



PLEO **Parents' Lifelines**
OF EASTERN ONTARIO



Parents' Lifelines

Families for Child & Youth Mental Health

Natalie Markoff, *Family Peer Supporter*
Director, Communication & Partnerships

Direct: 613 . 316 . 9151

Ottawa : 613 . 321 . 3211

Toll Free : 1 . 855 . 775 . 7005

natalie@pleo.on.ca

Parents Lifelines of Eastern Ontario

About us ...

- Registered as a non profit charity since 2002
- Completely volunteer organization until 2012
- Staffed with parents with lived experience supporting their own children, youth or young adults with mental health or addictions challenges



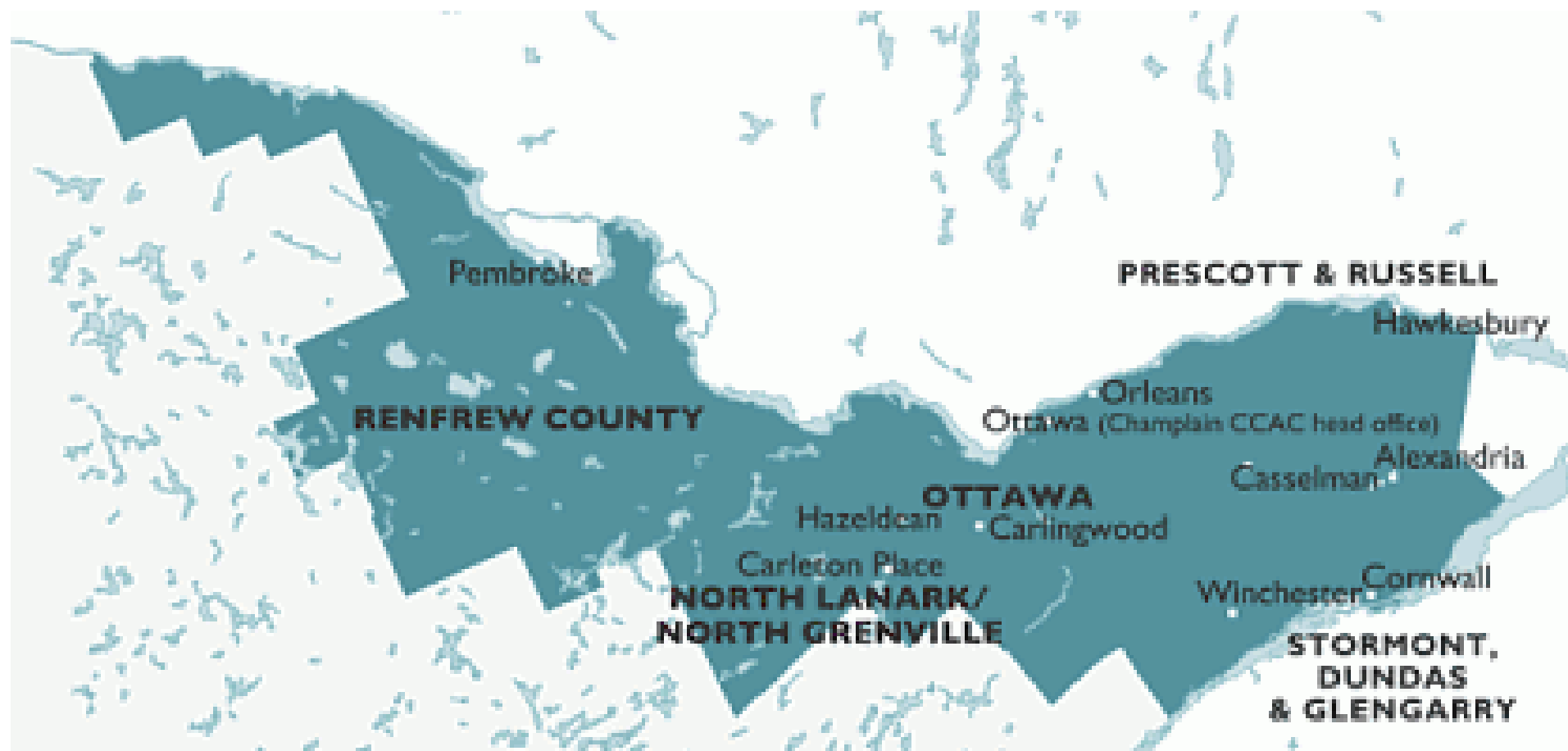
Who are we?

- Organisation providing peer support and system navigation for families with children and youth to age 25, who are experiencing mental health and/or substance use challenges
- PLEO is the voice of families, advocating on their behalf to community organizations, with the goal of achieving positive and sustainable systemic change



Community Partners & Engagement

- Serving families and working with Lead Agencies and community partners throughout Eastern Ontario



Why?

- **1 in 5 youth** will experience a mental health challenge
- Only **1 in 6** of those will receive the treatment they need
- **3 of 4** adolescents in conflict with the law have a diagnosable and treatable mental illness
- Suicide is the number 1 cause of non-accidental death in youth
- The mental health system is fragmented and under-resourced

Some would argue that the burden of care for someone supporting a loved one with an acute or chronic mental illness is greater than that of someone caring for a loved one dealing with late stage cancer.

Why?

Stigma is real

It isolates families and often prevents youth from seeking and accessing help

Why?



- Today's high speed society, electronic addictions and lack of healthy attachment to our loved ones is affecting children, youth and their families.
- More and more, families lack the resilience and capacity to cope.

What Is Resilience?



- The psychological strength to cope with stress and hardship
- The mental reservoir of strength that people are able to call on in times of need to carry them through without falling apart.

Resilience gives people the strength to tackle problems head on, overcome adversity, and move on with their lives.

Other Factors Associated with Resilience

- Holding positive views of yourself and your abilities
- The capacity to make realistic plans and stick to them
- Being a good communicator
- Viewing your self as a fighter, rather than a victim
- Having high emotional intelligence and managing emotions effectively

Factors that Contribute to Resilience

**Some individuals
come by these abilities naturally**



Dandelion Children

- Have the capacity to survive – even thrive – in whatever circumstances they encounter
- Psychologically resilient

Factors that contribute to resilience

**However, others need to learn the skills
that it takes to become more resilient**

Orchid Children

- Highly sensitive to their environment
- Especially to the quality of parenting they receive
- If neglected, orchid children promptly wither
- But if nurtured, they not only survive but flourish

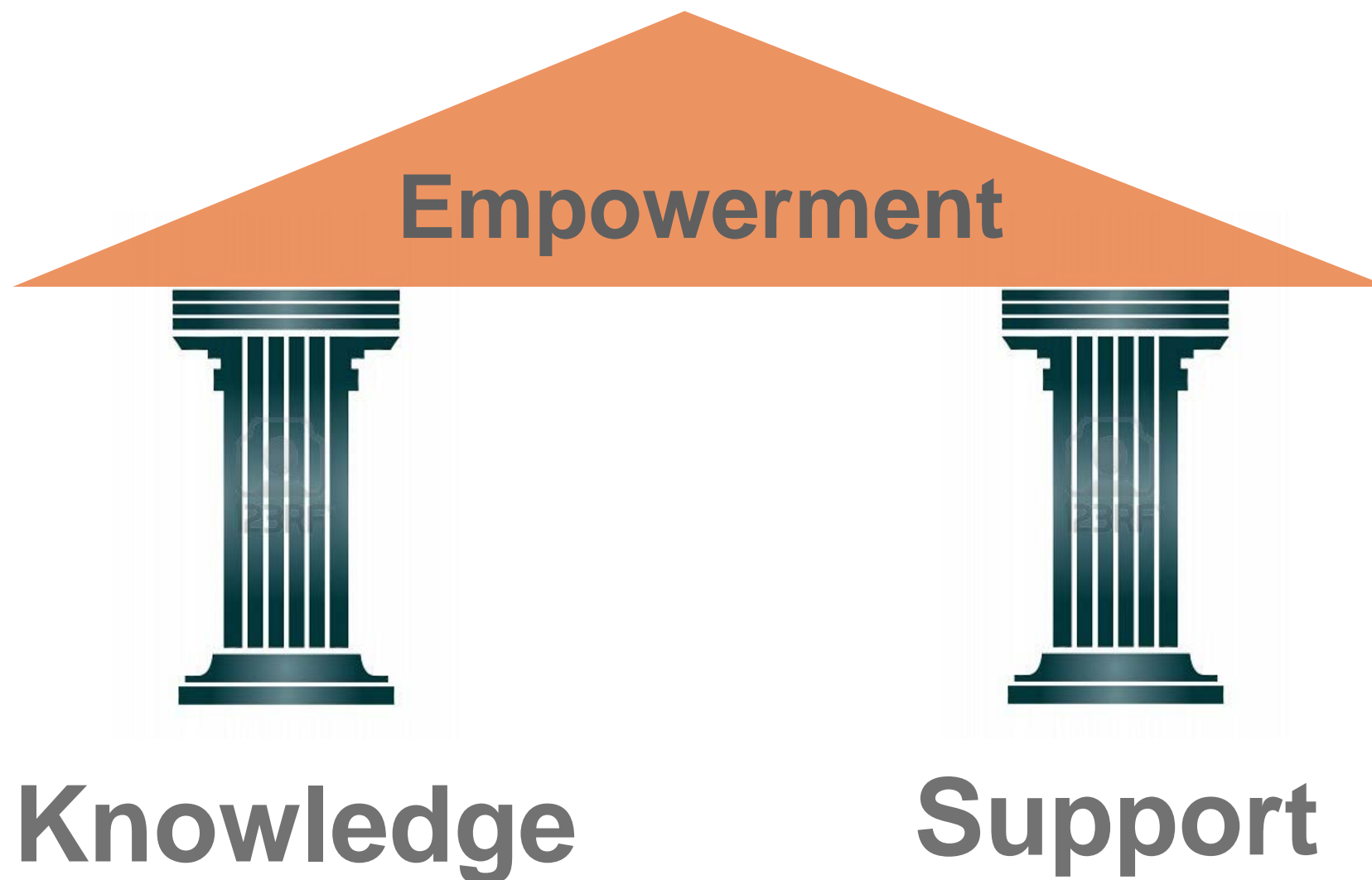


Factors that Contribute to Resilience

- Social support is a critical variable that contributes to resilience
- Mentally strong people tend to have the support of family and friends who help bolster them up in times of trouble



Our Mandate



To provide the **knowledge** and **support** the parents/caregivers of children, youth and young adults with mental health and addiction issues in order to **empower** them to be the supporters and advocates their children need

How PLEO Helps Families



Telephone Helpline

Monday to Friday
9:00 am to 7:00 pm

613-321-3211

Toll free: 1-855-775-7005

A bilingual, confidential service

- Our Family Peer Supporters answer the calls – they understand, they have supported their own child with mental illness and/or substance use challenges
- They provide emotional support to the caller – an understanding, caring ear
- They assist the caller in identifying services available in the community

How PLEO Helps Families

Parent Support Groups

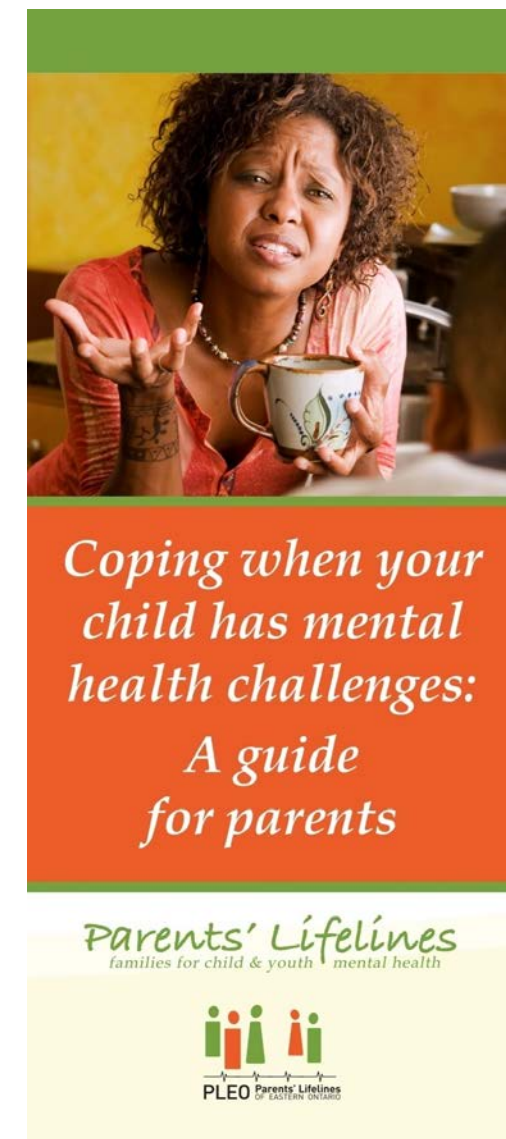
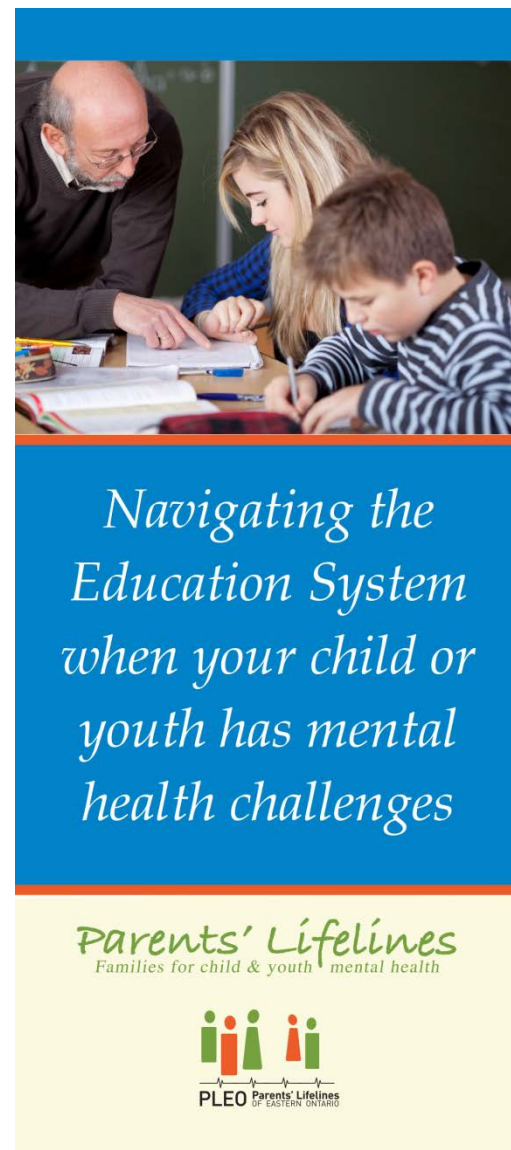


- Currently facilitating several groups each month, targeted to parents/caregivers of children, and youth (up to age 25)
- Several groups, in Ottawa and throughout the counties of the Champlain LHIN

A safe, confidential, non-judgmental environment for parents and caregivers to connect with one another and share resources

How PLEO Helps Families

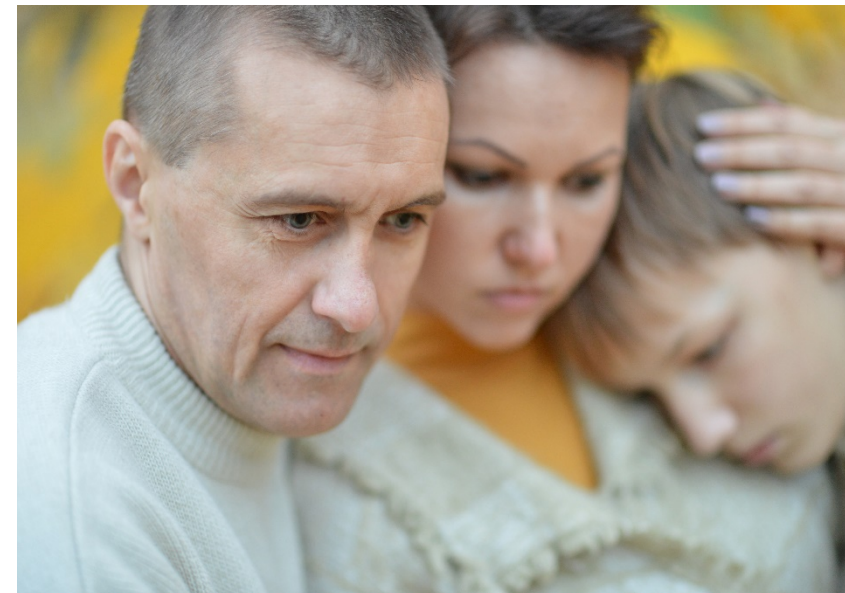
Information Brochures



How PLEO Helps Families

Mobile One-on-One Service

- 8 week program
- Provides one-on-one, face to face support to parents with the goal to:
 - Reduce caregiver strain
 - Identify formal and informal resources
 - Improve their capacity to support their child or youth



How PLEO Helps Families

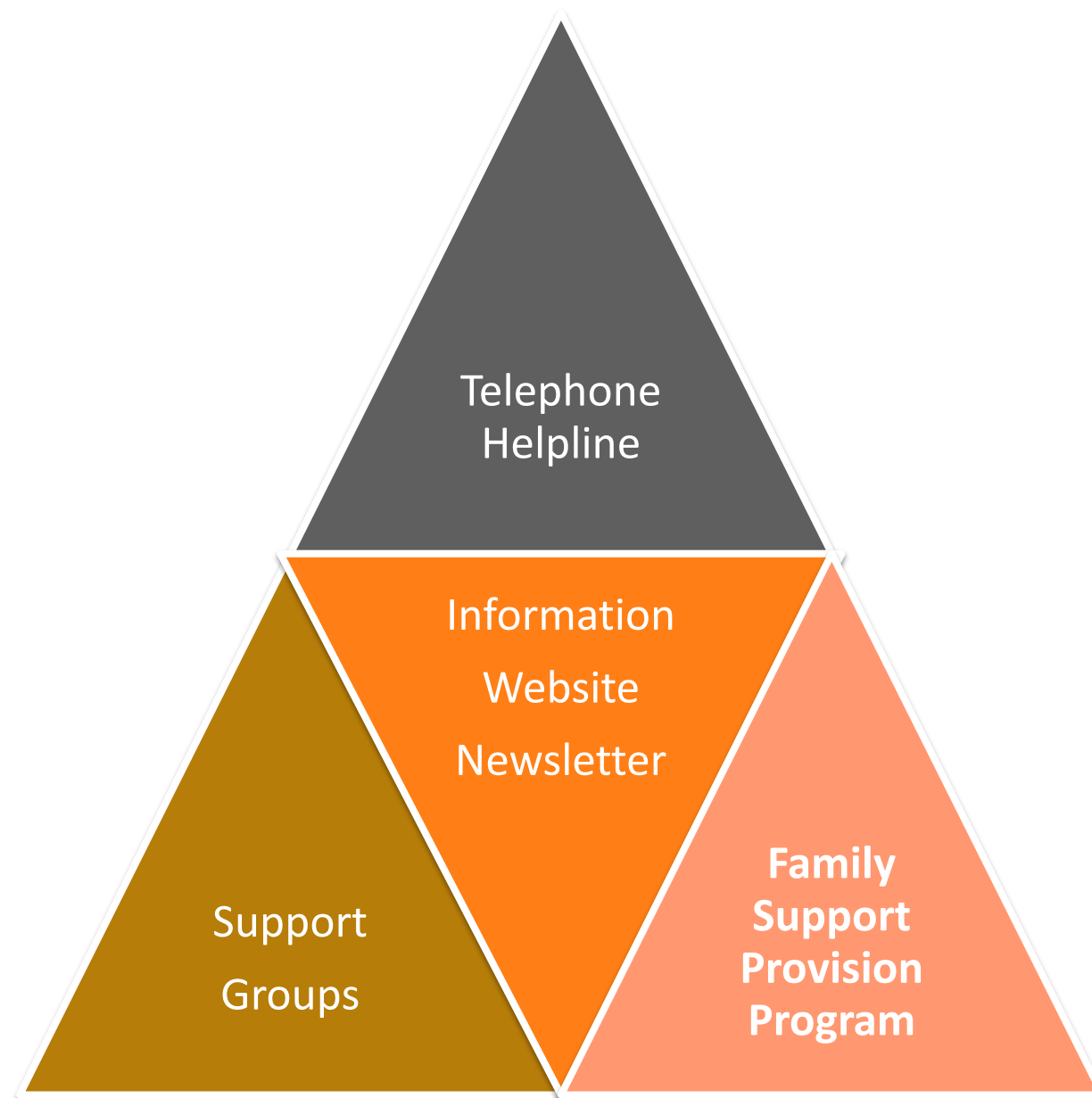
Monthly Newsletter



- Hundreds of families and service providers receive the newsletter monthly
- Important events and education opportunities
- Latest research
- Mental Health in the news

And more info on our website:
pleo.on.ca

A fully integrated model



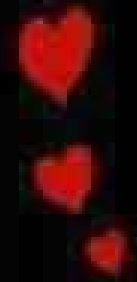
Once a family reaches out to PLEO....



They never again need to feel alone

Parents' Lifelines

Sometimes we need someone
to simply be there...
Not to fix anything or do
anything in particular, but
just to let us feel we are
supported and cared about



Thank you!

Questions?

**Natalie Markoff, *Family Peer Supporter*
Director, Communication & Partnerships**

Direct: 613 . 316 . 9151

Ottawa: 613 . 321 . 3211

Toll Free: 1 . 855 . 775 . 7005

natalie@pleo.on.ca

pleo.on.ca