Early Screening and Hand in Hand Developmental Support Planning provides an opportunity to address potential concerns while the child awaits further assessment or intervention services. The Developmental Support Plans are strength-based and age-appropriate for each particular child, and unique to the needs of the family. They can be used throughout professional practice to enhance interactions between a parent and child using the guiding principles: to build strong and respectful relationships; and to support development using an Indigenous lens.

This training will equip practitioners to:
- Support parent-child relationships and child’s wellbeing.
- Provide families with concrete strategies and everyday activities to foster a child’s development in culturally appropriate and strength-based ways.
- Provide an opportunity to engage parents, and for caregivers and professionals to collaborate on a child’s plan of care.
- Help parents and/or caregivers understand the type of experiences their child needs to meet their next developmental milestones.

About the Hand in Hand Model

When there are identified risks and disorders in young children or in family functioning, well-planned and evidence-informed intervention can promote optimal outcomes. Early screening to monitor development and detect the risk of delay is instrumental in developing an effective care pathway to intervene or prevent issues. Likewise, when a referral is made to further assessment or intervention, there is a clear opportunity to provide families with everyday strategies to support development and mitigate potential vulnerabilities while awaiting services. The Hand in Hand: Nurturing the Seed model of Developmental Support Planning is a simple framework to enable practitioners to provide caregivers and families with clear strategies to support the developmental and mental health needs of infants and young children where a concern or risk for developmental delay has been identified.

Our goal is:

To support all nurturing guides (families, extended families, practitioners, child welfare, Elders, community) in carrying out their responsibilities to provide safe and healthy environments for young children to realize their potential.

This includes supporting a child’s development within the context of family and community by:
- Recognizing traditional knowledge and cultural practices as foundational to Indigenous children’s spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical wellbeing.
- Using a strengths-based approach that values the role of Indigenous parents and nurturing guides in assessment and planning processes.
- Providing Indigenous parents and nurturing guides with simple, everyday strategies and activities that help a child reach their individual potential.
Day One
Introduction to Infant Mental Health & Early Development

This introductory session will provide an overview of early development with a unique focus on early mental health and the factors that can both support or hinder development. Theoretical models that can be used to understand behaviors and influencing factors will be explored and considered within the context of community programs working with families and young children. The session will conclude with a discussion about the challenges faced when implementing infant mental health into program design and delivery, and how to overcome some of the existing barriers.

Learning Objectives:
1. Become familiar with the meaning of infant mental health.
2. Understand normal infant and toddler development with a focus on mental health.
3. Understand theoretical models of child development.
4. Understand the influence of risk and protective factors on a young child’s development.
5. Become familiar with what promotes or impairs the development of positive early mental health.
6. Understand the challenges that may be experienced when implementing infant mental health into community programs.

Day Two
Administering and Interpreting the Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ-3 & ASQ:SE2) Developmental Screens

Research has demonstrated that early identification and intervention is crucial to increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes for children identified as having a developmental delay. This session will provide an overview and introduction to the Ages and Stages Questionnaires. Participants will learn how to screen for delays in the developmental areas of communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal social. Participants will also learn about the advantages of involving parents in the assessment process including improved accuracy of assessment due to their ability to observe their child across a variety of domains.

Learning Objectives:
1. Understand the importance of early developmental screening and observation for infants and young children.
2. Learn how to effectively administer the ASQ Screening Tools.
3. Learn how to score and interpret the results of the ASQ screens when completed.
4. Use screening results in programming for the children and families with which they work.

*Please note the training costs do not include the costs of any ASQ materials (Toolkits, User Guide, Quick Start Guides, Material Kits, etc.). A case study will be provided for the purposes of this training, however, it is the responsibility of the agency to have this tool available for staff.

Day Three
Creating Developmental Support Plans for Indigenous Infants, Children and Families

Many people play a role in supporting Indigenous infants, children and families in their life journeys. This workshop is intended to help nurturing guides to use Indigenous ways of knowing and doing to respectfully engage with and support Indigenous families by creating respectful and effective Developmental Support Plans. Nurturing the Seed is a resource that can help practitioners recognize and honour differing worldviews and create a platform to share valuable knowledge specifically relating to promoting infant mental health.

Learning Objectives:
1. Learn how to collect information about a child and family through observation, caregiver report, and a developmental screen.
2. Use this information to create a developmental support plan using an indigenous lens, that is strength based and unique to each individual child.
3. Learn how to respectfully develop and share the plan with caregivers, supervisors, medical teams, and other professionals working with the child.

*The Nurturing the Seed Resource Kit will be shared with all participants. It is encouraged for participants to bring a laptop to the training, to practice using the Resource Kit.

Following the training, IMHP is also available to provide ongoing technical support for practitioners on using the ASQ and implementing the DSP process.