

SAFE AND UNDERSTOOD: INTERVENING WITH FAMILIES TO PROMOTE HEALTHY CHILD OUTCOMES AND PREVENT ABUSE RECURRENCE FOR YOUNG CHILD VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE EXPOSURE

About the Project

Safe and Understood was a 5-year, Pan-Canadian project, funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). The project was led by Dr. Angelique Jenny and Dr. Katreena Scott. The main objective was to improve outcomes for young children (ages 0-4) at-risk because of domestic violence exposure by expanding the reach of two existing programs—Caring Dads and Mothers in Mind. These programs help parents with experiences of family violence build skills to manage stress, enhance self-esteem, and support the social, emotional and developmental health of their children.

Partnerships

5 Universities

- Université de Moncton
- University of Toronto
- University of Calgary
- Université Laval
- Western University

9 Community Organizations

- Centre de ressources et de crises familiales Beauséjour
- Changing Ways London Inc.
- Child Development Institute
- Children's Aid Society of Toronto
- L'Accord Mauricie
- Maison Pour Femmes Immigrantes
- Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration
- Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
- Wood's Homes

Community Based Research Projects

- Cluster Randomized Control Trial
- Program Implementation Research
- Outcome and Process Research

Resources Created

- Provincial Scan of Treatment and Intervention Services
- French and Muslim Caring Dads program manuals
- French Mothers in Mind program manual
- Mothers in Mind community of practice portal
- Professional development training portal

Interventions

Mothers in Mind

Mothers in Mind is a mother and child program designed to meet the parenting needs of mothers who have experienced family violence, childhood abuse, neglect or sexual assault, and have children under the age of four. The program focuses on the needs of mothers who find that these hurtful experiences are making parenting difficult. The 10-week program helps mothers learn ways to manage stress and other challenging feelings, foster healthy self-esteem and respond to their children in a sensitive, supportive and effective manner. For more information, visit: www.childdevelop.ca/mothersinmind/about-mim

Caring Dads

Caring Dads is an intervention program for men who have abused, neglected, or exposed their children to domestic violence. It focuses on changing current practice to better include fathers in efforts to enhance the safety and well-being of their children. The 17-week program emphasizes the need to enhance men's motivation, promote child-centered fathering, address men's ability to engage in respectful, non-abusive co-parenting with children's mothers, recognize that children's experience of trauma will impact the rate of possible change, and work collaboratively with other service providers to ensure that children benefit. For more information, visit: www.caringdads.org/

Impact

- 139 Mothers attended Mothers in Mind
- 178 Fathers attended Caring Dads
- 760 Children were supported
- 120 Child protection social workers received professional development training



For more information, visit:

kh-cdc.ca/en/project-profiles/safe-understood.html

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