



Handle with Care philosophy is expressed in these messages to parents and caregivers:

Young children's mental health is critically important in order for them to flourish, thrive, and grow into healthy adults.

Parents and caregivers have an important role to play in strengthening the mental health of young children.

Parents know their children best; every parent wants what is best for their child.

Positive relationships between parents or caregivers and the children they care for are investments in the children's future.

Parents and caregivers need to know it is never too late to build a trusting relationship with the children in their care.

Well being of people who care for children is important in itself, as well as for the children



Promoting Mental Health in Young Children



Promouvoir la santé mentale des jeunes enfants

The Program

The program is a set of simple interactive strategies designed for parents, grandparents, educators, and other caregiver to promote *social and emotional well being* of children of all ages, every day!



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Key BUILDING BLOCKS of children's mental health: (of anyone's mental health.)

1. Building Trust and Attachment
2. Building and Enhancing Self-Esteem
3. Expressing Emotions
4. Relationships With Other Children





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Self Care is an important component of every session!

Care of the Mind, Body and Spirit!



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Handle with Care uses a strength based approach that assumes every parent and care-giver has problem solving skills and resources and wants what's best for the children in their lives.

The program is suited to anyone who cares for or works with children, including those in communities with particular risks or challenges. Recognizing the value of every parent, caregiver, and child.

Evidence indicates:

- positive effects on participants' mental health.
- Self care and wellness practices improved significantly in parents and continued to improve over the life of the project.
- Parents reported more positive feelings about their lives; gained confidence in parenting practices and increased positive feelings about their relationships with their children.



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Lessons Learned

- 48 Participating Communities
- 352 Individuals (191 Immediate Intervention and 161 Control/Delayed Intervention participants).
- 14% Aboriginal, 38.6% New Immigrant, 47% Caucasian Participants

All participants completed Pre-Test, Post-Test and 4-Month Follow-up

21 focus groups with parents/caregivers, 7 focus groups with facilitators and 7 focus groups with interviews of research coordinators.

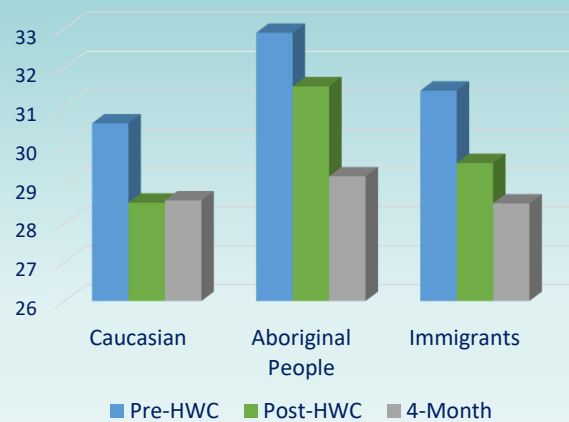


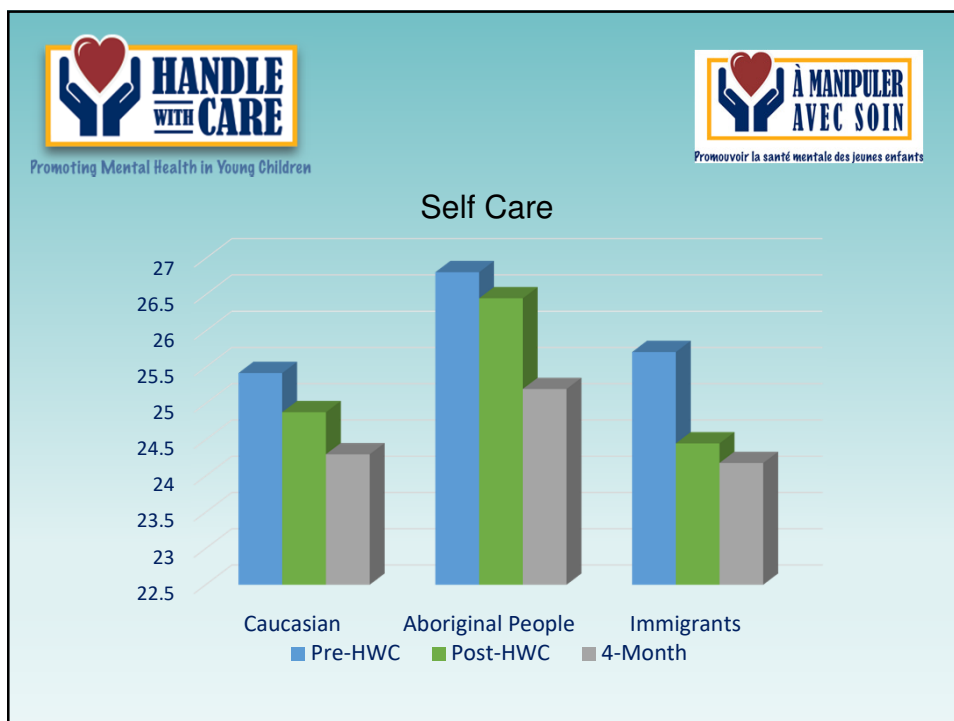
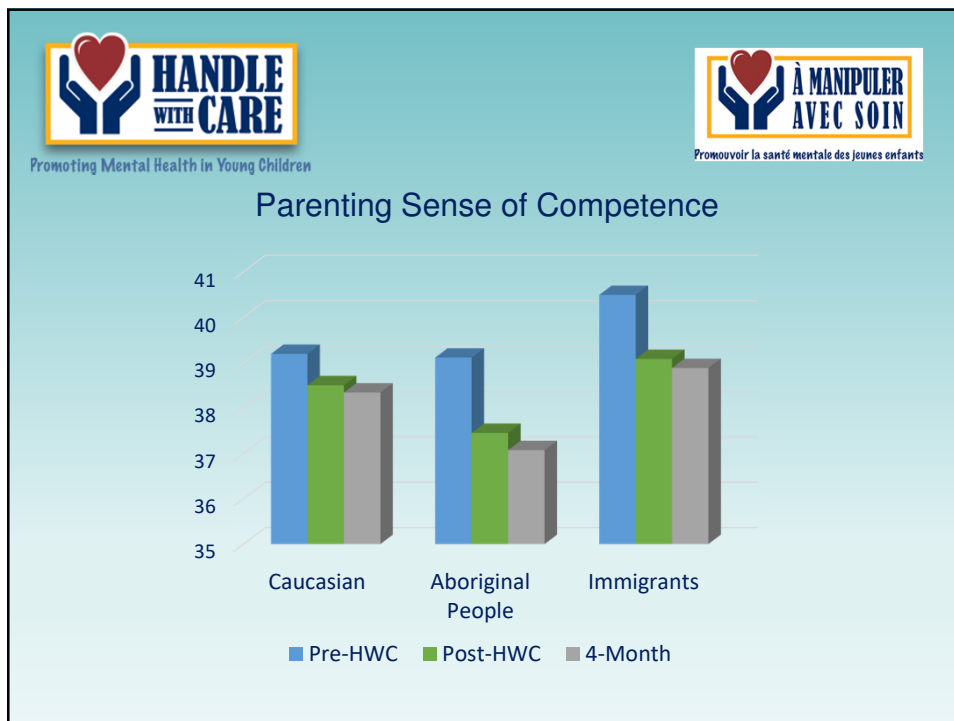
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Mental Health







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Key Changes to Parenting Practice

"I am...spending more time trying to identify the problem with my children or child. And I'm also spending more time... trying to recognize their emotional needs."

Building Trust and Attachment (Building Block 1): Help child problem solve/discuss behaviours or problems:

72 sources, 119 ref

Expressing Emotions (Building Block 3): Better understanding of/response to child's emotions/emotional development (empathy):

149 sources, 318 references



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Key Changes in Parent Practice

- "Um, different like techniques like I've started to pick at something specific to complement them on not just a general blanket one. That's a big thing that I'm using now that I found very helpful. Instead of just saying, 'oh good job Coloring' I'm saying that I really like that sun, it looks very happy that you drew. That's one of the big things"

Building and Enhancing Positive Self-Esteem (Building Block 2): More Positive in Parenting - Specific Praise:

34 sources, 65 references



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Key Changes in Child Behaviour

“Head smashing went from 12 to 20 times a day down to...maybe 3 times a week. He is happier... as am I. There’s less tantrums. He is a different child...he really is ... in such a good way.”

Expressing Emotions (Building Block 3): Emotion Regulation
88 sources, 153 references



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Key Changes in Child Behaviour

Participants report engaging in various forms of
Self-care as a result of program participation:

- 57 sources and 100 reference “Self-Care”
- 73 sources and 151 references “Importance of Self-Care, taking breaks”





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Growing the Program: The Process

- Provincial Advisory Group- influence policy
- Movers & Shakers/Champions- rooting program
- Mentoring- 1:1 & facilitator gatherings
- Facilitator and Master Trainers in each Province
- Social Media- keeping the conversation alive
- Commitment to ensure sustainability



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Growing HWC in Atlantic Region & Across Canada





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How To Get Involved

Facilitator Training

Participate in a Program

Contact:

Early Childhood Development Association of PEI : 902-368-1866

Alice Taylor: 902- 626-6147