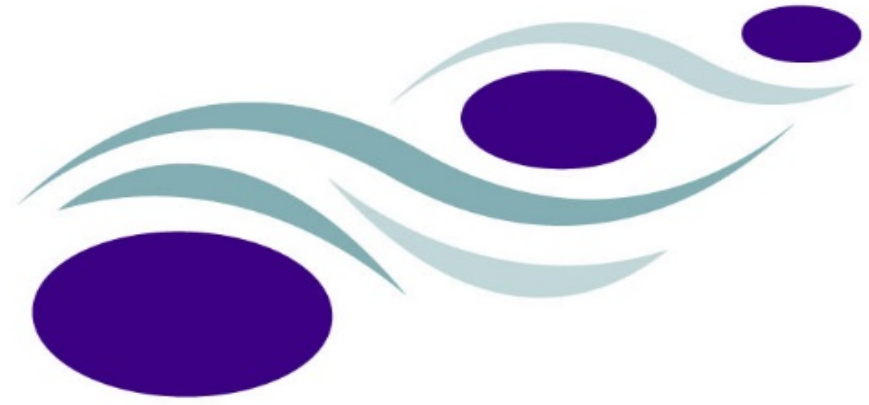




**Pathstone**



**Mental Health**

**Compassionate • Innovative • Professional**

# Process and Practice of Addressing Service Gaps in Infant Mental Health



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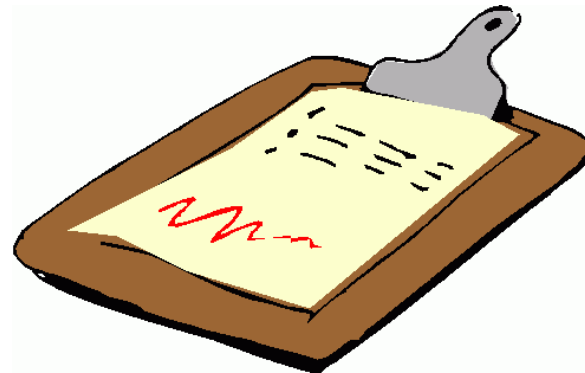
# Agenda

- Why Infant Mental Health?
  - Quality Assurance - Service Gaps
- What is Infant Mental Health?
  - Definition and explanation
  - Relevance
  - ACE
- Infant Mental Health at Pathstone
  - Pilot Program overview
  - What's next?
- Conclusion



# Quality Assurance - Service Gaps

- Accredited Children's Mental Health Agency and Lead Agency for the Niagara Region
- Ongoing Quality Assurance process includes:
  - Outcome Measures - Efficacious Evidence-based and/or Evidence-Informed treatment programs
  - Identify trends in Service
  - Process to address Service Gaps and waitlist for services in conjunction with Community Stakeholders including families, Licensed child care, Consolidated Municipal Service Providers, Boards of Education and Public Health



# Service Gaps:

## Increased Need for Behaviour Consultants

- Increased referrals through Consolidated Municipal Service Provider (CSMS) at Niagara Region for consultative and specialized supports for children attending licensed childcare and EarlyON centres with externalizing behaviours
- Children with DPS over 7
- Children's Action Relationships and Emotions (CARE) tool administered
- Increase in referrals for counselling and therapy services for children and families from 0-6 years



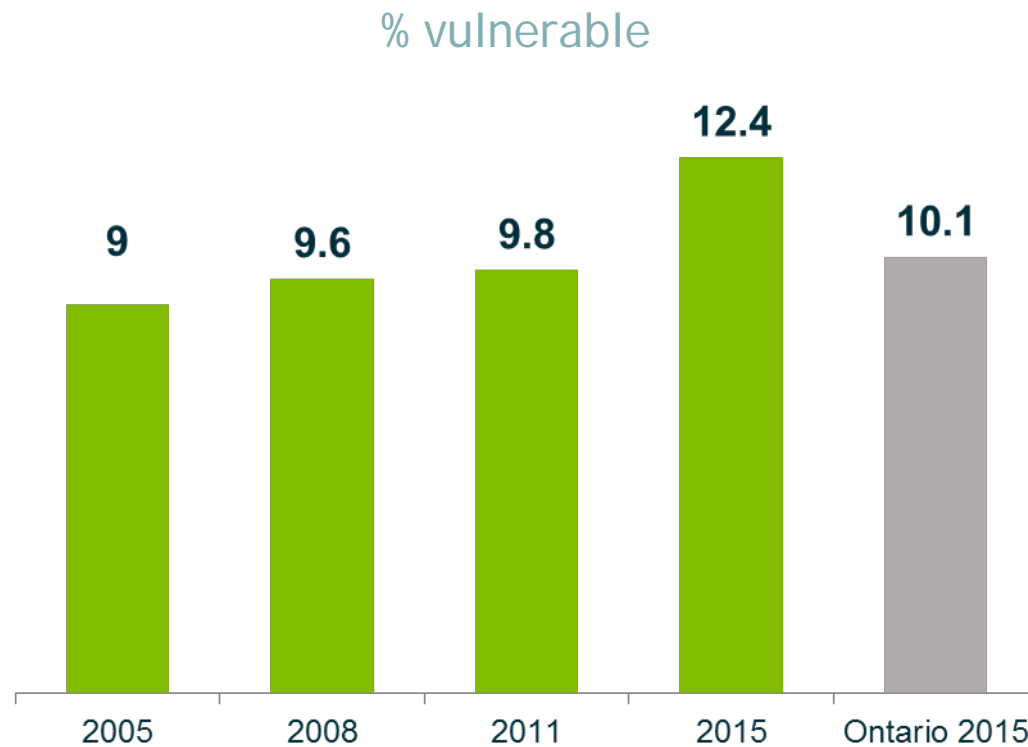
# Service Gap—What did we find?

## EDI results

### **EDI (Early Development Instrument)**

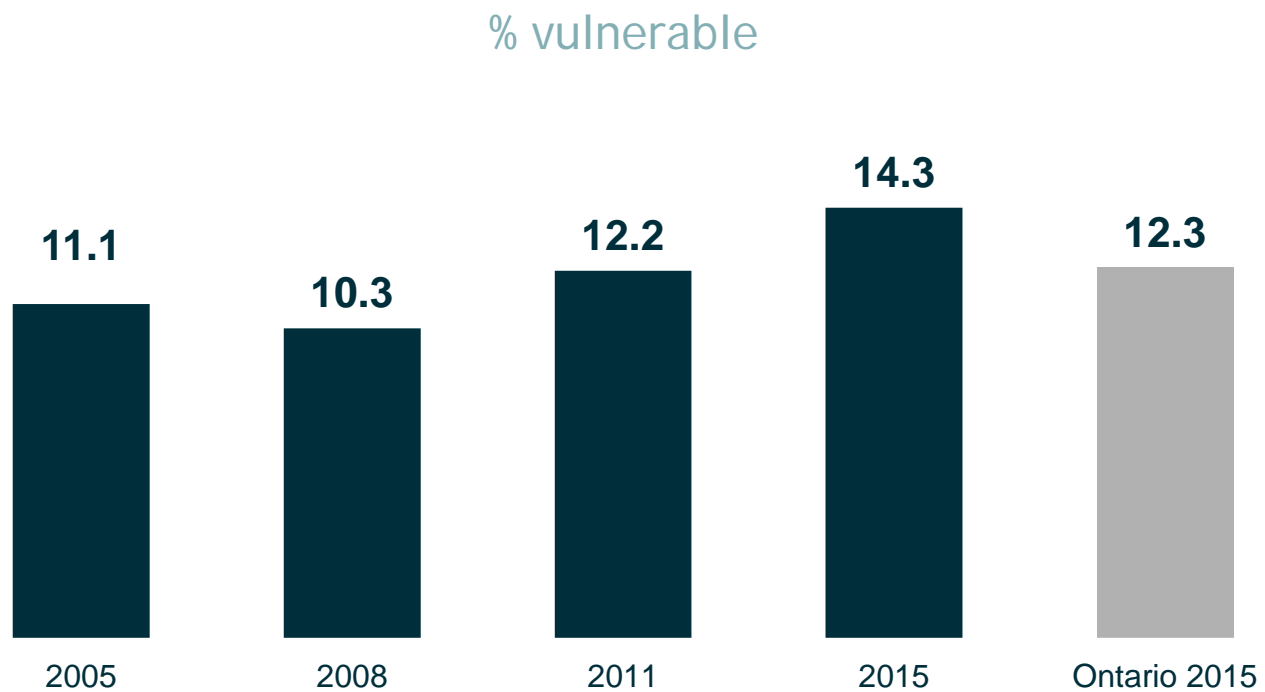
- Measures developmental health and wellbeing in 5 areas of development
  - Physical Health & Wellbeing
  - Social Competence
  - **Emotional Maturity**
  - Language & Cognitive Development
  - Communication & General Knowledge
- Implications: tells us about experiences or resources accessed prior to school entry, good predictor of future outcomes

# EDI results in Niagara - Social Competence



# EDI Results in Niagara

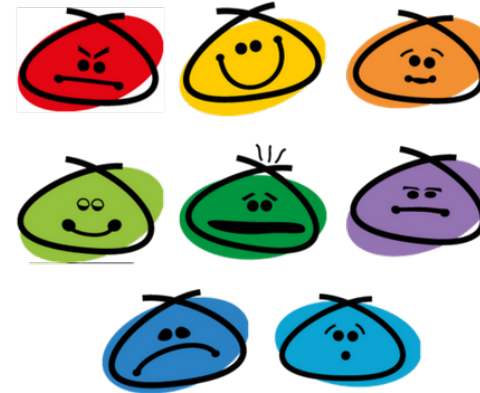
## Emotional Maturity





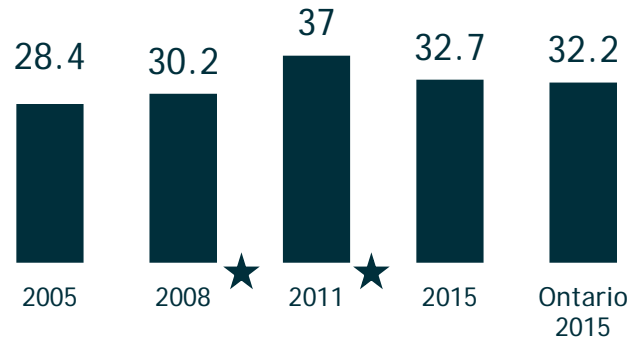
# EDI - Emotional Maturity Subdomains

- Prosocial and helping behavior
- Aggressive behavior
- Anxious and fearful behavior
- Hyperactive and inattentive behaviour



## Prosocial & helping behaviour

(% not meeting expectations)



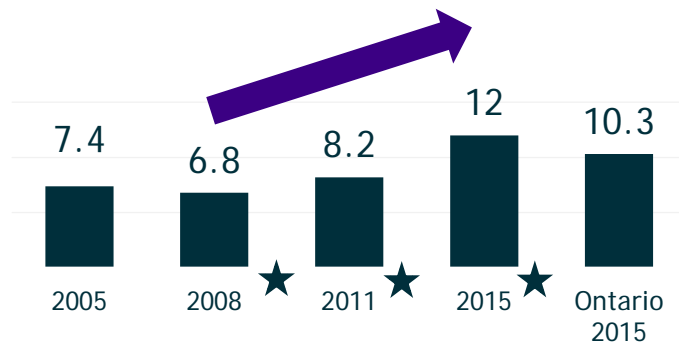
## Anxious & fearful behaviour

(% not meeting expectations)



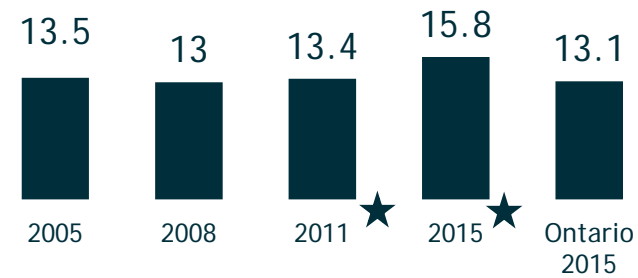
## Aggressive behaviour

(% not meeting expectations)



## Hyperactive & inattentive behaviour

(% not meeting expectations)



# Niagara Infant Mental Health Committee

- Pathstone Mental Health - active member of Niagara Infant Mental Health Committee
  - Committee founded by Strive Niagara with guidance, training and research opportunity under tutelage of Dr. Chaya Kulkarni and her team (Infant Mental Health Promotion - SickKids Hospital)
  - As part of the research, ASQ-SE training provided to RECEs at selected licensed child care settings - proactive identification and early intervention through the developmental service plan for young children who are waiting for more intensive services
  - All Early Years clinical and management staff at Pathstone trained in the administration of the ASQ and ASQ - SE as part of the continuum of services.

# What is Infant Mental Health?

Between birth and age two, there are 1 million synapses in the brain per second.  
(Centre of the Developing Child, 2009)

**This is a huge opportunity to effect  
the architecture of the brain!**



Yes, 1 Million!

When a child has a caregiver who is:

- ✓ Attentive, responsive, and nurturing
- ✓ Available to the child regularly
- ✓ Able to act as an external regulator for the child



Children may show some distress when a parent leaves, but are able to calm knowing that their caregiver will return.

They are more likely to develop a secure attachment with their caregiver.

# When a child is exposed to toxic stress,

(Exposure to strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity—such as physical or emotional abuse, chronic neglect, caregiver substance abuse or mental illness, exposure to violence, and/or the accumulated burdens of family economic hardship—without adequate adult support)(Centre on the Developing Child, 2018)

it is more difficult for the infant to develop a secure attachment to their caregiver.

Insecure attachment = the strengthening of connections in the brain relating to obtaining **basic needs**, as opposed to interacting with the world around them and further developing **socially and emotionally**.

These connections in the brain that go unused or inactivated can be lost.

# Secure Attachment

Children may show some distress when a parent leaves, but are able to calm knowing that their caregiver will return.



These children are able to interact with and learn from the world around them, because they do not have to worry about obtaining their basic needs.



In short, the foundation for infant mental health depends greatly on the caregiving environment and relationships.



In prior research, early intervention to aid in the development of attachment has resulted in secure attachment between a parent and child (Santelices et al., 2010)

# Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES)

Felitti and Anda, Kaiser, San Diego Dept. of Preventative Medicine

- 17,421 participants
- Completed questionnaire
- Were followed through years to determine if there were correlations between the ACEs and poor health/behaviour later in life.

The three types of ACEs include:

## Abuse

Physical  
Emotional  
Sexual

## Neglect

Physical  
Emotional

## Household Dysfunction

Mental Illness  
Incarcerated Relative  
Violent Behaviour  
Substance Abuse  
Divorce

# Findings

When children are exposed to toxic stress, there are consequences for child development and long-term consequences as well.

Child development consequences include neurobiological and psychological effects, as well as behaviours that put health at risk.

Long-term effects can be categorized into disease and disability, and social problems.



# Infant Mental Health at Pathstone Mental Health



# Infant Mental Health Pilot Program



Psychoeducational Workshops

- i.e. attachment, play



Hands-on Workshops

- Practicing skills learned in psychoeducation workshops



Feedback from workshop facilitator



Pre/Post Measures



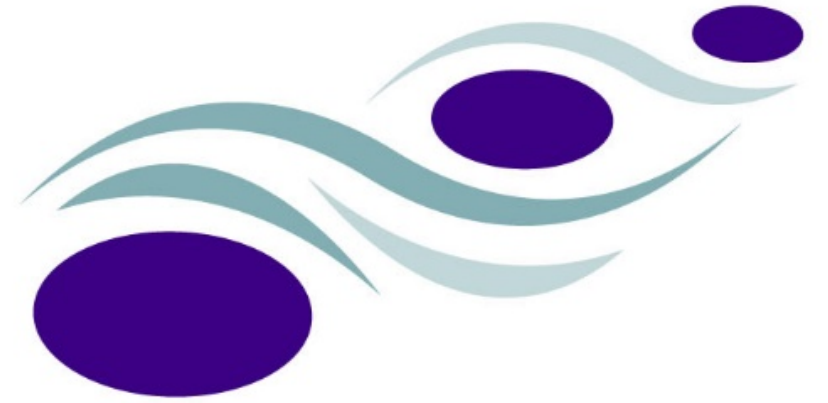
The goal of this program is to build on the relationship between the parent and child, and to lay a foundation for continued mental health from infancy onward.

# Questions?





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