



*"No one understands me. I am scared, helpless and alone."*

These are concerns families often share with us when they first ask for help and seek counselling. As mental health professionals, we empathize with our clients' feelings, and there are a few things we want them to know.

### **You are not alone.**

Asking for help is a very important first step, and it requires strength. It is our job to advocate for you, to listen to your concerns and to help you with the challenges you're facing. Families are often worried about navigating their way through the mental health system on their own. It is our role to support you in this process.

### **Maintaining your mental health is a journey.**

Beginning counselling can feel scary, confusing and overwhelming. It can also feel like a relief and a fresh start. Like many other life experiences, there will be ups and downs, twists, turns and detours. Some days will be better than others, and throughout it all, we want to walk alongside you on this journey.

### **We treat every person differently, depending on their situation.**

Regardless of your race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or cultural heritage, we are here to support you. Each person is unique and our experiences are diverse. We do not judge and we do not discriminate. Your treatment plan will be tailored to your family's unique strengths and challenges. We want to work with you to develop the best approach to support you, and that means that counselling can look very different for each family.

### **Getting help can be fun!**

At Peel Children's Centre, we help families using evidence-informed practices. This means there is research that demonstrates our methods and strategies are effective at helping children, youth and families cope with mental health challenges.

As counsellors, we take your concerns very seriously, but we can find fun ways to help you, too! Sometimes our sessions may consist of a lot of talking, while other times counselling may involve an activity or playing together. Getting help can be fun, especially when you keep an open mind throughout the process.

### **Your decisions will be respected.**

Asking for help is a choice you can make, and we will involve you in all decisions that are made throughout the counselling process. Our counselling services are voluntary, and we encourage you take the first step and ask for help. Ask because it can get better, because your life matters, and because everyone is deserving of support.