

## COVID-19 Support and Ideas Call #5 and Scenario Planning Workshop: Summary

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Following our training "Scenario Planning in Times of Change" on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 facilitated by Vantage Point, developing a strategy on how to move forward in uncertain times has been top of mind for many family resource programs (FRPs). The purpose of the Support and Ideas Call #5 on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, was to discuss ideas, questions, or concerns that have come up since this training.

Attendees at the Call #5 included a range of FRPs in terms of size, number of programs, geographical location, and type of programs. There were approx. 25 participants. Pre-registration was required for this call.



In the Scenario Planning workshop, FRPs identified these general categories as challenges for the next phase(s):

- 1. Funding Concerns**
- 2. Staffing Concerns**
- 3. COVID-19 Concerns, Pandemic Unknowns, and Stress Created**
- 4. Safety Protocols and Physical Location Constraints**

In the Support and Ideas Call #5, we discussed these challenges in further detail. This document will summarize the discussions held during the Scenario Planning workshop and the Support and Ideas Call #5 pertaining to the above-mentioned categories.

## 1. Funding Concerns

### Scenario Planning Workshop Discussion- May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

#### FRPs' Concerns:

- Present funding – what is required?
  - Current Contracts – how will they be impacted?
  - In-progress capital projects- do we proceed?
- Future funding – how or will it change over time if this pandemic continues? 2 months, 6 months, and a year?
- Need more funding as programming is taking more time/resources
- Fundraising: How will possible reduction in fundraised dollars impact programming/staffing? How will we continue fee for service operations?
- Fear of being forgotten

#### Strategies Identified:

- Money stays constant
- Adapting and communicating about deliverables
  - Talking with funders and "knowing" what they are doing- increased communication
  - "It's ok to learn" - share stories of clients and our experience doing the work
- Knowing/remembering government is still figuring out strategies and responses
- What are new partnership opportunities - spacing/staffing/delivery

### COVID-19 Support and Ideas Call Discussion- June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

**Question posed to participants:** What do you need to know from your MCFD Directors of Operations?

#### Questions/Comments from MCFD Director of Operations:

- Clarification of certain deliverables: What will the impact on funding/deliverables be?
- Changes to programming have included reduction in programming and participation
- What kind of training will become available to support front line staff re: emotional well being of families at this time, safety protocols, staff self care to prevent burn out?
- Who do we prioritize? Vulnerable, low numbers of participants or wide reach
- Not only vulnerable families, but how are we going to support healthy child development, child mental health, sense of community, their ability to play.

#### Comments from FRPs:

- One FRP's Dir of Ops has allowed for re-allocation of funding (for staffing)
- Suggestion: referrals from MCFD to FRPs

## 2. Staffing Concerns

### Scenario Planning Workshop Discussion- May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

- Differing risks and comfort levels of staff
- Summer and seasonal staff availability including students?
- Staff's need for a certain number of hours to work with factors like CERB, sick time
- Safety of staff – physical and mental
- Staff re-shuffling
- Staff expectations and guidelines re: new sick time requirements

### COVID-19 Support and Ideas Call Discussion- June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

**Question posed to participants:** WorkSafeBC guidelines- What has worked so far for your agency? Is this a funding question that FRP-BC can also take to MCFD Directors? (See [here](#) for more info on WorkSafe BC guide)

#### Questions/Concerns from FRPs:

- Which guidelines to refer to- which sector is appropriate?
- There are no guidelines specific to FRPs- childcare guidelines inadequate as the emphasis is on keeping adults out, but this is not possible for the setup of FRPs- perhaps meshing of different guidelines will be necessary
- How to work with restrictions on numbers- 1 family at a time? Issue is children want to meet other children- maybe 2 families at a time is acceptable but depends on the FRP
- Concerned about children social development- the way they are going to be interacting will be very different from a few months ago- what are the long-term impacts on development, mental health and community?

#### Attempted Strategies:

- FRP #1: Created multiple different COVID-19 Safety Plans: one for staffing, another for family visits/counseling, and another for family place- not seeing families in Family Place right now; difficulties managing spaces shared with other agency programs- lots of coordination and collaboration need with other agency programs
- FRP #2: Going to do a video to send out to parents before they come in, so they have a good idea of the changes (with translation)
- FRP #3: Asking parents to bring blankets to space around the outdoor space (park)- this will keep the family on the blanket. If that works, might transition to doing that in the family place. Note, this was going to accommodate up to 10 families. Also asking parents to bring their own pens to sign a declaration that they have no symptoms.
- Connect with community centres and libraries to get a better sense of how to handle mixed child and adult environments
- Think what works for you and your FRP- it's going to vary from FRP to FRP- need to build your protocols according to your space

### 3. COVID-19 Concerns, Pandemic Unknowns, and Stress Created

#### Scenario Planning Workshop Discussion- May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

##### Pandemic Progression:

- Next phase, 2<sup>nd</sup> wave – how to plan with these unknowns?
- What is a new normal?
- What is a reasonable reopening date?

##### Families Reactions, fear, comfort levels and impacts:

- How will families react to changes in familiar programming?
- Managing and supporting participants' responses
- What will parents choose to do?
- What will the impact be on child and family development both for individual families and for communities? The **notion of rebuilding community** and what that will look like after massive societal change.

##### Vulnerable Families:

- How do we connect? New families?
- How do we respond with services to help families with new upcoming needs?
- Are we really reaching our program outcomes via online programming?
- EDI Data – how we support families with the increasing vulnerability due to COVID19
- Social/Isolation impacts, now and future

**Note:** 100 percent of FRP-BC member survey respondents said they wanted more resources for vulnerable families. This will be a priority for FRP-BC in the coming months.

### 3. COVID-19 Concerns, Pandemic Unknowns, and Stress Created continued

#### COVID-19 Support and Ideas Call Discussion- June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

**Question posed to participants:** What have FRPs/agencies done to make sure vulnerable families, and any families, have access to your programs/services?

**Examples from FRPs:**

- Staying in touch by telephone with families (individual check ins)- one FRP mentioned that they are offering this, but the issue is that families need to know to reach out
- One-on-one in person visits with family at a distance
- Arranging for families to pick up resources
- Today was first day one our members opened their FRP under new re-opening plan (note only had 2 families at a time) and it went really well- the children did a good job of following protocols/rules, and it was clear they enjoyed it (they younger children were even better of following the rules than the older children, which is the opposite of what was expected)
- “Busy Bags”, now with food- lots of interest from families
- Offering food, hygiene, and activity hampers to families: pick up and/or delivery (one FRP received a grant for this initiative)
- Online Mother Goose- live or recorded

**Challenges/Observations from FRPs:**

- Want to use parks but permitting issues because so many people want to use parks
- New/first-time parents have been released into the community without support- one FRP has been collaborating with nurses to address this concern
- Social vulnerability is a great concern (rather than economic vulnerable)- esp. for families with only one child
- Interest in virtual programming has gone down- need to figure out different ways of engaging
- Large number of families so it is hard to contact each individually
- Different families interested in virtual programming as opposed to physical programming- How to get funding or re-allocation of funding for physical efforts that are not in line with proposal?
- Being drop-in, the caseload is not regular, so it is not possible to know who is not being reached
- How to offer Nobody’s Perfect or another program that requires trust and intimacy- hard to do online
- From larger FRP: it is huge to think of having to have 10 days off for a cold symptom, or for infants with teething fevers etc with the requirements of doctors note AND no symptoms when we have a lot of germs in our centres at all times

**Question posed to participants:** Would it be helpful for FRP-BC to form small group sub training with commonalities such as size, region, population served ...? These groups can work together to support each other and receive resources specific to their context and scenario. FRP-BC can facilitate this in various ways.

**Many responded yes, and FRP-BC will follow up to gage further interest.**

## 4. Safety Protocols and Physical Location Constraints

### Scenario Planning Workshop Discussion- May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

- Programming – constraints with existing building
- Number of families?
- What does each phase mean for FRPs (vs childcare settings)?
- When will we operate in person?
- Access to PPE – visors vs. masks?

### COVID-19 Support and Ideas Call Discussion- June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

#### Concerns/Questions from FRPs:

- Is it appropriate to ask families to wear masks in order to protect staff?
- One member suggested that the risk of a child transmitting COVID to an adult is much lower than adult to adult or adult to child when you consider that a child is shorter than an adult- their droplets won't likely travel upwards
- WorkSafeBC has indicated that masks are really only important if breaking the six feet barrier

#### Some FRPs' Approach:

- Common: Outdoor programming- community garden, farmers market, Story Walks with lit funding
- Hand sanitizer and dispenser
- FRP 1: Staff have to wear a mask if social distancing can't be maintained- will provide families with a mask but it's not mandatory- considering registering families for indoor programs instead of drop in so that it is the same people



## Resources Shared During Support and Ideas Call #5:

- [Community Foundations Grant](#)
- [WorkSafe BC COVID 19 Safety Plans Info](#)

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Please forward any questions or concerns to [admin@frpbc.ca](mailto:admin@frpbc.ca).