



Together, we're changing lives.

2010 to 2010 Strategy Guidance Letter: B-105 Individual and Family Support

United Way Windsor-Essex County
300 Giles Blvd. East, Windsor, ON N9A 4C4

A. Priority Area: Positioning kids and families for success.

B. Strategic Area of Focus: Individual and family supports.

Strategy Definition: Innovative and integrated short-term services (e.g., short-term crisis counseling) that build on individual and family assets that transition them quickly to more sustainable social/cognitive supports by connecting them with community-based support networks and opportunities.

C. Priority Populations

All strategies that receive funding must serve the following populations (s):

- Individuals, seniors and families in crisis.

D. Intended Outcome: Individuals, seniors and families in crisis have timely access to the immediate social and cognitive supports they require, and are effectively connected with sustainable community-based support networks and opportunities that build on existing individual and family strengths.

Outcome Definition: Some people require supports that extend beyond a crisis. This often involves connecting them to other relevant community services and formal/informal support networks that can provide longer-term support. Informal supports include family-member-to-family-member support. Better and more effective family interactions can have a “buffer effect” in protecting and supporting individuals through a crisis. Crisis counseling can increase knowledge and skills on preventing and/or coping with future crises. The intended outcome focuses on *Adaptation* as described by Torjman’s (2007) Resilience Framework.



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E. Strategy Paths

To be considered for funding, strategies must address all Strategy paths, as indicated below:

Strategy paths	Initial results
Building personal protective factors and family strengthening/resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of individuals/seniors/families who have stronger self-perceived resilience and coping skills to face potential future crises, as a result of integrated educational opportunities • Number of families who report more supportive and stable family relationships
Integrated individual & family supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of individuals/seniors/families in crises who can identify existing informal support networks • Number of individuals/seniors/families in crises who effectively draw upon a wide variety of formal/informal support networks • Number of group-based support opportunities

F. Preferred Strategy Components

In addition to the required components, preference will be given to those strategies that are able to demonstrate Preferred Strategy Components, as indicated below:

Preferred Strategy Components—(policies, practices and/or activities)	Examples
Emphasize family and individual competencies that build resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds coping and resilience competencies (e.g., sense of humour, empathy, communication skills, positive self-regard, self-efficacy) through integrated educational opportunities • Integrated educational opportunities include individual and family-based learning (e.g., combining skill-building with social networking or “group work” opportunities) • Links clients to other relevant strength-building opportunities in the community • Provides opportunities for clients and informal support network individuals/groups to apply their learning together



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Builds on existing individual, family & community assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs intentionally build on existing individual and family assets (e.g., informal social support networks, personal strengths such as behaviours and social/ cognitive skills), neighbourhood strengths) to further strengthen individual/ family resilience
Connect individuals and families to relevant formal supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g., one-to-one crisis counseling, or community peer-to-peer / family-to-family programs that consist of trained <i>support partners</i> who have similar experiences to provide emotional & information support
Connect individuals and families to relevant informal supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal supports include extended family members, friends, neighbours, peers, and other relevant community supports
Appropriate and effective "group work" professionals	<p>Group work professionals engage in appropriate and effective group practices such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong group facilitation skills • Appropriate self-reflective practice • Coordinate with other relevant community resources that might assist clients in building further resilience • Appropriate group member (client) screening, consent and confidentiality practices • Implement appropriate models of group development, process observation and therapeutic conditions • Safely and effectively manage the flow of communication to protect group members from harm • Assist group members in generating meaning from the group experience • Assist group members in developing individual goals



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F. (cont'd) Preferred Strategy Components for all strategies

Preferred Strategy Components for all strategies	Examples
Staff/volunteers are trained and well-prepared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and volunteers have relevant training, knowledge and skills • Staff keep up-to-date with current developments in the field, including promising and evidence-based practices • Volunteers are provided with strong supervision including screening, orientation and recognition.
Client-centered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active efforts to be inclusive and to connect with client populations in program planning, delivery, evaluation • Services provided are determined by participant needs and priorities • Operate from an accessible, identifiable location that facilitates access to other participant opportunities.
Diversity is acknowledged and respected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive to issues of diversity, transportation and childcare • Staff must be culturally competent and aware of diversity issues. • Staff and volunteers reflect the community
Monitor progress and evaluate outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct ongoing program evaluations to ensure program effectiveness • The evaluation includes various methods for measuring potential results as outlined in the strategy paths • Willing to participate in organized learning communities with other strategy partners.
Maintaining success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measures will be taken to encourage continue positive results after initial implementation ▪ E.g., by offering “booster” sessions; providing follow-up resources; tying the strategy with activities of other relevant community groups & programs.



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Demonstrate effective collaboration and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve a range of community partners • Leverage resources and support from an array of stakeholders, e.g., other not-for-profit organizations, private or public sector organizations, and other groups. • Written memoranda of understanding with other organizations to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clear.
Integrated and coordinated approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy is linked with other community services, group, and initiatives in an effort to enhance services.
Standard safety policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols are in place that ensure the safety of children/youth and address family situations of abuse and neglect • Conduct screenings for family violence issues & provide participant links to appropriate services. • Establish specific policies of what constitutes acceptable and non-acceptable interactions, e.g., standards of volunteer behaviour
Accessible / affordable / wrap around services that are place-based, strength-based & family-focused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered in accessible locations with availability of transportation • Emphasis that builds on individual and family strengths

Recommended Resources:

Association for Specialists in Group Work (1998). *Best Practice Guidelines*.

Harvard Family Research Project (2006). *Lessons from family-strengthening interventions: Learning from evidence-based practice*.

Promising Practices Network on children, families and communities: www.promisingpractices.net