

# First Steps to Success in Etobicoke

## What is it?

FIRST STEPS TO SUCCESS IN ETOBICOKE is a project that the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) is offering to a variety of childcare centres and family service agencies in Etobicoke. It uses an established program called *The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children*. This program was designed to improve the skills of people who work with children, helping them to support social emotional development. This is your child's ability to form close relationships, express emotions, and learn with confidence.

## Why is it happening? How will my child be affected?

The goal of this project is to help staff help your child to have good mental health now and throughout his or her life.

Participating staff will learn how to:

- make the room more engaging for your child by creating better routines and using more visuals;
- communicate more effectively with your child so he or she will feel safe and nurtured;
- encourage healthy friendship skills between children; and
- help your child manage his or her emotions by teaching feeling words and responding to your child's stress with patience and understanding.

The project will start small before growing, so only selected staff from certain rooms and/or programs will receive this training. All children in these rooms will benefit from the new skills the staff are learning. Because staff are being coached and evaluated, occasionally there will be an extra person in the room to observe how staff members are supporting your child. All new approaches fit well with how staff are already interacting with your child.

## How can I be involved as a family member?

Staff will speak regularly with you about your family's experiences, to learn what works at home and share new strategies being used at the centre. We may also ask you to take part in an interview to help us understand how to make the project better. Every few months, you will receive project updates like this one. We're eager to share back success stories with you as we hear about them!

## What's next?

Training will continue until the Spring and staff will receive regular coaching throughout 2018 so they can continue to improve their skills. We are hoping to see the most positive impacts of this project early next year.