

# PROTECTING MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH



*Life With A Baby*  
Real Parents • Real Challenges • Real Help



**LWAB**  
Foundation

*Supporting maternal mental health*

# PROTECT MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH

We have a simple mission - to protect maternal mental health. Together, we can realize a future where we prevent Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders wherever possible, offer support when inevitable, and where maternal health is conventional.





## The good news is a solution is practical and within reach.

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMS CAN REDUCE PMADs BY UP TO 50%<sup>3</sup>



Peer-support Programming including Life With A Baby and Life With A Preterm Baby



Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorder Support Groups



Maternal Mental Health Advocacy, Training, and Education

## 1 in 5 expectant or new moms will experience depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, or psychosis.<sup>1</sup>

Collectively known as **Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders**, in the worst cases, these can lead to suicide. PMADs negatively affect a parent's ability to care for children, family and themselves <sup>2</sup>. These can start during pregnancy and last for up to a year after delivery or loss - longer

if undiagnosed or untreated. Many suffer in silence, afraid of the stigma and potential consequences. If they or a loved one reach out for help, long wait times and a lack of ongoing, local options are common.

We collaborate with hospitals, public health and mental health professionals to develop locally accessible peer-support programs, support groups, and resources. All are suitable to work alongside a formal treatment plan or fill the gap until treatment becomes available. Many times, these connections during crisis turn into lifelong friendships and circles of support for parents.



<sup>1</sup> Dennis, C. (2014). Psychosocial interventions for the treatment of perinatal depression. Best Practice & Research Clinical Obstetrics & Gynaecology, 28(1), pp.97-111 <sup>2</sup> Rahman, A., Surkan, P., Cayetano, C., Rwagatare, P. and Dickson, K. (2013). Grand Challenges: Integrating Maternal Mental Health into Maternal and Child Health Programmes. PLoS Medicine, 10(5), p. E1001442

<sup>3</sup> Jones, C., Jomeen, J. and Hayter, M. (2014). The impact of peer support in the context of perinatal mental illness: A meta-ethnography. Midwifery, 30(5), pp.491-498.

“ People are willing to share personal stories, which others can relate [to] ”  
 Life With A Baby participant

# The key is connection, support and understanding

When maternal mental health is nurtured, the ripple-effect is endless. It's vital to creating strong, healthy communities. Maternal depression can impair the maternal/child bond, causing a delay in physical, social and cognitive development with long term implications <sup>4</sup>. Protecting maternal mental health changes the end of the story to create a better society for us all <sup>5</sup>.

Over the next ten years, our goal is to expand support programs to every province in Canada and select U.S. states. We'll increase outreach and support programs for parents of vulnerable babes and those with socio-economic barriers maternal mental health resources.



<sup>4</sup> Evans, J., Melotti, R., Heron, J., Ramchandani, P., Wiles, N., Murray, L. and Stein, A. (2011). The timing of maternal depressive symptoms and child cognitive development: a longitudinal study. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 53(6), pp.632-640.

Sohr-Preston, S. and Scaramella, L. (2006). Implications of Timing of Maternal Depressive Symptoms for Early Cognitive and Language Development. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 9(1), pp.65-83.

<sup>5</sup> Peersforprogress.org. (2017). Science Behind Peer Support | Peers for Progress. [online]

# OUR PROGRAMS

Over the past 10 years, Life With A Baby peer-support programs have helped over 50,000 parents and families thrive. The why behind our format is simple - creating spaces for parents to connect with others navigating the same experiences works. Peer-led support programs can reduce the occurrence of Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders by up to 50%.



## LIFE WITH A BABY

Made for parents from prenatal to pre-teen stage, Life With A Baby offers a range of events and activities, both on and offline, all based on the behavioural activation model. Our 55K members are part of 72 community chapters across Ontario and Eastern Canada. Each chapter is run by a dedicated Community Chapter Manager, moms who live in the same community, trained to both manage the unique needs of their local members and to help spot and connect parents who need more in-depth help.



## LIFE WITH A PRETERM BABY

Life With A Preterm Baby is a support network for parents of vulnerable infants from discharge through the transition from the NICU to their first months at home. Facing unique challenges, this specialized program ensures they receive the unique support they need with online meet-ups, resources and information from relevant specialists such as neonatal practitioners, speech-language pathologists, and developmental specialists.



## LIFE WITH A BABY MULTILINGUAL

We offer select Life With A Baby events and activities in multiple languages as a way to support moms for whom English is not the primary language at home or in their community, and for new immigrant families. These are led by Community Managers who speak the same tongue and include French, Farsi, Spanish, Russian, Mandarin, Cantonese and Japanese.



## PMADs SUPPORT GROUPS

Our Perinatal Mood and Anxiety support groups are a way for moms diagnosed with a PMAD to get to the other side of mental health challenges. Led by certified mental health practitioners, these small groups are offered free of charge and are a safe space for moms to gain vital coping tools and to share lived experiences with others.



## ADVOCACY & EDUCATION

Making strides to overcome the stigma and make way for prioritizing maternal mental health requires awareness, education, and tools. While providing the on-the-ground support to help prevent and support those struggling, it's our mission to make maternal mental health a national priority and to expand the breadth of knowledge, protections and available treatments.



**Over the past ten years, more than 50,000 parents have been able to thrive through our programs.**

Life With A Baby - now North America's largest parenting network, offers informal events, activities and an online network for parents and kids to help avoid social isolation and build a village. Many chapters offer events in multiple languages. Life With A Preterm Baby offers specialized support to parents of vulnerable babies with online meet-ups,

resources and information from relevant specialists such as neonatal practitioners, speech-language pathologists, and developmental specialists. Our health-practitioner led support groups are a way for moms in crisis to get the support and tools needed to get to the other side of mental health challenges.

72 Chapters across Ontario and Eastern Canada

Online Community to provide forums and resources anytime

Dedicated Community Chapter Managers

Specialized resources for parents of preterm and vulnerable babies

Activities and Events designed to prevent social isolation - a key precursor to PMADs

Multilingual and culturally-targeted programs

55,000 Members

Pipeline to PMADs Support groups for moms in crisis



The saying 'it takes a village' came from the wisdom of our ancestors about what it took to raise great kids. Help form a circle of support makes raising a child better, and for the 1 in 5 facing Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders, it's vital. The Life with a Baby

program is the result of one new mom's wish to create that essential support system for others she'd struggled to find for herself.

<p>55K Members 45K Active Database</p>	<p>72 Chapters</p>	<p>6K Combined Twitter Followers</p>
<p>20K Unique Monthly Web Visitors</p>	<p>20K Combined Facebook Followers</p>	<p>1800 Instagram Followers</p>

Made for parents from prenatal to pre-teen stage, Life With A Baby offers a range of events and activities, both on and offline, all based on the behavioural activation model <sup>2</sup>. The why behind our format is simple - creating spaces for parents to connect with others navigating the same experiences works. Peer-led support programs can reduce the occurrence of Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders by up to 50%

Our 55,000 members are part of 72 community chapters across Ontario and Eastern Canada. Each chapter is run by a dedicated Community Manager, moms who live in the same community as their members, who are trained to both manage the unique needs of their local members and to help spot and connect parents who need more in-depth help.

Every activity and event is designed to prevent social isolation and ease the obstacle course that is parenthood. In-person activities such as mom-and-baby yoga, stroller walks, circle times, and coffee meet-ups help parents get out of the house and connect with others on the same journey. Workshops covering first-aid, financial know-how, sleep-training, stress management and more, help

to give practical actionable advice. Our online community, Managing the Motherload group, and social platforms help parents connect without geographical barriers. Every option is judgement-free and kept at minimal cost to lower barriers for participation. It's not our job to tell parents what's best - only to help them find what works best for them. **Welcome to the village.**

# WHERE DOES YOUR INVESTMENT GO?

Our goal is to have our Operations costs fully covered by the close of 2023, so that going forward, 100% of public donations go directly to Perinatal Mood and Anxiety peer-support groups, programming, training, advocacy and education.

## SUPPORT GROUPS

Our PMADs support groups are offered free of charge to moms in need of mental health treatment. The support groups act as a complement to a holistic treatment plan. As such, we are responsible for the cost of sourcing and remunerating the certified health practitioners who lead the groups. We also cover costs for intake, securing the space, childcare, any required materials, refreshments, and administration.

## COMMUNITY MANAGER TRAINING

Our Community Managers are the key to our success. Each mom is trained to meet the unique needs of her community. Before being given a chapter to run, we train incoming managers in essential business knowledge. The training program, developed with business and entrepreneurship leaders, includes financial management, marketing and advertising, brand and community partnerships, digital and social media management, member recruitment, and volunteer management. At its conclusion, managers leave equipped with the tools to maximize the outreach and earning potential of their chapter. We design and provide this training program, all materials, and provide ongoing support and mentorship.

## BUSINESS RESOURCES

We develop and produce marketing, advertising, partnership and sponsorship proposal templates and materials to empower each Community Manager to grow and run a thriving chapter. By removing some of the day-to-day operational costs of each chapter, Community Managers are then able to keep costs to participants low-making it easily accessible to all. A percentage of net profit is returned to the Life With A Baby Foundation to assist with support groups and peer training.

## EVENTS

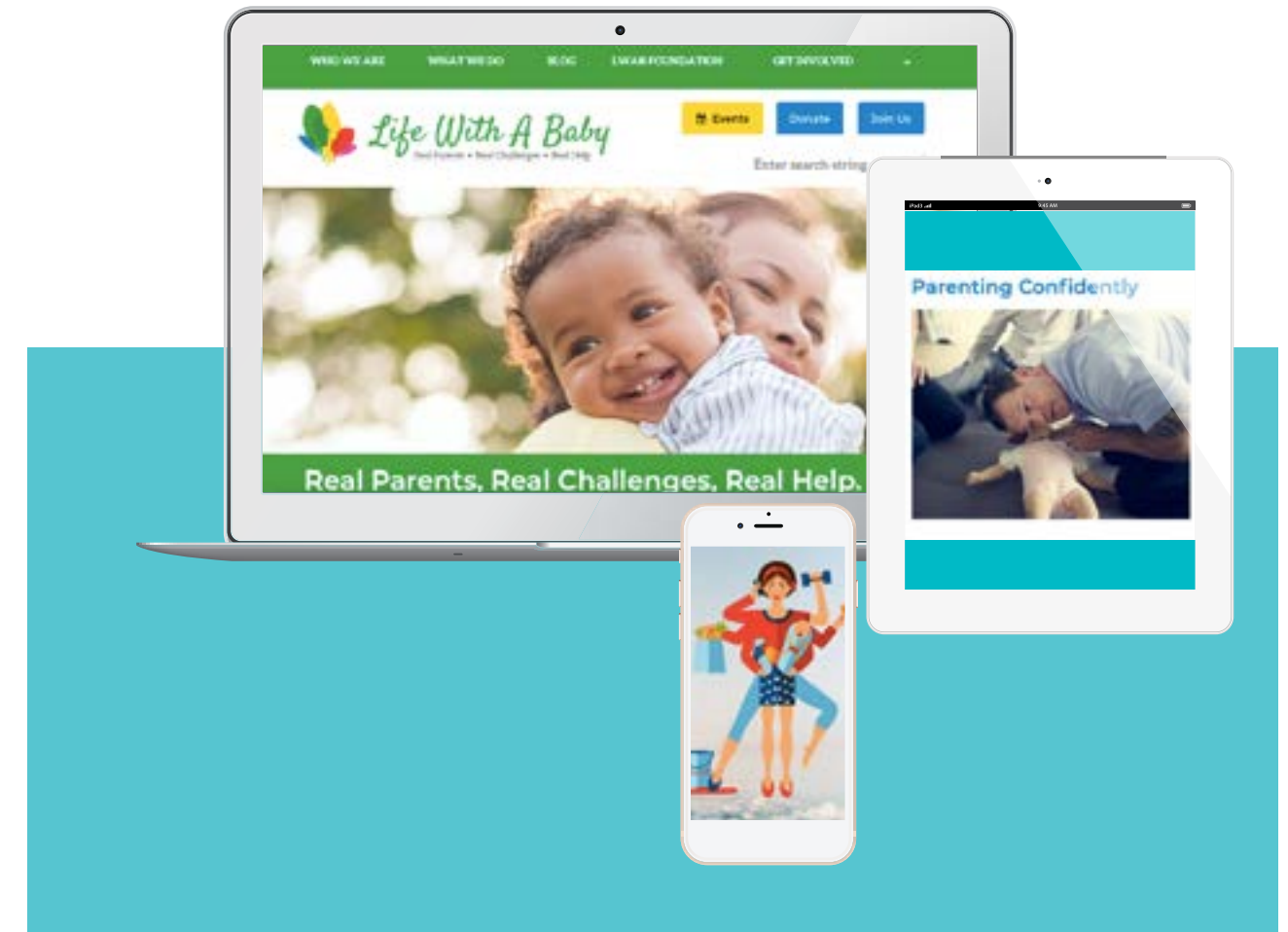
Each year, we run several fundraising events, campaigns and initiatives to raise funds for our programming and operational costs. We also run series and conferences aimed at educating and empowering both parents and members of the healthcare sector. We cover all operational costs associated with each, with some remuneration coming through ticket sales.

## OPERATIONS

We manage all costs associated with running a registered charity. These include insurance, which covers the operations of every chapter, administrative and office materials, financial management including bookkeeping, accounting, annual audits and tax filing. We are responsible for hiring incremental personnel to assist with events, fundraisers, and special initiatives, speaker fees, as well as all national advertising and outreach. We take care of all digital management, including website maintenance, security, and hosting. Lastly, the Life With A Baby Foundation covers the salaries of the Life with a Baby Managing Director, Life With A Baby Executive Administrator, and the Foundation Executive Director. We take pride in being as fiscally and environmentally responsible as we can by reusing, recycling, and procuring donated materials as much as possible.

# Better together.

Our vast database, content subscribers, web visitors, event attendees, and online communities and forums provide a unique opportunity to reach a network of thousands of engaged target audiences daily. Strategic partnerships allow us to leverage our expertise to develop customized, creative, and useful content to share pertinent information and resources with our network.



## SPEAKER SERIES

Gather parents, family, and medical professionals to learn, share and connect

## DIGITAL CAMPAIGNS & CUSTOM CONTENT

Increase brand awareness with sponsored or customized content integration through our social media platforms, website, email, and blog.

## CONFERENCES, EVENTS, ONSITE ACTIVATIONS

Connect with target audiences with face-to-face and hands-on interaction

Contact us to talk about tailored solutions.



# LET'S MAKE MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH A PRIORITY

## TOGETHER, WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

We recognize that for help to be practical, it has to consider where the person it's intended to reach stands today. A central factor in carrying out the Life With A Baby mission is meeting people where they are.

Protecting maternal mental health leads to stronger families, healthier kids, and unstoppable communities. We work with a great network to deliver real support and help to parents every day. Join our village; we'd love to have you.





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Life With A Baby Foundation is a registered Canadian charity.