



## Addressing the Needs of Families Experiencing Child Neglect Using the SafeCare® Program

---

Child neglect is broadly defined as significant caregiver difficulties in protecting or providing for a child's basic needs, which results in child harm or endangerment of safety and development (Fallon et al., 2020). Families with neglect concerns often raise children under adverse circumstances that include financial strain, social isolation, and mental health challenges. In Ontario, the primary concern among 21% of substantiated child welfare investigations in 2018 was child neglect, making it the maltreatment type with the second highest incidence rate (Fallon et al., 2020). Neglect is particularly concerning because of its heightened risk of occurrence during the early years and its impact on a child's rapidly developing brain and developmental processes (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2012; White et al., 2017). Given the incidence of neglect and its negative impacts on young children, there are surprisingly few programs that address proximal risk factors. This workshop will provide an overview of the evidence-based SafeCare® parenting program that addresses home safety, child health, and parent-infant/child interactions. We will also present on our current implementation of SafeCare® within the context of the pandemic and highlight preliminary findings from our research project that focuses on longer-term outcomes, change mechanisms, and on-going safety concerns among families who complete the program.



**Dr. Elisa Romano**  
**Sarah Zak**

- ENGLISH PRESENTATION -

