

ONTARIO Connections

Linking Families and Communities



Family Supports Institute Ontario's Four Pillars of Strength in Action

By Kevin Adams, Executive Director, Family Supports Institute Ontario

Family Supports Institute Ontario uses the model of four pillars: Professional Capacity Building; Research Partnerships and Knowledge Exchange; Expanding Professional Recognition and Promotion of Family-Friendly Public Policies. The purpose of this article is to describe in some detail what each one means, what the Institute has done to develop in each area of strength and some thoughts about where we should go in the near future.

1. Professional Capacity Building

- Our intention is to position the Institute as Ontario's leader in professional development of family centred practice.
- Capacity building will be delivered by a biennial conference, regional seminars/workshops, webinars, our website and our members' quarterly newsletter.

THE UPDATE

- September 19th and 20th, our conference "The Communities We Grow...The People Who Make It Happen" saw over 200 attendees, more than 30 presenters and 'best in class' keynote speakers.
- Our staff members have posted Conference speaking notes, power point summaries and links on our website as a service to our members and interested practitioners at: www.fsio.ca.
- Conference feedback from evaluations has been shared by the conference committee with the Board of Directors as we begin planning for September 2010.

- Our five regional launches are designed to bring innovative practice and 'food for thought' to members and colleagues across the province.
- Our members' quarterly newsletter *Ontario Connections* contains reports, interviews and issues that will create a context for lively discussion and reflection.
- The Institute continues to explore the potential of webinars to support and inform our colleagues in more remote locations.

2. Research Partnerships and Knowledge Exchange

- While there has been a significant body of research already generated, it is imperative that the Institute, in partnership with other associations and leading academics, continues to expand the body of research in part to add increased credibility to the profession and continue building on emerging practice.

THE UPDATE

- Our website, which has been active since September 18th of this year, is your gateway to current research.
- We continue to explore research partnerships with key academics in the field of family centred practice like Martha Lee-Blickstead, Catherine Moher and Cindy Valenti of Ryerson University, Mary Fisher at Seneca College, Brenda Smith-Chant at Trent University, Zeenat



Janmohamed at the Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development at O.I.S.E. and Stuart Shanker from York University.

- We will continue to feature their findings and the impact that each of them has on our daily practice in the newsletter and provide links to their work on our website.

3. Expanding Professional Recognition

- A commonly expressed concern across the province is the lack of recognition for the field of family support and by association, a lack of recognition of the value of family centred practice. The Institute has to seize the opportunity to play a decisive role in raising the profile and perceived professional value of family centred practice.

THE UPDATE

- We continue to dialogue with the leaders of like-minded organizations like Janice MacAulay, E.D. Of FRP Canada; Eduarda Sousa, Chair of the Common Table on Full Day Learning and E.D. Of the Association of Early Childhood Educators

of Ontario and Joan Arruda , Co-Chair of the Ontario Early Years Provincial Network. When we talk about raising the profile of the profession, it is often in the context of: a) communicating the principles of family centred practice to the public b) reaching out to other professionals in health, education, child welfare, community living and the justice system who work in a similar context and c) establishing a framework for self-governance.

- A report on the new College of Early Childhood Educators will appear in an upcoming newsletter.

4. Promotion of Family-Friendly Public Policies

- There exists a significant opportunity for the Institute and its members to establish a strong presence in the policy arena. There is an undeniable risk that the field of family supports and its practitioners will continue to be undervalued and further marginalized. Specific attention must be given to advancing a province wide, united voice in support of family centred practice.

THE UPDATE

- The Institute continues to engage in conversation with people like: Jane Mercer, Chair of the Toronto Coalition for Better Child Care and her provincial counterpart Jenny Robinson of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care; Charles Pascal, special advisor to Premier McGuinty on Full day Learning and Care; and Jacqui Strachan, Director of Parent Engagement at People for Education.
- We continue to grow our skills in public advocacy by meeting with Linda Hodgins, President and Peggy Sweeney, Communications Director for the Ontario Principals Council that for the last ten years has run a Queen's Park Day where the Council meets 40-50 MPPs and present their issues in a non-partisan way as a service to those who represent us. FSIO is currently developing its own advocacy model.

In Conclusion

When the Institute came into existence in the late fall of 2007, our Board of Directors created a strategic plan and four pillars of strength to help us complete the plan. We have finished the first year of that five year plan. While much remains to be done, what we've done so far we have done together. We cannot risk complacency but considering the wealth of energy and wisdom that we share with our members, our Directors and our colleagues, there is good reason to be optimistic about the field of family supports.

Editorial | Introduction of the New FSIO Executive Director

In April, 2008, FSIO announced the acquisition of a Trillium Grant which has allowed us to hire an Executive Director for the next three years. This will advance the goals of the Institute immeasurably. We have been fortunate in hiring Kevin Adams as the new E.D. Kevin comes to us from Lindsay, Ontario and is actually a retired principal, an advantage for us at a time when children's services organizations are expanding their partnerships with school boards. Kevin will work from the FSIO office located at the OEYC in Lindsay and will travel to Toronto frequently throughout the month. He brings a wealth of experience with parent engagement,

children and families and has also been active in community development in the City of Kawartha Lakes. Kevin is fluently bilingual and spent ten years teaching in Nunavut schools and thus brings us very valuable mixed cultural experiences. He has two grown children, Matt and Meghan and lives just outside Lindsay with his partner, Margaret. Welcome aboard, Kevin. Our hard working Board of Directors will now be able to relax somewhat as Kevin takes on the day to day responsibilities of the Family Supports Institute Ontario.

Jude Tripp, Editor



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Dear Colleagues and Friends

In the five months since I began in my role as Executive Director of the Family Supports Institute Ontario, I have deliberately sought out people who are actively involved in varying aspects of family centred care. Everywhere I go, I have been made to feel welcome. People have been unfailingly generous with their time and their willingness to share what they know. My contribution to our quarterly magazine will be to give a sense of my journey as your E.D. and to share my reflections on the issues of the day as I encounter them.

One issue that keeps coming up in conversation is our provincial government's apparent intention to introduce full day learning and care to 4 and 5 year olds. There is considerable conjecture as to the program format and the kinds of professionals who would deliver such a seamless program. When I heard that such a program already exists at the Kanata Research Park Family Centre, I called them to learn more about it. They kindly invited me to come and see for myself. The results of this visit will be featured in our next newsletter.

No newsletter covering recent events of our organization would be complete without some mention of our two day biennial conference: "The Communities We Grow... The People Who Make It Happen" held September 19th and 20th at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Toronto. To date we are still looking for more digital

images of presentations, key note speakers and that awesome gala, so if you have some to share, we'd certainly give credit to the source.

Regional launches for FSIO are an important activity during my first year as Executive Director. You'll find details on our first launches in the newsletter. There are more yet to come. We'll be sure and announce the next ones well in advance and hope that you'll attend if there's one near you. You'll find that our newsletter contains reports and information from a variety of sources; to stimulate discussion amongst our colleagues. Part of our goal as an Institute is to provide you, our members, with materials on current research, innovations, key figures in the field of family support, new trends and the like; all to help you grow your knowledge base, your reflective practice and your professional development.

You are also invited to become a part of the newsletter, to contribute suggestions, reviews and articles. I look forward to hearing from you. Finally, no matter where you work, I look forward to continuing our association and together advancing the well being of Ontario families.

Kevin Adams
Executive Director,
Family Supports Institute Ontario
e-mail: Kevin@fsio.ca / web site: www.fsio.ca

The Launch of Family Supports Institute Ontario for Central East Ontario

A Great Training Opportunity

In partnership with the Ontario Early Years Centre Haliburton Victoria Brock Inc., Ryerson University and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, a two day training event was held November 6 and 7 at the Lindsay Golf and Country Club. Our goal was to provide an overview of Ryerson's Family Supports Certificate Course "Applying Theory to Practice" with presentations by **Cindy Valenti**, associate professor from Ryerson University and **Brenda Smith-Chant**, associate professor from Trent University.

Putting theory behind the work of the family support practitioner was the goal of the two day workshop lead by Cindy Valenti. Mini-modules of the Family Supports on-line course were presented. Highlights included:

- Bruce Perry's Six core Strengths of Human Development;
- Deconstructing the 12 Guiding Principles of Family Support using Carl Dunst's model, and applying them to participants' programs.

Brenda Smith-Chant presented her recent work in the field of early childhood cognitive development: the role of the parent; the importance of social interaction and the issue of bonding. She discussed issues with social policies and programs, identified problems when supporting families and shared trends identified in her area of research.

As Executive Director for Family Supports Institute Ontario it was my pleasure to present the Institute's Four Pillars of Strength.

During the first day our attendees also had the good fortune to be addressed by **Catherine Moher**, Academic Co-ordinator of the Family Supports Certificate at the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, Ryerson University. She described the program and its requirements for admission. Catherine Moher and Cindy Valenti also conducted a data collection/question and answer session on Ryerson's Family Support Certificate as the Family Supports Certificate undergoes its first review.

There were many opportunities for sharing, reflection and feedback. Regional launches will continue over the next several months. I hope that you'll consider joining us at a launch near you!

For summaries of this two day event, please visit our website www.fsio.ca.

RYERSON UNIVERSITY

Family Supports Certificate



Spring is just around the corner! It is never too early to start planning for spring.

Gaining a Family Supports Certificate provides individuals with skills and knowledge to support families in a rapidly changing society. It gives you the opportunity to integrate your current practice with theory related to family supports, develop knowledge and skills needed for exemplary practice, and work collaboratively toward high-quality innovative programs.

COURSES OFFERED

Family Issues I, CVFS 401

Offered on campus, Tuesday and Thursday
May 05 – June 18

Family Issues II, CVFS 402

Offered on campus, Monday and Wednesday
May 04 – June 22

Program Planning and Evaluation, CVFS 404

Offered on-line
May 09 – August 08

Practicum/Project, CVFS 408

Offered on-line
May 09 – August 08

Group Dynamics and Interpersonal Communication, CVFS 400

Offered Monday to Saturday on campus
May 25 – May 30

For more information, contact Catherine Moher, Academic Coordinator, 416-979-5000 ext. 2535 or by email at cmoher@ryerson.ca

AWARDS, BURSARIES AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

If you need financial assistance to make tuition payments, you have a variety of options. You may apply or be nominated for merit-based awards and/or you may apply for need-based financial aid.

For more detailed information on financial aids and awards, please contact the Ryerson Student Financial Assistance office by telephone at 416-979-5113 or visit www.ryerson.ca/financialaid.

The Common Table: What's New, What's Next?

By Eduarda Sousa, Executive Director, Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario

The Common Table is a relatively young entity, having started in 2005. The Common Table for Childhood Development and Care came together in an effort to promote collaboration in advocacy and delivery of services to children and families in Ontario. The six founding partners of this provincial group included the AECEO, Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC), Ontario Association of Family Resource Programs, Home Child Care Association of Ontario (HCCAO), Ontario Early Years Centre Provincial Network (OEYCPN) and Middle Years Matter Coalition (MYMC). The Common Table has since grown to include 22 provincial members.

Working together towards a consensus, the group drafted a set of recommendations that addressed the future of early childhood development and care in Ontario. They unanimously agreed that government should put into place a plan that transforms at the same time as it expands Ontario's patchwork of programs into a single comprehensive early learning and care system of services for children 0-12 years. They also believed that in order to meet the goals of the QUAD principles Ontario's new system must be:

- High Quality
- A Universal Entitlement
- Inclusive
- Directly Funded
- Expanded in the not-for-profit sector only

The coming together of the Common Table was an important development for the province of Ontario, as this type of collaboration had never happened before. Common Table members felt confident that as a group representing over 95% of this sector they could lend their expertise and resources to government as they prepared to shape the future of children's services in Ontario.

In 2006 the AECEO along with Common Table Steering Committee members (Home Child Care Association of Ontario, Middle Years Matter Coalition, Family Supports Institute Ontario, Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, Ontario Early Years Centre Provincial Network), on the coordination of a provincial forum on services to children and families.

At the present time the network has grown to include: Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario, Best Start Resource Centre by Health Nexus, Boys and Girls Clubs of Ontario, Campaign 2000, Child Care Resource & Research Unit, College of Applied Arts & Technology – ECE Coordinators Group, CUPE Ontario, Early Childhood Resource Teachers

The Common Table Founding Partners

- AECEO
- Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC)
- Ontario Association of Family Resource Programs
- Home Child Care Association of Ontario (HCCAO)
- Ontario Early Years Centre Provincial Network (OEYCPN)
- Middle Years Matter Coalition (MYMC)

Network of Ontario, Family Supports Institute Ontario (formerly OAFRP), Home Child Care Association of Ontario, L'Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario, Middle Childhood Matters Coalition, Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, Ontario Early Years Centre Provincial Network, Organization for Parent Participation in Child Care and Education Ontario, Rural Voices.

These organizations met during 2008 to consider full day learning for four and five year olds. As a result a forum was held on June 11, 2008 in order to provide an opportunity to consult with the community. This forum enabled the Common Table to gather information for further discussion and create recommendations to be presented to Dr. Charles Pascal, the Early Learning Advisor for the Province of Ontario. Participants heard presentations on three different models and considered them in the following contexts: Governance; Funding and Parent Fees; Delivery Method and Location; Curriculum; Human Resources; Parent Choice and Involvement and System Building. Participants broke into small groups to discuss barriers and opportunities for each of the seven categories of questions. Summaries of the models and the discussions that followed were distributed to member groups for further consideration.

On October 20th some members of the Common Table met again to formulate recommendations from the information gathered at the Forum to be submitted to Dr. Charles Pascal.

The current global crisis has shifted some government priorities and at this point it is uncertain what will become of Dr. Pascal's report and the countless hours of effort that so many people put into it. What cannot be discounted is the spirit of consensus of The Common Table and the belief in the importance of families and children as central to the future of a healthy and confident Ontario.

Eduarda Sousa is Chair of the Common Table for Childhood Development and Care Ontario more often known as "The Common Table".

CAPC/CPNP REPORT

By Joanne King, Chair



CAPC/CPNP CONFERENCE – OCT 5 AND 6

Thrive and Survive – Moving Forward in Uncertain Times

The Coalition sponsored the annual conference at Clevelands House in Minette on beautiful Lake Rosseau in the Muskokas. This year's conference focused on management staff. Verbal discussions with participants indicate the workshops were amazing with extremely valuable information for executive directors and managers. Workshop co-ordinators and keynote speakers came from as far away

as British Columbia. Keynote speakers included Ruth Armstrong, and Julie Hryienwicz-Hache. As well, participants were given an update on the Evaluation process by Nicole Kenton, Evaluation Consultant, Ontario Region. The participants were treated to the walking trails and lovely fall colours at their peak, tai chi, karaoke and dance, bingo and a roaring bonfire. There was also an opportunity to win a boat tour of the lakes. For the more hearty souls, the outdoor pool offered an experience of warm water in below normal air temperatures or tai chi exercising at 7:00 in the morning.

Participants also appreciated the many networking opportunities and the chance to attend their zone meeting even if they were not a sponsoring agency.

Joint Benefits Project

The report on the Joint Benefits Project (OEYC/CAPC & CPNP), "Collaborating for Impact Report on the Joint Benefits of CAPC, CPNP, and OEYC" paper by Tom Zizys has been posted on the webboard.

The Coalition represents 39 CAPC projects, and 47 CPNP projects.

FRP Canada Conference Welcoming Communities

May 12 – 15, 2009

Crowne Plaza Niagara Falls – Fallsview

On-line registration is now open.

Visit www.frp.ca/welcomingcommunities



WELCOMING
COMMUNITIES
FRP CANADA
CONFERENCE
MAY 12 - 15, 2009

KEYNOTES:

*Vital Communities, Vital Support:
How well do Canada's communities support
parents of young children?*
Nancy Birnbaum, President & CEO,
Invest in Kids, Toronto, Ontario

*Family Support: The importance of HOW we
provide it when building parent capacity*
Carol Trivette, Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute,
North Carolina

The Neuroscience of Early Child Development
Stuart Shanker, York University, Toronto, Ontario

*Join us in Niagara for the
best conference yet.*

WORKSHOPS: The full program will be posted on the website by January 5.

Topics include: capital campaigns, storytelling, political action towards abolishing physical punishment, confidence in immigrant families, team building, primary language and culture, ED's round table, healthy child development, "evidence", parenting programs – what really works, e-Evaluation findings, toy libraries, best practices, relationship building and communities plus many more

FUN:

- Opening reception at the Hard Rock Club
- Tours of Niagara attractions and wineries on Wednesday evening
- Magic of Play on Thursday evening
- Walks by the falls – anytime

ANYTHING ELSE?

*Pre-conference training sessions on
Tuesday, May 12, 2009*

Immerse yourself in a full day of training in the topic that interests you the most. Registration is limited. More information is available on www.frp.ca/preconference

1. Positive Discipline: What it is and how to do it?
2. Strategic Planning that Works
3. Care, Identity and Inclusion – Involving families in dialogues about strengthening their culture
4. Reaching Hard-To-Reach Families
5. Effective Co-Parenting: Putting Kids First



THE COMMUNITIES WE GROW... THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT HAPPEN: September 19 and 20, 2008

Our second biennial conference and our first as the newly formed Family Supports Institute Ontario was the next in the series that began with conferences organized by our predecessor groups MAFRP and OAFRP.

Held at the Crowne Plaza in Toronto, it featured opportunities for members, partners and fellow family support professionals to access the latest research, innovative program ideas, panel discussions and those always important networking opportunities. Our Conference partners included: The Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario, City of Toronto Children's Services, the Ontario Early Years Centres Provincial Network, Ryerson University and Seneca College.

Conference Co-Chairs Catherine Moher and Renske DeVries and their volunteers spent countless hours in preparation for what became an extremely well-received conference. Our keynote speakers, **Dr. Stuart Shanker** of the Milton and Ethel Harris Research Initiative at York University and **Jennifer Clarke** of the School of Social Work at Ryerson University set the tone on their respective days by giving our preconceptions a good stir and left us with lots to talk about in the hours and days that followed.

For our readers who were unable to attend, Dr. Shanker spoke eloquently about early childhood cognitive development and the key role of adults to help each child maximize their potential. Ms Clarke presented passionately on the topic of diversity and how our conceptions of diversity, equity and social justice impact on our practice and our delivery of services to families.

Thirty-two workshops were presented during this two day event. Power point summaries for many have since been made available on the Institute's website: www.fsio.ca.

A key part of any conference is the opportunity to collect feedback on all aspects. The conference committee recently met with members of the Board of Directors of FSIO to review comments, suggestions, complements and critiques as we begin our plans for our next conference in September 2010. Anyone who works in the area of family support is invited to help in the planning of the next conference. Please contact Kevin.fsio@rogers.com or Kevin@fsio.ca.



For more information, please contact:

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ONTARIO Connections

Linking Families and Communities

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WHAT IS THE FAMILY SUPPORTS INSTITUTE ONTARIO?

The Family Supports Institute Ontario is a new organization that will promote family friendly policy, research and provide opportunities for professional development. Its primary goal is to develop capacity amongst family support practitioners who work in a variety of settings across the province of Ontario. Using the Metro Association of Family Resource Programs and the Ontario Association of Family Resource Programs as its foundation, the Family Supports Institute Ontario will bring together practitioners working in Family Resource Programs, (FRPs), Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYC), Community Action Programs for Children and Canada's Prenatal Nutrition Programs (CAPC/CPNP) to name a few.

Ontario Connections welcomes your input. For publications dates/submission deadlines, please email kevin.fsio@rogers.com. Due to time and space restrictions, we are not always able to publish all articles submitted – others may be edited for length and/or content. We do value all contributions and encourage you to continue to participate by sending us your information, articles and responses. The opinions expressed are those of the individual author(s) and not necessarily those of the Family Supports Institute Ontario.

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY	ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE
Entire organization/agency budget	
Under \$149,000	\$100
\$150,000 –\$249,000	\$200
Over \$250,000	\$300
Individual Friends and Supporters	\$80
Full-time students	\$25

Membership Form

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Agency or School _____ Address _____

City _____ Postal Code _____

Telephone: Home _____ Business _____

Email address _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please send all mailings to: my home address my business address receipt please

Cheques should be made payable to Family Supports Institute Ontario

Mail to: Family Supports Institute Ontario 55 Mary Street West, Suite 106, Lindsay, Ontario K9V 5Z6

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BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- Shape the research agenda in the province and be “in the know” on the latest research initiatives and findings.
- Receive member-only savings of up to 20% on our capacity building workshops and knowledge fairs.
- Members only early bird savings for our biennial provincial conference.
- Establish a dialogue in support of family-friendly policies through our policy development team.
- Networking opportunities within local chapters.
- Relevant and timely E- news blasts.
- Quarterly newsletter.
- First choice on career development opportunities.
- Access to tools of the trade, code of ethics and occupational standards.
- Being connected and having fun!