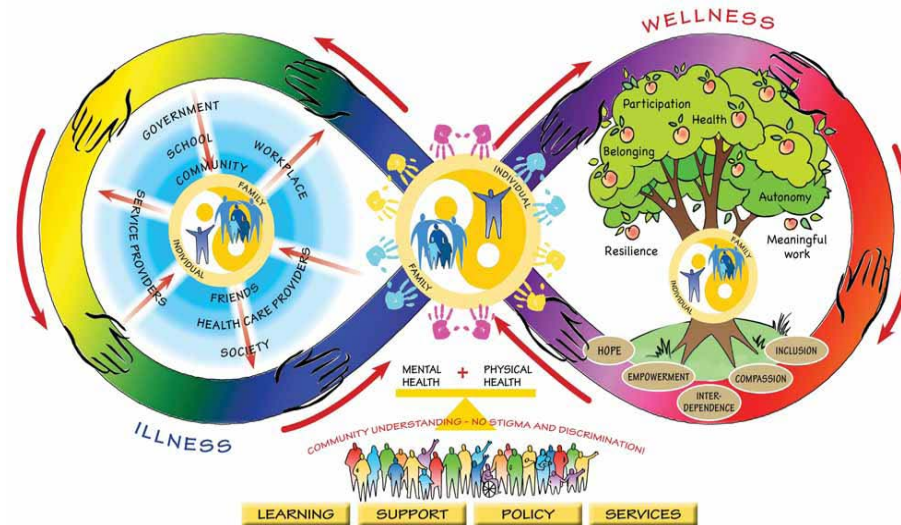


Families at the Centre: A Call to Action

Reducing the Impact of Mental Health and Substance Use Problems on Families

4th International Conference on Families with Parental Mental Health Challenges



Stephen Smith, BC Ministry of Health

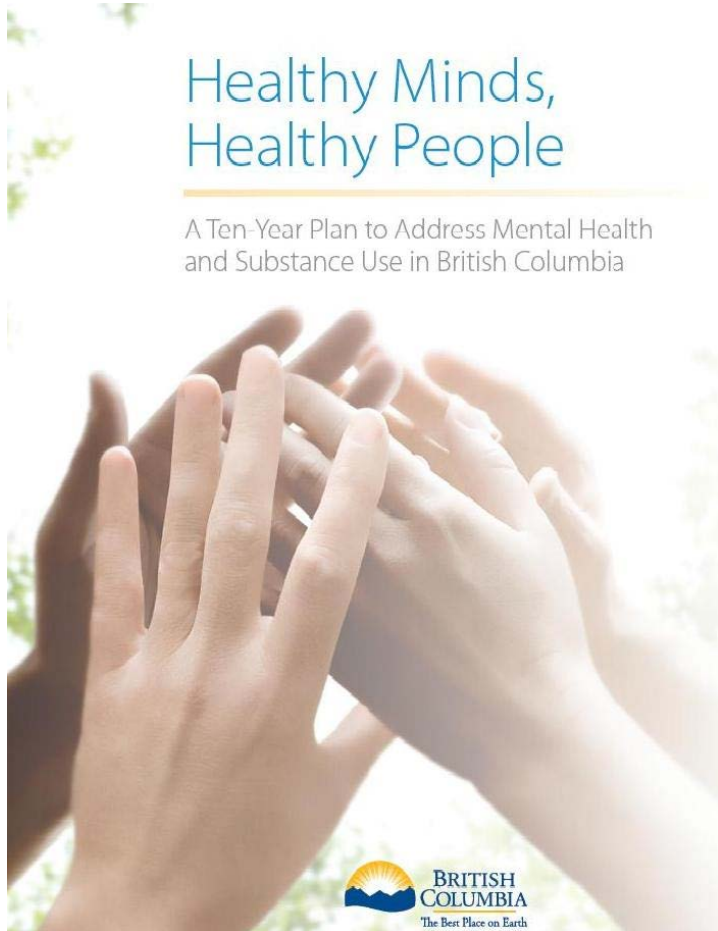
Learning Objectives

1. Appreciate the dimensions of a multi-sector, multi-jurisdictional planning process
2. Understand the basic elements of a family-centred approach to supporting families with a mental health and/or substance use problem
3. Consider the opportunities for movement towards a family-centred approach within the system(s) you work/connect with

Background: BC Policy Context

Healthy Minds, Healthy People

A Ten-Year Plan to Address Mental Health
and Substance Use in British Columbia



Action: “Implement supports for families with parents who have mental health and/or substance use problems to facilitate healthy family development.”

Intended Outcome: “By 2013, health authorities and key partners will use a cross-sector framework for planning, and children and families with parents who experience mental health and/or substance use problems will receive more coordinated services and supports.”

Background: BC Working Group

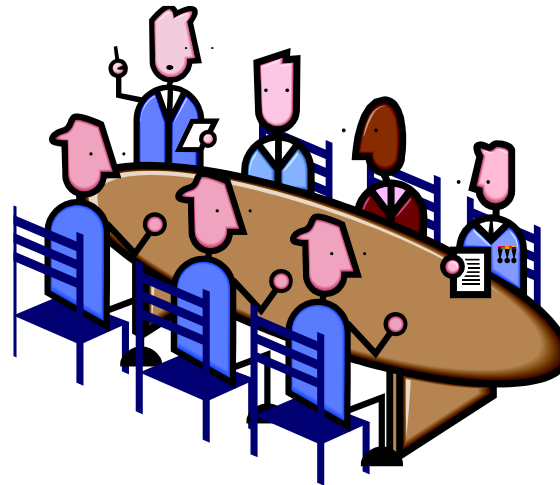
- BC has a long history of dedicated interest in supporting families with a parental mental health problem
- Formed in 1996, the Provincial Working Group on Parental Mental Illness has focused on improving practice with families where at least one parent has a mental health concern
- Provincial Working Group activities included forums, training events and a dedicated website: www.parentalmentalillness.org
- Many Provincial Working Group members now sit on the Family MHSU Task Force

Family MHSU Task Force

- Purpose: promote a multi-system and sector family mental health and substance use orientation that:
 - Supports positive mental health and well-being for all members of families affected by mental health and substance use problems;
 - Minimizes individual and family harms associated with these problems;
 - Addresses trans-generational vulnerability for mental health and substance use problems; and
 - Drives systemic coordination to achieve common goals.

Family MHSU Task Force - continued

- Membership includes:
 - Ministry of Health
 - Health Authorities (adult mental health and youth/adult substance use services)
 - Ministry of Children and Family Development (Child & Youth Mental Health, Child Welfare)
 - Ministry of Education
 - NGO/civil society groups

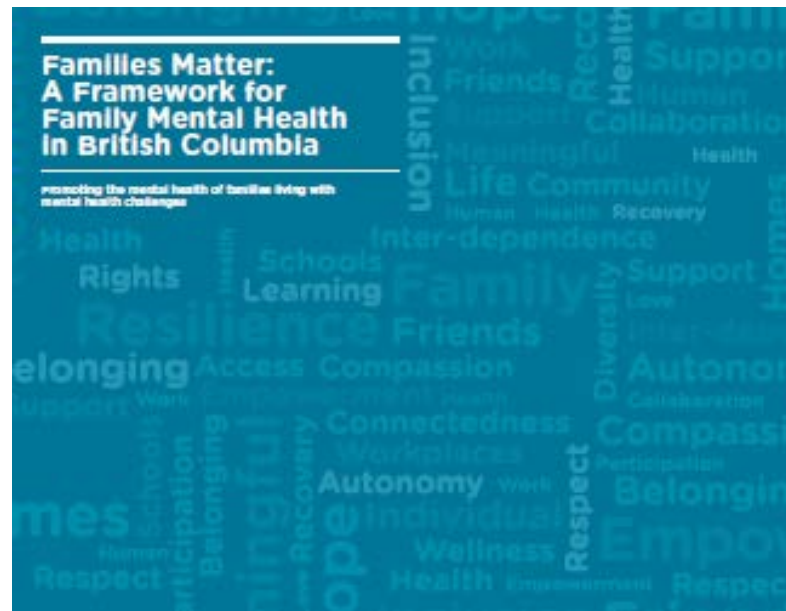


Families at the Centre: Inputs

- *Families at the Centre* draws upon four main sources of evidence:
 - peer-reviewed and grey literature;
 - experience in BC and other jurisdictions;
 - input from policy makers and service providers; and
 - input from families with lived experience of mental health and substance use challenges.
- Structure of vision, goals, operating principles emerged from a two-day knowledge exchange and planning meeting.

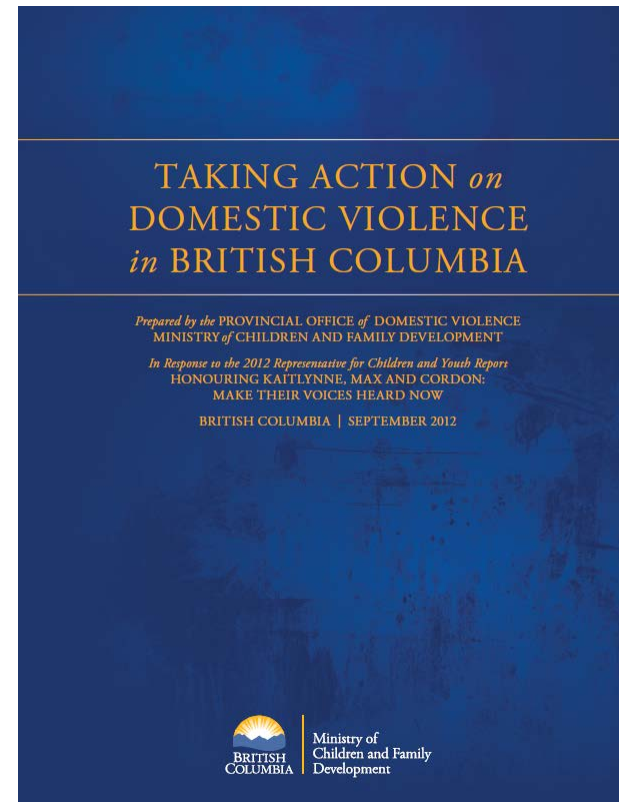
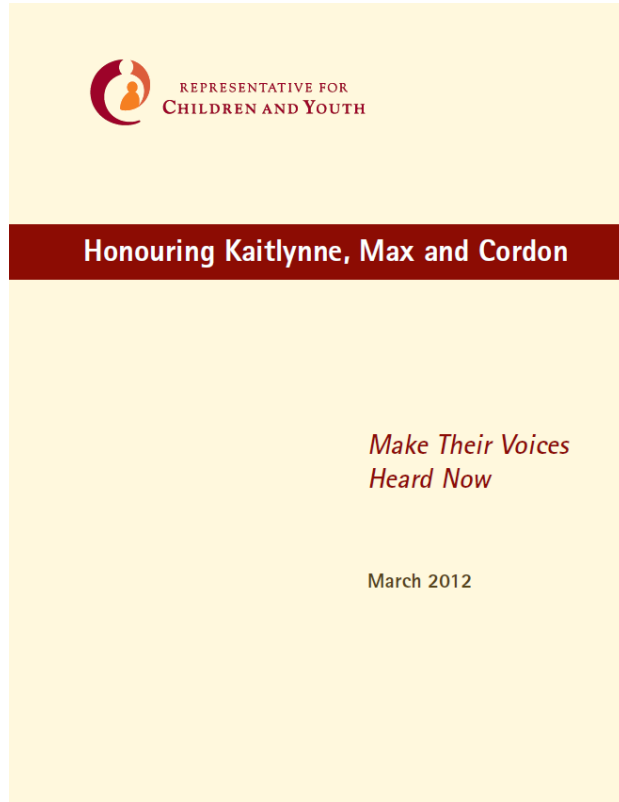
Builds on *Families Matter*

- *Families Matter: A Family Mental Health Framework for BC* released by the F.O.R.C.E. Society in May 2012 reflects voice of BC families, values and action priorities.



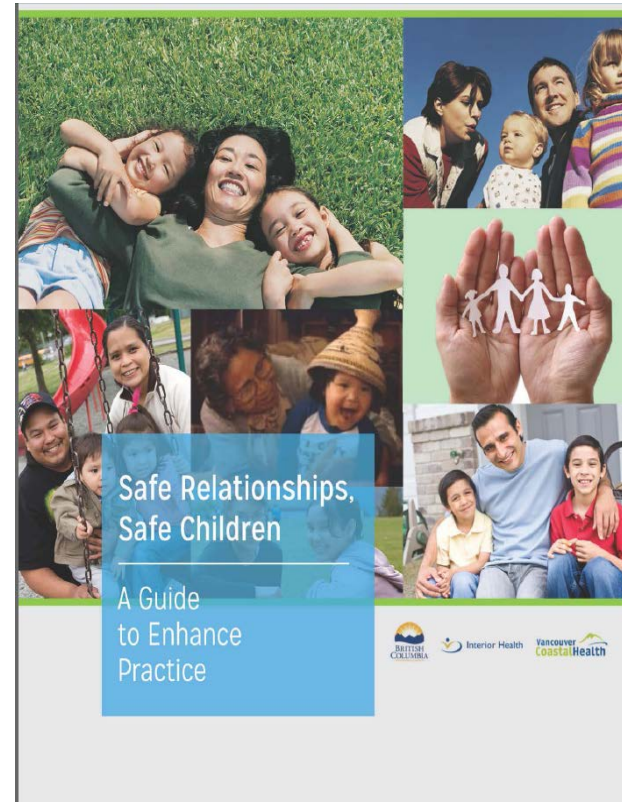
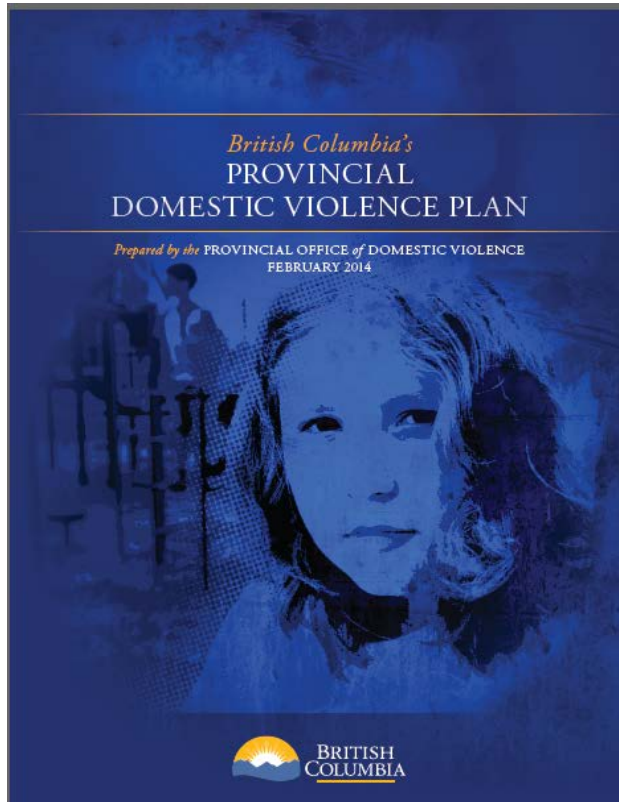
- Feedback obtained from families during the development of *Families Matter* shifted the focus from parental mental illness to families experiencing MH/SU challenges.

Aligns With: *Taking Action on Domestic Violence*



- 2012 report increased attention on issues related to domestic violence, substance use and untreated parental mental illness.
- Province responded in 2013 with *Taking Action on Domestic Violence in BC*.

Supports BC Initiatives Related to Domestic Violence



- The *Provincial Domestic Violence Plan* –includes cross ministry enhancement of government policies and resources to ensure consistent responses to domestic violence situations and support families.
- *Safe Relationships, Safe Children* project –prepares staff to determine risk and address the safety needs – adults with parenting roles, their children, partners and other family members.

Also Aligns With ...

- Ministry of Health *Setting Priorities for the B.C. Health System* by expanding on efforts to shift to a more patient-centred orientation
- Ministry of Children and Family Development practice guidelines
- emphasis on trauma-informed practice
- specific family-oriented initiatives underway in some of the regional health authorities

Families at the Centre: Vision

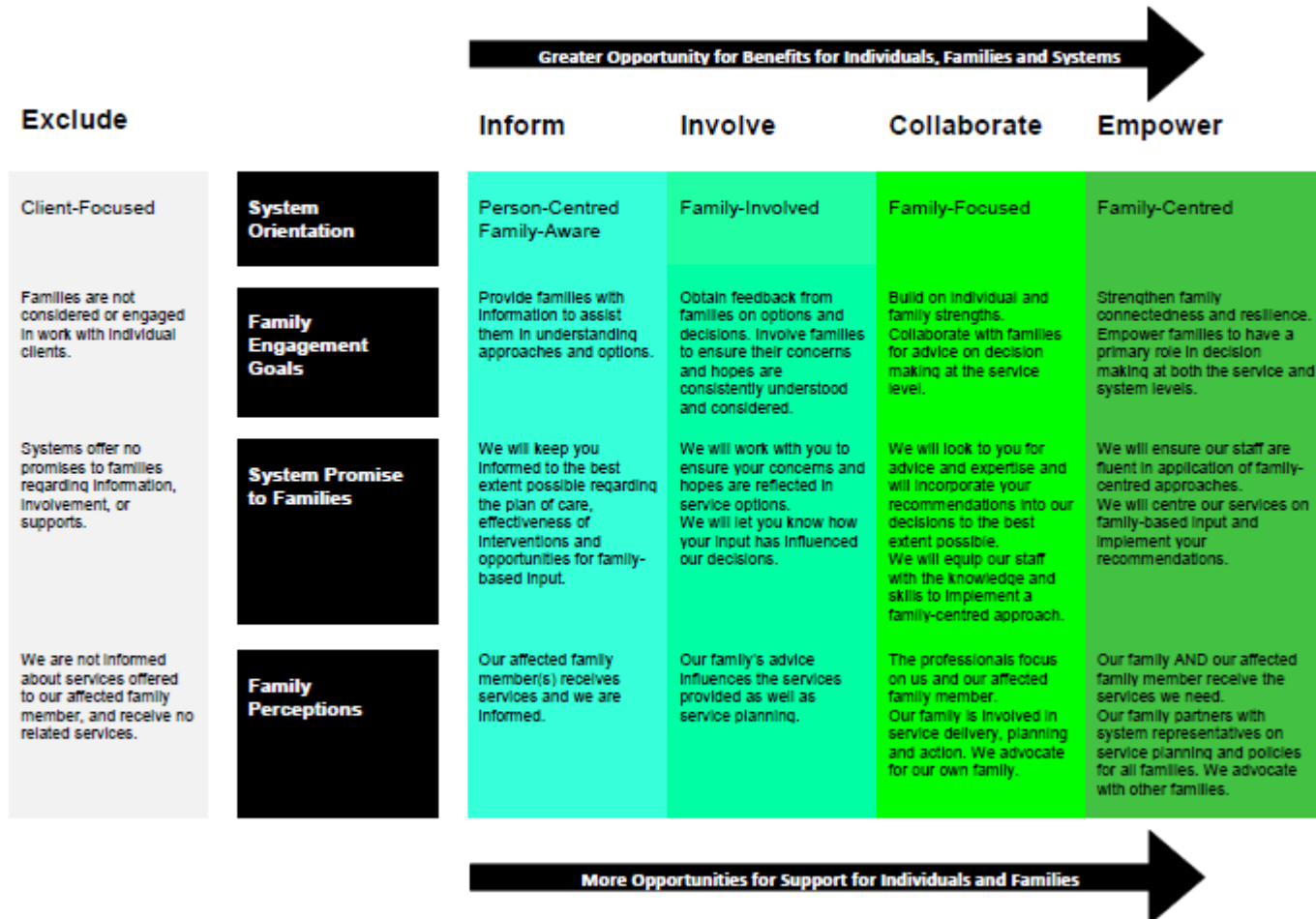
“Families in all their diversity are at the centre of service system cultures and responses”

Families at the Centre aims to foster this by:

- Helping systems and their representatives to embrace a **family-centred** approach to policy and practice, services and supports; and
- Encouraging greater collaboration among all systems that touch and influence the lives of these families

Conceptual Basis

Spectrum of Family Engagement: When a Family Member is Experiencing a MH/SU Challenge

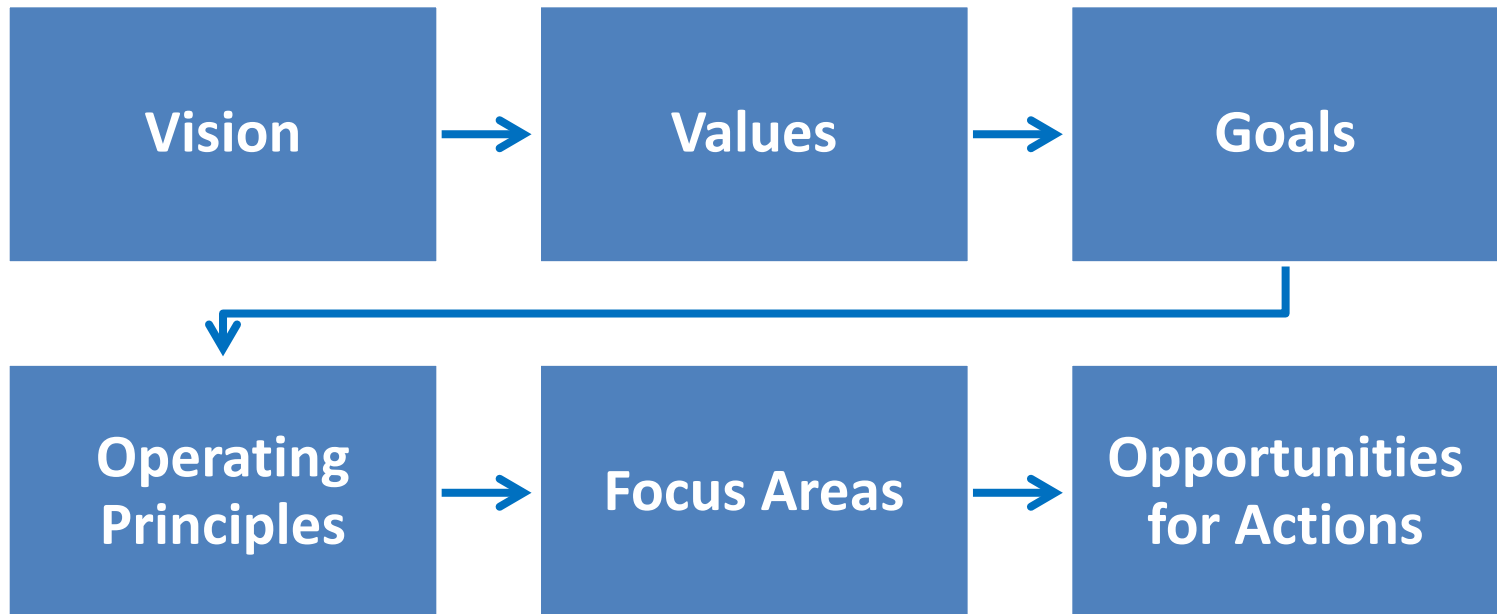


Key Elements of a Family-centred Approach

- Recognizes families as essential partners at the levels of:
 - ✓ Individual treatment and support
 - ✓ Service planning
 - ✓ Policy development
 - ✓ Evaluation and research
- Integrates a family-systems perspective into practice, service planning and policy making
- Compliments and expands on a patient-centred approach, considering the needs of all members of the family
- Degree of family involvement depends on the:
 - ✓ Individual family member's choice, capacity and acuity
 - ✓ Family interest and capacity
 - ✓ Service system orientation and capability
 - ✓ Health, developmental and safety needs of all family members and the family unit



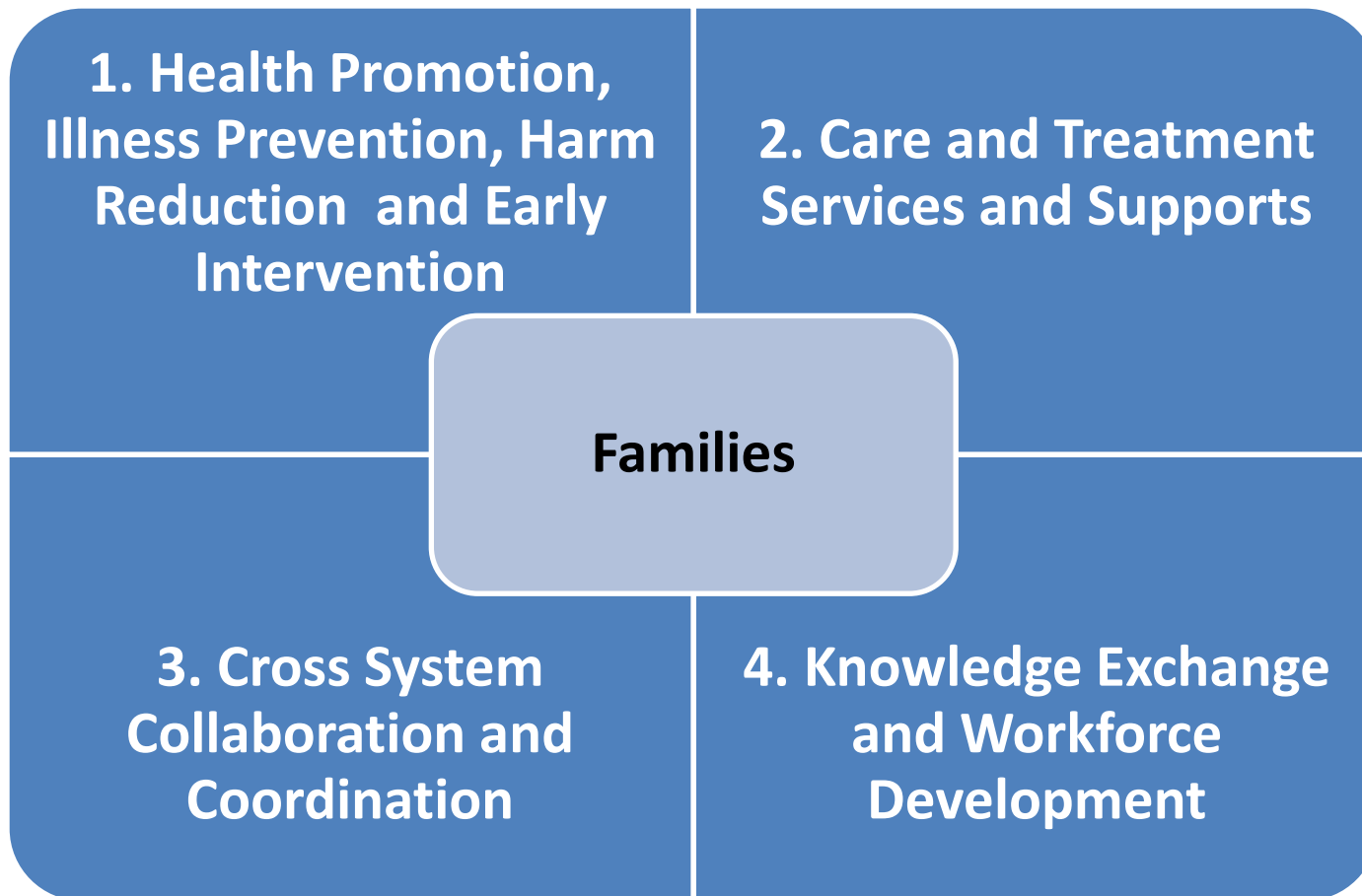
Families at the Centre: Charting a Path



Families at the Centre: Goals

1. Support families affected by mental health and substance use challenges to thrive
2. Minimize individual and family harms associated with mental health and substance use challenges
3. Combat stigma and discrimination experienced by families affected by mental health and substance use challenges

Families at the Centre: Areas of Focus



Families at the Centre: Actions

- 16 recommended actions grouped under the four focus areas
- Many are supported with examples of promising practices and resources, for example:
 1. Build the capacity of communities to respond to and support families experiencing mental health and substance use challenges.

Promising practices and resources:

- *The Parental Mental Health Community Development and Education Manual (BC)* is a practical resource for guided community development and education on parental mental illness.
- *In the know*, presented by the F.O.R.C.E. Society for Kids' Mental Health, is a monthly telecast about a different, parent-selected topic in child, youth and family mental health. Some of the community child and youth mental health teams are sharing the telecasts with families engaged in their services, including to those involved in the intake process.

Families at the Centre: Implementation

- Undertake knowledge translation and transfer activities to build awareness and understanding of a family-centred approach
- Foster implementation activities with partners across systems such as:
 - Development of early implementation projects to develop capacity for change, and encourage action across systems;
 - Development practice and service tools;
 - Introduction of accountability mechanisms; and
 - Work with researchers and representatives of families to determine evaluation approaches.



Thank you.

Discussion/Questions?

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