



Canadian Mental
Health Association
KELOWNA
Mental health for all

CARING FOR THE CAREGIVERS



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CHAMPIONS FOR POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH SINCE 1918

Made possible by an
innovation grant from:



“ For parents and families who are caring for children, youth, or dependent adults experiencing or recovering from mental illness. ”

What is caring for the caregivers?

Caring for children, youth or dependent adults who are experiencing or recovering from mental illness is one of the hardest jobs imaginable.

Caring for the caregivers (CFTC) is a program that has been jointly developed for parents, family members, and caregivers to receive the supports they need, help provide increased access to professional support and assistance in navigating community resources.

The result is an opportunity in the Central Okanagan to build peer connections for caregivers through supportive environments and facilitate emotional health and well-being.



2) Navigation Supports

The project incorporates a full-time Family Navigator as the point person for the project, to ensure that referrals to CFTC are appropriately assessed and screened and that parents are provided with the necessary information to connect with other CFTC support streams.

3) Access to Professional Therapy Services

The Bridge Youth and Family Services, in partnership with **UBC-Okanagan** provide professional counseling and therapy services for parents with no other means to access these supports.

4) Access to Primary Care

Divisions of Family Practice work with the CFTC project to provide the opportunity for up to 20 unattached families to connect with a primary care physician over the duration of the 30 month project.

Program overview

Parents and caregivers have been referred to as **'collateral casualties'** by the Mental Health Commission Canada (2013), facing chronic stress that comes with caring for a child, youth, or dependent adult struggling or recovering from mental illness or substance abuse.

Stigma, combined with broken and overburdened systems results in isolation and disconnection for parents and caregivers, when what they need most is support to manage their own health and wellbeing.



"Sense of disconnection is really common. But when you realize that you're like everyone else, not only in your dreams and passions but also in your pain and sadness, there's incredible comfort in that"

David Sutcliffe ~ Globe and Mail, November 23, 2013.

Coordinated approach

1) Development of Supportive Environments and Connective Settings.

Through a partnership that integrates the best of CMHA Kelowna's **Knowledge is Power** (KIP) and The FORCE's **In the Know** (ITK) program, group based social, educational, and mutual support sessions are held in communities across the Central Okanagan, hosted at Okanagan Boys and Girls Clubs facilities. Co-facilitated by professionals and parents with lived experience, these sessions will build inclusive environments where parents can connect, learn new skills and build new relationships that maximize the value of peer support.

Collaborative vision for success

A cross-sectoral project combining the strengths of non-profits with government and university. Understanding that collaborative and collective impact leverage the unique strengths of each organization allow for better outcomes for the target population.



The F.O.R.C.E
SOCIETY FOR KIDS' MENTAL HEALTH



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