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WORKSHOP ON INFANT MENTAL HEALTH SET FOR MARCH 24 & 31

Beginning on March 24, Adolescent's Family Support Services of Niagara (AFSSN) in collaboration with their community partners will host a two-day institute to explore the basic principles related to infant mental health. The first day of the workshop will take place on Monday March 24. The second day will take place on Monday March 31. Both will be held at Amici's Banquet & Conference Centre in Thorold. Participants will be invited to attend a follow up session at a later time to discuss how strategies are progressing. Tickets are \$75 and include breakfast and lunch on both days. This event is of interest to early learning and child care programs, special needs agencies, public health teams, home visitors, case workers and others who work with very young children.

The workshop will be led by Dr. Chaya Kulkarni, Director of Infant Mental Health Promotion at Toronto's SickKids Hospital. Dr. Kulkarni is the author of the book *Your Guide to Nurturing Parent Child Relationships*. She currently leads advocacy and training initiatives in areas such as child welfare, including family courts and community based programs.

"Awareness of early childhood mental health issues is essential for all professionals working with children under age three," says Sandy Toth, Executive Director of AFSSN, a non-profit, social service organization that fosters the independence of young families by providing quality child care and other necessary supports, while parents complete their education. "We have been fortunate to have Dr. Kulkarni present within our agency in the past and she was found to be a dynamic and informative speaker. She is passionate about the responsibility we ALL play in ensuring children are given a good start in life".

Other community partners helping make this event possible include Niagara Region Children's Services, Niagara Child Care Sector Executive Committee, the Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC) and SickKids Hospital. Together, they share the goal of helping the teams of Niagara's early learning and child care programs better understand the impact of children's experiences on their emerging sense of self and overall mental health.

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For further information, please contact Sandy Toth, Executive Director of AFSSN at stoth@afssn.org.

