

FRP Standards of Practice: Section A (Participant/Client Rights and Ethical Practice)

Approved by the Bowen Children's Centre Board on May 27, 2015 (to be submitted to FRP-BC for office review)

A.1 FAMILY FOCUSED APPROACH

A.1.1 / A.1.2 / A.1.3

Description

Family Place offers family, parenting and child focussed programming. Family Place sees all program participants as individuals, with their own strengths and abilities.

- Family Place provides services in a way that build on family strengths. Our staff and volunteers use language that emphasizes strengths rather than problems.
- Staff consistently encourages parents/caregivers to recognize their successes in relation to their child's development, health and wellbeing.

Procedures

1. Build on Family Strengths **(A.1.1)**

Family Place builds on family strengths and uses language that emphasizes strength rather than problems.

2. Positive Approaches **(A.1.2)**

Family Place uses positive approaches to guide group interaction and individual behaviour. Family Place staff or volunteers do not, at any time, condone, support or utilize the use of any punitive child guidance methods, including:

- Corporal punishment
- Interventions that involve withholding nutrition or hydration, or that inflict physical or psychological pain
- Isolation
- Ignoring the child
- Group punishment for individual behaviour
- Labelling a child "good" or "bad"
- The use of demeaning, shaming or degrading language or activities
- Use of time outs to punish a child

3. Positive Interactions **(A.1.3)**

Positive methods that Family Place staff use to guide group interaction and individual behaviour between participant and children include the following:

- Showing respect and acceptance of the individual
- Modeling effective positive parenting and problem solving skills
- Active listening
- Behavior monitoring and, when necessary, redirecting parents and/or children
- Encouraging family interaction
- Encouraging and supporting relationship building with others

Family Place staff engage in positive interactions on an individual level, recognizing the unique strengths and needs of each family.

- Staff recognize that listening is often more important than giving advice.
- Parents know they can trust staff to keep conversations confidential, except under specific, highly unusual circumstances. (Exceptions to confidentiality include suspected or confirmed child abuse or neglect, danger to self or others.)
- Staff have a clear understanding of how to provide support while maintaining a professional relationship with the participant.

A.2 STAKEHOLDER INPUT

A.2.1 / A.2.2 / A.2.3

Description

Family Place identifies stakeholder groups and invites these key stakeholders to offer their input into relevant programming areas.

Procedures

1. Stakeholders are Included (A.2.1)

Family Place and its umbrella organization, BCC, have established a network of community partners, family support and ECD service providers and funders. BCC and Family Place are committed to communicating regularly and working with these community partners and funders to ensure the best service delivery. This communication also allows BCC and Family Place to work with the stakeholders to identify gaps in services and assets in the delivery of program on Bowen Island. The Parent Advisory Group also provides input and feedback on program planning.

Family Place regularly gathers input on its programs and services from key individuals and groups both externally and internally. External stakeholders include community partners, network partners, family support and ECD service providers and funders. Internal stakeholders include participants, staff, volunteers, and Board members.

2. Stakeholder Input is Gathered (A.2.2)

Stakeholder input is collected on an ongoing basis in a variety of methods including, but not limited to:

- A comprehensive annual participant survey.
- Workshop evaluations (if applicable).
- Informal discussion / feedback from participants.
- Stakeholder surveys.
- Informal / formal discussion with funders and other service providers.
- Regular staff meetings / discussions.

- Volunteer / staff exit interviews.

3. Stakeholder Input is Analyzed (A.2.3)

Family Place and its umbrella organization, BCC, analyze stakeholder input annually and uses the information gathered for strategic planning, program planning, reporting and improving services.

A.3 VALUE IN DIVERSITY

A.3.2 / A.3.4

Description

According to our Principles:

- All people are accorded full dignity, respect and trust.
- Family Place ensures access to all services. We will strive to remove all accessibility barriers.
- Family Place encourages full, active participation and representation by any member of the community, regardless of each person's diverse abilities.
- Family Place respects and promotes diversity both within its programs and in the community.

Family Place Diversity Statement

Family Place and its umbrella organization, BCC, value diversity. We foster an inclusive environment where individual differences among us, whether in terms of race, religion, colour, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disability, or family status, are understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength.

We recognize that our participants, our Boards of Directors, our volunteers and staff bring their own unique capabilities, experiences and characteristics to their work. We value such diversity at all levels as these enrich the organization and workplace. Diversity benefits individuals, Family Place and our community. We expect that all who come through our doors, who provide or receive services, will extend the same respect to all those they meet here.

Procedures

1. Diverse Groups are Engaged (A.3.2)

All families are welcome regardless of age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, income or gender. Understanding and respect are facilitated through the shared concerns and common experiences of the joys and challenges of parenting.

The diversity of the participants and local community is reflected among the staff, volunteers, and Board members.

Bowen Island is a multicultural and socio-economically diverse community, and this is reflected in the make-up of the participants who attend Family Place's programs and services. Our families

include:

- New and recent immigrant families.
- Financially challenged families.
- Single parent families.
- Same sex parent families.
- Families whose children require additional support.
- Parents with disabilities.
- Families with children and / or adults with health issues.

When program planning Family Place staff develop strategies, with input from stakeholders including other service providers and families, to reach out and engage the diverse groups that attend our programs and services.

(A.3.3) Family Place offers programs and services in the language that reflects the majority of participants' needs.

(A.3.4) The physical environment at Family Place is set up to be welcoming and show acceptance for everyone. This includes but is not limited to:

- Books in different languages and stories about different cultures featuring characters from diverse ethnicities.
- Books, for both children and adults, that represent different family configurations.

A.4 ETHICAL CONDUCT

Internal Ethical Standards

A.4.1 through A.4.9

Policy

Standards A.4.1 through A.4.9 can either be separated as outlined below or can be grouped together with an overarching Policy and Procedures for each.

Family Place Staff affirm that:

1. We will promote the health and well-being of all individuals in receipt of our services, including their physical, social, cognitive and emotional development.
2. We will support individuals in participating to their full potential.
3. We will demonstrate caring for all individuals in all aspects of our practice.
4. We will respect the intrinsic dignity and worth of all persons receiving our services.
5. We will work in partnership with individuals and families, supporting them in meeting their goals.
6. We will work in partnership with colleagues, funders and other service providers in the community to support all those in receipt of our services.
7. We will respect and promote the human, civil and legal rights of all persons served and will seek to ensure that they receive the services to which they are entitled.
8. We will demonstrate professional integrity in all our working relationships.
9. We will take appropriate action to resolve any personal, professional and ethical conflicts as directly and speedily as possible.

A.4 Ethical Conduct

Board members, Family Place staff and volunteers operate in a manner that is ethical, professional and transparent.

A.4.1

Policy

Family Place staff maintain appropriate professional behaviour in their relationships with participants.

Procedures

Staff will conduct themselves in a professional manner appropriate to a community social service environment, including:

- maintaining a respectful atmosphere for participants;
- being courteous, friendly and cooperative; and
- showing respect and compassion for the service recipients and their families.

Abusive language, disrespect for participants or fellow employees, or engaging in sexual or other forms of personal harassment is not permitted at Family Place or when representing Family Place in the wider community.

Rights and Responsibilities

A.4.2

Policy

BCC strives to ensure that all Family Place staff and participants feel respected and are aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Procedures

Participants have the right to:

- Be treated fairly, honestly, and respectfully;
- Be considered an expert in their own life experience;
- Make a suggestion or complaint regarding our services;
- Inquire about the qualifications, training, and experience of our staff; and
- Privacy and confidentiality should they choose to share personal information.
**Exceptions to confidentiality include suspected or confirmed child abuse or neglect, danger to self or others*

Participants have the responsibility to:

- Supervise their children at all times.
- Bring only healthy children to Family Place. For example, we ask families to not attend children's programming if their child has a cold, fever, has been vomiting, or has a communicable illness.
- Inform staff of any allergy, medical condition, disability, or cultural need that requires our awareness or sensitivity in providing services.
- Complete a registration form and advise staff of ongoing changes (i.e. emergency contact information).
- Treat others with fairness, honesty, and respect.
- Maintain the confidentiality of other participants.
- Minimize or, if requested, cease the use of cell phones and other personal devices.

- Refrain from taking photos during the program (photos may be taken on occasion for promotional purposes when there is signed consent).

To ensure that participants feel respected and welcomed during their time at Family Place, the staff:

- Create a non-judgmental space for participants to share their life experiences.
- Understand that all participants come from different walks of life, therefore all personal experiences are respected and uncontested, with exceptions when staff have the duty to breach confidentiality agreements.
- Devise opportunities for participants to voice complaints about their experiences at Family Place.

Staff regularly inform participants about their responsibilities as program participants through program orientation and group reminders.

Complaint Process

A.4.3

Policy

Concerns and complaints from participants or their caregivers, volunteers or others connected with Family Place will be listened to and addressed, without bias or repercussions, as quickly as possible. We will do our best to remedy any situation causing a complaint, and will be open in our efforts. The staff at Family Place are committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all. Within our program and service areas, we try to provide the best resources and materials our funding can support. We encourage participants, volunteers and others connected with Family Place to express their opinions, concerns or complaints to management.

Procedures

1. Inform the staff person in charge of the program about the concern.
2. If unable or unwilling to inform the program staff, ask to speak with the Executive Director if the Program Coordinator is unavailable.
3. The staff person will complete the form below to document the complaint, and ensure appropriate follow-up.

COMPLAINTS REPORT

Family Place/BCC Employee to whom complaint information given: _____
Position: _____ Date Complaint Received _____
Date/Time/Location of Incident causing complaint: _____

Name of the person making the Complaint: _____
Complainant's relationship to Family Place: Participant Volunteer Other
(if participant, check appropriate box): Adult Adult on behalf of Child
(if other, describe relationship to Family Place) _____
Details of Complaint: _____

Process of Investigation

1) Description of Event, all Persons involved and Circumstances leading to the complaint:

2) Description of Planned / Actual Corrective Actions Taken (if any):

3) Complainant's Response to Corrective Actions:

4) Other factors to be considered: _____

5) Complaint Resolved: (yes)
Complaint taken Further: (yes) To: _____ Date: _____
** (If Complaint taken further, attach details of all further proceedings to this report)

Signatures:
Investigator: _____ Date: _____
Complainant: _____ Date: _____
Executive Director: _____
Date: _____

Confidentiality

A.4.4

Policy

Family Place acknowledges the importance of maintaining client confidentiality. Staff devote significant efforts to uphold their responsibility to ensure the confidentiality of all clients. However, staff are allowed to breach confidentiality responsibilities when any of the following circumstances occur:

- When disclosure is required by the courts.
- When there is suspected child abuse.
- When the client discloses self harm or intent to harm others.
- When staff need to seek support from their supervisor, other staff, or a board member. Information must be shared on a “need to know” basis unless directed by the participant. If in doubt about the definition of “need to know”, staff should consult with their immediate supervisor.

Procedures

Family Place has set many measures to protect client confidentiality. Some of these measures include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Signing confidentiality forms to ensure that clients are aware of their rights and are informed of the staff’s responsibility to breach confidentiality when specific circumstances arise.
- Client files and information is securely filed and kept.
- A private office is located at Family Place to allow clients to have confidential conversations with staff.
- Family Place will only publish photographs or other information regarding clients in promotional material with the client’s written consent.
- Family Place staff will not disclose any information about a client to anyone outside Family Place without the client’s written consent.
- Sensitive participant information is only shared internally on a “need to know” basis.

Release of Information

A.4.5

Policy

Family Place will not disclose information on participants or employees to a third party organization or individual without the written consent from the participant/employee.

Procedures

- When information about a participant is requested by the outside party, staff will state that they are not authorized to release information without the participant's consent. They will then request the permission of the participant to release information and have them sign the Consent Form. Staff will ensure that the participant is fully informed as to who is requesting the information, what specific information is being requested and what the consequences may be of disclosing the information.
- Before contacting any outside party about the situation of the participant, staff will request the permission of the participant to release information and have them sign the Consent Form. Staff will ensure that the participant is fully informed as to who will be contacted, what specific information would be disclosed and what consequences may be disclosing the information.
- Family Place will not release personal information on any employee to any person without prior written permission. This shall, in no way, limit the employer's right to provide employment related information to requests related to the proper operation of the employer's business (including the provision of employment information to authorized government agencies).
- Should an employee wish to have personal information released, he/she shall provide the employer with a written statement authorizing the employer to release the information.
- When a request for the release of personal information is received, and where the employee has not authorized the employer to release the information, the employer shall respond to the inquirer with a statement that it is not the organization's policy to give out information without the employee's prior approval.

The employer is not responsible for advising the employee when a request has been made.

Code of Conduct

A.4.6

Policy

Family Place protects the legal and ethical rights of all participants through informing families of their rights and ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all who use these programs.

Procedures

BCC's Code of Conduct:

- Addresses both confidentiality and conflict of interest.
- Includes procedures to deal with violations.
- Provides for educating staff, volunteers, and the BCC Board of Directors regarding the Code of Conduct.

Research

A.4.7

Policy

Any research done at Family Place must be approved by the Program Coordinator or the Executive Director and the participants.

Procedures

The Program Coordinator or Executive Director must approve any research at Family Place or any offsite programs involving Family Place participants. Once the proposal for research has been approved, participants must sign a consent form in order for the research study to be conducted.

Fundraising

A.4.8

Policy

All approved donations obtained through fundraising activities will be expended in accordance with Family Place's objectives and values as well as with the wishes of the donor.

Procedures

All fundraising activities for Family Place will be coordinated by the Program Coordinator or lead fundraising volunteer for Family Place, approved by the Executive Director, and reported to the Board of Directors.

Information to Public

A.4.9

Description

Family Place provides the public with clear, timely and accurate information about its activities, programs and finances.

Procedures

This information is provided through Family Place's website, newsletters, social media, as appropriate, and in the annual report.

The Program Coordinator is responsible for updating any information regarding the program, then ensuring the information is posted on the Family Place website. This information could include dates and times the program is offered, upcoming events, etc.

The Program Coordinator will provide various community agencies that provide service for families with updated information, to be included on their websites.

The Program Coordinator will be responsible for updating any written information regarding Family Place (i.e. Flyers, brochures, posters, information handouts and business cards).

This updating will happen on an as-needed basis.