

Certificate in **The Essentials of Family Support**



9 - WEEK PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE

**Online sessions will be available:
FALL/WINTER 2025/2026 and SPRING 2026**

Email fsio.ontario@gmail.com for more information

Fall & Winter 2025/2026 Sessions (6:30pm-8:30pm) via Zoom

- Module 1: Thursday, September 18, 2025**
- Module 2: Thursday, October 16, 2025**
- Module 3: Thursday, November 20, 2025**
- Module 4: Thursday, January 15, 2026**
- Module 5: Thursday, February 19, 2026**

Spring 2026 Sessions (6:30pm - 8:30pm) via Zoom

- Module 6: Thursday, March 19, 2026**
- Module 7: Thursday, April 16, 2026**
- Module 8: Thursday, May 14, 2026**
- Module 9: Thursday, June 18, 2026**

About the Certificate

Whether you want to learn the fundamentals of family support or you are seeking to increase your capacity to more effectively support families, ***The Essentials of Family Supports Certificate*** program is for you. Join a group of like-minded professionals who are working to empower families using this strengths-based approach in their work. These nine modules were designed to give those working with families a solid foundation in the practice and principles of Family Support. Modules cover the history and emergence of this strength-based approach; program evaluation; and contemporary challenges impacting children, families, staff and program and service delivery. Learners will walk away with a strong grounding in Family Support theory, practice and strategies that they can implement immediately in their work with families. The Family Supports Institute Ontario's certificate program instructors are experienced RECEs and Family Support Practitioners who have years of teaching experience at both the college and university level and years of practical experience working with families in the context of community-based programs. Upon successful completion of requirements, students will receive a Certificate of Completion to recognize their achievement.

Ready to become a member?

Email us: fsio.ontario@gmail.com
(FSIO Members receive discounts on all learning modules)

The Essentials



All of The Essentials Modules will be completed online via Zoom. Participants will be emailed the link to access the module(s) upon registration.

Module 1: The origins of family support programs

September 18, 2025

The history of Family Support programs, as well as what led to their emergence in Canada 50 years ago, will be uncovered in this module. Participants will trace the thread of this new model of service delivery and examine the underlying theories and practices that give these programs their power and make them so effective and attractive for families and their children.

Module 2: Reflective Practice Developing Self-awareness and Understanding

October 16, 2025

Family support programs value reflective practice as a principle to ensure ongoing and continual improvements. This module will focus on why Reflective Practice is important for practitioners in developing a deeper level of self-awareness and understanding. The benefits of Reflective Practice and how to apply it within staff teams to better meet the needs of families and their children will be discussed.

Module 3: Contemporary Families

November 20, 2025

Programs must understand the trends in family composition and the variety of issues that impact families such as poverty, race, mental health, addiction, violence and abuse, to name a few. This module will explore marginalization as well as the intersectionality of issues that impact families. Participants will discuss strategies and resources that support practitioners work with the unique families in their community.

Module 4: Enabling Family Empowerment and “Voice” in Early ON Programs

January 15, 2026

The practice of Family Support is founded on the building of relationships with families. In this module, participants will examine the inherently positive effects of building genuine relationships with families, how to do it, and how to enable empowerment and “voice” for parents and caregivers that will enhance their lives far beyond the program walls.

Module 5: Family Engagement

February 19, 2026

Building relationships with families is an essential element of an effective program. This module will discuss how to facilitate enduring connections with diverse families, how to meet parents/caregivers as valued experts of their children, and how to ensure that programs are reaching the underserved. Participants will explore the ways to design a curriculum that promotes the connection between adults and children as laid out in the provincial document, *How Does Learning Happen: Ontario’s New Pedagogy*.

Module 6: Facilitating Connections with the Local Community, Including Schools - What does it take?

March 19, 2026

Family support programs do not need to be isolated entities within a community, but rather vibrant hubs at the center of community life that are connected to schools and other community services. In this module, participants will explore concrete strategies for building community ties with an emphasis on local schools and other community resources that will enrich and support families’ lives.

Proof of participation certificates will be issued for each modules for CPL documentation. Learners have two years from the start date of their first module to complete the certificate.

Registration Fees

Member Pricing: \$90 per module, \$65 per module if attending 4 or more modules

Non Member Pricing: \$110 per module, \$85 per module if attending 4 or more modules

Please contact: fsio.ontario@gmail.com to register

Module 7: Fostering Mutual Support & Community Building/Belonging

April 16, 2026

The families participating in family support programs can be a resource and a mutual support system for each other. Participants will discuss the importance of social support and how to foster a sense of belonging for all. Participants will also examine how to build social capital amongst families and how it adds value to your program.

Module 8: Planning in family support programs during a collective crisis

May 14, 2026

Over the past years, families have witnessed and been impacted by several natural disasters such as fire and floods and currently, all families are enduring the impacts of a global pandemic. This module will explore how staff working in family support programs can identify and address the needs of families and children during times of collective crisis living in their local communities

Module 9: Program evaluation in family support programs

June 18, 2026

How do staff working in family support programs know that their programs are effective and meeting the mark with families and communities? This module will explore the importance of program evaluation in family support programs. Participants will have an opportunity to explore what methodology best suits their program needs and how to include stakeholders in this important process.

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