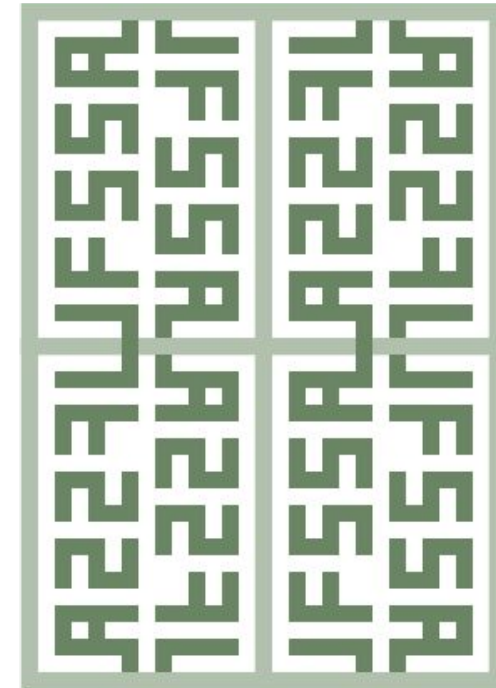


Building Capacity with Collaboration and Partnerships

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ISLAMIC FAMILY
& SOCIAL SERVICES
ASSOCIATION

Land Acknowledgment:

- *We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.*

Overview

- Islamic Family history & model of service
- Children and Youth Services
- Case Study 1: Stakeholder Collaboration
- Case Study 2: Collaborative Mental Health Supports
- Inequities in the system
- Questions

IslamicFamily:

- History
- Programs:
- <https://prezi.com/view/Xa0oZDbM3loY2u3pJIJ1/>
- Steps Forward
- Ifssa.ca

Children and Youth Services

- Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act
 - Example of a few General Guidelines:
 - The best interests, safety and well-being of children are paramount
 - Children benefit from:
 - Lasting relationships with family, friends, caregivers and other significant individual
 - Connections with their culture and cultural communities and opportunities to form those connections
 - Permanent, formalized ties with people who care about them

Children and Youth Services:

- Child Intervention:
- How does Child Intervention get involved?
 - The well-being of children is everybody's job.
 - Parents are primarily responsible for the safety and wellbeing of their children, but everyone has a role to play.
 - Families, community members, or professionals should make a report if they are concerned about a child's safety and wellbeing.

Children and Youth Services

- Child Intervention:
- What if the child can't be protected at home?
- A plan is created :
 - with the family, the child and other people important to them.
 - stability, continuing care and ongoing personal relationships.
 - Respects the child's heritage, culture and religion.
- Aim is to keep kids with family or other people who know and care for them.
- Our goal is for the child to feel secure and develop healthy, permanent relationships.

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Children and Youth Services

- Child Intervention:
 - What if I'm a parent having trouble?
 - When parenting challenges are added to other stresses:
 - work
 - stable housing
 - Family violence
 - health concerns
 - We want children to stay with their families
 - Our goal is to support families
 - Keeping children safe and healthy.
 - It is okay to ask for help

Children Aid Societies- Ontario

- Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017
- Protection services for 16- and 17-year-olds:
 - Children under 18 can receive protection services in Ontario.
 - Services for people who are 16 or 17 and need protection.
 - Left home because of concerns: safety or risk of harm, or homeless, eligible for services
 - Report a suspicion that a youth may be in need of protection
 - Ontario Child Welfare Eligibility Spectrum
- <https://www.ontario.ca/page/child-welfare-and-child-protection-services>

Support for Children and Youth

- Office of the Child and Youth Advocate- Alberta
 - Child Youth and Advocate act
 - <https://www.ocya.alberta.ca/>
- Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth- Ontario
 - Provides an independent voice for children and youth
 - Responds to concerns from children, youth, and families
 - Individual and systemic advocacy for children and youth seeking or receiving services from Child and Family Services Act and the Education Act.
 - Access to legal representation
 - Public Education
 - Investigations

Challenges and Gaps:

- Language Barrier:
 - Working with a family who does not speak English- access to translation Services.
 - At times speak a specific dialect of a language for which translator is not available.
 - A times they only speak to one parent who can communicate and not the other.
- Lack of knowledge Of Islam:
 - Stereotypes: do not understand the different cultures that come with Islam
 - Someone from Africa versus someone from Turkey
 - Culture versus Religion
 - If they speak Arabic does not mean that they are Muslim.

Challenges and Gaps

- Barriers to accessing different systems:
 - they do not know how to access the systems- accessing banks and medical system
 - Often service workers do not provide all the information
- Understand the refugee situation:
 - grief, loss and guilt.
- Mental health support:
 - Lack of awareness
 - Religiously appropriate: Islamic Psychology
 - Lack of free services

Case Study: Stakeholder collaboration

- Maryam- 17 years old female
- New refugee to Canada
- Family left her in youth shelter
- IslamicFamily received a call from the shelter
- IslamicFamily involved five other organizations/supports
- Took 6 months to resolve

Case Study: Stakeholder collaboration

- What if IslamicFamily did not get involved:
- Lost in the system
- Mental health, trauma, Intellectual disability
- Major advocacy
- Paid for her neuropsych test
- Involved government system - MLA
- Understood her culturally and religiously.
- IslamicFamily staff is still involved and regularly connects with her.
- Like the food she eats, festive days, eating foods that are culturally appropriate.

Case Study: Stakeholder collaboration

- **Current update:**

- Office of the Child and Youth Advocate.
- CFS did another neuro psych test- the result is the same.
- She was living in a group home but now she turned 18, just moved in a person's house who can be a youth mentor, teach her life skills (how to cook, how to take the bus etc).
- CFS is still supporting her financially, applying for her to accepted to AISH.
- She has a regular youth worker from CFS

Case Study 2: Mental Health Supports

- ***An 11-year-old boy from our counselling program:***

- His step-mother called
- Self-harming behaviour in step son
- Started at the age of 3 years. Picked at his face when anxious.
- Started cutting the web between his fingers with scissors.
- History of depression

Solutions

- Current Research:
- Racial Equity in Child and Youth Sector: (Lucente et al, 2022)
 - Multisector partnerships
 - Community engagement
 - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8323084/>
- Factors Contributing to Youth Mental Health: (Salami et al, 2022)
 - Racial discrimination
 - Poverty
 - Trauma
 - Lack of identity
 - Academic expectations
 - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9616134/>

Solutions

- Current Research:
- Disparities in Child Welfare: (Cenat et al, 2020)
 - Mixed Method Study
 - with Child Welfare Staff
 - Analysis of 36 curriculum of Social work program in Colleges and Universities in Ontario
 - One in two programs had a course on cultural issues
 - Lack of Cultural Competency of staff
 - Inadequate training on ethnocultural issues during school and later
 - <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32858480/>

Future Steps:

- Connection, Consultation, Collaboration
- Building relationship with:
 - mainstream organizations
 - The bigger systems (Local and provincial)
- Training & Education:
 - Service Providers
 - Healthcare professionals at all levels (mental & medical)
 - Government staff (Children ministry, Police, etc)
 - Legal system

Questions

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- Help-line: 780-900-2777