

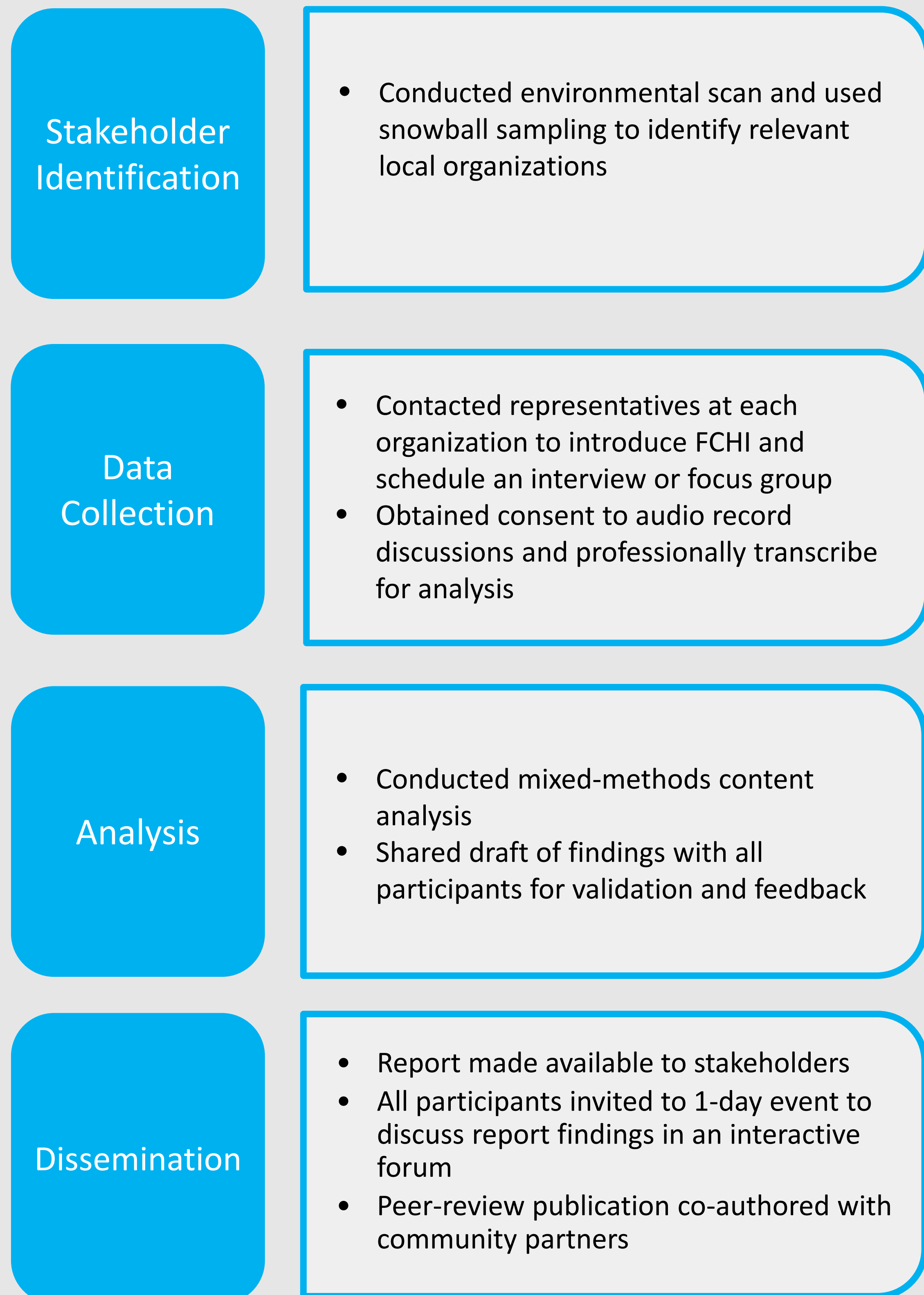
Towards a Whole Family Approach to Family & Child Health: Findings from Community Engagement Activities

SARA MARTEL^{1,2}, CHELSEA D'SILVA¹, DIANNE FIERHELLER^{1,3}, CHRISTINE HEIDEBRECHT¹, IAN ZENLEA^{1,2}
 1 Trillium Health Partners, Mississauga, ON; 2 University of Toronto, Toronto, ON 3 McMaster University, Hamilton, ON

INTRODUCTION

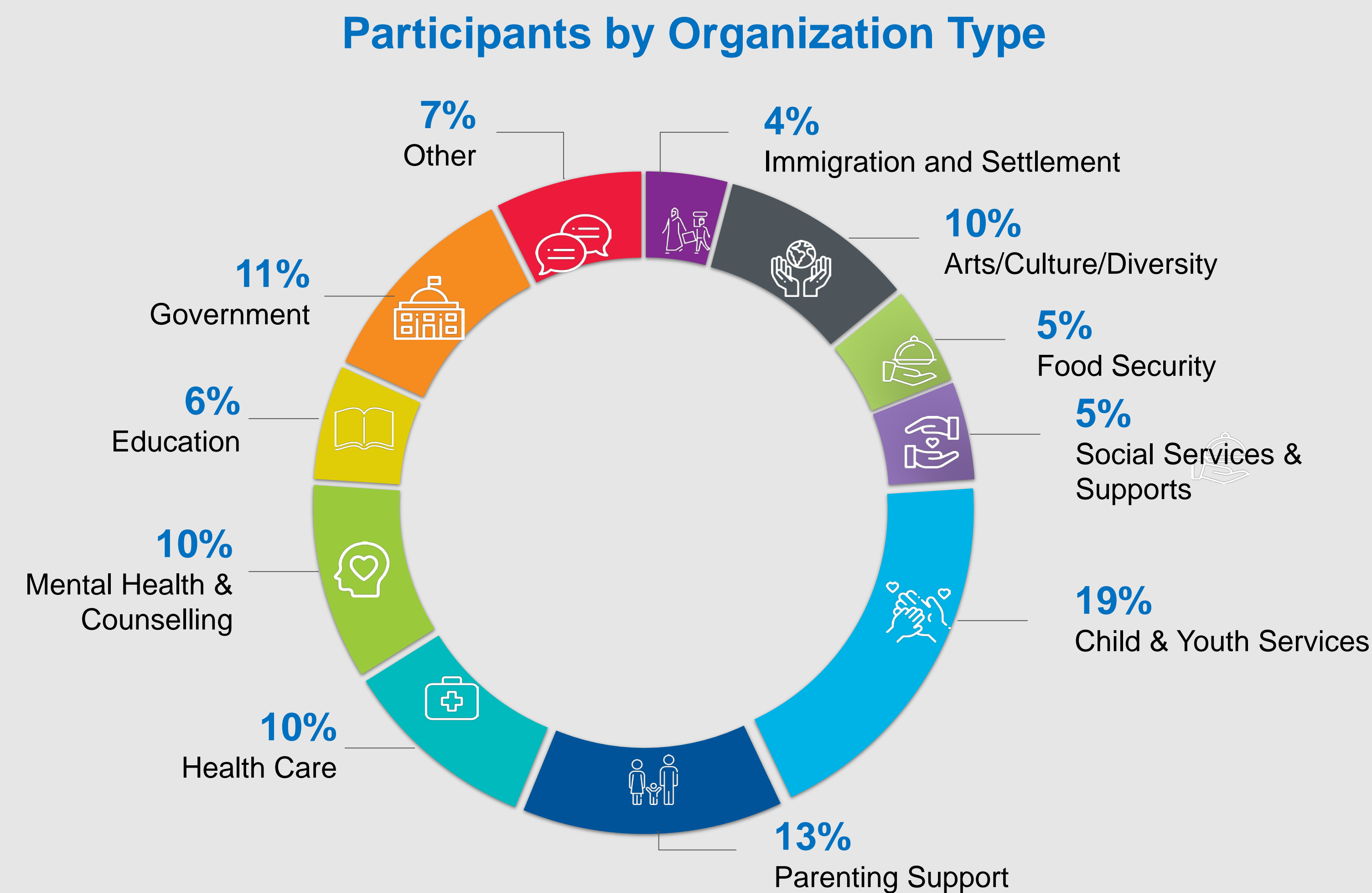
- The Family & Child Health Initiative (FCHI) is a community-based research and innovation program at the Institute for Better Health, Trillium Health Partners, Mississauga, ON. FCHI's work is carried out within the Peel Region of southwestern Ontario. We partner with local organizations and groups on the design and implementation of community-based research and the co-design, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based health programming.
- In 2018-2019 we engaged local organizations working with families, children, and youth in Peel in order to:
 - Establish relationships with others doing similar work
 - Gain an understanding of services, supports, and resources currently offered to local families
 - Understand what health and wellness means to stakeholders in Peel, the challenges they see families facing, and what is needed locally (i.e. co-identify priorities)

METHODS

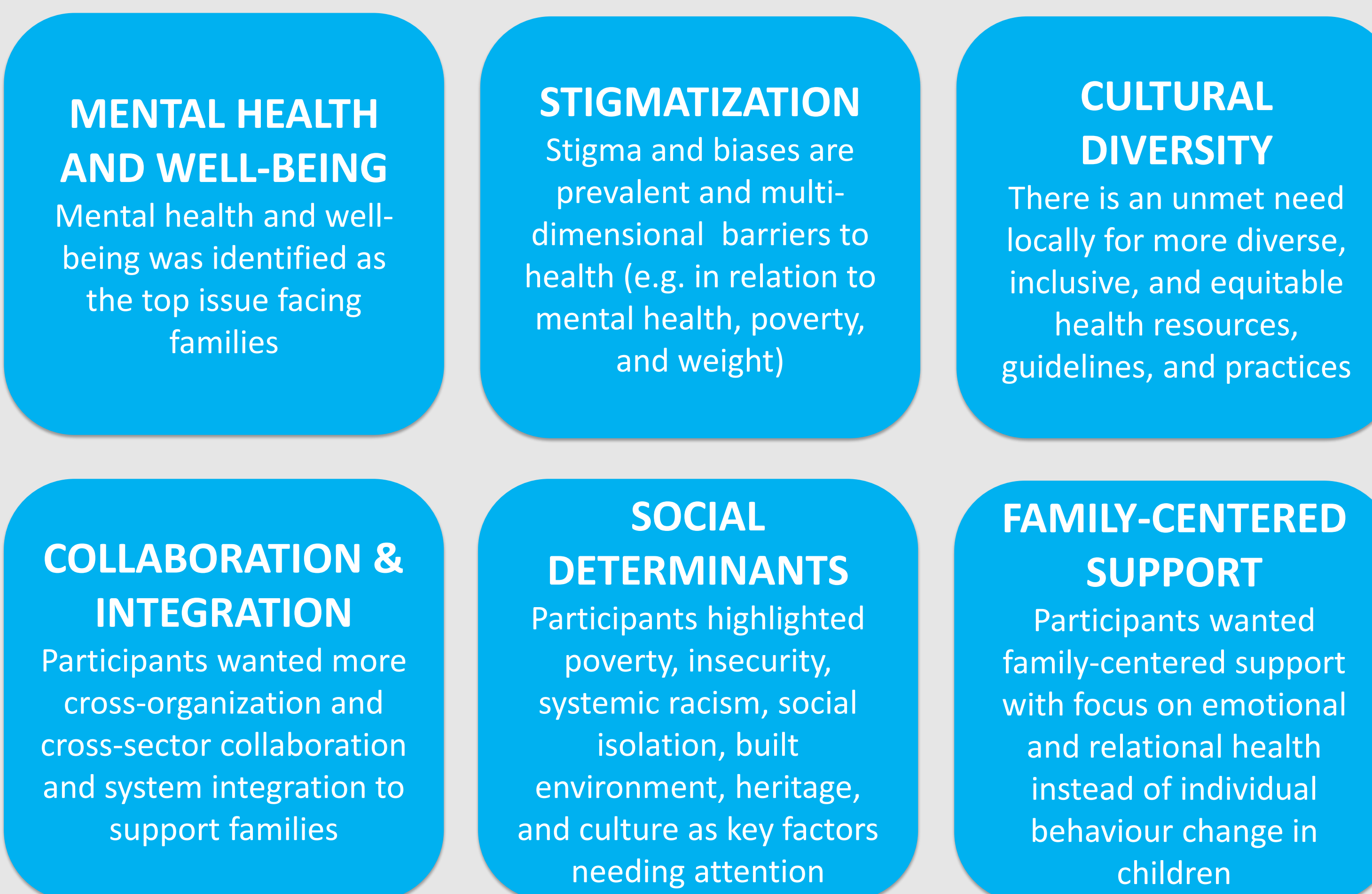


RESULTS

We identified 87 organizations and conducted interviews and focus groups with n=155 representatives from 61 (70.1%) organizations across the Peel Region



Key Findings



What does health mean to you?

- Holistic quality of life involving physical, mental, emotional, and social health
- Secure child and care-giver relationships
- Health equity

Highlights from Community Event

- Attended by 45 people from 35 organizations
- Forum included panel of community leaders from healthcare, mental health, recreation, poverty reduction & diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and interactive discussions
- Moving forward participants want to see:
 - Open dialogue and strategies to address trust, funding restrictions, and 'red tape' challenging collaboration and partnership
 - Diverse, inclusive, and equitable voices informing design and implementation of programs and resources
 - Action connected to community
 - Support for families through better access to mental health services and increased caregiver support
 - Increased peer-to-peer support

DISCUSSION

- A vision for local health emerged that was holistic, equitable, and family-centered
- There is need to support mental health as a major health issue facing families locally
- DEI lens is needed in the design of resources, programming and overall strategies to support health and wellbeing in the region
- Participants shared an interest in collaboration and working towards system-level integration

NEXT STEPS

- Joining community response tables (CRT) and networks in Peel to participate in ongoing engagement, dialogue and work (e.g. Regional Diversity Roundtable, Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy, COVID-19 CRT, Equity and Systemic Discrimination, Parent/Family Support Team)
- Applying for grants and conducting community-based research studies in partnership with local organizations
- Co-designing and implementing programming with local community organizations and members

CONCLUSION

This early engagement was crucial to identifying local priorities, challenges, assets, and aspirations; it will continue as part of FCHI's community-based approach to research and innovation in Peel.

CONTACTS

Sara Martel, Science Associate, IBH - Sara.Martel@thp.ca

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is funded through support from an anonymous donor, Trillium Health Partners Foundation, and grants from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).