

TERMS OF REFERENCE

BEST START NETWORK OF SIMCOE COUNTY

VISION

Children and families in Simcoe County are well supported by a system of responsive, high-quality, accessible and increasingly integrated early years programs and services that contribute to healthy child development today and a stronger future tomorrow (Ontario Early Years Policy Framework)

MANDATE

The Best Start Network plans, implements and monitors the Best Start Vision through the promotion of the well-being of children and families by supporting them to reach their full potential. Well-being addresses the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation skills.

GOAL

Children and families in Simcoe County have equitable access to local services and programs

PRINCIPLES

The following principles will guide the development, delivery and evaluation of Early Years program and services:

- Child and family centred - meeting the unique needs of families to support developmental health and general well-being
- Welcoming - welcoming environment based on the foundations for supporting growth and long term success (Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, Expression)
- High quality - programs and services, based on research and evidence, are designed to foster positive outcomes and to support nurturing relationships
- Inclusive - programs and services are accessible and responsive to children, parents and caregivers with varying abilities and cultural, language, socio-economic, sexual orientation and religious backgrounds
 - Francophone children and families have access to French language programs
 - Indigenous children and families have access to culturally responsive programming
- Integrated - programs and services are developed, coordinated and delivered in a cohesive manner in collaboration with community stakeholders

OBJECTIVE

To achieve our goal, the Best Start Network will support the development of an integrated system of services for children and families that is seamless and responsive to local community needs. This system will serve:

- Children through coordination of services that support well-being and optimal success
- Parents and Caregivers through collaboration among providers in the delivery of information, services and resources
- Community Partners by promoting collaborative process and application of best available practices in service planning and delivery

FUNCTION OF THE BEST START NETWORK

The Best Start Network will:

- Engage in collaborative community planning that promotes implementation of the Best Start Network Vision
- Have shared accountability for integrating services and making sure that they work together to achieve the Best Start Vision.
- Establish and support (or direct, as required) sub-committees that will engage in the tasks required to implement the Best Start Network Vision.
- Build effective partnerships with families and caregivers to promote implementation of the Best Start Network Vision.
- Receive, review and advise on impacts of provincial legislation, regulation and available data as it relates to the Best Start Network Vision.
- Act as a common voice for Early Years' Service Providers in Simcoe County.
- Advocate for Early Years' Service Providers in Simcoe County
- Evaluate and Monitor to guide service system planning and to identify priorities and actions

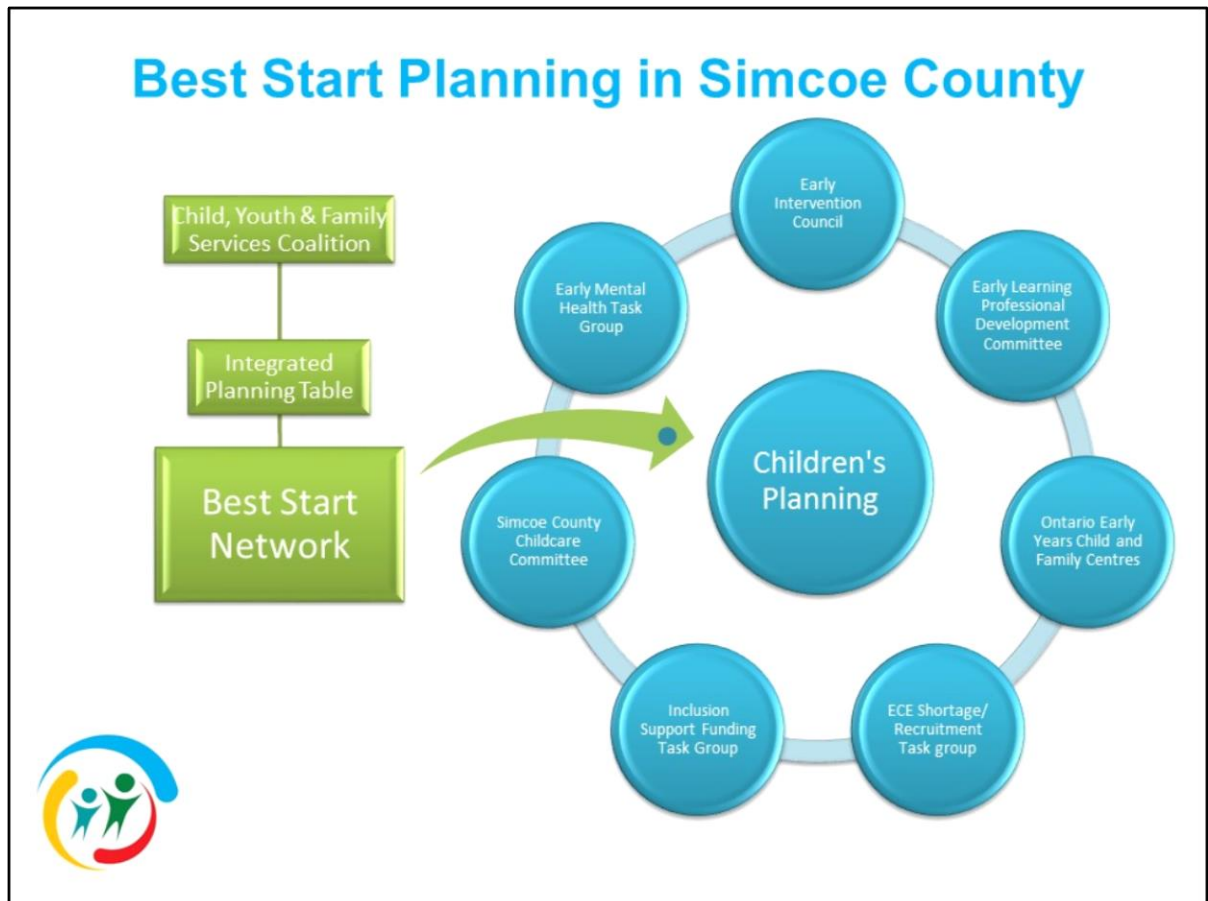
TIMEFRAME

The Best Start Network will review the Terms of Reference in January every two years at minimum.

ACCOUNTABILITIES

The Best Start Network is accountable to the County of Simcoe- Consolidated Municipal Services Manager as the Service System Manager for Early Learning and Child Care responsible for submitting an Early Years plan to the Ministry of Education as required. The Best Start Network is recognized as the Community Planning group for Early Years

system planning. The Best Start Network integrates with the Child, Youth and Family Services Coalition of Simcoe County through the Planning Table.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Local Best Start Network will reflect the unique composition of our community and a broad range of community perspectives as suggested in the list below. Participants make decisions on behalf of the organization and/or sector they represent.

A francophone member of the Best Start Network will participate on the Regional French-language network.

MEMBERSHIP:

- Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) – County of Simcoe
- Child, Youth and Family Services Coalition of Simcoe County
- Early Intervention Council Committee Member
- Simcoe County Child Care Committee Member
- Early Years Professional Development Committee Member

- ECE Shortage Recruitment Committee Member
- Inclusion Funding Task Group member
- District School Boards- French and English/Catholic and Public and School Authority
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
- Borden Military Child and Family Programs
- Early Years Services
- Simcoe County Infant Development Program
- Indigenous/Métis Services
- Francophone Services : La Clé d'la Baie
- French Language Regional Network for Central East
- Public Libraries: Barry Public Library
- Children's Treatment Network of Simcoe/York
- Children's Mental Health Services: New Path
- Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions
- Community Colleges-Early Childhood Education Program (English/French)
- Community Action Program for Children/ Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CAPC/CPNP)
- Community Action Program for Children- Aboriginal
- Preschool Speech and Language Program
- Multi-cultural services
- Ministry of Education Barrie Regional Office (non-voting)
- Central & North Simcoe Muskoka Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN)
- United Way Simcoe Muskoka
- Perinatal Mood Disorder Coordination
- Other groups as identified

Parents will be engaged through community consultation, focus groups and survey

ROLE OF THE CHAIR

The Chair ensures stability and continuity for the Best Start Network. The Chair position will be maintained by an appointed staff of the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager-County of Simcoe.

When a Co-chair position is elected it will be filled by a member of the Early Years Community that has demonstrated consistent prior participation on the Best Start Network.

The Chair(s) are spokespeople on behalf of the committee, but not specific groups. The CMSM Co-Chair will maintain a permanent position. When available, the Community Co-Chair will serve a two year term.

It is the role of the Chair to:

- Support accountability to CMSM as Service System Managers for Early Learning and Child Care and to Ministry of Education as funders for Early Years programs and services
- Participate actively in all meetings and work of the network
- Liaise with Ministry officials where required
- Ensure that minutes and motions of each meeting are distributed appropriately
- Chair the meeting in a fair and efficient manner, including starting and adjourning meetings on time
- Ensure tasks assigned are addressed within the specified time-frame established
- Ensure the minutes reflect points of discussion and record major decisions
- Provide an opportunity for all members of the Network to participate in the discussions
- Participate on Committee Task Groups as required
- Attend Symposiums/Meetings as required (Ministry of Education, MCYS, Central East Region) on behalf of the Network
- Provide updates/presentations to Community Planning groups as required by the Best Start Network
- Participate on the Child, Youth and Family Services Coalition of Simcoe County-Integrated Planning Table

ROLE OF THE PAST CO-CHAIRS

A Past Co-Chair group provides continuity to the work of the Best Start Network and may be called upon for consultation as required

ROLE OF MEMBERS

In conducting the key activities of the Best Start Network it is expected that the members of the Best Start Network will:

- Conduct business in the best interest of children and families in Simcoe County
- Act in an impartial manner
- Be prepared for each meeting by reviewing information in advance and contributing to discussions and updates
- Participate as an active and involved members (attending 70% of all Best Start Network meetings)
- Representing their respective organizations and/or sectors and communicate to and from their sector

EVALUATION OF THE BEST START NETWORK

The performance of the Best Start Network will be evaluated annually, based on many indicators such as participation, communication to stakeholders, progress on outcomes related to the Best Start Vision, work plan outcomes, etc.

MEETING FREQUENCY

The Best Start Network will meet monthly on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 9:30am -12:00pm

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Members are to ensure that they are not in conflict of interest by speaking in favour of, or recommending a course of action that may benefit them personally, and that may not be in the best interests of the communities. Members must disclose when they are in conflict of interest and remove themselves from voting.

Decisions will be made, whenever possible, through consensus. When consensus is not possible, the Chair shall call for a vote requiring 50% plus 1 of membership. A quorum of membership is determined to be 50% plus 1 of members in good standing. Proxy votes are acceptable by members in good standing.

Revised January 2017