

INFORMATION ADVISORY | May 17, 2021

## Parenting and family support study launched in Windsor

### McMaster University research group collaborating with Children First for the betterment of families

Children First, Windsor's early intervention agency, is collaborating with Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University with the launch a parenting and family support study, *Promoting Healthy Families*. The study will evaluate two new parenting programs and others currently provided by the community agency. The goal is to understand if families benefit from the two evidence-based parenting programs the Centre has developed — the TRIPLE P (Positive Parenting Program) and Circle of Security Program (COSP). Funding for the study is provided from the Public Health Agency of Canada as part of the *Preventing Gender-Based Violence Strategy: The Health Perspective*.

- ▽ We're looking for families with children aged 2-6 to enroll in our online study.
- ▽ With their help, we can take a closer look at two new parenting programs and get a better understanding of their effectiveness in building stronger families and relationships between parents/caregivers and children.
- ▽ Contact **Joel Schryer**: email: [jschryer@children-first.ca](mailto:jschryer@children-first.ca) | Tel: 519-250-1850, ext. 256.

#### About the parenting programs ...

“Both the Triple P and COSP programs offer ways for parents and caregivers to develop practical skills, which can help decrease challenging behaviours and emotions in young children, and help strengthen family relationships. We want to see which of the programs will benefit families and their children more, and whether these programs are better than existing ones.”

*Andrea Gonzalez*, Associate Professor, Canada Research Chair in Family Health and Preventive Interventions, Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University

#### About the research ...

This parenting study comes at a time when COVID-19 has introduced increased levels of challenges for families. In the *Offord Centre's landmark 2020 Ontario Parent Survey*, 40% of parents indicated their children's behaviour/mood had deteriorated and children were “worse off” since the start of the pandemic lockdown, with only 12% indicating children were doing better. The most surprising results were the extremely high levels of depression among caregivers and parents, and that children are faring worse since the pandemic started.

**About the study ...**

“The study will provide much needed evidence about the implementation and effectiveness of parenting programs in Canada, specifically promoting healthy family relationships,” says Gonzalez. “By taking part in this study, parents and caregivers may find they feel more positive about themselves and caregiving skills and strategies, but also helping other parents/caregivers in the future.”

*Andrea Gonzalez*

“We’re actively looking for families with children aged two to six years to enroll in this study,” says. The programs will be offered via remote, and we’re able to accommodate families without technology and/or internet access in order for them to participate in the study. And in recognition the time and effort as participants in the study, parents will receive gift cards after completing the required interviews. Children will also receive a small gift.”

*Lori Kempe, Executive Director, Children First*



**Children First** provides individualized services for families with children up to six years of age who are at risk for or experiencing mental health challenges or developmental concerns. It uses a family-centred approach based on the principles of respecting every family’s beliefs, values and culture. The program respects the strengths and resourcefulness of all families and aims to support and encourage families in their efforts to meet the needs of their children.

**The Offord Centre for Child Studies** is a multi-disciplinary research institute established in 1992. Through collaboration across fields such as child psychiatry, psychology, epidemiology, pediatrics, policy development, social work, and nursing, the Centre’s aim is to better understand children’s mental health problems with the overall goal of improving the lives of children and youth.

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