



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CDI releases *Facing Our Feelings*—a mental health campaign exploring the positive impact of self-expression in the everyday lives of children and youth

TORONTO, ON—Mental health is often not associated with children when in fact 70% of mental health issues begin in childhood or adolescence. Child Development Institute (CDI), a leader in children’s mental health and well-being, is launching today its first digital campaign—*Facing Our Feelings*—to spark action on self-expression in support of happy, healthy children and youth.

“Sharing our feelings within caring relationships is an important first step in development for young children,” said Dr. Samantha Yamada, Clinical Psychologist and Director of Research and Quality at CDI. “When children are encouraged to express and learn about their feelings with adults who care about and validate them, children learn they can effectively work through their feelings, creating a strong foundation for emotional wellness later on in life,” she added.

Starting **February 4 to March 17, 2020**, CDI will release a weekly campaign video via its social media channels, allowing one to follow along as the heartwarming journeys of Robert, 8, Ezekiel, 9, Kaden, 8, Kathryn, 6, Mackenzie, 10, and Ember, 3, unfold. The campaign aims to educate parents and caregivers to encourage their children to express and be curious about their emotions and to help them feel safe and supported when they do.

Click [here](#) to view the *Facing Our Feelings* launch video.

As part of the campaign, CDI sat down with Toronto-area children to find out how they feel when experiencing a variety of emotions, including happiness, sadness, anxiousness and anger. Captured on video, the participating children reveal just how deeply they feel and the ways they think about their problems. “When someone is, like...being mean to me, and like, saying, ‘you’re the worst’ or stuff, it hurts my feelings and I get all tight and mad,” revealed Robert.

Self-expression, especially for children and youth experiencing complicated or overwhelming feelings, plays a critical role in the well-being of children in their early years and as they navigate the world as adolescents and adults.

An estimated 1.2 million Canadian children and youth are affected by mental illness. This campaign reflects the importance of early intervention and CDI’s ongoing commitment in supporting healthy socio-emotional development in children and youth within the family unit. When we are *Facing Our*

Feelings, we are doing more than just talking—we are connecting with others and steering through emotions, actions that involve courage, vulnerability; an open heart and mind.

CDI invites all parents and caregivers to join the conversation by sharing how they encourage their children to express and learn about their feelings. Share a tweet, snap a photo, or post a video in support of the importance of *Facing Our Feelings* every day.

ABOUT CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Child Development Institute (CDI) is an accredited children’s mental health organization in Toronto, Ont., mandated with the mission to support the healthy development of children, youth and their families. A leader in the field, CDI develops and delivers world-class, evidence-informed mental health programs and services across four streams: Early Intervention, Family Violence, the Integra Program, and Healthy Child Development. For more information about CDI, please visit: childdevelop.ca.

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