

first annual  
**MENTAL  
HEALTH  
SYMPOSIUM**

SATURDAY MAY 4, 2024



# WELCOME

THANK YOU for being a part of this special event and sharing your time and energy to help support mental health. We hope that you leave feeling EMPOWERED, VALIDATED, INSPIRED, and MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE about mental health as we embrace the efforts this community is taking to become a beacon of mental health well-being in the north,  
*Terry-Lynn and Colleen*

## FEEDBACK, PLEASE!

We hope that you will take a few minutes to share your feedback and input with us so we can help to make next year's event even better.



## PROGRAM AT-A-GLANCE

- 8:00-8:40am Check-in & Registration
- 8:40-9:00am Welcome Greetings  
Scott Aitchison, MP  
Laura Peghamagabow,  
*Wasauksing First Nation*
- 9:00-10:30am Keynote, Michael Ungar PhD
- 10:45-11:45am Session 1
- 11:45-12:45pm Lunch, Parry Sound High School  
culinary students  
Exhibit Hall
- 12:40-12:50pm Greetings from Graydon Smith,  
MPP & Jamie McGarvey, Mayor
- 1:00-2:00pm Session 2
- 2:15-3:15pm Session 3
- 3:30-4:30pm Session 4
- 4:30-5:00pm Closing Address

*Refreshments available throughout the day*

# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS



# MEET OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER, MICHAEL UNGAR (PH.D.)



Michael Ungar, Ph.D., is a Family Therapist and Professor of Social Work at Dalhousie University and holds the position of Canada Research Chair in Child, Family and Community Resilience.

His research on resilience around the world and across cultures has made him the number one ranked Social Work scholar in the world, with numerous educational institutions, government agencies, not-for-profits and businesses relying on his research and clinical work to guide their approaches to nurturing child, family, organizational and community well-being under stress.

He is the author of 18 books for mental health professionals, educators, caregivers and employers, including his most recent works *The Limits of Resilience: When to Persevere, When to Change, and When to Quit* (forthcoming February, 2024), a book for individuals and organizations under stress, *Change Your World: The Science of Resilience and the True Path to Success*, a book about our emerging understanding of resilience as more than individual grit, and *Working with Children and Youth with Complex Needs: 20 Skills to Build Resilience*, a book for mental health professionals.

As well as having received numerous awards for his work, including the Canadian Association of Social Workers National Distinguished Service Award and being named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, Dr. Ungar also maintains a blog, *Nurturing Resilience*, which can be read on Psychology Today's website.

## **OPENING KEYNOTE: “DIAGNOSING” RESILIENCE: SEEING THE POSITIVES IN YOUNG PEOPLE EVEN WHEN THERE ARE SERIOUS PROBLEMS**

With growing interest in resilience among mental health care providers, there is a need for a simple way to think about the complex interactions that predict which young people will do well despite the seriousness of the challenges they face. A focus on resilience helps us to understand individual adaptive and maladaptive coping strategies, as well as the social and physical ecologies that facilitate processes associated with youth resilience.

Using case examples of youth who have been exposed to high levels of adversity such as family violence, mental illness, a caregiver struggling with addiction, natural disasters, forced migration, poverty, racism and other types of social marginalization and political conflict,

Michael will show how we can assess resilience and use that assessment to guide practice. He will show that by “diagnosing” resilience, we are in a better position to design interventions that are sensitive to the individual, family, school and community factors that influence a youth's well-being.

Nine factors common to young people who cope well under adversity and avoid problems like depression, PTSD, and delinquency will be discussed. This presentation will also explore ways we can intervene to help youth cope by changing the social and physical environments that surround them.

# SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

## PROGRAM STREAMS

This symposium has something for everyone! Each time block includes a session option tailored to one of our program streams. Please go where your heart takes you!

### SESSION ONE 10:45-11:45



**Addictive behaviours: What can caregivers do?** Anne Tong



**Developmental trauma and attachment in child and youth behaviour,** Adria Taylor



**Fostering empathy, kindness and understanding in a forever evolving society,** Seth Compton

### LUNCH & EXHIBIT HALL 11:45-12:45

Thanks to the **Parry Sound High School culinary program** for lunch, and be sure to check out the Exhibit Hall!



### SESSION TWO

1:00-2:00



**Understanding eating disorders: What to do and how to help,** Trent Simons



**As safe as possible...**  
Diana Clements  
*\*offered Session 4 for caregivers\**



**Ending the stigma: Turning pain into passion,** Clarissa Kennedy

### SESSION THREE

2:15-3:15



**Taking care of yourself while taking care of your kids,** Olivia Scobie & Melissa Lindsay



**Emotional development and mental health,** Amanda Lamb



**Identifying risk & navigating systems: What you need to know,** Katrina Aguiar & Teresa Wetselaar

### SESSION FOUR

3:30-4:30



**Protecting yourself from parental burnout,** Olivia Scobie & Melissa Lindsay



**As safe as possible...**  
Diana Clements  
*\*offered Session 2 for educators/professionals\**



**Taking care of YOU,** Jacklyn Frias



**Talking circle: Rites of Passage,** Elaine & Vinny Kicknosway



Caregivers



Educators & Professionals



Community members

# SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

## SESSION ONE - 10:45-11:45AM



### **Addictive behaviours: What can parents/caregivers do? Anne Tong**

This session will support you in developing an understanding of addictive behaviours through the framework of adolescent development. We will explore ways in which to intentionally parent in order to promote maturity and healthy and effective tolerance for discomfort.



### **Developmental Trauma and Attachment in Child & Youth Behaviour: A Bottom Up, Integrative Approach, Adria Taylor**

There is the need for a lens shift when working with children and youth who have experienced trauma and attachment disruption. Adria discusses the pillars that drive this type of work and the integration of the neuro-sequential model of therapeutics (Bruce Perry), polyvagal theory and circle of security. Adria highlights that it's really about how to make connections, co-regulate and develop a sense of safety to allow the intervention to occur.



### **Fostering empathy, kindness and understanding in a forever evolving society, Seth Compton**

Compassionate spaces are designed to foster empathy, kindness, and understanding, providing safe and supportive environments where individuals can thrive emotionally, socially, and academically. Compassion extends beyond physical spaces—it's about creating connections, promoting empathy, and fostering kindness wherever we go.

## SESSION TWO - 1:00-2:00PM



### **Understanding eating disorders: What they are and how to support, Trent Simons**

During this session, Trent provides a background on eating disorders, highlights ways to recognize early signs, discusses what treatment might look like, and shares strategies to support a young person who might have an eating disorder.



### **As Safe As Possible..., Diana Clements \*offered Session 4 for caregivers\***

During this session we will unpack the benefits of allowing children to have generous amounts of unstructured outdoor play. Diana will focus both on current research and on her personal experiences as a forest school facilitator.



Caregivers



Educators & Professionals



Community members

## SESSION TWO - 1:00-2:00PM (CONTINUED)



### **Ending the stigma: Turning pain into passion, Clarissa Kennedy**

In this session, Clarissa bravely recounts her journey with mental health challenges and sheds light on the significant role of stigma in her recovery journey. With raw honesty and vulnerability, she illuminates the barriers imposed by societal misconceptions and judgment, underscoring the critical need for compassion and understanding when it comes to mental health. She offers insight into the complexities of mental illness and inspires a call to action against stigma. Her story is one of empowerment and advocacy as she recovers out loud and is highlighting the path to healing and acceptance.

## SESSION THREE - 2:15-3:15PM



### **Taking care of yourself while taking care of your kids, Olivia Scobie & Melissa Lindsay**

Olivia offers an enriching session that promises to provide practical tools, valuable insights, and a supportive community. She will delve into five key areas that significantly impact your well-being and ability to support your teens effectively:

- Taking care of tired bodies: You'll get validation and some hot tips about how to navigate the physical demands of everyday life.
- Tackling negative thoughts and anxiety: Gain insights into addressing thoughts that contribute to self-doubt and anxiety.
- Shifting identities and relationship dynamics with teens: As your teens grow, so do you. Examine the evolving identities within your family unit and explore ways to navigate changing relationship dynamics.
- Amplifying self-compassion for challenging life-circumstances: Acknowledge and unpack the life circumstances that are nobodies' fault but do contribute to the complexities of parenting.
- Navigating social pressures: Explore the myriad of social narrative and harmful pressures impacting both teens and parent



### **Emotional development & Mental health, Amanda Lamb**

Understanding our child's behaviours and development: How can we respond with intention to promote mental wellness and growth? This session will look at a child's "emotional milestones", how to track mental health and what to do when kids get stuck.



Caregivers



Educators & Professionals



Community members

## SESSION THREE - 2:15-3:15PM (CONTINUED)

### **Identifying risk & navigating systems: What you need to know, Katrina Aguiar & Teresa Wetselaar**

This session demystifies "the system" by walking you through a mental health crisis experience. We'll talk about the signs of a mental health crisis, what a healthcare visit may involve and its potential outcomes, and how to advocate for yourself and others.

## SESSION FOUR - 3:30-4:30PM


### **Protecting yourself from burnout, Olivia Scobie & Melissa Lindsay**

Join Olivia for a participatory workshop designed to help parents who are struggling with feelings of exhaustion, overwhelm, and a constant sense of urgency. She promises not to tell everyone the answer is to start their day at 5:00am or take more bubble baths. Instead, participants will learn how to support their nervous systems, explore community care strategies, and shift some blame to the social systems that contribute to making parents so tired (instead of blaming themselves).

### **As Safe As Possible..., Diana Clements**

See description in Session 2 for educators & professionals

### **Taking care of you!, Jacklyn Frias**

 Tips and tricks for taking care of your mental and physical health while doing all the things (drinking water, packing lunches, kids drop off etc.), being everything to everyone (a partner, a parent, a good friend, an employee etc) and at the same time giving yourself the grace, compassion and kindness you give to everyone else.

### **Talking circle: Rites of Passage, Elaine & Vinny Kicknosway**

Explore the rites of passage of mental health and learn about the roles and responsibilities community members hold as protective factors of mental health.



# MEET OUR SPEAKERS

## CAREGIVER STREAM



**Anne Tong**  
MSW RSW

Anne has over a decade of experience working with youth in multiple capacities. She brings her experience working in adventure-based therapeutic summer camps, coaching competitive rock climbers, and working within the children and youth mental health sector at Pine River Institute. Anne has also felt privileged to be a part of the Sound Youth Counselling team for the past couple of years supporting in a virtual capacity. She is passionate in supporting individuals to tap into their own resources, to find the strength in their voice, and to take self-responsibility in living a whole and authentic life. Anne's diverse academic background includes a Master of Social Work from the University of Toronto, a Bachelor of Therapeutic Recreation from Brock University, and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from OCAD University.



**Trent Simons**  
Registered  
Psychotherapy  
& MDiv Clinical  
Counselling

Trent is a Registered Psychotherapist with a Master's Degree in Clinical Counselling (Indigenous Studies emphasis) from Tyndale University and Seminary. Trent brings diverse personal, educational and professional experiences to the room, having received his first Master's Degree in 2002 in Community Economic Development, spent time in over 25 countries, and was born and raised in the Philippines. He also worked for five years as a Family Services Worker for the Children's Aid Society, ten years as an Associate Pastor of a local church, where he became an ordained minister, and three years at Chigamik Community Health Centre as a therapist and team manager. Trent has extensive training in Eating Disorder treatment, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT). He has provider status for Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) and has been trained in DBT Prolonged Exposure and DBT for cPTSD, with additional training in Radically Open DBT and Narrative Therapy. He specializes in working with PTSD, Eating Disorders, anxiety and mood disorders.



Caregivers



Educators & Professionals



Community members



# MEET OUR SPEAKERS

## CAREGIVER STREAM, CONTINUED



**Olivia Scobie**  
MA MSW RSW

Olivia is a social worker who specializes in parental mental health reproductive trauma, and provider burnout. She is the author of the book "Impossible Parenting: Creating a New Culture of Mental Health for Parents" and is currently completing a PhD in Health Policy and Equity. Olivia is the co-founder and executive director at Canadian Perinatal Mental Health Trainings and co-leads the psychotherapy placement program at Perinatal Wellbeing Ontario. Most importantly, she believes in eating dessert every day, barrier free access to mental health services, and reminding parents they are doing a great job as often as possible.



**Melissa Lindsay**  
RP (Q)

Melissa spends most of her time in Muskoka and the Madawaska Valley with her two kiddos and husband. But she has spent her life flowing around North America working with families, early learners, youth and teens in a variety of educational and recreational program settings.

Melissa is a certified ECE, Qualified Teacher, Kindergarten Specialist, Wilderness & Whitewater Canoe leader and a Qualifying Registered Psychotherapist with a specialty in Perinatal Mental Health. Melissa is both curious and passionate about how humans connect with themselves, each other and with our natural world.

## EDUCATORS & PROFESSIONALS STREAM



**Diana Clements**  
M.Ed

Diana is the Founder and Director of the Parry Sound Forest School. She was a classroom teacher for over twenty-five years and took early retirement to allow her to pursue her dream of starting an outdoor learning program in Parry Sound. She is a wife, mother, and grandmother and recognizes that being outdoors is key to her mental health.



Caregivers



Educators & Professionals



Community members

# MEET OUR SPEAKERS

## EDUCATORS & PROFESSIONALS STREAM, CONTINUED



**Jacklyn Frias**  
MSW RSW

Jacklyn is a Register Social Worker and Certified Personal Trainer with years of experience working in both fields in Parry Sound. From her interactions at her fitness studio and in the larger community she noticed the commonly perceived disconnect between mental and physical health in a person's overall well-being. Many people were open and active in pursuing their physical health goals, but when it came to the larger and deeper aspects of well-being they neglected self-care. It is from these observations that JF Fitness and Therapy was born and her passion to counsel real people, going through the everyday issues, with no stigma attached became a reality. She has created a safe, open, caring community of strong and empowered people looking to take control of their own happiness.



**Amanda Lamb**

Amanda began her career at Pine River in 2010 and brought with her a strong passion for working with youth and their families to support positive communication and relationships. Through her time at Pine River she has worked with countless families that struggle with mental health and addictions, first as a Youth Counsellor and then as our Aftercare Coordinator. In 2018 Amanda returned to school and has since completed her training as a Relational Psychotherapist. She lives in Peterborough with her two young children.

As the newest Director of the Center for Family Initiatives, Amanda brings a deep commitment to the wellbeing of youth and their families through empathy, acceptance and compassion. She is experienced in working with families who find themselves in crisis as well as with those that are just starting to explore the field of mental health. Amanda hopes that by educating and supporting families early on, they can foster greater resilience and sustain their mental wellness through difficult life transitions and the challenges we all face.



Caregivers



Educators & Professionals



Community members

# MEET OUR SPEAKERS

## EDUCATORS & PROFESSIONALS STREAM (CONTINUED)



**Adria Taylor**  
CRPO

Adria is a Registered Psychotherapist with the Ontario College of Registered Psychotherapists (CRPO) and currently in private practice located in North Bay, Ontario. Adria has clinically supported children, youth and families impacted by developmental trauma, and attachment difficulties for the last fifteen years of her career. She has also lead teams of child and youth workers, and consulted on school programs with regards to these populations.

## COMMUNITY PROGRAM STREAM



**Clarissa Kennedy**  
BSW RSW

Clarissa Kennedy is a distinguished Clinical Social Worker and the visionary founder of Reinvent Your Bliss Point, co-founder of Sweet Sobriety, and co-host of the Food Junkies Podcast. She has a specialized diploma in Professional Addiction Studies and brings over 15 years of invaluable experience to her practice. Her extensive professional journey spans diverse treatment settings, encompassing residential treatment, outpatient services, and private practice, demonstrating her commitment to providing comprehensive care to adolescents, adults, and families.

Having triumphed over her own battles with eating disorders and food addiction, Clarissa brings a unique level of empathy and understanding to her work. This personal history not only enhances her ability to relate to her clients but also enables her to establish trust and rapport crucial for effective therapeutic relationships. Embracing her role as a guide and supporter in her clients' journeys.

As a Somatically Informed Self Compassion Therapist, Clarissa recognizes the interconnectedness of physical and emotional well-being. Her expertise extends to evidence-based therapies, including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Mindfulness-Based Interventions, Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) for Eating Disorders, and Motivational Interviewing.



Caregivers



Educators & Professionals



Community members

# MEET OUR SPEAKERS

## COMMUNITY PROGRAM STREAM



**Elaine  
Kicknosway**

Elaine Kicknosway (pronouns Qwe/she/her) is a traditional helper. She is Swampy Cree through her biological mother from Amisk Lake and her biological father's side is from Buffalo Narrows Sk. Elaine is a member of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation in Northern Saskatchewan, and is Wolf Clan. She is a Sixties Scoop Survivor and returned home in 1996. She has been a long time community advocate in the areas of child welfare, MMIW2SG, healthy families, and Indigenous Wellness that include spaces for the LGBTQ2S+. Elaine is an Indigenous trauma informed Counsellor, a Blanket exercise facilitator and trainer, Indigenous full spectrum doula, Indigenous death Doula, Traditional dancer, singer, drummer and is the Cofounder of The Sixties Scoop Network and carrier of ceremonial teachings.



**Vince  
Kicknosway**

Vince Kicknosway is father of four, grandfather of eleven, and great grandfather of one. He is a treaty band member of the Bkejwanong Anishinawbek Unceded Pottawatomi Territory of the Loon Clan. Vinny worked for the Odawa Native Friendship Centre for 44-years and retired in January 2022. He received an Honours Bachelor of Social Work Degree, a certificate from the University of Oklahoma (working with Adult Alcoholics) and started a course with the George Brown College (History of Indigenous Culture). Vinny provides cultural presentations, opening and closing prayers, and assists Elaine and Theland Kicknosway in the "Blanket Exercise."



**Teresa  
Wetselaar**  
NP

Teresa is the Nurse Practitioner Lead for the West Parry Sound Health Centre Rural Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic (WPSHC Rural NPLC) and Co-Lead for the Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinic. She is also the manager at the Whitestone and Britt sites of the WPSHC Rural NPLC. Teresa has a special passion for mental health and addictions.



Caregivers



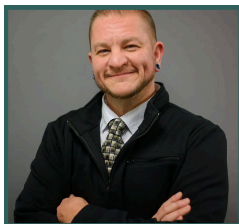
Educators & Professionals



Community members

# MEET OUR SPEAKERS

## COMMUNITY PROGRAM STREAM, CONTINUED



**Seth Compton**

Seth is the founder of OUTloud North Bay, a brave space for youth. Seth is an established educator, trainer, advocate, mentor and leader with many years of experience working with children, at-risk youth, and those in the 2SLGBTQ+ community. Seth holds a diploma as an Early Childhood Educator and a Child and Youth Worker and was an 2SLGBTQ+ Outreach Worker with the Near North District School Board. Seth is currently employed with the Aids Committee of North Bay as a 2SLGBTQ+ Seniors Program Coordinator. Seth is trained in a number of areas including ASSIST, Mental Health First Aid First Nations, First Aid & CPR, Safe Talk, Anger Solutions, Naloxone, U.M.A.B (Understanding & Managing Aggressive Behaviour), and Crisis Prevention and Intervention. Seth is a certified Peer Support Trainer.



**Katrina Aguiar**  
BHSc., MSc

Katrina is a mental health and addictions worker with the West Parry Sound Health Centre. She works closely with the District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board, offering mental health and addiction support to clients engaged with Ontario Works, Housing, and Emergency Shelter Programs. Katrina's background includes crisis intervention, intensive case management, community-based capacity building, and system navigation. Katrina is currently working towards her Registered Social Worker designation.



Caregivers



Educators & Professionals



Community members