



THE OWERKO CENTRE STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 - 2023

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
THE ALBERTA CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL FOUNDATION



VISION

A world in which every child reaches their optimal brain and mental health

MISSION

To optimize brain and mental health for children and families through research, education, and community engagement

VALUES



DISCOVERY - the exploration and creation of new knowledge and ways to approach research



EXCELLENCE - pursuing the highest quality in research, knowledge, and collaboration



COLLABORATION - building collaboration among researchers, partners, and community members

A LETTER FROM THE **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Established in 2015, the Owerko Centre for Neurodevelopment and Child Mental Health is at an exciting stage in our development. In this document, we present our strategic plan for the next three years. In consultation with our members and stakeholders, we have developed the vision, mission, and values to guide our decision-making and operations over the next three years. We have set ambitious and forward-looking goals that will increase our impact in brain and child mental health research, education, and community-engagement.

The Owerko Centre is a multidisciplinary research hub with a broad translational focus on neurodevelopment, neurodevelopmental disorders, and child mental health. Researchers in the Owerko Centre advance knowledge about brain development and child mental health, from the cellular level to public policy, drawing upon a wide spectrum of research methods.

The Owerko Centre was established with a generous gift from Calgary philanthropists Stan and Marge Owerko to the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation. We are grateful to the Owerko family and to Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation for their support and collaboration in building the Owerko Centre and for providing continuing support for our research, training, and community-building activities.

Currently, our membership consists of 52 principal investigators representing faculties across the University of Calgary including Arts, Cumming School of Medicine, Kinesiology, Nursing, Social Work, and the Werklund School of Education. In addition to our cross-disciplinary team of principal investigators, the Owerko Centre includes over 180 trainees from the undergraduate to post-doctoral levels. Our activities are guided by the Owerko Centre Executive committee, whose membership reflects the multidisciplinary nature of our research centre, including members from Community Health Sciences, Kinesiology, Pediatrics, Clinical Neurosciences, Psychology, Medical Genetics, and Radiology.

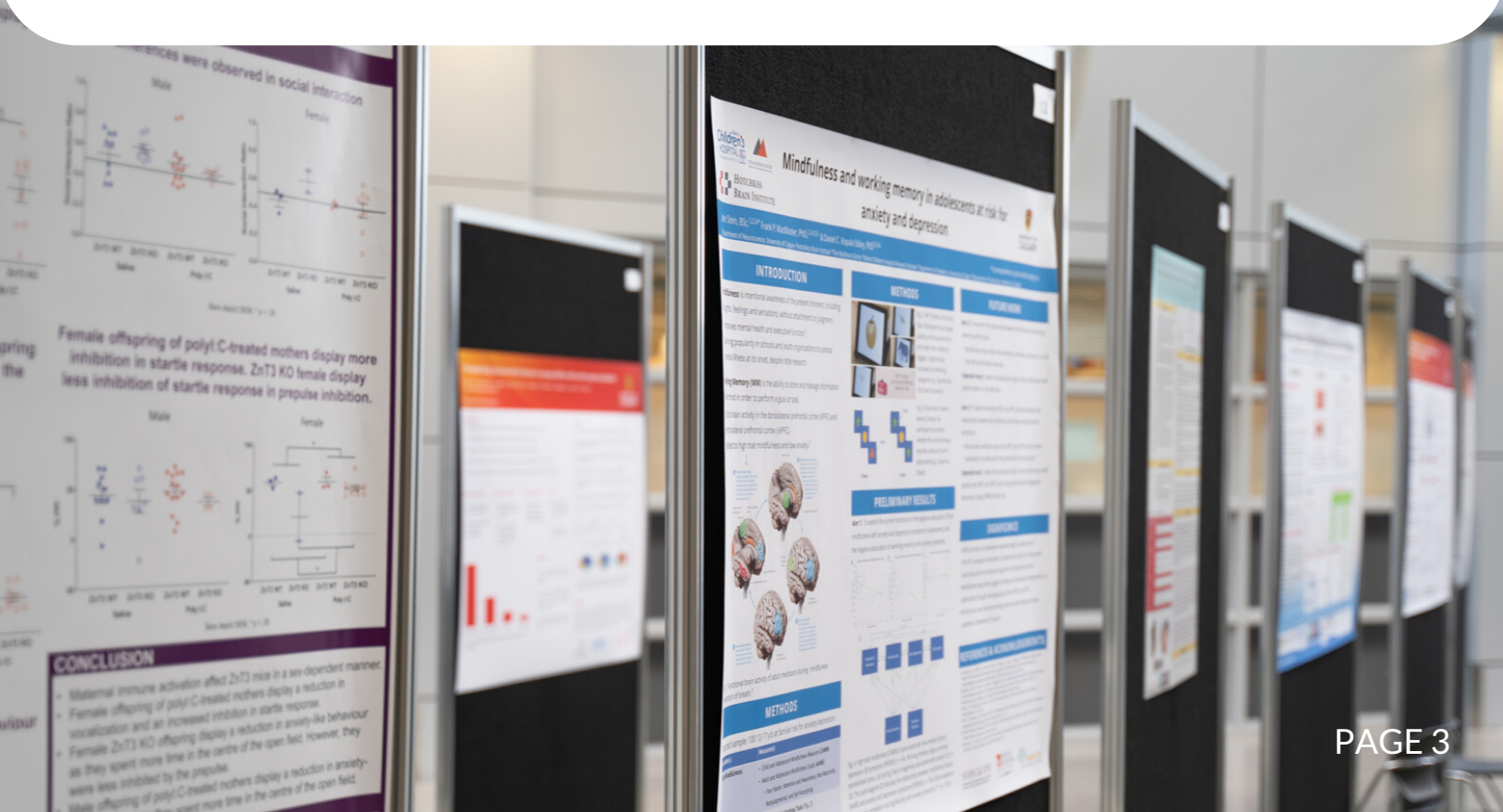
This strategic plan is the culmination of many internal executive committee meetings, a strategic planning session with the full cohort of Owerko Centre members, and individual meetings with University leaders, partners, and stakeholders.

In the coming months, we will work towards implementing the goals and objectives of the strategic plan, establishing measurement benchmarks, and promoting the work of the Owerko Centre amongst our partners and broader community. As always, we welcome your ideas and comments on how we can improve our work and benefit children and families.

Sincerely,

Members of the Owerko Centre Executive Committee

- Dr. Susan Graham
- Dr. Gerald Giesbrecht
- Dr. Catherine Lebel
- Dr. Deborah Kurrasch
- Dr. Suzanne Tough
- Dr. Jane Shearer
- Dr. Kara Murias



GOAL SUMMARY

GOAL RESEARCH

To catalyze innovative research on children's brain and mental health.

GOAL EDUCATION & TRAINING

To empower the next generation of researchers with cross-disciplinary approaches to child brain and mental health.

GOAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To engage with the broader community to inform Owerko Centre research and share knowledge with stakeholders.

SMART METHODOLOGY

We used the SMART Goal methodology to bring structure and trackability into the Owerko Centre's goals and objectives. SMART goals are:



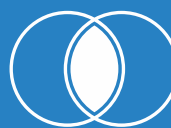
Specific



Measurable



Achievable



Relevant



Time-bound

GOAL RESEARCH

To catalyze innovative research on children's brain and mental health.

THE OPPORTUNITY

As a hub for neurodevelopment and child mental health research at the University of Calgary, the Owerko Centre will catalyze research across the campus by:

- Building connections with multiple faculties and departments across the University of Calgary campus and with academic institutions nationally and internationally.
- Using funding mechanisms to create innovative research opportunities and facilitate cross-disciplinary collaborations.

NEW INITIATIVE

Form a research committee that will:

- Conduct an environmental scan to identify researchers across campus focused on neurodevelopment and child mental health, with the goal of identifying areas of strength, research themes, and potential collaborations.
- Establish and implement funding competitions to encourage collaboration across content areas and disciplines.

STRATEGIC LEAD: DR. DEBORAH KURRASCH

ONGOING INITIATIVES

- Networking events
- Post-doctoral fellow support
- Participation in campus-wide research initiatives with a variety of organizations and themes such as:
 - ACHRI
 - Child Health & Wellness Theme
 - Children's Mental Health Centre
 - Hotchkiss Brain Institute
 - Mathison Centre

GOAL EDUCATION & TRAINING

To empower the next generation of researchers with cross-disciplinary approaches to child brain and mental health.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Owerko Centre will provide innovative training opportunities for trainees from undergraduate students to post-doctoral fellows by:

- Engaging with key training partners across campus including ACHRI, Cumming School of Medicine and the Faculty of Graduate Studies to provide education and training opportunities;
- Gathering feedback from principal investigators and trainees regarding key areas in which training and career development opportunities are most needed; and
- Creating a shared language and understanding of neurodevelopment and mental health across disciplines to foster new knowledge and collaborations.

NEW INITIATIVE

Develop and implement a curriculum that builds a shared language and understanding of neurodevelopment and child mental health across campus.

The curriculum will enable collaboration with like-minded trainees and researchers across campus, and also prepare trainees for career opportunities both inside and outside of academia.

STRATEGIC LEAD: DR. SUSAN GRAHAM

ONGOING INITIATIVES

- Trainee focused awards for excellence and training
- Hack-a-thons (e.g. Innovation4Health)
- Summer student education series
- Post-doctoral fellowship support
- Owerko Centre Neurodevelopment Rounds
- Participation in ACHRI seminar and grand round series

GOAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To engage with the broader community to inform Owerko Centre research and share knowledge with stakeholders.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Owerko Centre will engage with the broader community by:

- Connecting with community partners to inform and seek feedback about the research programs and projects at the Owerko Centre;
- Increasing public awareness of the Owerko Centre mission and vision; and
- Developing opportunities for project partnerships and collaborations with stakeholders for Owerko Centre researchers and trainees.

NEW INITIATIVE

Conduct an environmental scan of current and potential community and scientific partners to create a roster of community stakeholders as well as an engagement map to determine where Owerko Centre expertise can be applied to the service of community stakeholders.

The goal of this initiative is to create meaningful knowledge translation opportunities between the Owerko Centre and the broader community. Initially, the work will result in a short-term plan to engage with stakeholders to create shared understandings and needs, and will, in the longer term identify potential projects and/or partnerships alongside those partners.

STRATEGIC LEAD: MARK AGIUS

ONGOING INITIATIVES

- Owerko Centre annual conference
- Owerko Family Distinguished Lecture
- Owerko Centre social media and web presence
- Owerko Centre Knowledge Dissemination and Engagement Award
- Knowledge mobilization opportunities for Owerko Centre members
- Media opportunities and events for speakers
- Conversation Canada and UToday articles
- Owerko Centre research recruitment database and newsletter

THE OWERKO CENTRE



THE OWERKO CENTRE

For more information regarding our new and ongoing initiatives please check our website for the latest updates or contact us directly.

www.research4kids.ucalgary.ca/owerko

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