



COMMUNITY
SERVICES

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1.1.3 Overarching Principles

Policy Statements:

The core principles of an organization affect everything it does. They encompass ethical values, as well as matters such as creativity, innovation, continuous quality improvement and decision-making. Values influence the nature of the relationships developed with the agency's personnel, service recipients, and other stakeholders. They also affect the agency's approach to matters such as compliance with the law, financial reporting, service delivery expectations and contract deliverables.

Core Overarching Principles – These Apply to Everyone without Condition or Reservation:

1. We value honesty, fairness and integrity. We must earn the right to credibility and to provide service. We acknowledge our duty to provide high quality care, to act ethically, and to achieve excellence.
2. Our services build on the relationships we develop with participants. We respect their legal, human, privacy and service rights; treat everyone with dignity and respect, and accept them without judgment or blame.
3. We strive to develop effective working relationships with participants that are based on genuine positive regard, active participation and mutual understanding of roles, responsibilities and desired outcomes. We use multidisciplinary approaches that respect their inherent dignity and self worth, individual differences, and cultural and ethnic diversity.
4. We build on the capacities and strengths of participants. We make every effort to accommodate each individual, and creatively tailor services to their unique circumstances, learning styles and changing requirements.
5. We believe that participants have the right to participate in decisions that affect them, to make informed choices, to act on their own behalf, and have equal rights to safe and fulfilling lives.
6. We recognize that culture is an important determinant of personal behaviour and family functioning. We understand and are sensitive to the social realities of participants including issues of race, culture, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, poverty and lifestyle and how these impact their lives.
7. We champion the resilience approach. Central to the success of this approach is our firm belief in the potential for positive outcomes for participants, despite the severity or number of risk factors that they have experienced. We increase strengths and protective factors without minimizing the reality of risks and stressors – safety is always paramount.
8. We work to strengthen resilience by developing durable relationships, actively promoting positive

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expectations and facilitating real opportunities for meaningful participation and contribution.

9. We accept the onus to engage with each participant; to earn their acceptance and trust, and to achieve voluntary participation. If a strategy does not work, we change the strategy.
10. We also accept, without judgment or blame, that participants may be reluctant or resistant to accepting our services. We persevere, using engagement strategies that emphasize collaboration, practical assistance and concrete supports, and earn their trust. We do not give up.
11. We believe that problem free (the temporary reduction of external stressors) is not the same as being fully prepared. We strive to ensure that participants are fully prepared to live in their own communities and to have as normal, successful, independent and safe lives as their personal needs and circumstances allow.
12. We value one-to-one service models and use them to the greatest possible extent. Group programming is only used where there is an appropriate learning reason to do so.

Personal Development:

13. We believe that it is essential to work with participants and their families holistically. Our work is informed by current knowledge about lifespan development and evidence-based best practices.
14. Our primary emphasis is on outreach – providing services to people and to families where they are, when they are available, and when they need them.
15. We build on the willingness of people to learn and their desire to succeed. We focus on doing rather than talking, and finding practical ways to address their developmental, social, health, educational, and vocational needs. We make special efforts to improve youths' educational experiences and outcomes, and emphasize, for all youth, the importance of literacy and numeracy.
16. We maintain a similar approach to assisting participants to prepare for employment, and to seek and maintain work when appropriate to their circumstances.
17. We believe that participants need to be able to participate in the full range of social and recreational activities. We assist them to access these resources so that they have opportunities to experience success, to develop positive peer and adult relationships, and to build a stronger sense of personal identity and connection with others.
18. We assist participants to learn, develop, mature, and increase their self-reliance and engage in their communities. We teach life and community survival skills, and how to live lives free of abuse, injury, harm, neglect and victimization. We structure opportunities for participants to engage in safe and constructive activities.
19. We reintegrate into their families and communities participants who have become disengaged due to victimization, addictions, mental illness, being in care or involvement in the justice system. Our intentions are to move towards remaining at home, returning home or to independent living as appropriate.
20. Our service goal is always to move towards a healthier living and functioning, and to leave the service system. All participants are entitled to the least intervention necessary, consistent with their needs and public safety. They are entitled to stability and sufficient time to allow the attainment of realistic goals.

Mentoring:

21. We believe that providing the opportunity to develop a supportive and enduring relationship with a Volunteer Mentor will increase their resilience to the risk factors they may face in their lives.

22. Our primary focus is to assist Volunteer Mentors in finding ways to successfully engage the participants they are assigned to in weekly activities that are fun, provide a sense of personal achievement and success, reinforce their strengths and create new interests.
23. We are committed to selecting Volunteer Mentors based on their demonstrated ability to accept people unconditionally, develop caring relationships based on mutual trust, and model pro-social attitudes and behaviours.
24. We recognize that the continuing success of this program is due to the outstanding commitment of time and energy that the Volunteer Mentors have been willing to make, and the power of positive and meaningful relationships.

Living with Us:

25. We are committed to ensuring safe, comfortable, and welcoming environments in family settings in the community that promote the best interests of each participant.
26. We believe that individuals who for a variety of reasons, cannot live independently are entitled to as much choice, independence and self-determination as their health and legal circumstances allow. We adapt to their personal preferences, changing capacities and needs for support and supervision.
27. We believe that a home should be built around the individual preferences of participants, and that they should have as much discretion as possible regarding its location, characteristics, amenities and other participants.
28. We believe that each participant is entitled to, and should be encouraged to live life to the fullest possible and with the greatest degree of personal freedom. We respect and accommodate the cultural and religious backgrounds of participants and their families.
29. We tailor services around individual health, social, safety, educational, recreational and transportation needs, and accommodate physical and mental abilities. We provide access to cultural, educational and recreational community resources.

Advocacy:

30. We acknowledge our role as advocates for individual and systemic change. We make every effort to promote public policies that support the health, safety and well-being of the community and its members.
31. We believe that every participant must be supported to maximize their potential within their community. Opportunities for success should not be limited by prejudice or discrimination, or by their inability to access assistance when this is needed to overcome significant challenges.
32. We support peer advocacy and mutual support and encourage participants' involvement in advocacy networks. We have a responsibility to support participants to develop these networks and to assist them to build the skills and capacity to ensure that their voices are effective and sustained.

Community:

33. We accept that we have a responsibility to be an active and contributing member of the communities we serve. We are committed to developing relationships that are grounded in mutual respect, and to behave in ways that earn the trust of participants, our funders, members, donors, and the neighbourhoods and communities we work in.

34. We value the diversity of the traditions, values and behavioral norms within our community. Our work is culturally sensitive and appropriate. We support and work with organizations that are representative of the social realities of participants.
35. We believe that to reduce multiple risks and enhance protective factors in the community we must build and maintain strong links to First Nations, schools, health services, recreation facilities, cultural and faith groups, voluntary and service organizations, businesses, and other community networks.
36. We rely on participants to provide us with advice and suggestions to develop innovative approaches to delivering and enhancing our services.
37. We are committed to relationships with our colleagues in the community that are based on cooperation, honesty, mutual respect, equality, and a firm commitment to the best interests of participants.
38. We promote cooperative partnerships based on shared beliefs, values and equitable power sharing.
39. We value cooperative and respectful working relationships with referring and funding authorities, other agencies and advocates.
40. We value our agency's independent point of view and our ability to remain true to our vision, mission and core beliefs.

Our Employees, Volunteers and Family Caregivers:

41. We recognize that our employees, volunteers and family caregivers are at the heart of all our programs. We have profound respect for their passion and dedication to participants. The continuing success of our programs is directly related to our collective determination to achieve excellence.
42. We are committed to ensuring a positive work environment where everyone treats each other with dignity, respect and kindness. Every effort is made to make sure that everyone has a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities, is supported in their work, valued for their contributions and recognized for their achievements.
43. We believe that strong employment relationships are fundamental to the integrity of our work and our reputation as a progressive agency. We strive to work in ways that actively support these relationships, encourage collaboration, and build a sense of engagement throughout the agency.
44. We believe that our diversity is a key strength of our agency and the primary source of cohesion. We are committed to the open exchange of ideas, worldviews and disciplines; understanding different perspectives and approaches, encouraging innovation and being on the cutting edge of best practices.
45. We are dedicated to continuous learning throughout the agency. Ensuring that everyone is provided with opportunities to improve their practice and acquire new knowledge is a priority for us. We promote both formal and informal approaches to learning and continuous quality improvement.

Our Management Team:

46. We believe that the management team has a heightened duty of care and excellence. This is vital because of the nature of the challenges that participants face and the hope held out by our programs.
47. We proactively support our personnel in all aspects of their work and strive to be an employer of choice. We recognize the responsibility to lead the agency, manage our resources, mitigate risk, discharge our legal obligations and be accountable to participants and our funders.

48. We are attentive to the processes and controls that protect the privacy of individuals, ensure accountability for services delivered, manage risks and maintain organizational integrity.
49. We value the flexibility and capacity for innovation that we have built into our agency. While the ability to adapt to changing service needs is one of our key strengths, ensuring the consistent quality of our services is of paramount importance.
50. We believe that growth is beneficial, but not growth at any price, and not so much growth that it impairs our focus. We will work cooperatively with funders and other service providers to build partnerships and alliances.
51. We are nimble in responding to opportunities and we take the initiative to implement best practices, and promote continuous learning and improvement. We embrace change that is focused on positive outcomes.
52. We ensure value for money and we are accountable for how we spend the funds entrusted to us.
53. We value the public trust placed in our agency.