

Trauma Support Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is the Trauma Support Program for?

- Families who have experienced domestic violence or where a parent has chronic mental health issues, which may or may not be diagnosed.
- Families with children under 18 living in Strathcona County.
- Families that have complex needs that require multiple points of long term support.
- Families that may or may not be working with other community social service or mental health providers.
- Families do not have to see themselves as “traumatized” to participate.

What will the Trauma Support Program offer to parents/families?

- Supportive education about the effects that family violence and chronic stress can have on children and how parents can help.
- Supportive education about why their child may be having difficulty in school and/or at home and how parents can help.
- Support with identifying personal and/or family goals and creating plans to achieve them.
- Strategies to maintain and enhance a positive relationship with their child.
- Supported referrals to necessary community services such as affordable housing, counselling, legal advice, etc.
- General advocacy with other agencies and organizations.
- Education about the effects of trauma to other service providers involved with the family.

What will the Trauma Support Program offer to children?

- Child-friendly education in an individual or group setting, about the effects that family violence and mental illness can have on children and families.
- A safe place to understand and express emotions.
- The opportunity to learn relaxation techniques.
- The opportunity to learn self-regulation and problem solving techniques.
- The opportunity to create a narrative that includes past and present experiences as well future plans.

What will the “In the Zone” children’s therapy group offer?

- Child-friendly education on the topics of safety, managing emotions, problem solving and self-concept.
- The opportunity to connect with other children (ages 6-12) with similar experiences and build peer support.
- The opportunity to build self-esteem by trying and mastering new things.
- A safe place to experiment with creative expression (i.e. art, movement, drama).
- A therapeutic group format that offers evidence-based trauma specific interventions.



How is the Trauma Support Program different from other Family and Community Services programs?

The Trauma Support Program works specifically with families who have experienced domestic violence and/or parent mental illness and where the effects of these have had a significant impact on the child and/or family's functioning. It offers long term, intensive follow-up with families, as well as providing supported referrals to other community services.

The Trauma Support Program will not offer one to one counselling to parents or children. The Trauma Support Program can work in conjunction with other Family and Community Services programs (i.e. parent participates in Family and Community Services Counselling Program, while also being involved in the Trauma Support Program. In addition, the Trauma Support Program will refer clients to other Family and Community Services programs if it is clear that families are primarily struggling with issues other than those mentioned above.

How should I describe the Trauma Support Program to parents/families if I think they might benefit?

The program is designed to assist families to meet their goals for themselves and their children after or during difficult life events. The specific focus is to meet the needs of families who have experienced or witnessed family violence or who are dealing with parent mental health issues. The program is voluntary and can provide long term support over life transitions, including scheduled follow ups. The program can help families connect with appropriate community resources (such as affordable housing, counselling, education, etc.). It can help parents understand and deal with difficulties that their child

might be having, and it can help parents advocate for themselves and their children when necessary (i.e. with schools, agencies, etc.).

Since children who have witnessed or experienced family violence may feel isolated, anxious, and/or angry and may experience difficulty with social maturity, positive relationships, and acting out behaviours, the program also offers a therapeutic group for children ages 6-12 years old. This group will have a focus on connecting to others with similar experiences, self-expression, self-esteem, and relaxation. Activities will include skill-building games, movement games, drawing and art projects, music and drama games, yoga and relaxation instruction.

Parents and children do not have to identify as 'traumatized' to participate. This program encourages participants to define and discuss their experiences in whichever ways are meaningful and create safety for them. It emphasizes the building of support networks for the child and family, made up of both formal and informal community resources.

How should I refer?

To refer a child or family, call Family and Community Services at 780-464-4044 and ask to speak to the Trauma Support Worker or the Intake Worker. If you are not sure if the family would meet the criteria or would benefit from the program, still feel free to call. The Trauma Support Program works closely with other Family and Community Services programs and will make referrals to other programs when appropriate.

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780-464-4044



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