

# Child Youth and Family Services Coalition of Simcoe County MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION

January 2020

## **Purpose**

The Child Youth and Family Services Coalition of Simcoe County (Coalition) is a collaborative entity designed to increase the effectiveness of the service delivery system in Simcoe County for children, youth and their families. As an unincorporated entity, the Coalition has no binding power over its members but exists to better coordinate their collective efforts to serve children, youth and their families. Council derives its influence from Coalition members and works through persuasion and consensus. It is essential that Coalition members continue to invest in the mission of the Coalition and to see their own interests and those of their clients well served by Coalition initiatives.

The purpose of this Memorandum of Association (MOA) is to clearly define the structure, decision making authority and scope, fiscal responsibility and membership rules of the Coalition. Legal counsel has advised that the Coalition should clarify these issues in an MOA if it chooses to remain an unincorporated entity.

In addition this MOA contains a Schedule on Integrated Working that outlines how Coalition members can work more closely together to provide a more effective service system for children, youth and their families.

**Vision** All children, youth and families thriving in a strong, nurturing community.

**Mission** To maximize the capacity, effectiveness and cultural uniqueness of the child youth and family service system through collective efforts.

## **Values**

**Integrity** (We demonstrate honesty, transparency and fairness in everything we do as a Coalition)

**Respect** (We treat each other with mutual consideration and sensitivity, recognizing the importance of diversity and inclusion)

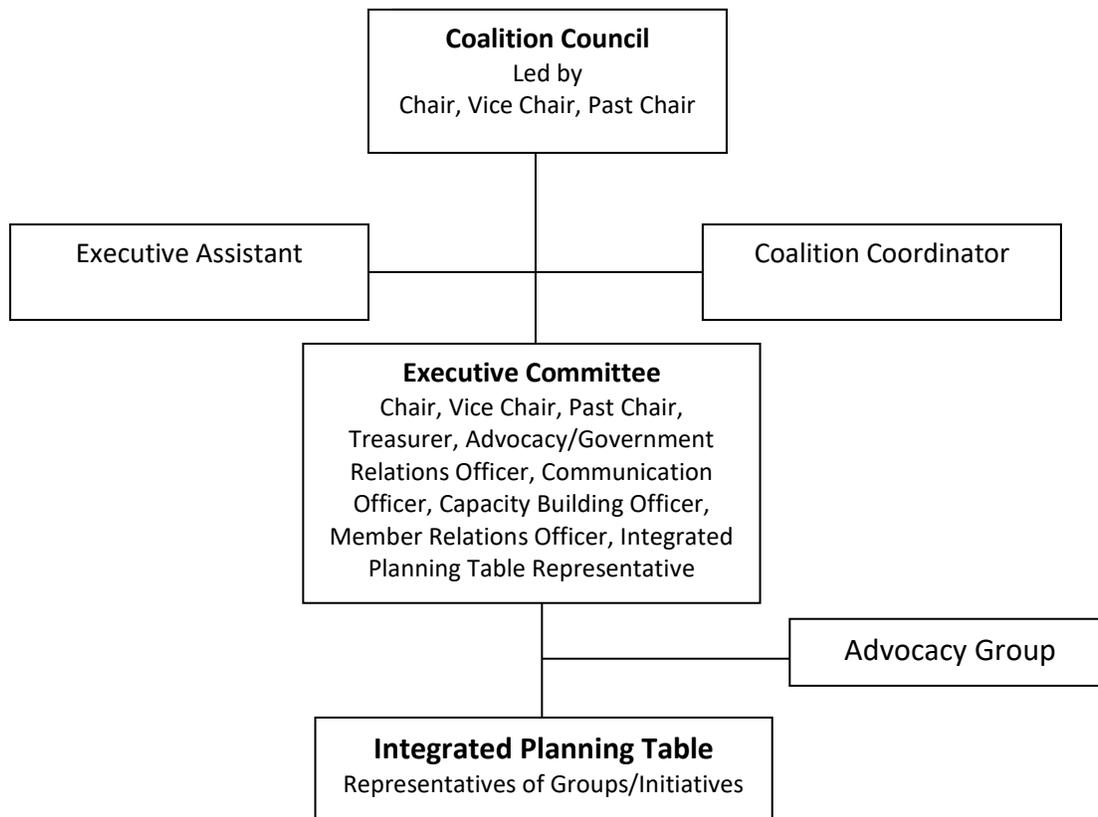
**Innovation** (We seek new approaches, capitalize on opportunities and amplify the impact of initiatives)

**Collaboration** (We work together through our Values to accomplish our Vision and Mission).

**Strategic Plan** The Coalition renews its Strategic Plan every three years in a Coalition-wide planning day. The current Strategic Plan (2018-21) includes the following four strategic directions:

1. Foster **representation and equity** by understanding and supporting the communities we serve
2. Advocate for service **system change** by forming a powerful voice
3. Advance **collective action** to improve experiences for children, youth and families
4. Build on the knowledge of individuals and organizations to strengthen **community wisdom**.

## Structure



## Decision Making, Scope of Authority

**Coalition Council** (40 members) Made up of members of the Coalition who support the Coalition's vision, mission and values, pay annual sliding scale fees, and designate an executive staff person to represent them at Council meetings five times a year.

- Advocates and supports proactive and responsive change at a system level through consensus decision making of its members.
- Primary decision-making body for Coalition policy, planning and budgeting.
- Provides leadership to set strategic priority goals and direction for the Coalition.
- Delegates decision making responsibilities and takes guidance from the Executive Committee which it empowers to research, discuss and make recommendations in the areas noted in their respective Terms of Reference.
- Creates a forum for information-sharing, networking, education and advocacy.

**Executive Committee** (9 members) Made up of the Coalition Chair, Vice Chair and Past Chair, Treasurer, Advocacy/Government Relations Officer, Communication Officer, Capacity Building Officer, Member Relations Officer and Integrated Planning Table Representative.

- Creates the support systems and manages the processes that enable the Coalition to achieve its strategic outcomes.
- Develops, implements and maintains systems to enable the Coalition to conduct business.
- Provides a forum for discussion and recommendations to Council.
- Ensures ongoing leadership of Coalition Council and Integrated Planning Table.
- Demonstrates outcomes to support strategic objectives.
- Recruitment and recommendations for retaining contracted services.
- Efficient budget and financial management.
- Manages member relations, communications and advocacy.

**Integrated Planning Table** (approximately 19 members) Engages in systemic planning and coordinates the collective efforts of community initiatives to improve the integration of the service delivery system for children, youth and families in Simcoe County. Promotes and supports planning amongst service partners to maximize impact and increase capacity within the service system by:

- Reviewing new initiatives from funders and all levels of government, identifying local impact and opportunity.
- Providing feedback and support to proposals to align with the Child Youth and Family Services Coalition (Coalition) of Simcoe County’s principles and priorities.
- Identifying gaps in services for children, youth and families in Simcoe County, facilitating discussion and developing an action plan to address the gaps.
- Identifying new opportunities for collaboration, supporting coordinated efforts amongst system partners and making recommendations for new projects or proposals to Coalition Council for approval or endorsement.
- Providing feedback and recommendations to projects or initiatives that are seeking support to align with Coalition priorities.
- Developing processes for cross sectoral protocols and pathways to service.
- Committing to system planning that incorporates the needs and goals of all children, youth and families, and includes the voice of lived experience as integral to system planning.
- Committing to system planning that is inclusive in that programs and services are accessible and responsive to children, parents and caregivers with varying abilities and cultural, race, colour, language, socio-economic, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and religious backgrounds
  - Programs and services are accessible and culturally responsive in accordance with the tenets of the Ontario Human Rights Code, with a specific focus on Indigenous, Francophone and Immigrant children, youth and families

**Fiscal Responsibility**

Since the Coalition is not an incorporated body, it cannot own property, undertake contracts, sue or be sued, or protect its members or Council from personal liability in the unlikely event of a law suit. With regard to fiscal responsibility, the Coalition must work with a member organization which is willing to act as a trustee for any funding it receives or any contracts it undertakes, including arrangements with contract staff.

Within this context, the Council has responsibility for the adoption and monitoring of an annual budget developed by Coalition contract staff in consultation with the Executive Committee. Staff are responsible for bookkeeping and reporting to the Executive Committee and Council, in consultation with the Fiscal Trustee. The Trustee organization will receive, manage and disburse funds, and undertake contracts, on behalf of the Coalition.

*Member Organization Name:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member Organization  
Chief Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child Youth and Family Services Coalition  
Chair

Please Print Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Schedule A: Membership

### Membership Eligibility

- eligible Coalition members are not-for-profit or public organizations that serve children, youth and their families (excludes for profit organizations or individuals), apply to Executive Committee for membership, support the Coalition vision, mission and values, pay sliding scale fee (\$110-8,300 plus \$100 Council meeting fee) based on portion of budget devoted to children and youth services in Simcoe County
- representatives from non-member organizations may sit on Coalition Task Groups but not on Tables or Council
- local funders are invited to sit as full members on Council, pay fees and may vote as well as signing this MOA; provincial ministries cannot become full members
- coordinators of key initiatives that are aligned with the Coalition's top priority goals may be invited to sit on Council for the duration of the initiative (no fees and no vote).

### Membership Expectations

Membership in the Coalition carries both obligations and benefits. Benefits include the opportunity to:

- work together to improve outcomes for children and youth
- receive free membership in to the Simcoe County Data Consortium which provides access to Statistics Canada enhanced reports (a \$2,000/yr value)
- have your organization's name and link to your site posted on the Coalition website and included on Coalition promotional materials such as the Members' Report
- use of the Coalition logo based on the Coalition Brand Standards
- participate in collective assessment of community need in relation to programs and services to help you build relationships and find new partners
- garner community support for new initiatives that your organization may wish to move forward
- work together to advocate for services
- create synergy of actions and continuity of service where mandates relate or overlap
- fulfill mandate and influence programming across the region.

### Obligations include

- prompt payment of annual member fees<sup>1</sup>
- commitment of a senior staff person to prepare for and attend 5 Council meetings held every other month between September and June
- active participation in Coalition strategic planning, policy development, initiatives and activities by member organizations
- represent the Coalition perspective and speak with one voice on issues of importance to the whole
- uphold a communication standard with the use of the Coalition brand and logo that is consistent with the mission, vision and values of the Coalition
- support and advocate for positions that have been developed by the Coalition.<sup>2</sup>
- be willing to support others in advocating for specific programs, positions or issues of relevance to that member organization alone.

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<sup>1</sup> Coalition effectiveness depends directly on member financial support. If a member fails to pay annual fees after the initial invoice in February and two follow up attempts in June and September, benefits of membership will be revoked (including sitting at Council or at one of the Coalition tables, website and other Coalition promotion, access to the Data Consortium)

<sup>2</sup> On a matter of principle, a member organization may not agree with all decisions being made by the Council or its Tables. The organization has a right to withdraw from participating in such decisions yet still remain part of the Coalition. The organization's representative may wish to have their difference noted in the minutes and recuse themselves from the discussion.

## Schedule B: Integrated Working

*This schedule defines guiding principles and key elements of integrated working among Coalition member organizations when working with common clients and families. It is also a platform upon which accountability agreements are based for specific initiatives that require sustained service coordination/integration and ongoing integrated working among Coalition members.*

### Purpose

The Coalition's Mission is to maximize the capacity, effectiveness and cultural uniqueness of the child, youth and family services system **through collective efforts**. Research indicates (Ref. Centre for Excellence's lit review on service integration) that more families and children will have better outcomes when:

- Services are well coordinated, integrated and strengths based
- Families clearly understand the roles and responsibilities of each participating organization
- The most streamlined, and least intrusive service delivery model is used.

### Scope

Coalition members focus integrated working on children, youth and families who are at high risk of poor outcomes, are living in or at risk of living in environments of compromised care, or for whom the universal and first stages of intervention by a single provider are not sufficient to meet the needs of the child or family. Integrated working is a continuum from simple to intensive coordination; the intensity of integrated working is based on the needs of the child/youth/family and the team members.

### Guiding Principles

1. Child safety is paramount
2. Early identification and intervention are critically important
3. Facilitate referrals to the appropriate organization or integrated initiative
4. Child/Family Centred process
5. Strengths-based (child, family and system) and anti-oppressive
6. Inter-agency collaboration, common language and approaches are required to achieve a shared and holistic understanding of a child
7. Efficient and effective intervention, grounded in evidence-based knowledge
8. Professionals and families are partners in assessment, planning, decision making, and intervention
9. Assessment is a continuing process, not a single event, carried out in parallel with other action/service provision
10. Services and supports (formal and informal) should be culturally appropriate, and reflect family values, priorities, strengths, and preferences.

### Roles and Responsibilities Related to Integrated Working

Joint work and coordination builds on and blends the mandates of all participating organizations so that a comprehensive approach can be developed for a child/youth/family that requires it. Each participating organization's systems of accountability and responsibility remain separate but the manner in which participants deliver care and service is aligned wherever possible to minimize the family/child's experience of fragmentation, duplication of effort and documentation, and to streamline care delivery. Coalition members' staff adheres to their professional code of ethics regarding responsibility to children and families and overall professional representation, including the legislated requirements related to privacy, consent and duty to report.

Integrated working is based on a **team approach** that requires members from various organizations to come together with knowledge and respect for each other's roles, knowledge and mandate, and to develop a common understanding of the child's and family's needs and strengths. The plan that is developed as a result focuses on

outcomes related to the child's safety, healthy development and wellbeing.

The team approach uses **a systematic way of gathering and analyzing information** in order to understand and record what is happening to children within their families and the wider context of the community. This leads to decisions about their needs, what actions to take and which services best meet the needs of this particular child and family.

The team gathers and evaluates information for a holistic understanding of the child and family's strengths and needs within their environmental context, using a mix of tools to gather, analyze, and cross-check information prior to developing a plan.

The team approach differs from traditional service delivery in that it **holds team members from multiple agencies equally accountable** for promoting the welfare of the child or youth that is at the centre of the plan. This shared way of thinking and understanding is likely to improve outcomes through a more efficient, creative, strength-based interagency assessment, planning and service delivery process.

The team approach and **integrated working are enabled by** Coalition members' commitment to participation in:

- a culture that brings staff together from time to time to enable the building of relationships across agencies and organizations, in local groupings
- timely inter-agency communication at all levels, from senior managers to front-line staff, such as responsiveness to requests to work together, or the use of common tools, language and documentation to facilitate the integrated work of team members
- training in the basics of inter-professional practice
- willingness to take a team lead or service co-ordinator role when appropriate to work with the family to plan, coordinate and monitor the formal and informal supports and ensure that service providers work together with the family in a comprehensive approach
- ensuring appropriate measures are in place regarding privacy and consent for integrated working
- use of common tools and frameworks that facilitate a common language and holistic, evidence-based approaches among Coalition members.

### **Accountability and Sustainability of Integrated Initiatives**

When Coalition members agree to integrated working on a long term basis, such as Suicide Prevention, FASD, or Single Plan of Care, a Memorandum of Understanding will be developed and signed by those organizations participating in that protocol, to specify the following:

- The purpose, outputs & outcomes, scope and core elements and timeframe of the initiative
- Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities of participating organizations with respect to:
  - Staffing and Supervision
  - Communication
  - Resources and Tools
  - Training
  - Documentation
  - Privacy
  - Evaluation plan
  - Leadership and an Oversight structure.

## Decision-Making and Conflict Resolution

Decision-making is done wherever possible, by consensus that is sufficient to proceed with action. In the case of specific initiatives, a lead agency may be identified that has responsibility for final decision-making within specified parameters. Conflict could arise between clients and professionals, or between professionals. Conflict resolution will be approached through the following staged progressive process:

Stage 1:

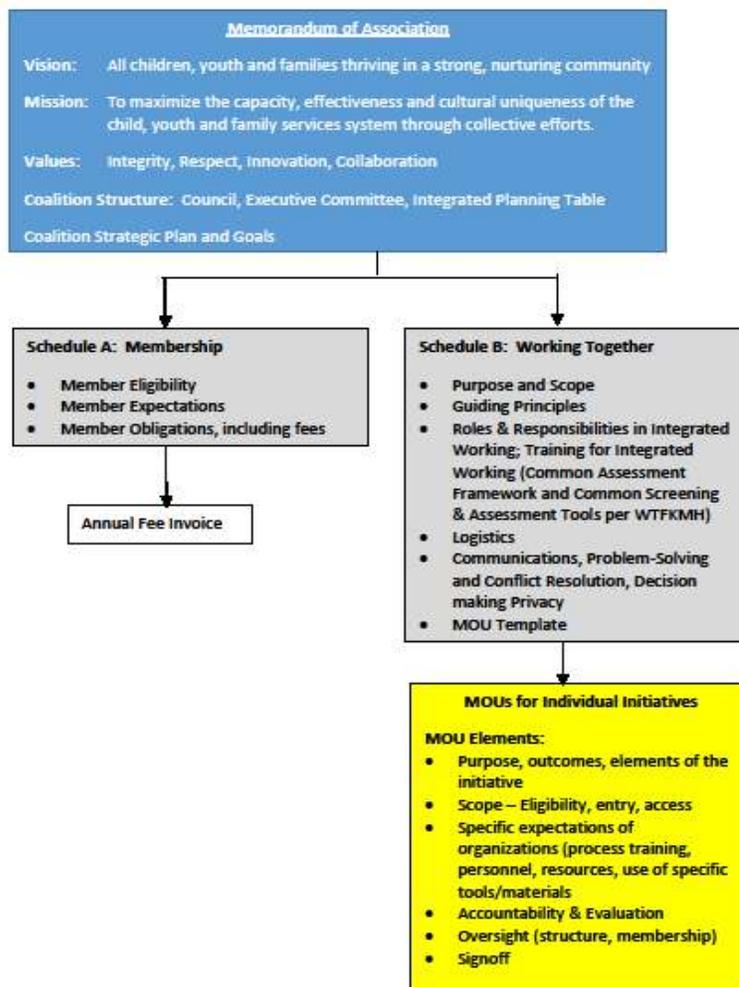
- The problem is clearly identified by the party(s) involved.
- A discussion occurs between the individuals involved to address possible solutions.
- Problem resolution occurs by building consensus on most acceptable solution, if possible.

Stage 2: If problem is not resolved after Stage 1 process:

- Communication occurs with the supervisors of the individuals involved.
- The 'team lead' supports the family using existing mechanisms (e.g. documentation, written correspondence, verbal communication).
- In the event of continued conflict between the family and the care providers, a change in care providers may be considered if possible.

Stage 3: If problem is not resolved after Stage 2 process:

- In the event of unresolved conflict between the family and the lead or care provider, a case conference is arranged (may be initiated at request of family, 'lead' and/or another team member).
- In the event of unresolved conflict between the staff and/or organizations, senior management of the respective organizations become involved.



## MOA GRAPHIC WITH SCHEDULE B