

The ParentingWell Practice Framework

**Having Conversations with Parents
about Mental Health, Wellness
and Family Life**

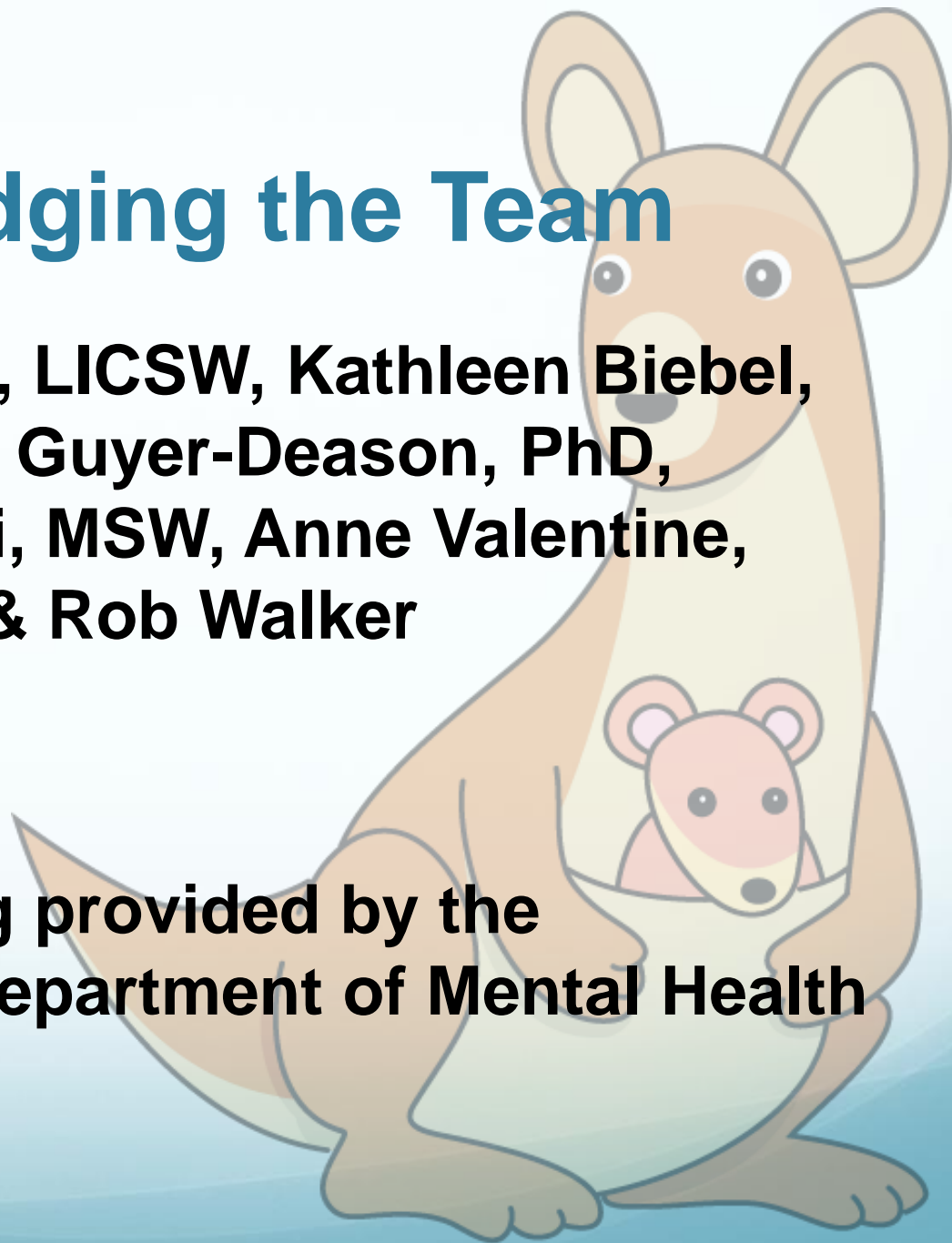
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**Joanne Nicholson, PhD
Kelly English, PhD, LICSW**

Acknowledging the Team

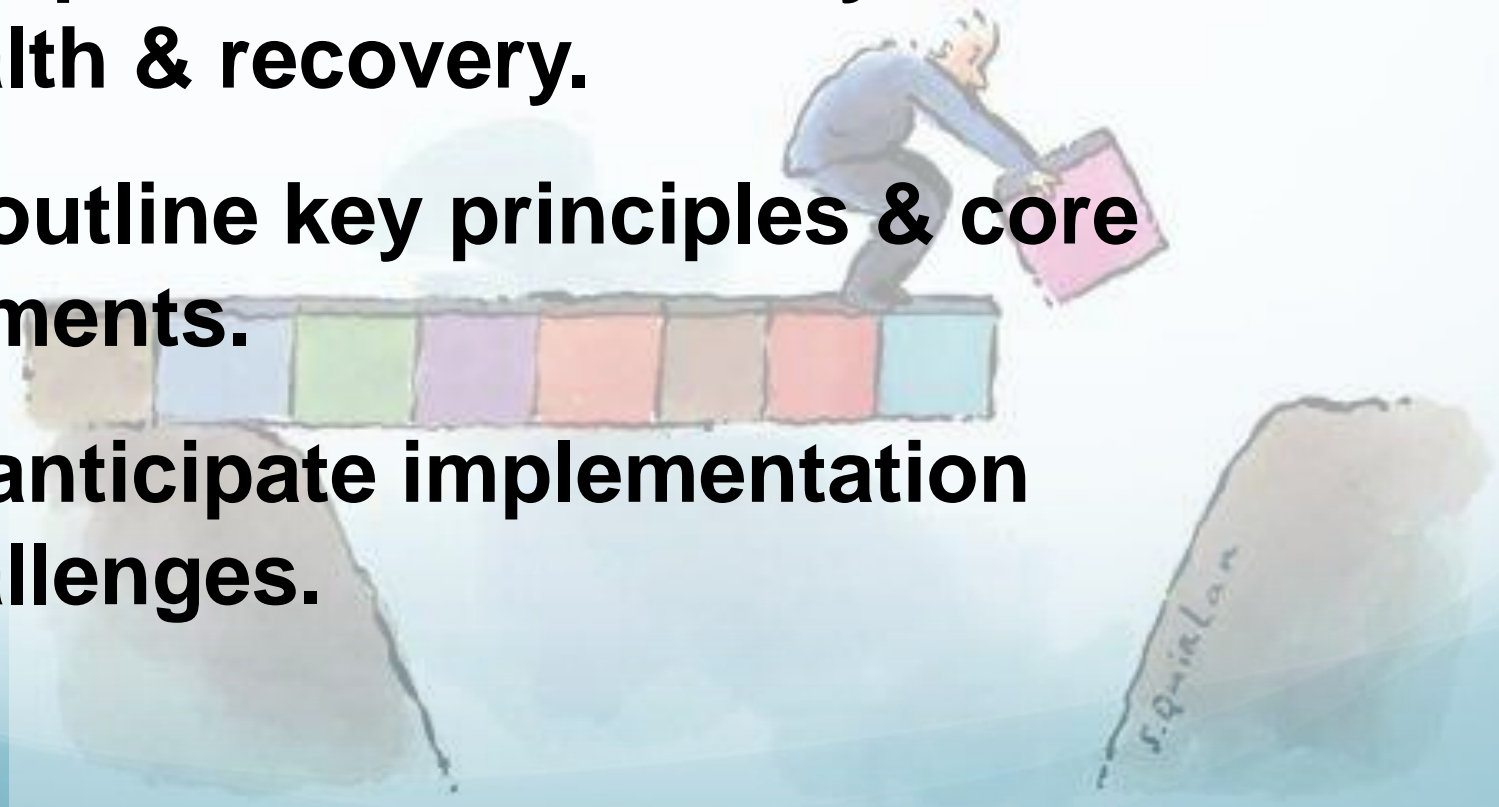
Kelly English, PhD, LICSW, Kathleen Biebel, PhD, Margaret Guyer-Deason, PhD, Christine Furnari, MSW, Anne Valentine, MPH, & Rob Walker

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ParentingWell Webinar Goals

- **To provide the rationale for talking with parents about family life, mental health & recovery.**
- **To outline key principles & core elements.**
- **To anticipate implementation challenges.**



True or False

- **Parenting is a significant life domain for adults with mental health conditions.**
- **Adults with mental health conditions are as likely as other adults to have children.**
- **Their children will definitely have problems.**
- **A parental mental health condition alone does not increase the likelihood of child abuse.**
- **Parenting may be challenging, but children are often a source of meaning and hope for parents.**

The Answers

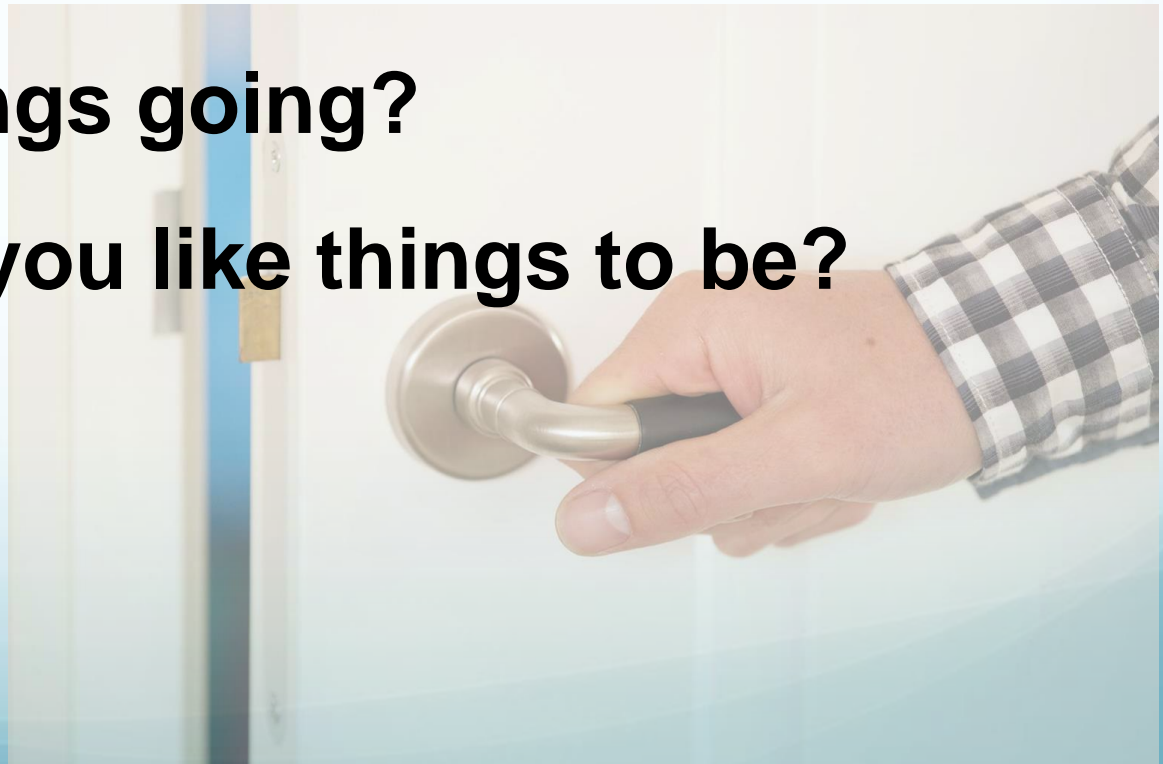
- Parenting is a significant life domain for adults with mental health conditions. *True*
- Adults with mental health conditions are as likely as other adults to have children. *True*
- Their children will definitely have problems. *False*
- A parental mental health condition alone does not increase the likelihood of child abuse. *True*
- Parenting may be challenging, but children are often a source of meaning and hope for parents. *True*

Why talk about parenting, wellness & family life?

- **Recovery occurs in the context of family life.**
- **Family provides motivation for change.**
- **Parenting offers opportunities for community participation & inclusion.**
- **NOT considering family life can undermine an individual's recovery, with negative effects on parent & child.**

Opening the Door: Key Questions for Routine Practice

- **Are you a parent (or thinking about becoming a parent)?**
- **How are things going?**
- **How would you like things to be?**



ParentingWell - Key Principles

- **Family-focused**
- **Culture/Identity-sensitive**
- **Strengths-based**
- **Trauma-informed**



ParentingWell – Core Elements

- **Engaging & relationship building**
- **Exploring & understanding**
- **Accessing supports & resources**
- **Planning for the future**



Follow-up Conversations

- **Keep talking about parenting.**
- **Monitor progress & provide feedback.**
- **Adjust the action plan, if necessary.**
- **Identify new goals & next steps.**
- **Celebrate success!**



Potential Outcomes

- **Improve self-efficacy**
- **Reduce stress**
- **Increase hope**
- **Feel better**
- **Do better**
- **Parent --> parent-child relationship, resources & supports --> child**



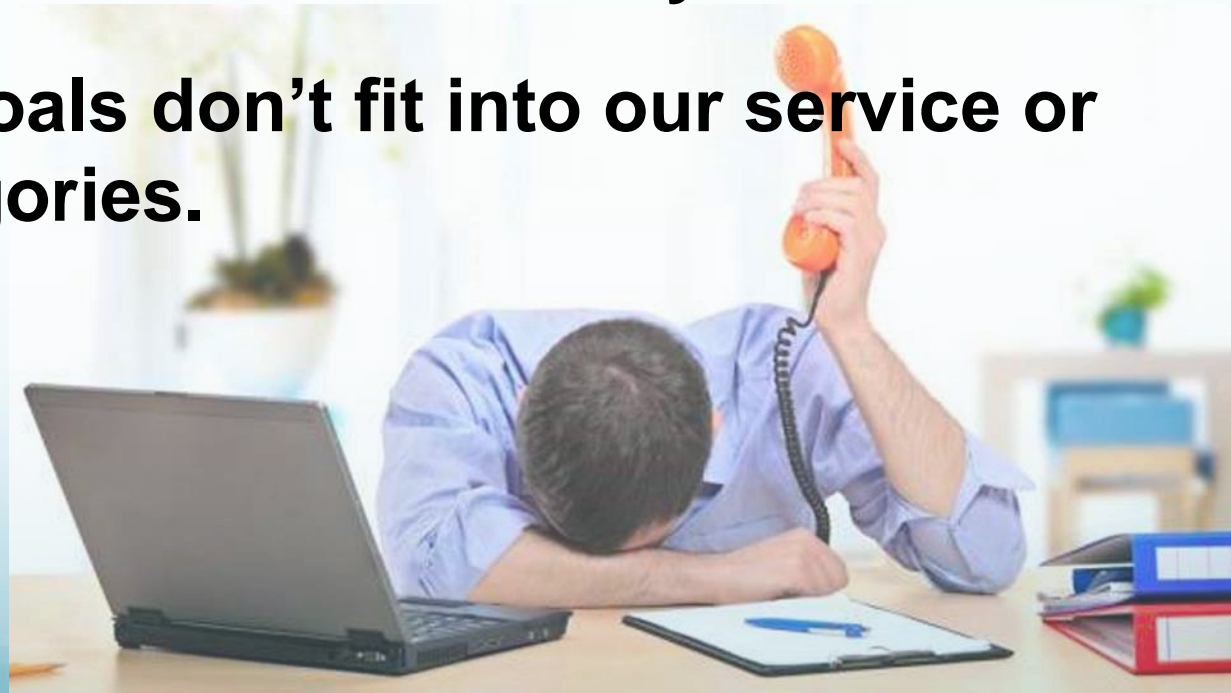
Implementation Challenges: Perception of Skills & Mandate

- I'm not trained in child work.
- I'm not a parent myself.
- We already do this.
- Not my job.



Implementation Challenges: The Work Flow

- **There's no time to have the conversation.**
- **Our agency culture is not family-oriented.**
- **Parenting goals don't fit into our service or billing categories.**



Implementation Challenges: Feelings

- It makes me anxious.
- It might make my client sad.
- We just seem to move from one crisis to the next – it's overwhelming.



Overcoming Parenting Well Practice Implementation Challenges

- **Draws from skills you have.**
- **Is versatile & fits into the work flow.**
- **Enhances your work & promotes the parent's recovery.**



**“We honor our parents by
carrying their best forward and
laying the rest down.”**

Bruce Springsteen, *Born to Run* (2016)



Thanks for watching!

**Check out the ParentingWell
resources on the
Massachusetts Children's
Behavioral Health Knowledge
Center web site:
*www.cbhknowledge.center***

Additional Resources

- **National Research Center for Parents with Disabilities and their Families:**
<http://heller.brandeis.edu/parents-with-disabilities/>
- **Temple University Collaborative on Community Inclusion:** <http://tucollaborative.org/>
- **Australia National Children of Parents with Mental Illness Initiative:** <http://www.copmi.net.au/>

Joanne Nicholson, PhD
jnicholson@brandeis.edu

Kelly English, PhD, LICSW
Kelly.English@state.ma.us