ paints) are required.

Register for Part 2

here: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/u02kq1gGT1>



Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)

[Exploring Changes In Occupational Health And Safety across Canadian Provinces](#) (May 5, 2026, 1:00 – 2:00 PM)

Join CCDI as they explore the recent changes to different provincial Occupational Health and Safety Acts and how this impacts DEIA in workplaces today. This session will highlight recent OHS changes in Ontario, Quebec and Alberta, while providing leaders and decision-makers with knowledge and resources to continue building more inclusive and equitable policies and practices.

[Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Practices in Action](#) June 11, 2026, 1:00 – 2:00 PM)

It can be challenging to take theories or frameworks and apply them to our everyday actions and practices. This webinar will focus on sharing skills and real-life workplace examples of anti-racism and anti-oppression in action. From hiring and retention practices to psychological safety and employee cultures of belonging, CCDI will

explore how anti-racism and anti-oppression values shape healthy and equitable workplaces.



ABC Life Literacy Canada

ABC is hosting four Innovation Learning Labs. In each webinar, they will discuss one topic that is important and relevant to the literacy field in 2026. The next webinar is [Helping Learners Navigate Canada's Technology Driven Economy](#): Tuesday, May 12th at 1:00pm.

ABCLLC has just released two new resources from Connect for Learning, Introductory Digital Literacy Program:

- **Staying Safe on Social Media:** If you use social media, there are steps you can take to protect yourself. In this [workbook](#), you'll learn how to spot scams and use privacy settings to stay safe on social media.
- **Protect your Information Online:** In this [workbook](#), you'll explore how to keep your information safe while using the internet. You'll learn how to create strong passwords, spot unsafe pop-ups, understand website cookies, and tell if a website is secure.



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**

[Connection Changes Everything](#) May 5, 2026 1:00 - 2:00 PM

At a time when so many people are feeling disconnected from each other, from community, and sometimes from themselves, CMHA creates space for a different kind of conversation. One that's grounded, honest, and focused on what actually helps. This one-hour virtual event will bring together expert voices from across the country to explore the role connection plays in our mental health and what it

looks like, in real terms, to build stronger, more supportive communities.

Exploring the Connection Between Children's Communication Development, Mental Health, and Trauma

This session will explore the connections between children's communication skills and development, trauma, attachment, and mental health, with a focus on how communication differences may present in clinical practice. Drawing on existing understanding of the relationships between communication development, trauma, and mental health, the session will highlight why collaboration between children's mental health and speech-language pathology professionals matters. Opportunities to strengthen identification, support practice adaptations, and advance more integrated, accessible, and holistic care for children and families will be emphasized, with attention to how these insights can be applied within clinical and leadership roles.

May 21st, 2026
1:00 - 2:30pm EST
Virtual (via Teams)

REGISTER HERE!



Kids Enfant's
Care First - mental health

Speakers:
Aimee Rapart, PhD, MEd - Speech-Language Pathologist and Senior Manager, Research & Strategic Programs, George Hull Centre Institute of Child and Adolescent Studies, Sector of Public Health Sciences and Institute Professor, University of Toronto
Leticia Greco, MSW, RSW - Director, George Hull Centre Institute of Child and Adolescent Studies, Executive Director of the Centre's community mental health clinic, award-winning clinical leader with 30+ years' experience in children's mental health.

Exploring the Connection Between Children's Communication Development, Mental Health, and Trauma

George Hull Centre for Children and Families and Kids Come First is hosting a webinar on the important connection between children's communication development, mental health, and trauma. This session is designed primarily for service providers and will also be valuable for leaders, managers, students, and staff across the child and youth sectors.

Date: May 21, 2026

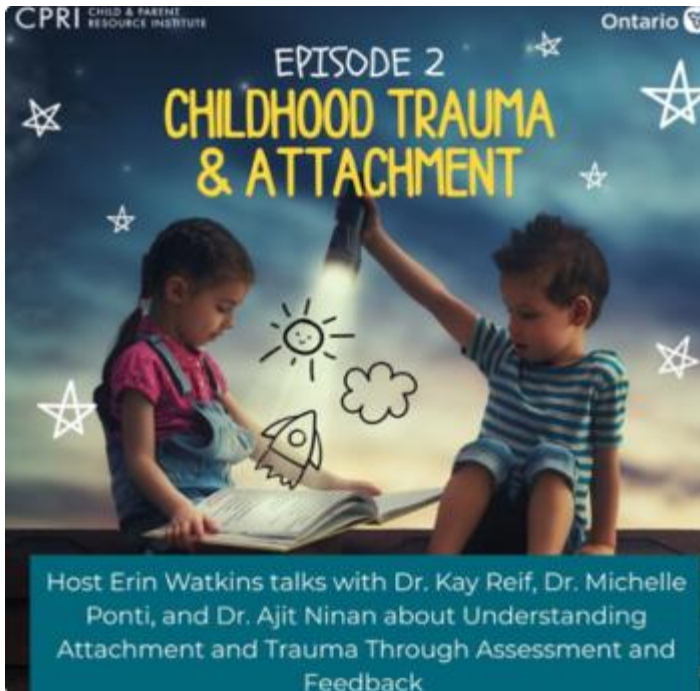
Time: 1:00–2:30PM

Register here: <https://lnkd.in/e7mseG62>

Compensation in the Nonprofit Sector: Highlights from the 2026 Canadian Nonprofit Sector Salary & Benefits Report June 4, 2026, 1:00 – 2:00 PM



During this [webinar](#), The Portage Group will explain how nonprofits and charities can leverage the latest Canadian Nonprofit Sector Salary & Benefits Report to implement compensation benchmarks. This session will cover actionable strategies for individuals to make the case for higher nonprofit salaries, as well as helpful tools and takeaways to help you put the report's data to use.



Child & Parent Resource Institute

In this CPRI podcast, host Erin Watkins talks with Dr. Kay Reif, Dr. Ajit Ninan, and Dr. Michelle Ponti about assessing and providing feedback around sensitive and complex areas. [Listen here.](#)



Infant and Early Mental
Health Promotion

SickKids®

Big Ideas for the Care of Tiny Humans: A Resource for Early Childhood Educators on Infant Mental Health

This is a free resource for Early Childhood Educators and others who work with infants, very young children, and their families. [Learn more and register here.](#)

Early Literacy Three-Part series

Dive into a three-part series that explores how to support children with various developmental disabilities in developing their literacy skills. [Learn more and register here.](#)

Heads-ED Under 6 with Dr. Mario Cappelli

Training participants will learn about the HEADS-ED Under 6, a screening and triage tool that identifies and communicates mental health and developmental concerns during infancy and early childhood. [Learn more and register here](#). Registration Closes: June 9, 2026.

An Introduction to the Foundations of Infant and Early Mental Health

This free webinar is an updated introductory session that provides an overview of early development with a focus on infant and early mental health. [Learn more and register here](#).

Nurturing the Seed (NTS): Indigenous-led Model for Developmental Screening and Support Spring 2026

This training features the NTS developmental screening and support model, co-developed with Indigenous Elders and practitioners across Canada. [Learn more and register here](#). Registration Closes: May 29th, 2026.

Transmission of Adversity Across Generations and Impact for Infant Mental Health

This presentation will illustrate mechanisms by which early adversity is transmitted across generations as well as key protective factors to mitigate poor outcomes among children exposed to high levels of adversity. [Learn more and register here](#). Registration Closes: June 23, 2026.

When Screens Get in the Way: What Practitioners Can Do to Support Parenting, Reduce “Technoference”, and Promote Child Well-Being

This presentation will introduce the 2026 digital media guidelines, review current research on the impact of digital media on child development, and explore the concept of “technoference” and its implications for parenting and child well-being. [Learn more and register here](#). Registration Closes: May 13, 2026



SafeGuards is a partnership of provincial associations dedicated to providing culturally informed training on trauma-informed practice, trauma assessment and treatment and related effects of trauma. OAYPA agencies receive a member's rate which is 12-23% off on SafeGuards training fees. Save an additional 20% off with [group registration](#) of 4 or more participants. For more information and to browse their list of courses, click [here](#).

SafeGuards provides certificates for all their trainings, however each participant must complete both of the following requirements:

- Attend 75% of the session
- Complete the evaluation survey within 10 days. The link for the evaluation is posted in the chat at the end of the session and is included as a QR code in the handouts provided. The instructors will note at the beginning of the session where access to the link can be found.

The following courses may be of interest to you.

- [Practical Integration of CBT and Attachment Theory in Psychotherapy](#) May 4 & 5, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
- [Trauma-Informed Practice](#) May 6 & 7, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
- [Introduction to Motivational Interviewing](#) May 13 & 14 / 20 & 21, 2026, 12:30 – 4:00 PM
- [Peer Mentor Training: The Impact of Lived Experience](#) May 27 & 28, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
- [Painting Rainbows – Engaging the rainbow model to Support 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth](#) June 2 & 3, 2026, 12:30 – 4:00 PM
- [Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder or Complex PTSD? Emerging Definitions and Treatment Directions](#) June 4 & 5, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
- [Navigating the N-Word and Racial Slurs](#) June 8 & 9, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
- [Ambiguous Loss: A Framework to Understand and Respond](#) June 10, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
- [Serving the Mental Health Needs of Persons with a Developmental Disability](#) June 11 & 12, 2026, 9:30 – 3:30 PM
- [Affirmation Under Attack: How can we Support Queer and Trans Youth?](#) Free 1 Hour Webinar

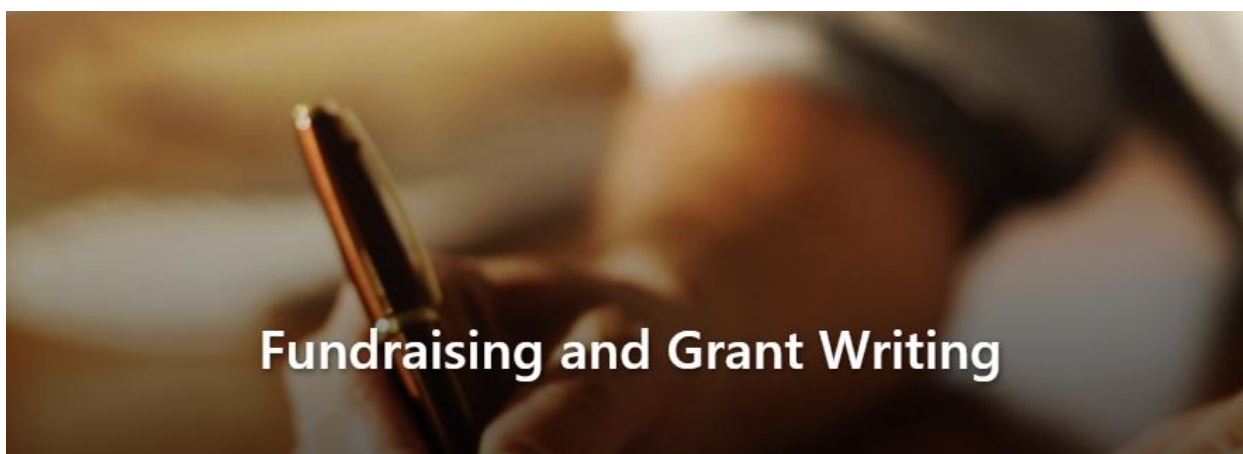
- [Information Session on the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention System Approach](#) Free 1 Hour Webinar
- [Regulation, Relationships and Resilience: How to Support Students Affected by Trauma](#) Free 1 Hour Webinar

Free Expert-Led Webinars

To support your ongoing learning, SafeGuards is pleased to offer free, expert-led webinars designed to enhance trauma-informed practice through accessible online training. These sessions offer valuable insights you can immediately apply to your work. [Explore Online Webinars.](#)

No-Cost Resource Library

As part of SafeGuard's commitment to supporting your learning journey, they are excited to share a collection of free resources designed to help you stay informed and confident in your role. This library is available anytime you need it. [Access resources here.](#)



[DonorPerfect Conference 2026](#) June 2 & 3, 2026

This year's event is designed to help you step back, sharpen your focus, and make real progress where it matters most. Over two days of free, virtual sessions, you'll learn how to:

- Focus your fundraising efforts for greater impact
- Use donor data to guide smarter decisions
- Streamline your workflows and save valuable time
- Strengthen donor engagement across channels

Foundations of Grant Writing for Canadian Nonprofits May 6, 2026, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

If you've ever felt unsure about where to find grants, how to know if an opportunity is worth pursuing, or what actually makes an application stand out... this free, virtual session is for you.

The following topics will be discussed;

- How to find relevant funding opportunities
- How to assess whether a grant is worth pursuing
- What funders are really looking for in an application
- Tips to make your proposals stronger and more competitive
- How the grant funding process works from start to finish

In the News

Children's Mental Health Ontario

According to [CMHO 2026 Ontario Budget Recommendations](#), 35% of children and youth in Ontario (roughly 1 in 3) currently have unmet mental health needs. This confirms that frontline community staff are often the primary point of contact for youth navigating significant service barriers and long waitlists.

Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses

The federal government is moving to criminalize coercive control through [Bill C-332](#), a move designed to protect survivors from patterns of psychological and emotional abuse. While experts support the bill, they warned MPs that it must be accompanied by specialized training for police and judges to ensure the law is not weaponized against the victims it is intended to protect.

Indigenous women's organizations are calling on the federal government to provide [sustained long-term funding](#) to programs addressing missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, two-spirit and gender diverse people.

A Historic Turning Point for First Nations Children and Families

On March 30, 2026, the Chiefs of Ontario and Nishnawbe Aski Nation [announced](#) a monumental milestone: the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal has formally approved the Ontario Final Agreement (OFA). This decision marks a profound shift in First Nations child and family services in Ontario—one grounded in equity, self-determination, and the wellbeing of children.

The Tribunal confirmed that the agreement meets its directives to eliminate systemic racial discrimination in First Nations Child and Family Services. At the heart of the ruling is the principle of substantive equality, alongside a clear affirmation of the inherent right of First Nations to care for their own children and design services rooted in their laws, traditions, and priorities.

With this approval, First Nations communities are reclaiming jurisdiction over the care of their children, ensuring they can grow up surrounded by culture, community, and connection. Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler of Nishnawbe Aski Nation further emphasized that this decision restores authority to families, leaders, and communities, while also recognizing innovative approaches like the remoteness quotient as essential to achieving equitable services.

For OAYPA, this moment reinforces what we know to be essential: children thrive when they remain with their families, connected to their identity and culture. Safe and secure attachment is built through consistent, loving relationships—and those relationships are strongest when families are supported, not separated.

This agreement signals a decisive move away from systems that have historically disrupted those bonds. Instead, it invests in community-based, culturally responsive care, ensuring families have the resources and supports they need to stay together and to raise their children in ways that reflect who they are. As Grand Chief Joel Abram highlighted, this is about more than a settlement, it is about achieving substantive equality and affirming the right of First Nations to care for their children in ways that are culturally grounded and responsive to community realities.

Ontario's departing Ombudsman highlights lack of resources for vulnerable people

In a [recent interview](#), the departing Ontario Ombudsman reflected on his experience after serving more than a decade in the role and underscored his concerns around the lack of resources for vulnerable people in the province. He pointed out that the allocation of resources to services that support vulnerable people is coming too slowly while the needs are growing. ONN will continue to advocate for a [reformed funding](#)

[relationship with government](#) that prioritizes stable, long-term, and flexible operational funding that reflects the true cost of delivering services and programs, reduces administrative burdens associated with transfer payment agreements (TPAs), and enables a coordinated approach for nonprofits to negotiate TPAs.

Maytree: Permanent, Canada-wide housing benefit system needed

Maytree's new report, [Blueprint for a Canada housing benefit system: architecture and design features](#), outlines how federal, provincial, and territorial governments can work together to create portable and predictable housing benefits that follow lower-income renters wherever they live, respond to income changes, and ensure that no one is left behind if the Canada Housing Benefit ends in 2028. The report provides a detailed, evidence-based roadmap to replace the current patchwork of housing benefits with a single coherent Canada-wide system that delivers predictable and meaningful support to more renters who need it.

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