



Together, we're changing lives.

2010 to 2010 Strategy Guidance Letter: B-106 Parent Education and 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: Parent (caregiver) education and support.

Strategic Definition: Comprehensive and integrated strategies that focus on family-to-family support models, and on strengthening child-parent (caregiver) attachment and incorporate other parent (caregiver)/child skill-building opportunities.

C. Priority Population

All strategies that receive funding must serve at least the following population (s):

- "At-risk" families experiencing mental health, addiction, and/or disability.

D. Intended Outcome: "At-risk" families experiencing mental health, addiction, and/or disability have timely access to the parent supports they require, and are connected with appropriate family-to-family supports and effective child-parent (caregiver) attachment opportunities that build on the existing skills of parents (caregivers) and their children.

Outcome Definition: The goal of parent (caregiver) support is to strengthen existing social supports so families can draw upon additional resources for their own and their children's well-being. Parent (caregiver) education reinforces parental practices that promote positive development and alternatives to harmful or nonproductive practices. Parents (caregivers) are more likely to provide appropriate nurturance and guidance as they acquire a greater understanding of child development and children's needs. 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	Potential results
Integrated parent (caregiver) education opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of parents (caregivers) who feel confident they can provide a positive home life-and-learning and effective parenting that is appropriate to children's developmental stage • Number of families with increased confidence that they have the skills to better manage stress and improve family relationships • Number of parents (caregivers) who demonstrate skills that facilitate child development
Integrated family supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of parents (caregivers) who participate in family-to-family support activities. • Number of families who are appropriately trained and actively involved in family-building activities (e.g., family reading activities). • Number of families in crises who identify informal support networks.
Parent leadership and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of parents (caregivers) who identify themselves as family leaders • Number of children who perceive their parents (caregivers) as positive role models • Number of parents (caregivers) who are trained in advocating for their child's needs

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 Strategies Components— (policies, practices and/or activities)	Examples
Competence of staff and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff demonstrate knowledge and model skills that can be utilized by parents (caregivers) to support positive child development • Staff know how to assess and effectively address parents' developmental needs, personal factors, family stressors, and environmental conditions to maximize positive outcomes.



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Appropriate timing and type of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify when/which supports are appropriate for “at-risk” families experiencing mental health, addiction, and/or disability challenges.• Demonstrate and teach age-appropriate parenting & child development support skills using a variety of techniques, e.g., seminars, parent/child interaction events.
Addressing parent beliefs and program intensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff effectively address issues of parental stress (e.g., under stress, parents may rely on familiar ways of parenting)• Activity delivery is intensive enough to bring about positive changes
Family-to-family linking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• E.g., caregivers might be trained as a “Resource Parent” who offers support to other parents (caregivers), and provides linkages to a network of resources.• Families are carefully matched based upon disability, and/or specific issues that arise.



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

Preferred Program 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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<p>Demonstrate effective collaboration and partnerships</p>	<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.
<p>Integrated and coordinated approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy is linked with other community services, group, and initiatives in an effort to enhance services.
<p>Standard safety policies</p>	<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
<p>Accessible / affordable / wrap around services that are place-based, strength-based & family-focused</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered in accessible locations with availability of transportation • Emphasis that builds on individual and family strengths



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Recommended Resources:

Alberta Children's Services (2009). *Parent Links: Program guidelines and best practices.*

Commission on Children and Families (2009). *Parent Education and Support: Essential Components / Demonstrated and Model Programs.*

Communities That Care Squamish (2009). *Promising approaches: Learning, growing and working together for the future of our children and youth.*

Coordinated Care Services Inc. (2005). *Evidence-based parenting education programs.*

Cornell Cooperative Extension (2003). *Effective parent education programs.*

Health Canada (2009). *Best practices: Early intervention, outreach and community linkages for women with substance use problems - Model Program Elements.*

NH State Parent Information & Resource Centre (2008). *Parent Leadership Training.*

Parent to Parent of Virginia (2009). *Best practices for parent to parent support.*

Parenting Research (2009). *Checklist of quality practices in parenting education.*

Philadelphia Department of Human Services, Division of Community-Based Prevention Services Parenting Collaborative (2002). *Overview: Guidelines for parenting skills enhancement programs.*

Promising Practices Network (2009). *Child-Parent Centers.*

Shannon, L. C. (2009). *Best practices for parent education programs seeking to prevent child abuse.*