



# Peel Family Engagement

For Child & Youth  
Mental Health

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## GET IN TOUCH! GET INVOLVED!



FamilyEngage@EveryMind.ca



EveryMind.ca/family-engagement



We've chosen the topic of **ENDURANCE** for our 3rd newsletter. COVID-19 continues to impact our lives – much like caring for our children and youth who live with mental health challenges.

The similarity between the two journeys can't be diminished.

When the pandemic began, we did not know much about COVID-19 or understand what lay ahead of us. Similarly, when our children & youth begin showing symptoms of mental health challenges, we also often don't know very much about the challenges ahead of us. The days turned into weeks, and months into years, paralleling what we as caregivers may be experiencing helping our children & youth.

These unknown elements along with the long journey we've been through and are on, have germinated something in our character. We hope our experiences will resonate with and inspire you to notice what may be germinating in you !

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## In this issue, you'll find resources to help you

### LEARN

how Family Engagement in child and youth mental health care benefits everyone and how to get involved.

### LOCATE

access points for child and youth mental health services in Peel region.

### ACCESS

free workshops, groups and webinars to support you as a family, parent or caregiver.

### NURTURE

your resilience as a family, parent or caregiver via helpful resources selected by families.

# CAREGIVER ENDURANCE

We asked five caregivers about their experience supporting their children and youth on their mental health journeys. We invited them to share how they persevere through complex challenges and change while maintaining their endurance.

## What has helped you maintain your endurance?

- The habits I formed before COVID-19 help me maintain my endurance. Things like mindfulness, meditation, yoga, gardening, journaling, self-care independent daily spiritual nourishing activities, which were a lifeline for me when churches closed during the pandemic.

## What does it mean for you to have made it this far as a caregiver?

- I know that I am strong. I also know that I can feel anger, frustration, despair; these emotions are normal, and it is okay to feel them. I know that I can get through anything. I am not made of glass. I am human.

## How do you manage to keep your head above water?

- Life is about learning and the learning is lifelong. So, every day, as I go through my journey, I keep going by helping people. This helps me keep my head above water.

## What did the pandemic NOT change, and how did you manage that?

- The pandemic did not change my child's emotional challenges. The depression and anxiety that comes with isolation and the unknown of a 'new norm.' Those emotions were on a never-ending roller coaster for my child and for the family. I persevered. I prayed. I took my child for drives. We did puzzles. I let my child feel what they were feeling. I did not downplay their emotions. I allowed them the space they needed. I tried to get them the support they needed to work through their fears.

## What would you have done differently had you known what we were going to collectively face?

- I would have asked for help sooner.

## How did you know/find out what you needed?

- I shared my story, my struggles with someone I trusted and asked for help.

# CAREGIVER ENDURANCE

## How come things are not worse?

- Having gone through challenges in my life, I have learned that this is just a phase we are going through. Eventually, things will get better, we just need to have patience and keep persevering. I recognize that we live in a country with access to resources that many don't have. We are able to virtually connect with people; whereas many, many years ago we couldn't.

## If you were to choose a symbol for endurance that you could carry around with you, what would it be?

- Elastic: I am flexible and adaptable, but keep my identity. I am anchored. I can be stretched without snapping/breaking and come back to shape like an elastic does. I can keep loving under pressure.

We also asked mental health professionals how they see families navigating this complex journey. We wanted to learn how they've noted the caregivers they work with support their families, while maintaining their own resilience in these unprecedented times.

## How did you see families managing to maintain their endurance as caregivers while also navigating the complexities of this pandemic with their children and youth?

- Something that I noticed in many caregivers was a sense of "what are the things that matter" and "how do I keep going".
- Some of the caregivers that I work with were able to come to an 'acceptance' of the daily challenges with their youth and learned to pick their battles.
- There has definitely been a greater understanding of the necessity of putting your own oxygen mask on before helping others. Not only has there been the understanding, but I've been able to observe caregivers prioritizing their own self-care and rest!
- Families typically worked hard to meet the needs of their kids, often at the expense of caregivers' needs. Some families counted on support from extended family, while others coped by allowing more screen time for themselves and kids.

# CAREGIVER ENDURANCE

## What tools and/or resources seemed to be the most helpful in supporting families to maintain their endurance?

- In addition to the use of community resources (library, camps, provincial parks, etc.), I've seen the value of using Respite services offered by EveryMind (see pg. 6)
- Choosing your battles!
- Recognize the resiliency in your child, and that it is okay to take a break.
- If a caregiver is struggling to take time out of the day for themselves, try listening to music, do some intentional breathing or listen to a short 5 minute "self compassion break"

**Try a self-compassion break here:**

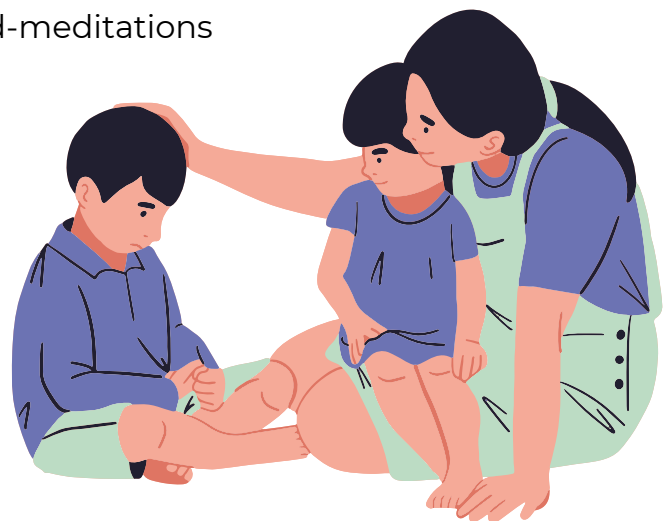
[selfcompassion.org/category/exercises/#guided-meditations](https://selfcompassion.org/category/exercises/#guided-meditations)

## Why didn't the families you work with lose endurance or hope?

- They did sometimes. I think normalizing and listening to them helped the most.
- They love their families so much that they did not want to lose hope for things getting better again. Focusing on small shifts was another way that helped.

## Imagine a symbol that would describe the strength and endurance you witnessed in families...

- I imagine a family with their hands in the middle, as though they are in a huddle.
- Hope symbolizes that things will get better and help families get through difficulties.



# Webinars + Workshops + Groups

Supporting Children & Youth through caregiver capacity, skill and knowledge building

To support you and your family's mental health at home, staff from EveryMind & AYSP are offering free groups and workshops for parents / caregivers, in addition to our offerings for children and youth.

Two-hour workshops are offered in the Fall on several topics. Groups meet once a week for 2-10 sessions. These sessions are offered in the fall, winter, spring and summer.

Fall 2022 groups for parents / caregivers will include:

- Mom's Group – in person; for moms of children/youth up to age 17
- Learning About ADHD – in person or virtual; for parents of children ages 6-12
- Coping with Challenging Behaviour – in person; for parents of children ages 7 - 11
- Circle of Security – virtual; for parents of children ages birth to 8
- Parenting Your Anxious Child – in person or virtual; for parents of children/youth up to age 17.



**Registrations for some of these workshops and groups are limited.**

Visit [WhereToStart.ca](https://www.wheretostart.ca) or call 905-451-4655 to learn more and register.

# Supports

To help nurture your resilience

## WHAT'S RESPITE?

Caring for your child with mental health needs can be stressful and it may help to take a break. EveryMind offers temporary relief for Peel Caregivers who need a break from looking after their child / youth with a mental health challenge.

Respite options include activities at EveryMind's Morgan House (in Brampton) or Caledon campus; support in your home provided by a child and youth counsellor; and community camps during the summer months. We encourage families to use our respite services as part of their self-care.

For information and to access Respite Services, please speak with your child's clinician.

## SickKids<sup>®</sup> AboutKidsHealth

### MENTAL HEALTH LEARNING HUB

This hub includes resources for parents on how to support your child's mental health and general well-being through physical activity, sleep and nutrition. It also provides information on the signs, symptoms and treatments of different mental health conditions, including anxiety, bipolar disorder, depression, behavioural disorders, anorexia nervosa and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

**Access the hub here:**

<https://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/mentalhealth>

# How to Get Involved with Peel Family Engagement

Your Experience and Perspective Makes a Difference!

**JOIN OUR NETWORK!**



[sign-up @ everymind.ca/family-engagement/](https://everymind.ca/family-engagement/)

## WE SHARE OPPORTUNITIES TO:

- Learn from online webinars and/or trainings
- Participate in events like focus groups
- Share your perspective through surveys
- Join the Peel Family Engagement Advisory Committee
- Write or record your personal story
- Contribute to time-limited special projects



Join the Peel Family Engagement Advisory Committee

Connect with Eleni, our Family Engagement Coordinator, at [familyenageg@everymind.ca](mailto:familyenageg@everymind.ca)

# Where & How to Access

## Mental Health Services for Children and Youth in Peel



**WhereToStart.ca** is the access point for free and confidential mental health services for children, youth and families who live in **Peel Region**.

When you **contact WhereToStart.ca**, an Access & Intake Specialist **will listen to your concerns** and help connect you with **the most appropriate** mental health program or service for you at **one of these service providers**:



## 5 Steps to Get Help

- 1** Contact WhereToStart.ca via the website or by calling 905 451 4655. All calls are free and confidential.
- 2** Schedule an intake appointment.
- 3** Complete the intake appointment by phone. The appointment will take about 1 hour and an Access & Intake Specialist will ask you questions about your daily life, relationships and how you feel.
- 4** The Access & Intake Specialist will provide you with information about the program or services that fits your needs. They will answer your questions and help you decide what to do next.
- 5** The Access & Intake Specialist will help set up your first appointment. You may need to wait for service, so they will also connect with you services (like groups, Tangerine Walk-In Counselling or 24/7 crisis support) that can support you while you wait.

# Crisis & Walk-In Services

For Children, Youth and Families in Peel



**24.7 CRISIS SUPPORT**

**One number.  
All ages. In Peel.**

905-278-9036 | 1-888-811-2222

**EveryMind** has joined with **CMHA Peel Dufferin** to launch one phone number **905-278-9036** for all ages in Peel to get help in a crisis.

**Call us any time,  
day or night**

**EveryMind's** crisis workers are here for you! Calling our old number? No worries, it still works.

**Do you or your child need to talk  
to someone?**

Tangerine Walk-In Counselling  
offers free 45-minute brief  
consultations for Peel children,  
youth and families – now with  
expanded appointment availability  
Monday to Friday

Click **here** to book your visit  
Or go to:

[www.tangerinewalkin.com/request-appointment](http://www.tangerinewalkin.com/request-appointment)

**Tangerine**  
WALK-IN COUNSELLING

Operated by

 **EveryMind**

# Peel Core Service Provider News

## What's Happening in Peel's Child and Youth Mental Health System

### Lead Agency Progress Report

As lead agency, EveryMind compiled a progress report this past spring on our work at the system level with Peel's CYMH core service providers, other sectors like school boards, and regional tables that focus on mental health and addictions.

Please visit [everymind.ca/lead-agency](https://everymind.ca/lead-agency) to download a copy. You can learn about how we work together as a system to improve CYMH processes and services for children, youth and families in Peel.

### Peel's Child and Youth Mental Health System

Over the past year, EveryMind and the Peel Family Engagement Advisory Committee worked with Peel's Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) sector to educate staff on the Family Engagement Quality Standard developed by the Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth Mental Health and Addictions.

In partnership with the Knowledge Institute, EveryMind also engaged family advisors and staff to gather feedback on how Peel's CYMH service system measures up to this standard. EveryMind has published a report, "[Perceptions of Family Engagement in the Peel Service Area](#)", that is available on [EveryMind's website](#). The report's findings are being used to develop priorities and a workplan for the Peel Family Engagement Advisory Committee.

# Peel Core Service Provider News

## What's Happening in Peel's Child and Youth Mental Health System

### AYSP Prepares for Accreditation

AYSP has also been busy preparing for our Accreditation! As part of AYSP's ongoing development and commitment to quality services, we are again taking part this Summer and Fall in an accreditation process through the Canadian Centre for Accreditation.

Accreditation involves a thorough review of our agency and services, including input from AYSP staff, volunteers, community partners, and feedback from parents/caregivers, children and youth. We welcome this feedback and the opportunity to be evaluated on the activities of our organization to ensure we are providing the most effective services for our community.

To read about all of our programs and services, and our menu of groups, please visit our website at [aysp.ca](https://aysp.ca)

### EveryMind's Annual Report for 2021-22

EveryMind recently published our 2021-22 annual report, which is available here: <https://everymind.ca/compliance/>

With a theme of "togetherness," this year's report demonstrates that we could not achieve what we do without our clients, families, staff and community members. We invite you to read about how we faced challenges together, learned together, grew together, moved forward, and stood as a community together.

# Core Service Provider News

## What's Happening in Peel's Child and Youth Mental Health System

### Ontario Perception of Care (OPOC) at EveryMind

Parents/caregivers and youth in several EveryMind programs participated in the OPOC feedback survey in 2021 to help EveryMind know how well our services are meeting their needs. Summaries of the OPOC results are available on EveryMind's website as an infographic and a fun Powtoon (video cartoon). Highlights include:



EveryMind is considering opportunities for improvement that youth and caregivers identified in the OPOC survey. Reducing wait times requires more government funding, but there are areas where EveryMind can act now. These include:

- Supporting youth if their clinician changes
- Providing or arranging supports beyond treatment
- Making appointment times more convenient
- Helping youth plan their next steps after treatment
- Making our complaints process and youth's medication information clearer

# Core Service Provider News

What's Happening in Peel's Child and Youth Mental Health System

## Accreditation at EveryMind

EveryMind was successfully accredited at the Primer level with Accreditation Canada following our on-site survey in February. We achieved 96.4% compliance, having successfully met 81 of the 84 applicable criteria.

Our identified strengths included:

- Passionate staff dedicated to the delivery of high-quality services
- A strong culture that recognizes the importance of our people, clients, and community partners.
- Surveyors also commended our commitment to client-centered practices.

Surveyors encouraged EveryMind to proactively engage children, youth, and families in the co-design of clinical services and processes. We are committed to doing so as we begin the next stage of our journey, Accreditation Canada's QMentum program.

## William Osler Health System - WOHS Child & Adolescent Clinic

If your child or youth is referred to this clinic, here is some information on how to prepare:

### What to expect

- Complete a 90 minute in-depth assessment with the child psychiatrist
- The child psychiatrist will want to know if there are any challenges or difficulties that your child is facing
- Discuss and prescribe medication, as well as provide medical monitoring of the prescribed medications.

# Core Service Provider News

## What's Happening in Peel's Child and Youth Mental Health System

### What to expect continued

- Parents/caregivers will be asked information-seeking and clarifying questions
- Parents/caregivers will be provided with resources to community partners if needed
- If needed Mental Health Clinicians will provide adjunct short-term psychotherapy to help children and caregivers manage symptoms of anxiety and mood disorders

### What to Bring to the Clinic

- Bring a parent or caregiver to the appointment
- Bring your child's non-expired health card to the appointment
- Your child's medication history/medication bottles
- Medical and mental health history of the child and family members
- A list of any symptoms or concerns
- Any medical or psychiatric assessments
- Any Psychoeducational assessments
- Information about prior admissions to a hospital

Please note that a child Psychiatrist is a medical doctor that specializes in diagnosing and treating mental health illnesses. A child Psychiatrist can prescribe medications, as well as recommend treatments for your child.

Learn more about the Child & Youth Adolescent Clinic here:

<https://www.williamoslerhs.ca/en/areas-of-care/mental-health-services-for-children-and-adolescents.aspx#Inpatient-units>