

# Ottawa Network for Borderline Personality Disorder (ON-BPD)



HELPING FAMILIES AND FRIENDS COPE  
WHEN SOMEONE THEY LOVE HAS BPD

ON-BPD Presentation to the  
Royal Mental Health Center Support Groups  
March 20, 2018

# ON-BPD

OTTAWA NETWORK FOR BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER

# Outline

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- Background of ON-BPD
- Objectives
- Family Connections course
- Continuing Connections
- Website
- Newsletter
- Future Opportunities
- Summary

# Background

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## 2004

- 4 Ottawans attended Family Connections training course taught by Dr. Perry Hoffman & Dr. Alan Fruzzetti (founders of National Education Alliance for BPD) [www.borderlinepersonalitydisorder.com](http://www.borderlinepersonalitydisorder.com)

## 2004, Fall

- First 12-week Family Connections course given in Ottawa
  - Has continued 2 or 3 times each year, beginning in January and September

## 2005

- Ottawa Network for Borderline Personality Disorder established as a Registered Charity in Canada
  - **Registration no.:** 829239474RR0001

# Impact

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- More than 350 individuals have completed the Family Connections course
- 30+ courses have been delivered
- 25 trained course facilitators (family members) in Ottawa
- First Family Connections course in French presented in April-June 2016 in Ottawa, based on translation of the course manual into French funded by Heritage Canada and the Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Approximately 75 families receiving training per year

# February 2018

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- More than 350 individuals have completed the Family Connections course
- 30+ courses have been delivered
- 25 trained course facilitators (family members) in Ottawa
  - Virtual satellite training from NEA-BPD
- First Family Connections course in French presented in April-June 2016
- Family Connections Course Leader Refresher training June 2017
- Family Connection course in Cornwall Feb 2018

# Objectives of ON-BPD

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To educate the public regarding BPD through:

- Courses and facilitated group discussions;
- Presentations at seminars and conferences;
- Community outreach meetings;
- Collection, publication and dissemination of related educational articles and information; and,
- Education and creation of peer support opportunities for families of individuals affected by BPD

# Family Connections Course

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THE MAIN WAY WE HELP FAMILIES  
IN THE OTTAWA AREA

# Family Connections

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## Course Goals:

1. To help **understand the symptoms and behaviours** associated with BPD and its related features
2. To better understand how to **manage our own emotional responses** to situations and our relationships
3. To **develop a support network** of family members with others with similar situations



# Family Connections

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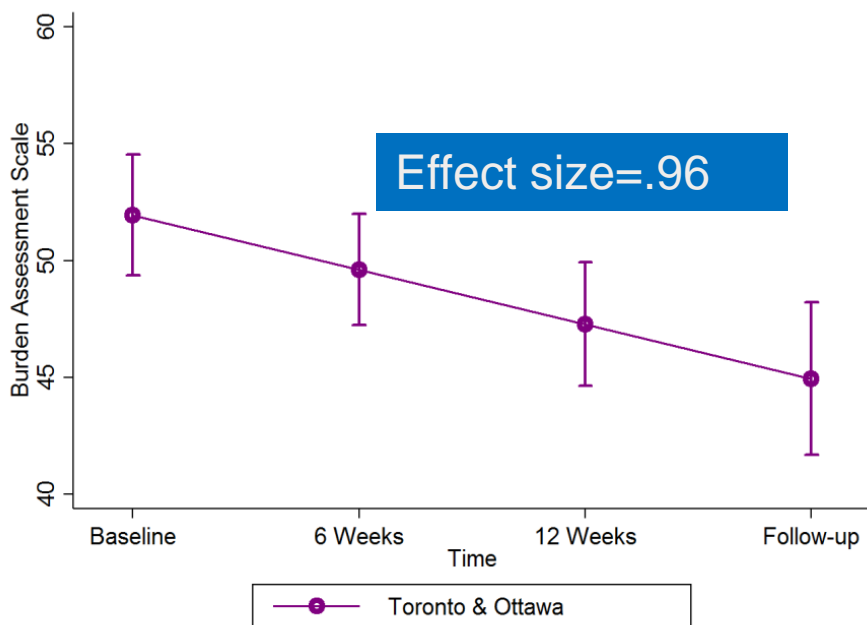
- 12-week course given by volunteers, who have a loved-one with BPD, trained by NEA-BPD
- No charge – all expenses covered by donations
- More than 30 courses have been given
- More than 350 family members have taken the course
- Self-referrals and referrals from professionals
- Forum for family members to share experiences, reducing stigma, isolation, and sense of burden

# Impact of Family Connection

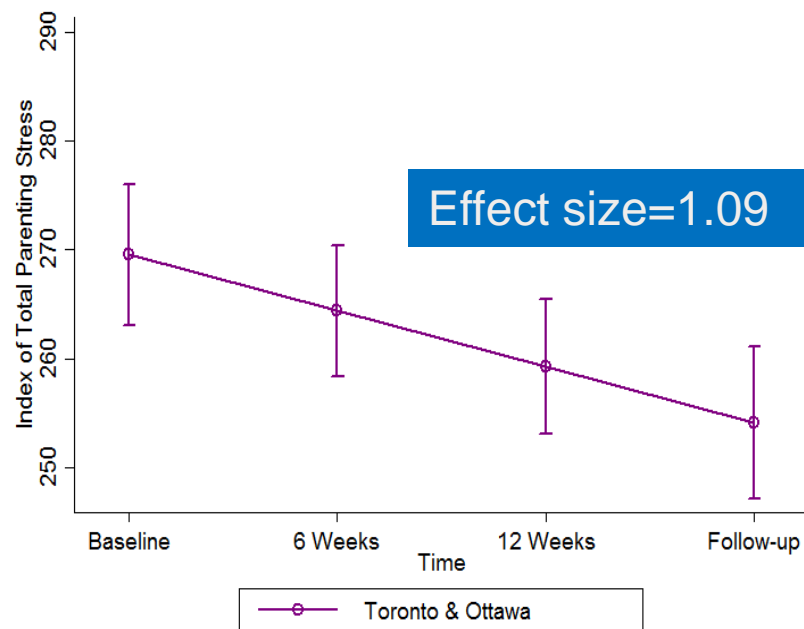
Evidence-Based\*

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## Caregiver Burden



## Caregiver Stress



Statistically significant reductions reported by people who have completed the Family Connections program.

\* Data from presentation at the ISSPD conference, Montreal, Quebec, October 2015.

Tali Boritz, Ryan Barnhart, Joanna Henderson and Shelley McMain (University of Toronto (Psychiatry), and CAMH)

# Family Connections – Course Content

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- Introduction and Participant “Story” Sharing
- Family Education
- Relationship Mindfulness Skills
- Family Environment Skills
- Validation Skills
- Problem Management Skills

+ Exercises/homework through the course to help learn and practice the skills

# Based on DBT Skills

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Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, a recognized program for treatment of BPD. Skills include:

- Radical acceptance
- Opposite action
- Relationship mindfulness
- Emotion management
- Creating a validating environment
- Observing your limits
- Finding a balance

# Family Connections Course

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- Increasing demand for:
  - Family Connections course
  - Volunteers to lead it
  - Ongoing peer support
- Feedback from participants is very positive
  - Forum for sharing experiences
  - Understanding the disorder
  - Impact/benefits on family member sense of well being

# Family Connections Course

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- Evaluations on completion of each course
  - Unequivocally positive feedback

## ***Comment by participant***

*“... my husband and I are finding the group extremely helpful. The exercises force us to face aspects of our relationship with our son that are difficult, but we know in the long run, will be beneficial to us. I feel more peaceful than I have in a very long time, just knowing that someone else out there understands what we are dealing with is very helpful.”*

# Family Connections Course

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## ***Comment by another participant***

*“The **Family Connections** course gave us the skill to understand our daughter’s illness. With that knowledge, came understanding and compassion. Without the opportunity to attend this course, we are sure that our daughter’s life would have been much more chaotic and destructive. At the same time, our family relationship may have fragmented in the ensuing despair. However, now we are empowered to manage the effects of BPD with strategy, knowledge, and patience.”*

# Continuing Connections

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ONGOING SUPPORT  
FOR GRADUATES OF THE FAMILY  
CONNECTIONS PROGRAM



# Overview and Objectives

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- ON-BPD conducted a survey of its participants in October 2015
- 54% (21/39) of respondents reported a desire for a ongoing peer support / networking events.
- In January 2016, the ON-BPD approved the launch of a pilot session of Continuing Connections which promotes:
  - ❖ connecting with others (ongoing peer support to caregivers)
  - ❖ refresh skills (taught in the Family Connections program, and introducing new resources)
  - ❖ sharing experiences (via facilitated discussion)

# Continuing Connections Core Elements

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- open to all graduates of the ON-BPD FC course
- offered 3-4 times per year in a half day workshop format (2 ½ hour)
- facilitated by volunteers, at least one of whom is a trained FC leader
- all materials made available online via the ON-BPD members portal
- Continuous improvement post event survey to all those who registered
- 2018-19 Development of “Standardized” CC program

# Continuing Connections Sessions

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- To date, 7 sessions have been held:

DATE	TOPIC	# PARTICIPANTS	% SATISFACTION
May 14, 2016 (pilot)	Validation	33	86%
September 24, 2016	Radical Acceptance	22	67%
December 3, 2016	Relationship Mindfulness	15	100%
March 25, 2017	Communications	10	100%
June 10, 2017	Family Education	6	60%
November 4, 2017	Problem Management	21	100%
February 24, 2018	Validation	23	90%
May 26, 2018	Radical Acceptance		
October 20, 2018	Relationship Mindfulness		

# Participant Feedback

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- General Comments

*“Thank you for delivering these workshops. I value the refreshers and opportunities to meet other parents who are surviving, living with a loved one who has BPD.”*

*“I think annual sessions of this sort would be very helpful and appreciated”*

*“Thank you for the great session – the coordinators were absolutely wonderful and compassionate and I appreciated and hung on to every word they said.”*

# Participant Feedback

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- What did you like most?
  - “reminder of the theory and hearing the stories of other families”
  - “The feeling of being with people with similar difficult experiences”
  - “Review of skills and the sharing people, did so I felt less isolated.”
- What did you like least?
  - “Our former classmates did not attend and I missed the connection that I felt in the longer class. However the new people that we met were very open and friendly.”

# Other Activities

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OTHER WAYS WE PROVIDE SUPPORT

# Website

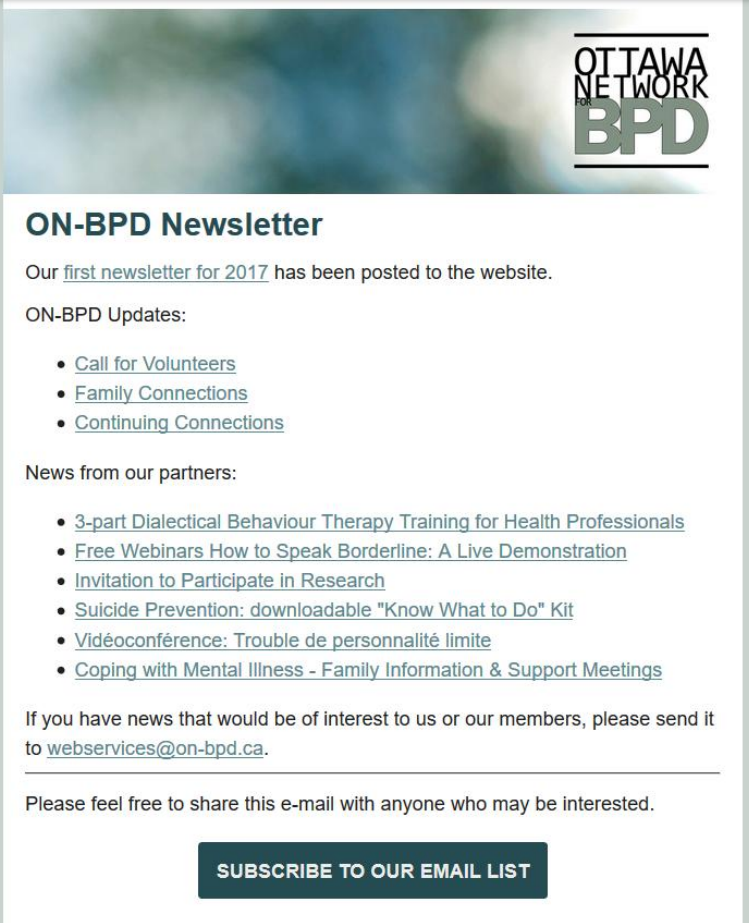
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- Responsively bilingual (French and English)
- Translation funded by Heritage Canada and the Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Includes secure area for access to Family Connections and Continuing Connections materials
- Average about 500 sessions per month
- More than 250 registered users

# Newsletter

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- Approximately once per month (except summer)
- Content includes ON-BPD updates as well as news and resources from our partners
- High engagement: “click rate” of 66% after opening the newsletter email is much higher than the industry (non-profit) average



The screenshot shows the header of an email newsletter. On the right side, there is a logo for the Ottawa Network for BPD, consisting of the words "OTTAWA NETWORK" stacked above "BPD" in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the logo, the title "ON-BPD Newsletter" is displayed in a bold, dark font. The main body of the email contains the following text: "Our [first newsletter for 2017](#) has been posted to the website." This is followed by a section titled "ON-BPD Updates:" which lists three items: "Call for Volunteers", "Family Connections", and "Continuing Connections". Below this is a section titled "News from our partners:" which lists six items: "3-part Dialectical Behaviour Therapy Training for Health Professionals", "Free Webinars How to Speak Borderline: A Live Demonstration", "Invitation to Participate in Research", "Suicide Prevention: downloadable 'Know What to Do' Kit", "Vidéoconférence: Trouble de personnalité limite", and "Coping with Mental Illness - Family Information & Support Meetings". At the bottom of the email content, there is a line of text: "If you have news that would be of interest to us or our members, please send it to [webservices@on-bpd.ca](mailto:webservices@on-bpd.ca)." Below this is another line: "Please feel free to share this e-mail with anyone who may be interested." At the very bottom of the email content, there is a dark rectangular button with the text "SUBSCRIBE TO OUR EMAIL LIST" in white, uppercase letters.

**OTTAWA NETWORK  
BPD**

## ON-BPD Newsletter

Our [first newsletter for 2017](#) has been posted to the website.

ON-BPD Updates:

- [Call for Volunteers](#)
- [Family Connections](#)
- [Continuing Connections](#)

News from our partners:

- [3-part Dialectical Behaviour Therapy Training for Health Professionals](#)
- [Free Webinars How to Speak Borderline: A Live Demonstration](#)
- [Invitation to Participate in Research](#)
- [Suicide Prevention: downloadable "Know What to Do" Kit](#)
- [Vidéoconférence: Trouble de personnalité limite](#)
- [Coping with Mental Illness - Family Information & Support Meetings](#)

If you have news that would be of interest to us or our members, please send it to [webservices@on-bpd.ca](mailto:webservices@on-bpd.ca).

Please feel free to share this e-mail with anyone who may be interested.

**SUBSCRIBE TO OUR EMAIL LIST**



# Future Opportunities

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**INCREASED SUPPORT TO FAMILIES**

# Opportunities

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- Tele-connections Family Connections course
- Lecture Series for Community Outreach
- Website Upgrades
- Social Media Outreach
- Translation of More Documents to French
- Continuing Connections Development
- Collaborations
- Other Opportunities?

# Summary

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HELPING FAMILIES AND FRIENDS COPE  
WHEN SOMEONE THEY LOVE HAS BPD

# Summary

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- At this time, ON-BPD supports families in Ottawa by:
  - Family Connections course
  - Continuing Connections
  - Website
  - Newsletter
- Future Opportunities are being considered and prioritized