# **Logo Toronto Child and Family Network Toronto - Together for our childrenToronto Child & Family Network**

**Steering Committee Minutes**

Date: Thursday, May 13, 2021

Time: 2:00 pm – 4:00pm

Webex meeting

| **Present** | **Regrets** |
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| * Kevin Pal (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services) (TCFN Co-chair) * Karen Gray (Children’s Services) (TCFN Co-chair) * Diane Banks (Toronto Public Library) * David Willis (East Metro Youth Services) * Paula Carrie (Aisling Discoveries) * Cynthia Grundmann (Toronto District School Board) * Connie Giorando (Toronto Catholic District School Board) * Nancy Hendy (Children’s Services) * Brenda Weitzner (Primary care physician) * Anna Patola (Humber College) * Siobhan McCarthy (AAPC Co-Chair , Native Child & Family Services of Toronto) * Margaret Howard (Surrey Place) * Leanne Nicolle (Big Brother Big Sister of Toronto) * Patricia Chorney-Rubin (George Brown College) * Cheryl Webb (Lumenus) * Jillian Sewell (YMCA) * Pamela Hart (Native Women's Resource Centre) (AAPC Co-chair) * Sarah Jimenez (Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network) * Danielle Layman-Pleet (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services) * Ashley Burger (EarlyON, Children's Services) * Annique Farrell (United Way of Greater Toronto) * Michele Lupa (Mothercraft) * Michele Antunes for Marie Klaassen (Public Health) * Trevor McAlmont (Macaulay Centre) * Glory Ressler (Toronto Children's Services) | * Jeffrey Schiffer (Native Child & Family Services of Toronto) * Pam Blanchfield (Parks, Forestry & Recreation) * Anne Lambert (Viamonde) * Lee Soda (Agincourt Community Services Association) * Isilda Kucherenko (Ministry of Education) * Jennifer Miles (Catholic Children’s Aid Society) * Agnès Sesboüé (RLFEFT co-chair, Garderie Rayon de Soleil) * Terri Hewitt (Surrey Place) |

**Staff Support:** Kelley Baldwin (Toronto Children’s Services), Matt Hilder (Toronto Children's Services), Bethany Zack (Toronto Children's Services), Vanessa Vuong (Summer Research Student, Toronto Children's Services). Kelly O'Gorman (Toronto Children’s Services)

**Observers/Guests:** Lynn Fergusson (Social Impact Advisors), Donna Koller (Ryerson),

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| **Agenda Topic & Lead** | **Action** |
| 1. **Welcoming remarks** (Lead: Kevin Pal)  * Welcomed TCFN members * Land acknowledgement * Overview of the agenda and purpose of meeting today * Welcomed new TCFN Steering Committee member Trevor McAlmont (Macaulay Centre) representing QELN and Trevor introduced himself and Macaulay |  |
| 1. **Approval of minutes and agenda** (Lead: Kevin Pal)  * Approval of agenda and minutes | Agenda and March minutes approved |
| 1. **Grounding in Theory of Change** (Lead: Karen Gray)  * To ensure work and meetings of TCFN are grounded in the Theory of Change, members suggested we start each meeting with a quick review of our Theory of Change, how the meeting agenda fits within it and role of members * Begin with Ontario Public Health presentation on the negative impacts of COVID-19 on child and families create a shared understanding of immediate needs, and the long term impacts we’ll need to anticipate and work to mitigate within and across the systems * The next agenda item where David from Strides will present on the three year plan for child and family mental health, and focus in particular on responding to the mental health needs of Black and Indigenous families in order to understand how we are responding to needs * We’ll start the agenda by hearing research on impacts to understand and plan around the needs from COVID-19, and furthermore zero in on the mental health piece by learning planned actions and thinking collectively how we can support the mental health needs and work underway for children and families using an equity approach |  |
| 1. **Inform: Impacts of COVID-19 on child and family well-being from Public Health Ontario** (Lead: Sarah Carsley)  * Karen introduced Sarah Carsley (OAHPP)   **4.1 Rapid review of current research**   * Purpose is to review evidence collected since pandemic that was published in rapid review, overview of impact on Healthy Baby and Healthy Children services, overview of what we know about the inequities, and recommendations on how to mitigate the impact * See presentation slides in minutes for details on presentation * Rapid review on negative impacts on health and well-being of children from the public health measures implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic   + Overview of timeline, purpose, research question, methods and results   + Outcomes mainly focussed on mental health and well-being, including increased depressive symptoms for children, use of substance reported by students, parental stress, anxiety and depression symptoms, nutrition and food insecurity, movement behaviours, physical activity/outdoor play, health services utilization   + Overview of the limitation of the literature: snapshot in time from the first wave, some studies have small sample sizes or crowd source with selection bias, and parent-reported, and predominantly white families with high income and education which may lead to studies' result biased to the null   + Discussion of risk and protective factors of perceived parental stress on child's health and stress   + Discussion that it is expected that health and well-being outcomes will become more apparent and potentially worsen over time * Health Babies Healthy Children   + Found over 50% of HBHC workforce redeployed in response to COVID-19, 1/3 of public health units stopped doing in-person visits – impact on a targeted service that sees some of the most vulnerable families * Health inequities   + Health inequities for decreased HBHC services – those who continues to receive services find increased need of families, in intimate partner violence and mental health   + Maximum City report found disproportionate impact on based on race, participation in virtual school and dwelling type * Protective Factors   + Physical activity, time outside, less time on screens, participation in school in-person, having a pet, having a friend or sibling to talk to, having access to outdoor space * Considerations for community services   + Strategies to support school-aged children access to mental health and outdoor physical activities   + Improving opportunities for time outdoors and connection to nature   **4.2 Questions and discussion**   * Question of prioritization and what should happen first? Researchers landed on outdoor activities as the easiest, quickest intervention; and that public health needs to be better at messaging the safety of outdoor activities in terms of COVID-19 transmission * Question from EarlyON on whether there is another survey to collect more recent data? The Ontario Parent Survey is collecting one year follow up data. They will be contacting 3000 survey respondents for first survey for cohort data as well as getting new respondents. Maximum City and the Compass Team are also collecting data * Question from TDSB on vaccine access for children 12 impact the findings? Impact remains to be seen but the sooner we can get children double dose vaccination, the sooner some of the impactful restrictions will be lifted * Question from Macaulay if any data sets outline impact of social isolation on children? Compass Data asked about how children coped and whether they were able to see friends; the SickKids group ask about varying levels of COVID-19 compliance to understand how much families stayed at home, so could get that data there * Question from LHIN on has this data been presented to children mental health agencies or the Ontario Health Teams? Sarah to stay for the Stride's presentation for mental health. Public Health Ontario not part of Ontario Health, so currently little contact with Ontario Health Teams * Discussion from Children's Services on needs of staff working in the child care and early years services and what TCFN can do to best support the emerging needs to children when they return to service. The need to focus on a trauma-informed practices and training up staff on a trauma-informed approach   + Mothercraft received a grant to develop, disseminate and deliver trauma-informed training to early years staff * Question from Mothercraft whether the data can be broken by age groups, and whether certain ages have higher prevalence in terms of impact? Rapid review divided by children and youth at a higher level, but other studies have more detailed break-downs based on age * Question from TPL on whether they are other strategies that have proven to support mental health other than outdoor time? Before pandemic, did review of interventions to mitigate impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences | **Resources**  Slide deck on *Impacts of COVID-19 on child and family well-being from Public Health Ontario*    **Actions**  Ontario Parent Survey for sharing. The link can be found here: [www.OntarioParentSurvey.ca](http://www.OntarioParentSurvey.ca). |
| 1. **Plan: Toronto Lead Agency for child and youth mental health 3 year strategy** (Lead: David Willis)  * Kelley provided context on current TCFN-led work connecting families to mental health services at the 4 working tables * David provided overview of the mental health lead agency three year plan * For areas: improve quality, expand existing services, implementing innovative solutions, and improving access * 26 provincially-funding child and youth mental health agencies are coordinated by the lead agency * Overview of planning and stakeholder engagement process * Area of focus: entry and navigation * Intensive service re-design – engagement led to need to re-think entry into intensive services. Recommendation of 1) one door to many doors approach to intensive services and programs that support access to intensive services, 2) access to a navigator to support clients and families to get right services at the right time * Expansion of Brief Services: new services for kids who need 3-8 session in partnership with George Hull; expansion of What's Up Walk-In Services and creating consistency in services; expanded pathway to virtual services to include chat, text, videoconferencing * Mental Health TO: engagement that name including term "mental health" may be stigmatizing, working with marketing agency to create new name; creating a task force to develop vision and recommendations for centralized point of access/intake that will include implementation and operational plan * Area of focus: entry and navigation * Expanding service to equity-deserving populations: task force to create measurable impact on anti-Black racism; working with Indigenous partners to support self-determination, partner education, and service design; enhance delivery of French language services * Urban Tele-Mental Health: capacity building, learning, and way for agencies to have child psychologist embedded into teams free of charge * Area of focus: innovation * BI solution: to support data-driven decision making and planning. Worked with RTV to map services, identify gaps in services, and system planning shift, build or re-allocate funding to change services * Waitlist Management: tech solution that sends reminders about appointments and ability to cancel; seen drop in number of missed appointments * Digital Integration and Connectedness with OHTs: discussing how to build in e-referrals between systems to make more seamless * Other areas of work * Advocacy – partnership, alignment and integration * Respond to Emerging Needs and Opportunities * Engaging Partners – city and regional level * Ontario's First Connected Virtual Brief Services Program: allow children and youth in Ontario to access via link, chat or text a clinician to get 1.5 hour session * Training opportunities: 3700 clinicians from CSP Agencies will receive training in: Indigenous Cultural Safety, Anti-Black Racism, Ethics in Delivering Virtual Care, Trauma Transference and Countertransference, Sexual Trauma, Harm Reduction, Developmental Trauma – will look at opening the trainings up to more and more partners   **Questions and Discussion**   * Michele mentioned TCFN-related system coordination projects that might help Strides – like the common intake project, centralized point of access, and online portal work * Need to build systems that allow for partnerships across sectors that coordinate efforts and make entry between services easier for children * Missing link between physician and hospital (and those children and youth placed in emergency) as well as child welfare agencies to community child and youth mental health organizations * NCFS - arising challenge of children and youth who need mental health crisis response but who get placed in hospital emergency rooms which is harmful to children and youth * Big Brother Big Sister – BBBST works in prevention before children reach acute side. What is in the plan for prevention and upstream interventions? Funded Massey Centre to create a program that will go into primary schools for early identification on mental health concerns and build in supports/programs. Also looking at 27 living treatment bed closures and moving service to more prevention stage. Need to focus on ACEs and how we mitigate the long-term effect of ACEs on physical and mental health outcomes * Brenda as primary care speaks to difficult on making community referral and supports those pathways and expansion of service navigator support – and connection to the online portal work to support referral to services and navigation | **Resources**    **Next steps**  Continue to think through the gaps and what TCFN members can do to support the mental health needs and access to services |
| 1. **Wrap up and next steps (Kelley)**  * Standing agenda item for working tables on support needed (What do you need from us?) | **Next steps** |

**2021 Meeting Schedule:**

* Thursday, September 30, 2-4pm (Webex)
* Tuesday, November 23, 2-4pm (Webex)