The Handle with Care Project, funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada's Innovation Strategy Fund for mental health promotion, includes four sites across Canada: Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, Ontario and the Yukon.

The project aims to increase the mental health of young children, birth to six years, by introducing their parents and caregivers to a variety of activities and strategies that have the potential to promote children's positive social and emotional development, secure attachment, and healthy self-esteem.

Parents and caregivers are introduced to these simple yet powerful strategies through trained facilitators in their community in group settings. This 4 year research project will reach 400 at risk families across Canada (100 in Manitoba).

The project will evaluate the (intervention) delivery of eight group sessions, focusing on four building blocks of positive mental health: attachment, self-esteem, expressing emotions and relationships. In these eight sessions, parents and caregivers will be introduced to brief yet meaningful activities that are intended to raise awareness of the importance and value of positive mental health and to also provide simple activities that parents can do with their children to promote their children’s mental health.

The program is strength-based and aims to build on parents and caregivers existing knowledge and experience. The program is flexible and allows participants the opportunity to share their knowledge in a safe and empowering environment.

If your agency would like to discuss the opportunity to be involved in the Handle with Care Project, please contact Laurie McPherson, information below.

“Thank you for reminding us how parenting is the most special job”.  
*Pilot Program participant, 2010*

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