

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH)

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OTTAWA INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD
MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

INITIATIVE DE LA SANTÉ MENTALE DES NOURRISSONS
ET DES JEUNES ENFANTS D'OTTAWA

Objectives

Defining IECMH

Reviewing the research on IECMH

Outlining the Facts and Stats

Reflecting on the IECMH initiative in Ottawa

Identifying the components of IECMH

Exploring the future of IECMH and the children of Ottawa



Defining IECMH

It is the developing capacity of the child from birth to six years of age to form close and secure adult and peer relationships, experience, manage and express a full range of emotions, and explore the environment and learn – all in the context of family, community and culture (Cohen, Oser & Quigley, 2012; Clinton et al., 2014)

However, it is important to recognize that brain development begins in pregnancy, therefore, the prenatal period must also be considered in relationship to IECMH.



The Research

From conception to age 6 is the most influential time in brain development. Early experiences especially in the first 2000 days can have an effect on the wiring and sculpting of the brain that can influence a child's learning, behaviour and health for a lifetime.

**The developing brain makes
1,000,000 new brain
Connections every second.**

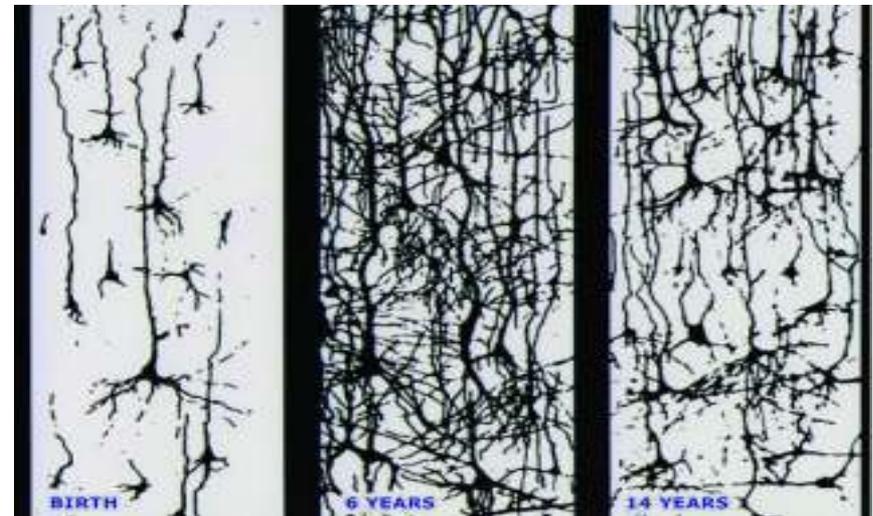


Image obtained from Centre for the Developing Child, Harvard University, 2017.
Original Image source: Conel, J.L. The postnatal development of the human cerebral cortex. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1959.

Facts and Stats

In Canada

- ▶ 70% of mental health problems start during childhood or adolescence.
- ▶ In any given week, **at least 500,000** employed Canadians are **unable to work** due to mental health problems.
- ▶ The economic burden of mental illness in Canada is estimated at **\$51 billion per year**.

In Ontario

- ▶ The disease burden of mental illness and addiction in Ontario is 1.5 times higher than all cancers put together and more than 7 times that of all infectious diseases.

Thus, the numbers demonstrate that there is clearly a **problem in Canada.....**and the evidence is clear that **prevention and early intervention are important**



Ottawa is not immune to this problem

- ❖ Fostering mental health in our community is a strategic direction for Ottawa Public Health.
- ❖ Youth Services Bureau has made IECMH as one of their nine priority areas
- ❖ Numerous community agencies have dedicated resources to this initiative. These include.....



Growing List of Initiative Contributors....



Facts and Stats in Ottawa

In Ottawa

- Since 2010, mental health emergency visits at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) have increased by 75% (Ottawa Insights, 2016).
- In the last year, 45% of children who accessed Crossroads Children's Centre walk-in clinic were under the age of 6. In their intensive home based program, supporting families with severe challenges, 30% of the children are also under the age of 6.

And as children grow.....

- One in eight (12%) of grade 7-12 students had seriously considered suicide in 2013 (OSDUHS, 2014).

Early Child Development in Ottawa



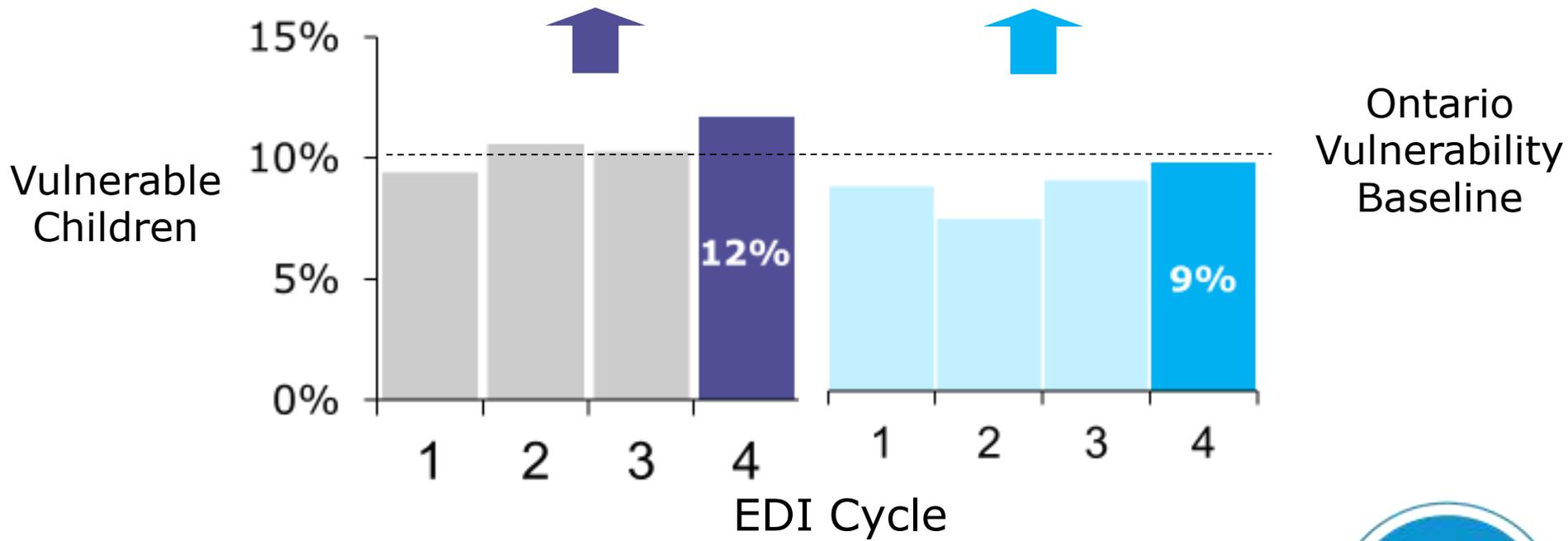
are vulnerable in one or more areas of their development as they enter school

Early Development Instrument (EDI) Results, 2015





EMOTIONAL MATURITY



SOCIAL COMPETENCE





EMOTIONAL MATURITY

SUB-DOMAIN RESULTS

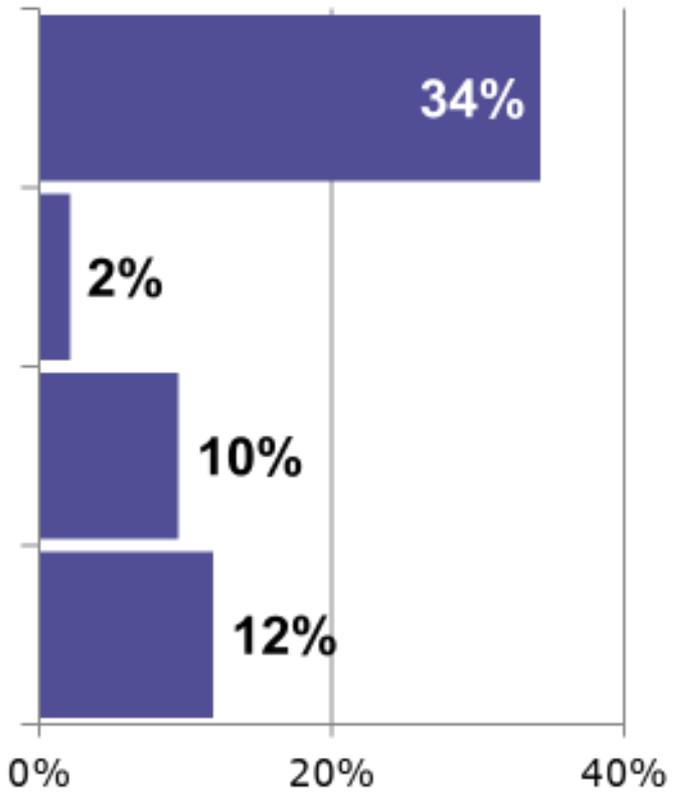


Prosocial and Helping Behaviour

Anxious and Fearful Behaviour

Aggressive Behaviour

Hyperactive and Inattentive Behaviour



Children Not On Track



SOCIAL COMPETENCE

SUB-DOMAIN RESULTS



Overall Social Competence

8%



Responsibility and Respect

5%



Approaches to Learning

7%



Readiness to Explore New Things

3%

0% 20% 40%

Children Not On Track

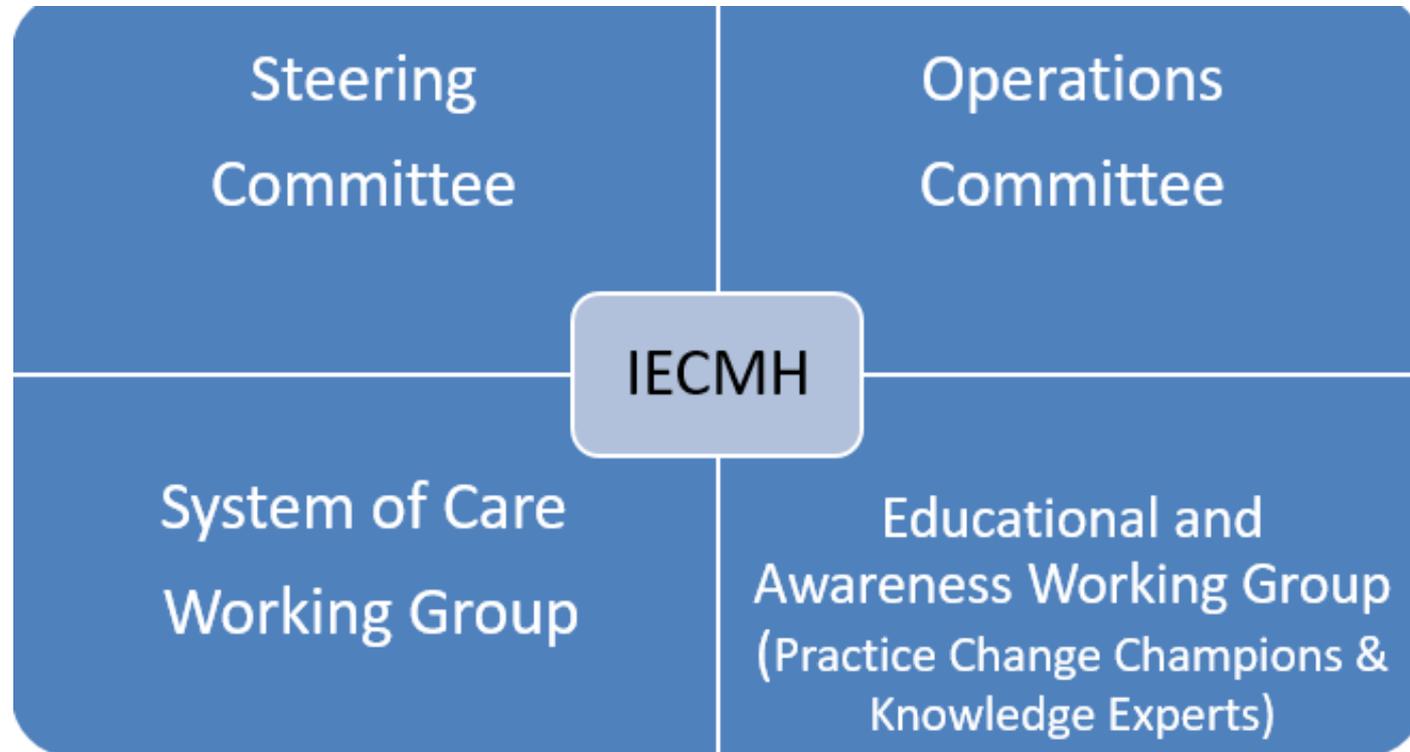
Foundations of the Ottawa IECMH Initiative

- ▶ In 2014, Ontario's Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) identified infant and early childhood mental health as an issue that needed policy development to ensure the availability and accessibility of optimal and consistent services across the province.
- ▶ Resulted in a policy paper released in November 2014, *Supporting Ontario's youngest minds: Investing in the mental health of children under the age of 6*, and it drew on "the latest research evidence and information from environmental and jurisdictional scans to advance evidence-informed policy recommendations to strengthen infant and early childhood mental health services in our province" (Clinton et al., 2014).

Foundations of the Ottawa IECMH Initiative

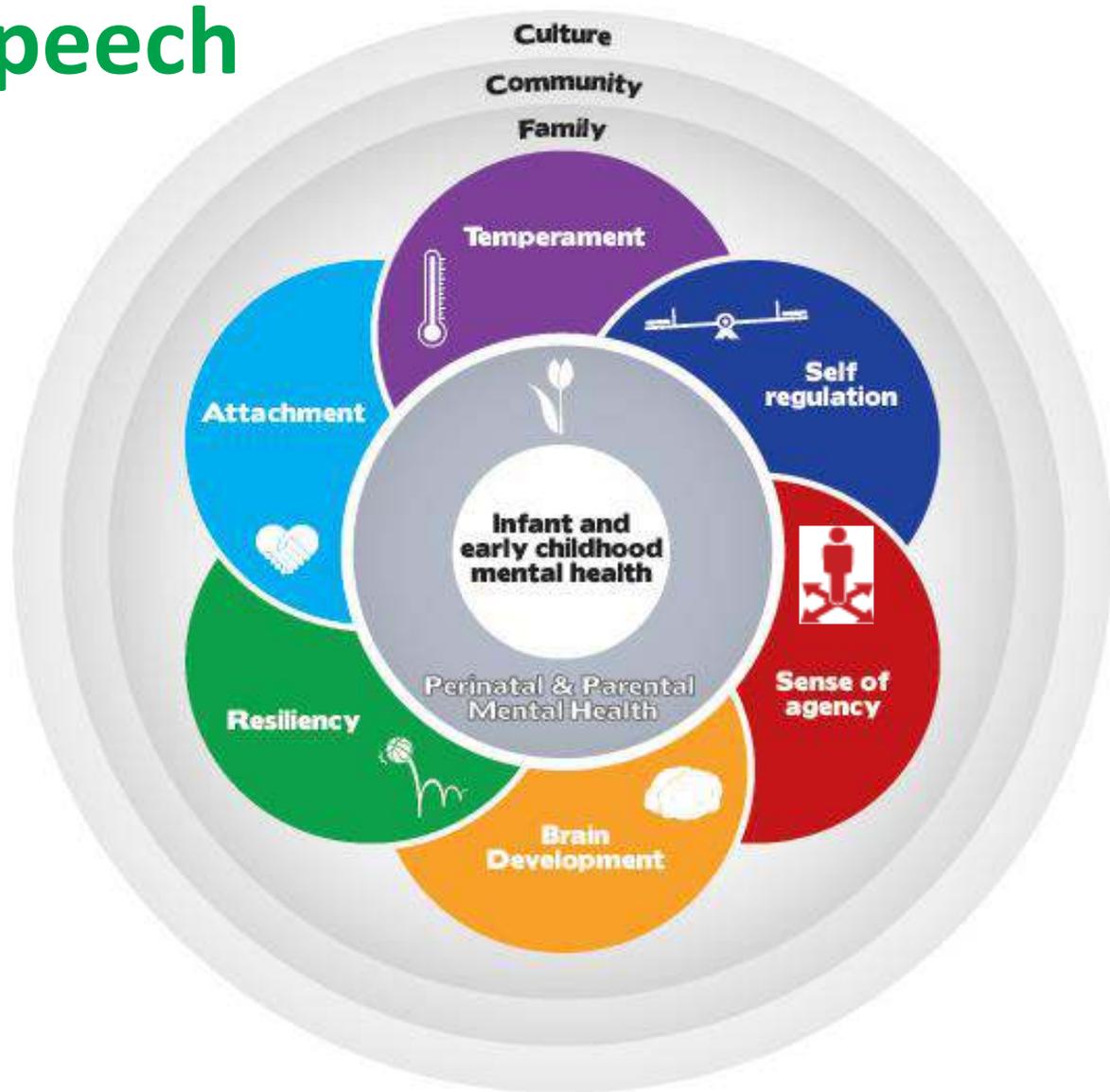
- ▶ In partnering with IMHP and through a grant from PHAC, Ottawa was one of several communities chosen to begin a “community conversation” about IECHM.
 - ▶ ***Some questions explored were:*** What do we know? What are we doing? What programs do we offer? Where are the gaps? Now what?
- ▶ From here we formed the Ottawa IECMH Initiative to bring to life the *Supporting Ontario’s youngest minds: Investing in the mental health of children under the age of 6* document.

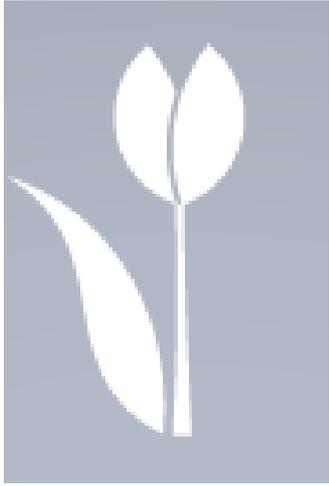
The IECMH's Organizational Structure



The Elevator Speech for IECMH

It is comprised of multiple interrelated components:





Perinatal Mental Health

Refers to the mental health of the mother pre pregnancy, during pregnancy, and in the postpartum period.

Brain Development

Brain development begins in pregnancy and undergoes its most rapid period of growth during the first 2000 days (Make No Little Plans, 2013).

The Impact of [serve and return](#) relationships on brain development



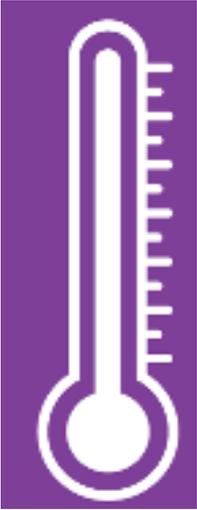


Attachment

Is a deep and lasting connection babies form with their caregivers. Babies need to feel safe, cared for, and protected. When caregivers respond consistently in a manner that is warm and sensitive a secure attachment develops.

A secure attachment is foundational to positive developmental outcomes and future relationships with peers and partners. (EECD, 2017)

[Still Face Experiment](#)



Temperament

Is a set of personality traits that people are born with
A child's temperament can shape their outcomes and influence how others respond to them.

It is important to get to know your temperament and your child's!

Self-regulation



Refers to how efficiently and effectively children deal with stressors and then recover from them.

Why [self-regulation](#) matters



Resiliency

Develops over time and is the ability to bounce back from adversity in a positive way (EECD, 2017).

It does not mean that we protect children from being exposed to opportunities where they are challenged and may not succeed.

Instead be there to support them through life's challenges. Things don't always work out the way we intend them to, but it does not mean that we cannot cope with life's challenges.

[Resiliency in action](#)



Sense of Agency

The child is able to make choices and decisions that have an influence in their environment.

It is linked to having a sense of control over matters that affect them.

To create a sense of agency, children first need to identify with their family. These first relationships between family members build a sense of belonging.

Your family contributes to making your child feel loved, secure and valued. (Lamia, 2010)

Some Ottawa IECMH Accomplishments

Engaging Community Leaders through a leadership forum:

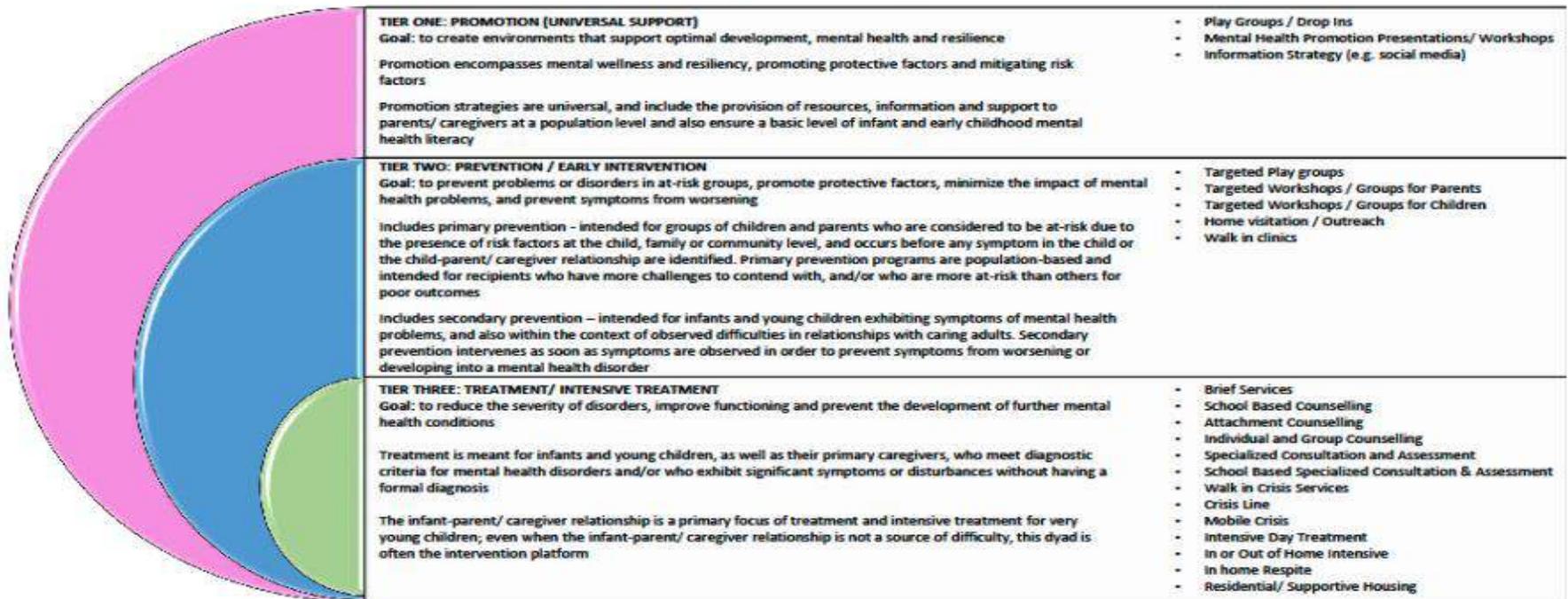


L to R: Marisa Moher(Director Ottawa Child and Youth Initiative), Monica Armstrong (Youth Services Bureau), Mr. Shad Quadri (Chair – Board of Health), Mrs. Bibi Alfredsson, Catherine Miller (Parent Resource Centre), Mr. Daniel Alfredsson (former Captain, Ottawa Senators Hockey Club), Senator Rita Gordon, Dr. Isra Levy (Medical Officer of Health – Ottawa Public Health), Dr. Jean Clinton (Lead Author Supporting Ontario’s Youngest Minds Document, Advisor to Ontario’s Minister of Education), Cherry Murray (Associate Executive Director – Crossroads Children’s Treatment Centre, Harpreet Grewal, Elder’s Sally Gordon and Rita Wilson, Counsellor Cherenenko, Deputy Mayor Mr. Mark Taylor, Counsellor Suzanne Pinel, Marino Francispillai (Program Manager, Family School Health), Mr. Alex Munter (CEO, Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario), Christine Darmawan (Program Manager Carlington Community Health Centre), Cindy Simpson (Director Youville Centre), Dr. Vera Etches (Associate Medical Officer of Health).

IECMH System of Care Accomplishments:

Development of a tiered inventory of mental health programs and services for pregnant mothers and families with children aged birth to age 6 years old.

INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM OF CARE



IECMH Practice Change Champions

30 front line workers, including Early Childhood Educators, Public Health Nurses, Mental Health Workers received intensive IECMH training. The curriculum included:

- Infant Mental Health Promotion Modules
- Reaching in Reaching Out Resiliency Workshops
- Dr. Gordon Neufeld's Making Sense of Preschoolers
- Training included in person, online and ongoing learning labs



IECMH.CA Landing Page

French: SMNJE.CA



This landing page directs the audience to three areas:

- **Parents and caregivers:** directs to Parenting in Ottawa Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health
- **Professionals:** directs to professionals section of Ottawa Public Health's website
- **The Initiative:** directs to Growing up Great

Next Steps for the Ottawa IECMH Initiative

Launching Public Awareness Campaign

Pause. Moments matter in the life of a child.

Encouraging a curious mind today...

Helps build a healthy brain today and tomorrow.

Building a healthy brain starts early...
It starts with exploring the world around you.

Learn more about infant and early childhood mental health:
IECMH.ca

(One of six posters. Each poster addresses a component and links to IECMH.ca)

Next Steps for the Ottawa IECMH Initiative

- ❖ Keep the momentum alive! Launching November 20, 2017 then having weekly Facebook sessions through Parenting in Ottawa
- ❖ Adaption of the English and French interrelated components visual into top three languages in Ottawa
- ❖ Adoption of the common definition
- ❖ Develop sustainable IECMH trainings for various sectors
- ❖ Ensure IECMH promotion, prevention and intervention in all service areas.

Next Steps for the Ottawa IECMH Initiative

- ❖ Invest in educational opportunities for all providers that have a direct stake in infant and early childhood mental health.
- ❖ Develop strong data indicators, data collection, and monitoring systems.
- ❖ Engage key stakeholders (families, caregivers, service providers) in addressing policies.



