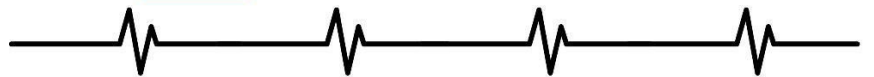


Annual Report 2015-2016



PLEO **Parents' Lifelines**
OF EASTERN ONTARIO

613 . 321 . 3211
1 . 855 . 775 . 7005

info@pleo.on.ca
www.pleo.on.ca

Registered Charity
8956 35019 RR0001

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Message from our Board Chair



Parents who have lived experience supporting their child with mental health and/or addiction are painfully aware of the shortfalls within the system. They have keenly felt the challenges and stress of finding the right services for their child. Health care providers are working hard at improving the system, but knowing change is under way doesn't necessarily make one's current travails any easier. I am very proud that our PLEO team continues to support families to lighten their burden and make their journey easier. No family needs to do this alone. This report documents how that support translates into positive outcomes for parents and caregivers.

But while PLEO focusses on the here and now, we also continue to work within the system to advocate for and support system improvements. We work with our mental health service providers, our schoolboards and other support structures within the community to make improvements that are child/youth and family focused. We present the collective voice of our families, their needs and challenges to those moving forward on change. The Ministry of Child and Youth Services has restructured, implementing lead agencies throughout the province with the goal of providing faster and easier access to services, services that are child and family focused with a major emphasis on youth and family engagement. We continue to be active in the Suicide Prevention Network and we know the commitment that this community has to improving mental health and addiction services. Wait lists are shorter, there are increased supports for children and youth with complex needs and more initiatives to support our youth as they are transitioning into adulthood.

I would like to thank our PLEO team and our volunteers for their dedication and their service to our families and to acknowledge the efforts of the Service Providers in our community who strive to improve service delivery. Of course a thanks to our funders who have made the past year's success possible; the Champlain LHIN, United Way Ottawa, Bell Let's Talk and Remax – Hallmark Realty Group

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Phyllis Grant-Parker".

Phyllis Grant-Parker
PLEO – Board Chair

Message from our Executive Director



If PLEO did not exist, it would have to be invented. As a newcomer to PLEO, I was immediately captivated by the strength of our organizing principle – that “parents know their child best and must be empowered and supported to be effective supporters and advocates for their child”. This simple and self-evident truth is nonetheless a powerful idea that is not only providing a vital service to our community, but that over time has played an important role in transforming the mental health sector.

The PLEO team is simply amazing. Who best to lend support to a parent/caregiver that is struggling to care for a sick child than someone that has walked the same mile and has faced or is facing similar challenges. Our family peer supporters are all mothers with lived experience who help parents/caregivers navigate the mental health system with care and compassion on a daily basis. These ladies are heroes, as are the parents/caregivers that they empower.

Success begets success. The metrics in this report speak for themselves. The growth in demand for PLEO services is exponential, and the challenge to find new resources to meet this increasing demand is ever present. We will rise to this challenge and find new sources of revenue so that the thousands of parents in Eastern Ontario that are feeling alone and abandoned by a struggling mental health system continue to be able to turn to PLEO for help.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Forgues', written in a cursive style.

Pierre Forgues
Executive Director

Our Board of Directors 2015 – 2016



Phyllis Grant-Parker
Chair



Mark Bélanger
Vice-Chair



Amanda Sang
Treasurer



André Parker



Kathlene Evanski



Margaret DeCorte

And Sébastien Lacoste

Our Mission

Our mission is to support, educate and empower families so they can be the supporters and the advocates that their children need

- Youth with mental illness with good family support have better outcomes
- Often it is the parent who first recognizes the signs that something is wrong but 94% of parents surveyed indicated they did not know where to turn for help and found it challenging to find services for their child or youth
- Families in our community need help to navigate what is a fragmented mental health system
- They also need emotional support to help them to cope and be able to support their child and their family



Why we do what we do

- The numbers are staggering
 - 1 in 5 children and youth will experience a mental health challenge -- Sadly only 1 of 6 of them will receive the help they need
 - Suicide is the leading cause of non-accidental death among youth
 - 3 out of 4 youth in conflict with the law have a diagnosable mental illness
 - *Since 2006-07, there has been a 54% increase in emergency department visits and a 60% increase in hospitalizations for children and youth seeking treatment for mental health issues in Ontario*
- The mental health system is in a state of disarray
 - *Community services cannot keep up with rising demand and inadequate funding*
 - *Wait lists for treatment in the community continue to grow – Youth’s mental state likely to deteriorate while they wait, causing hospital visits to skyrocket*
 - *There is a lack of coordination within the system that needs to be seamless*
 - *There is a lack of clear pathways and programs for youth transitioning from the child and youth system to the adult system*

A complex, fragments and underfunded, mental health system makes it extremely difficult and stressful for parents/caregivers to get the necessary treatment and services for their child and youth



How we do what we do

Telephone Helpline

Family peer support and system navigation for parents/caregivers through our confidential telephone helpline. Monday to Friday – 9:00- am to 7:00 pm, parents and caregivers can reach out to a family navigator for help in navigating the child and youth mental health system in our community. The PLEO Navigators are parents with their own experience supporting their child on the journey with mental illness and/or addictions so they truly understand.

613-321-3211

Toll Free: 1-855-775-7005

Parent/Caregiver support groups

- 9 monthly groups in the Champlain LHIN
 - 5 groups in Ottawa: the Royal, CHEO, Montfort, and 2 at Crossroads
 - 4 groups outside of Ottawa: Pembroke, Renfrew, Carleton Place and Cornwall

Family Support Program (FSP)

Family Support Providers work one-on-one, face-to-face with families to help them improve their capacity to support their child or youth who is struggling with mental illness and/or addiction. By designing a family support plan and assisting them in building a stronger network of formal and informal supports, the FSPs enable families to be the supporters their kids need.

The Source

A facilitated weekly social-recreational group for young adults 16-24 managing mental illness providing a safe, supportive, non-judgmental environment to help connect individuals to their peers where they can enjoy a fun Friday night with friends.

Monthly Newsletter

Providing subscribers with information on educational events in the community and relevant newsworthy articles pertaining to mental health and addictions.

Community Events

Engaging parents through community events with a strong focus in schools.

Informative Website www.pleo.on.ca

A comprehensive online resource for parents and caregivers to access valuable information, news and our calendar of events, featuring our support groups and various events in the community.



What we accomplished over the past 12 months

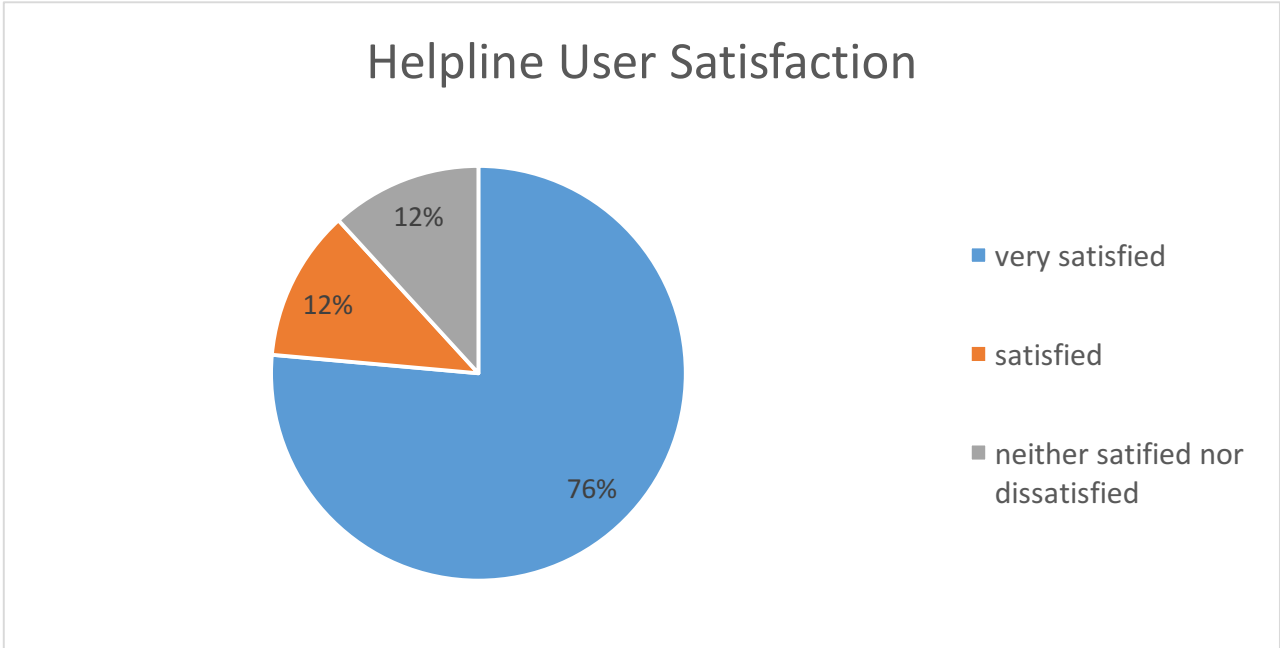
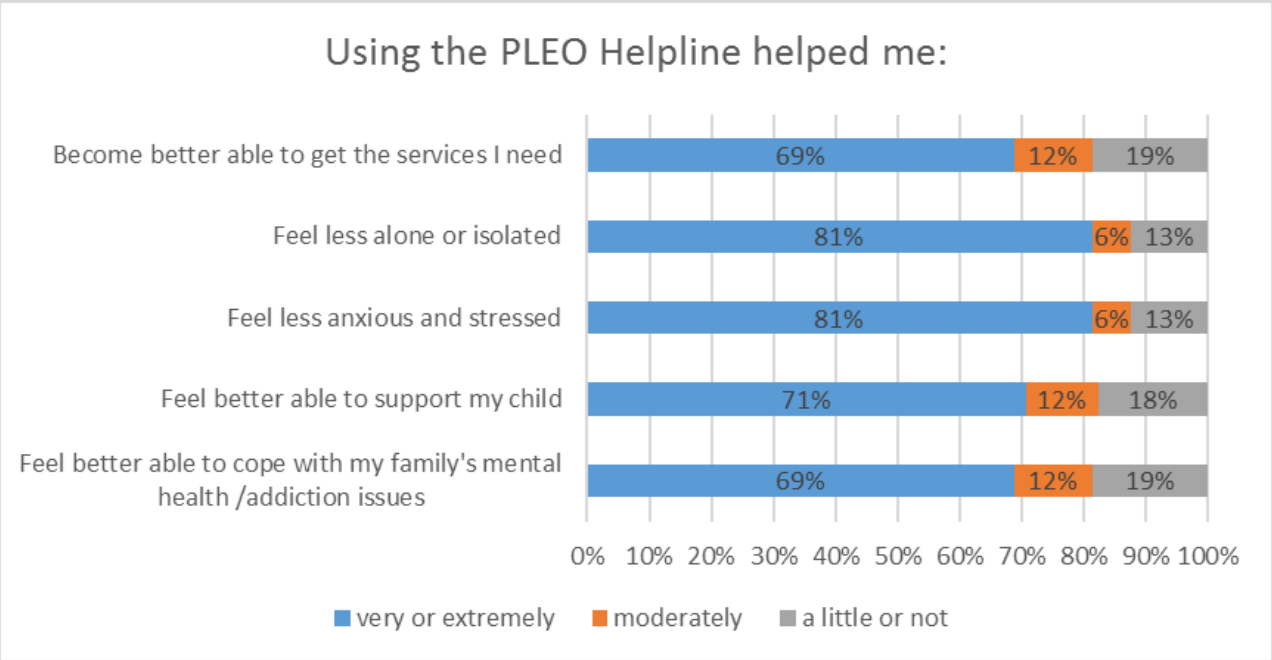
- **383** families were supported through our telephone helpline this year, and a total of **1199** since the program started in September 2012
- **331** parents received peer support through our **57** support group meetings held throughout the year, and a total of **1012** since the program started
- **1536** individuals received information and/or support through the **46** community events we participated in, PLEO having reached over **2870** individuals since the program started
- An average of **10** young adults with mental illness increased their community engagement each week by participating in The Source every week, with a total of over **411** participants for the year
- **1043** subscribers stayed informed through the monthly PLEO newsletter
- Through our website, Facebook and Twitter communities, a countless number of families gained information and knowledge



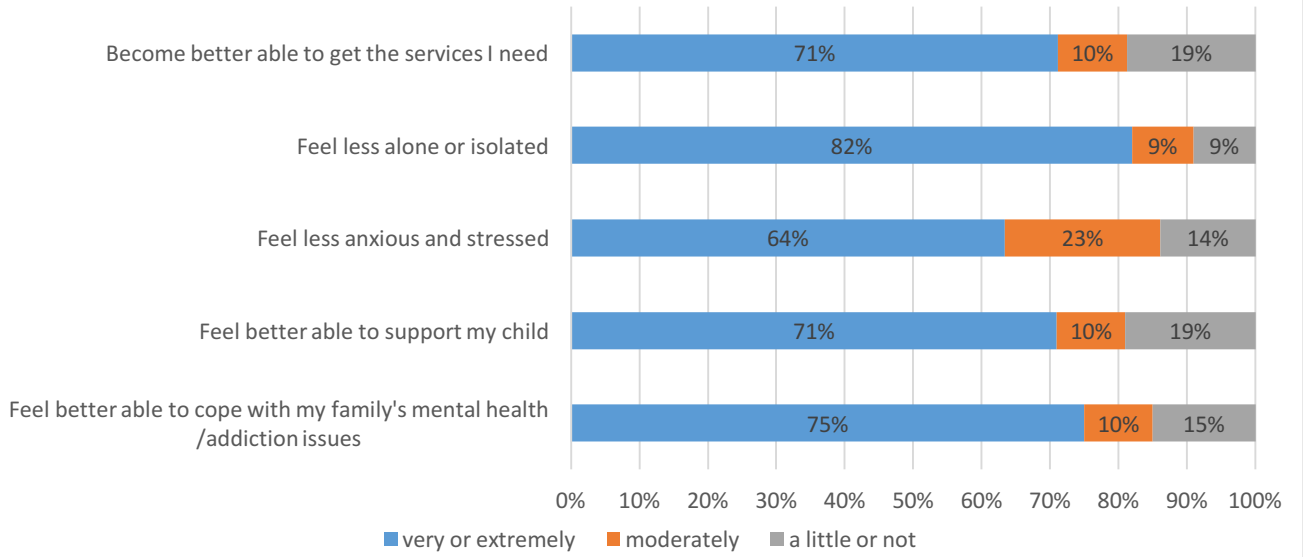
Making a Difference – What families have told us

- “The navigators I have dealt with at PLEO have been a Godsend. **I was at breaking point when I phoned and the person I spoke to has been so helpful and supportive.** She was calm and kind and pointed me in the right directions. I am a single parent with a child in the Mental Hospital diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder, a child at home in depression and anger, and two elderly parents. PLEO gave me support and help thrashing ideas out about how to approach the doctors and the most pertinent questions to ask. it was somewhere for me to go and talk and be taken seriously when I quite literally had no one else to turn to that was not judging or telling me what to do from an uneducated standpoint. **PLEO helped me understand more about the system, clozapine, and my own rights and generally how to start to navigate, grieve and understand more about my future.** Even though I cried buckets in the early days they were always kind and re-assuring wanting to assist me and my family. Thank you so much. “
- “ **I think your "help line" is amazing ...** I can't tell you how much I needed this service and could have used it especially during the first 5-6 years when we felt completely isolated as a family in this city, trying to find our way through a nightmare. I am so grateful to have emails coming into my inbox and knowing that support is there. Please let me know if there is anything I can do. This work you do is more important than you know. Thanks so much!”
- “**I have found everyone at PLEO to be most helpful, empathetic and knowledgeable.** They have helped me find resources to help learn about my child's problem more thoroughly, seminars, etc. ... that I would not have known existed before. The facilitators at PLEO have also helped me to find other means to obtain treatment for my child - again, something I would have known nothing about. I could not be happier that I found PLEO. **They are providing me with hope - which to me is everything.**”

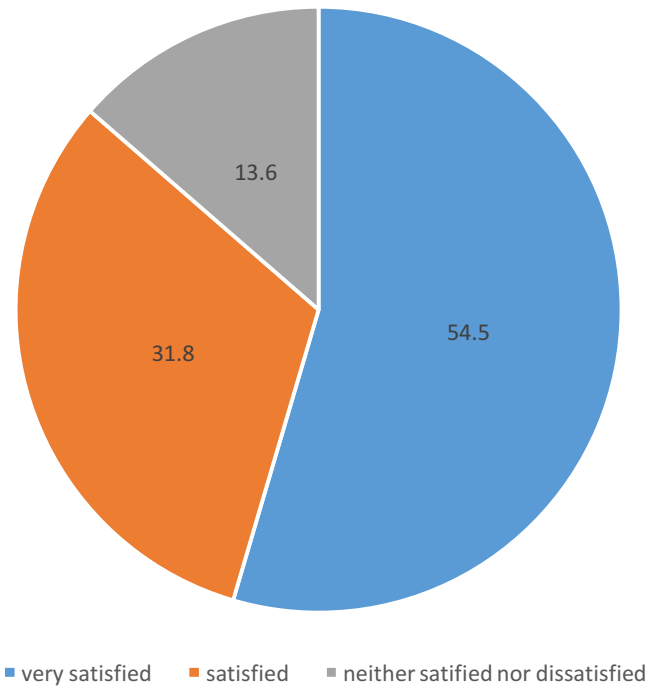
What families have told us – uOttawa Survey Results



Attending PLEO Support Group helped me:



Support Group Users Satisfaction



Looking to the future

Serving all of the Champlain LHIN

- We are excited to continue to expand our service offerings to families in all regions of the Champlain LHIN and build strong relationships with the various community agencies both in and outside of Ottawa
- Through careful needs assessment and consultations with families, we aim to design our service delivery to be tailored to the very specific needs of all communities



- With the support of our funders, we will continue to provide invaluable and meaningful support and services to parents of Eastern Ontario



How you can help

Volunteer

Sign up on our website to help by:

- Hosting our information table at community events
- Organizing or participating in various fundraising events
- Sharing and distributing PLEO information in the community
- Speaking at community events



Become a PLEO supporter – sign up on our website

Donate and help us to help families

Directly to Parents' Lifelines of Eastern Ontario

OR

Direct your United Way contribution to PLEO

OR

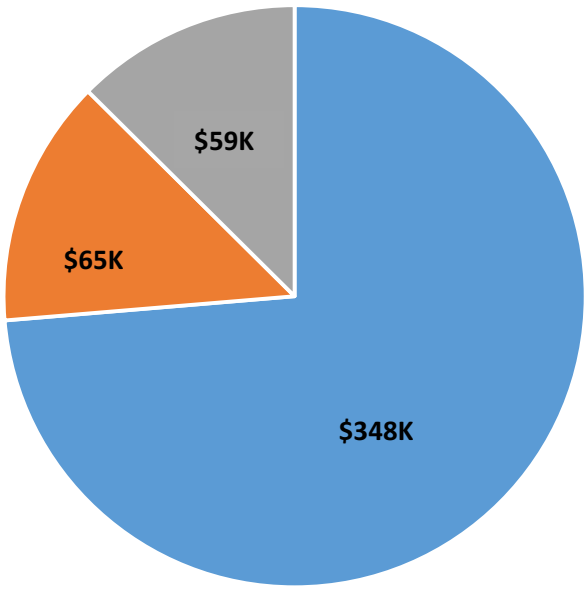
Through the Canada Helps button on our website

Our Charitable Org # 8956-35019-RR0001

Spread the word

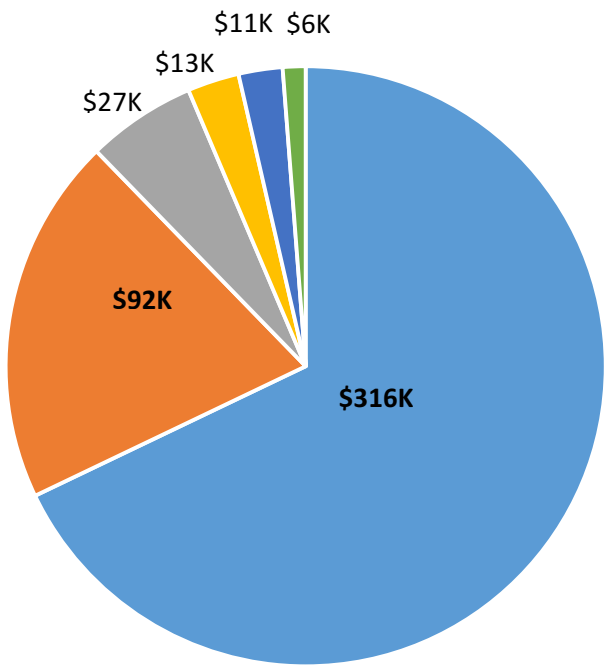
Let others know about PLEO – let's work together to reduce stigma

Our Financial Picture



REVENUE

- LHIN
- UNITED WAY OTTAWA
- OTHER

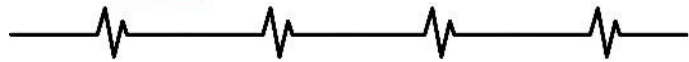


EXPENSES

- SALARIES
- PROFESSIONAL FEES
- OFFICE
- TRAVEL & TRAINING
- ADVERTISING
- OTHER

Thank you to Our Funders!





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OF EASTERN ONTARIO