Updated Guidelines (Fall 2012)
Early Child Development Planning Funding
Ministry of Children and Youth Services


<u>Section One. Overview of Updated Early Child Development Planning Funding Model</u>

Early Child Development (ECD) Planning Funding has been distributed to communities to support community planning in the child and family services sector since 2005. Starting with the 2013/2014 fiscal year, the process used to distribute this funding is being updated. Communities will now receive ECD Planning funding allocations according to their stage in the Community Planning Framework.

There are six stages in the Community Planning Framework:
1. Network Building: the community is building relationships and a commitment to collaborative planning;
2. Analysis and Preparation: the community is working to build a common understanding of their resources, strengths and needs;
3. Community Planning: the community is developing a plan for a child and family services system;
4. Implementation and Testing: the community is testing and refining key components of their community plan;
5. System Building: the community is developing and testing processes for a local child and family services system; and
6. Child and Family Services System: the community is operating a dynamic, integrated local child and family services system.

The Community Planning Framework (Appendix A) includes activities that must be completed and submitted by community planning networks to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to mark completion of each stage in the framework. The complete list of community planning activities is provided in the Table 1 below.

This document describes each of the Community Planning Framework deliverables. The templates for deliverables #2 through #8 are included in the attached appendices. Templates for deliverable #1 are being provided to communities in a separate package.

Products #3 through #12 must be 'community endorsed' before they are submitted to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. The requirement for community endorsement is intended to ensure broad-based community support for the deliverable content. Communities should be working toward consensus-based plans and decisions that include the full range of providers in the child and family services sector. The community endorsement process will document the level of agreement within the community and act as an assurance to the ministry that the materials have been developed by community service providers at large. Details about the community endorsement process are included in Section 3, starting on page 8.

Table 1. Complete List of Community Planning Framework Deliverables

| | Deliverable Name | Deliverable Phase | Funding available **on completion** of deliverable(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Review of planning funding since 2008 | Required by all communities to receive ECD Planning Funding in 2013/2014 | 50% |
| 2 | Review of organizations by service functions | | |
| 3 | Community planning strategy | Network Building phase | 75% |
| 4 | Planning network structure and leadership team | | |
| 5 | Community vision for child and family services | | |
| 6 | Functional analysis of current programs, services and supports | Analysis and Preparation phase | 100% |
| 7 | Analysis of community strengths and needs | | |
| 8 | Community plan for child and family services | Community Planning phase | 100% |
| 9 | Process evaluation of major component of community plan | Implementation and Testing phase | 100% |
| 10 | Critical review and refinement of community plan (based on initial implementation period) | | |
| 11 | Community governance structure | System Building phase | 100% |
| 12 | Community-level system funding strategy | | |

Section Two. Description of Community Planning Framework Deliverables

1.  **Review of Early Child Development Planning Funding Since 2008**
    The Ministry of Children and Youth Services is conducting a review of Early Child Development Planning Funding to help the ministry understand how planning funding has been used in the past.  The review is being conducted in two phases in the 2012/2013 fiscal year.  Materials for this review are being distributed to communities in a separate correspondence.


2.  **Review of Organizations by Service Functions (Appendix B)**
    The Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and its partner ministries, are committed to improving the quality of services for children and families by improving access, enhancing information and referral functions, and streamlining access to specialized supports.  The creation of a services system requires the participation of providers and organizations from across the child and family services sector.  This activity is designed to help identify the broad scope of organizations that should participate in, and/or be informed about, community planning and innovation activities occurring in your community.

    The template provides a list of service functions that play a role in a seamless child and family services system.  For each function, list the organizations in your community that deliver programs, services or supports related to the function.  An organization may be listed more than once, if they provide programs, services or supports related to more than one function.


3.  **Community Planning Strategy (Appendix C)**
    Findings from the 2011/2012 Community Action Research project highlighted that communities who had made significant progress toward developing and implementing a community-based plan for integrated child and family services had used similar approaches.  These communities worked hard to apply an inclusive, transparent community development approach that sought to reach consensus wherever possible.  Being open and inclusive from the beginning, allowed them to engage a wide variety of organizations in the child and family services sector and minimized implementation delays.  These leading communities also demonstrated a commitment to communicating information about the community and the community planning process; many used virtual tools to facilitate broad access to meeting minutes, reports and evaluations and to allow virtual conversations about key issues.

    The template asks your network to describe a community planning strategy that aligns with the principles identified in the research:
    a. inclusive and transparent;
    b. community development approach;
    c. commitment to open communication; and
    d. consensus-based whenever possible.

4. **Planning Network Structure and Leadership Team (Appendix D)**
   Effective local leadership was identified as one of the primary facilitators of effective community planning and progress toward integrated child and family services in the 2011 Community Action Research project. Leaders can come from any organization and any role in the community. They possess the skills and capacity to engage partners, resolve conflicts, build consensus, set priorities and build the capacity of others in the community. Ideally, leadership is demonstrated by multiple partners in the community, creating a leadership team of people who have the vision and knowledge to help move the community forward. Research findings suggest it is best if leaders (e.g. planning network chairs, subcommittee chairs, spokespersons) are selected by the community and these appointments are reviewed on a regular basis (e.g. bi-annually).

   The template asks your network to describe the structure of the community planning network including the approach to membership and the role of subcommittees. The template also asks for information about the selection of chairs and strategies to support leadership development.

5. **Community Vision for Child and Family Services (Appendix E)**
   The Ministry of Children and Youth Services is committed to improving services for children and youth. The ministry is working toward the creation of a child and family services system that provides effective, timely and seamless services for children and families. This template asks your network to articulate a common vision for integrated child and family services in your community. The vision should align with core concepts of the Best Start Strategy and the update on Child and Family Centres (June 2011, see http://beststart.children.gov.on.ca/all-publications/).

6. **Functional Analysis of Current Programs, Services and Supports (Appendix F)**
   The sixth activity builds on work completed for deliverable #2 – Review of Organizations by Service Functions. This activity asks networks to analyze and discuss how service functions are provided in the community. The template prompts the community to explore overlaps, gaps and opportunities across the child and family services sector. The discussions and key findings from this activity should inform the community plan for a child and family services system.

   A number of communities have already conducted similar analyses. In these communities, pictorial representations have proven helpful for facilitating conversation. For example, as part of 2011 Community Action Research - Community Integration Leaders project, the Sudbury Best Start Network created a figure that showed programs, services and support, both within functions and also across the range of service intensity (see the report, 'Sudbury #2 Web Summary' at http://beststart.children.gov.on.ca/learning-through-doing/). Data analysis coordinators may be able to support the completion of this deliverable.

**7. Analysis of Community Strengths and Needs (Appendix G)**

Building a common understanding of the community's resources, strengths and needs is an important building block for the development of a community plan for child and family services. Many communities have already engaged in activities to better understand their strengths and challenges. The template prompts networks to explore, discuss and submit information about community characteristics. Communities are encouraged to add additional information that may be unique to their population, geography, history, etc. Data analysis coordinators may have information that could help support the completion of this deliverable.

**8. Community Plan for Child and Family Services (Appendix H)**

A major milestone of the Community Planning Framework is the development of a local plan for an integrated child and family services system. The community plan may reference the previous activities, such as Deliverable #6 - Functional Analysis of Current Programs, Services and Supports and Deliverable #7- Analysis of Community Strengths and Needs, to describe a plan for the future. The plan should chart the course forward for your community, while also providing more detailed information about core activities and a timeline for key milestones.

Integration of services means organizations in the community operate as a single system, using tools and processes to align and coordinate services in such a way as to minimize the transitions between providers and provide a seamless service experience for children and families. The InFocus discussion paper 'Defining Integration' proposes a preliminary definition of integration (see http://beststart.children.gov.on.ca/infocus/).

Integration is a key strategy for achieving a child and family services system; however, there are other important concepts to also consider, such as:
- improving access to services and streamlining access to specialized supports, in particular;
- strengthening links to other community-based resources, such as libraries, community centres, health care and language services for newcomers; and
- minimizing the burden on families to 'tell their story' or participate in multiple screens and assessments.

The template prompts networks to think about specific aspects of a child and family services system. Networks are asked to submit a community plan that addresses the key questions listed on the template.

## 9. Process Evaluation of Major Component of Community Plan

Making the leap from planning to the implementation of core components of the plan can be a difficult step.  In some respects, planning is a 'safe' process, while implementation of the plan will often require changes to the roles, processes or activities of service providers.  Deliverables #9 and #10 of the Community Planning Framework demonstrate the community's ability to implement, evaluate and critically review core components of the community plan.  Accomplishing these activities demonstrates the community's capacity to leverage a community plan into real changes and improvements for children and families.  Achieving this important milestone should be celebrated in the community.

There is no template for this deliverable.  Communities should discuss their strategy to implement and evaluate a component of their community plan with their regional program supervisor.  (The implementation of minor processes or activities may not meet the requirements for this deliverable.)  Communities should determine the format for submitting this deliverable to the ministry through consultation with their program supervisor.

## 10. Critical Review and Refinement of the Community Plan

It is important to review and critically reflect on a plan after an initial implementation period.  A fully functioning child and family services system is a dynamic system that has the on-going ability to monitor and analyze information about its functioning, then adjust processes and activities accordingly to maximize outcomes for children and families.  After an initial implementation period (suggested period of one year), networks are asked to critically review and update the community plan to incorporate evaluation findings and emergent strategies.

There is no template for this deliverable.  Ministry staff will discuss this deliverable with communities following the submission and approval of their community plan.  Communities should determine the format for submitting this deliverable to the ministry through consultation with their program supervisor.

## 11. Community Governance Structure

Governance is the structure, partner roles, policies, expectations, accountability requirements and decision-making processes that will collectively manage a local child and family services system.  (For more on local governance of a child and family service system, see the report 'London Final Web Summary' at http://beststart.children.gov.on.ca/learning-through-doing/).

Communities who are preparing for conversations about governance have already developed a community plan to move toward a child and family services system and have demonstrated the ability to implement and evaluate a major component of their plan.  These leading communities are invited to continue progressing toward a locally managed child and family services system by developing a local governance

structure for their services system.  Communities should contact their regional program supervisor if they are interested in completing this deliverable.


**12. Community-Level System Funding Strategy**

Beyond governance, the other major element of managing a child and family services system is determining how to maximize the available funding envelope to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and families.  This is the final deliverable to be achieved for communities to advance toward local management of their child and family services system.  The ministry is open to conversations about changes to how local programs, services and supports are funded provided the funding strategy meets government standards for transparency and accountability.  All organizations impacted by funding changes must endorse the proposed funding strategy. Communities should contact their regional program supervisor if they are interested in completing this deliverable.

Section Three. Community Endorsement Process

Communities should be working toward consensus-based plans and decisions that include the full range of providers in the child and family services sector. The requirement for community endorsement is intended to ensure broad-based community support for material that is submitted to the ministry. The community endorsement process will document the level of agreement within the community and act as an assurance to the ministry that the materials represent the values and opinions of community service providers at large.

Deliverables #3 to #12 must be community endorsed. A deliverable will be considered community endorsed when 75% of child and family services partners support, and agree, with the content of the product.

Community endorsement can be determined in a number of ways.

Preferred Community Endorsement Process
The simplest option is to have at least 75% of child and family services partners (see deliverable #2 to help generate the list) approve the deliverable content. This option would be appropriate for small- to medium-sized communities.

Endorsement could be demonstrated through:
- an approval sheet with signatures from community partners (showing name, title, organization, date) attached to the deliverable template, or;
- endorsement letters indicating support for the deliverable content from partner organizations.

Alternative Endorsement Process
For very large communities, an alternative endorsement process may be more appropriate. In lieu of endorsement from individual service partners, these communities can demonstrate broad community endorsement by demonstrating support for deliverable content from groups of partners (e.g. neighbourhood network tables, sector specific network groups, etc).

The intention of the community endorsement requirement is to ensure broad-based community support for each step in the path toward integrated services. The ministry recognizes that communities across Ontario are very diverse and one process will not work for all communities. The ministry is open to discussing other options for demonstrating community agreement with deliverable content.

Appendix A. Community Planning Framework

| Readiness Stage | **Network Building** | **Analysis and Preparation** | **Community Planning** | **Implementation and Testing** | **System Building** | **Child and Family Services System** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Description of Stage | building relationships and a commitment to collaborative planning | building common understanding of the community's resources, strengths and needs | developing a community plan for a child and family services system | testing and refining key components of the community plan | developing and testing processes for a local child and family services system | operating a dynamic, integrated local child and family services system |
| Required Planning Stage Deliverables | i. Community planning strategy<br>ii. Planning network structure and leadership team<br>iii. Community vision for child and family services | i. Functional analysis of current programs, services and supports<br>ii. Analysis of community strengths and needs | i. Community plan for child and family services | i. Process evaluation of at least one major component of community plan<br>ii. Critical review and refinement of community plan | i. Community governance structure<br>ii. Community-level system funding strategy | ~ Annual monitoring reports |
| Community Planning Funding Allocation | 50% of total available funding allocation | 75% of total available funding allocation | 100% of total available funding allocation | 100% of total available funding allocation | 100% of total available funding allocation | 100% of total available funding allocation |
| Additional Funding Options | Eligible for Innovation Fund grants for special projects ($25K per project) | | | Eligible for Innovation Fund or Community Integration Leader grants ($25K to $200K per project) | | |

| Early Child Development Planning Funding Deliverables - Appendix B |
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| Region | |
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| Network | |

| Phase | Required by all communities to receive ECD planning funding in 2013/2014 |
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| **Deliverable #2** | **Review of Organizations by Service Functions** |
| Description | This template provides a list of service functions that play a role in a seamless child and family services system.<br><br>For each function, list the organizations in your community that deliver programs, services or supports related to the function. An organization may be listed more than once, if they provide programs, services or supports related to more than one function. |

| Service Function | Organization Name |
|---|---|
| Child care services | |
| Child protection/child welfare | |
| Early learning/primary education | |
| Family support/home visiting | |
| Information resources | |
| Links to community partners | |
| Literacy and communication | |
| Nutrition programs and services | |
| Parent support/parent participation | |

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|---|---|
| Physical activity and recreation | |
| Play-based learning | |
| Pre-/post-natal support | |
| Professional development | |
| Screening and early identification | |
| Specialized supports | |
| Other: | |
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| | **Early Child Development Planning Funding Deliverables - Appendix C** |
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| Region | |
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| Network | |

| Phase | Network Building |
|---|---|
| **Deliverable #3** | **Community Planning Strategy** |
| Description | This template asks your network to describe a community planning strategy that aligns with the principles identified in the research:<br>    a. inclusive and transparent<br>    b. community development approach<br>    c. commitment to open communication<br>    d. consensus-based whenever possible |

| Describe the composition of your network. |
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| |
| How do providers become members and/or active participants in your planning network? |
| |
| Describe your planning strategy.  How do community partners participate in the planning process? |
| |
| How are decisions made?  What is the mechanism to ensure community agreement? |
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| What is your strategy to communicate information about the planning process and decisions made by the network to all providers in your community? |
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| **Early Child Development Planning Funding Deliverables - Appendix D** | |

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| Region | |
| Network | |

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| Phase | Network Building |
| **Deliverable #4** | **Planning Network Structure and Leadership Team** |
| Description | The template asks your network to describe the structure of the community planning network and the role of subcommittees. The template also asks for information about the section of chairs and strategies to support leadership development. |

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| Describe the structure of the network. (Attach the current Organizational Chart if available.) |
| |
| What is the role of subcommittees?  What is their reporting relationship to the 'main' network table?  How do subcommittees communicate information about their work to the broader network? |
| |
| Describe the process for developing, approving and updating your Terms of Reference. When was it last reviewed/updated? (Attach the current Terms of Reference if available.) |
| |
| How are leaders (chairs/co-chairs, project leads) selected? What are the term lengths for leadership positions? |
| |
| How does the network support leadership development? |
| |

| Early Child Development Planning Funding Deliverables - Appendix E |
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| Region | |
|---|---|
| Network | |

| Phase | Network Building |
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| **Deliverable #5** | **Community Vision for Child and Family Services** |
| Description | The template asks your network to articulate a common vision for child and family services in your community. |

| What is your community's vision for child and family services? |
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| Describe the process used to develop your vision. |
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| What is the process for periodic review of your vision? |
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| When was the vision statement last reviewed / revised? |
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| **Early Child Development Planning Funding Deliverables - Appendix F** |
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| Region | |
|---|---|
| Network | |

| Phase | Analysis and Preparation |
|---|---|
| **Deliverable #6** | **Functional Analysis of Current Programs, Services and Supports** |
| Description | This activity builds on information gathered for Deliverable #2 - Review of Organizations by Service Functions.  Using the information from Deliverable #2, networks are asked to analyze and discuss how service functions are provided in the community.  Information about duplication, gaps and opportunities across the child and family services sector should be used to inform the community plan for an integrated child and family services system. |

| Provide a graphic or pictorial representation(s) of programs and services by function in your community.  What are the key findings from the analysis of the representation(s)? |
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| |
| Is there an appropriate mix of universal (available to all children and families) and targeted (intended for specific populations) programs and services across service functions? Describe. |
| |
| Are diverse cultural and linguistic groups effectively supported across all service functions? |
| |
| Are there potentially overlapping programs and services in your community? Are there gaps in programs and services in your community? |
| |
| What are the opportunities and immediate priorities for the community to address duplication and gaps in services? |
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| **Early Child Development Planning Funding Deliverables - Appendix G** |
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| Region | |
|---|---|
| Network | |

| Phase | Analysis and Preparation |
|---|---|
| **Deliverable #7** | **Analysis of Community Strengths and Needs** |
| Description | Building a common understanding of the community's resources, strengths and needs is an important building block for the development of a community plan. The template prompts networks to explore, discuss and submit information about the community that would influence the network's priorities and plan for integrated child and family services. |

| Describe the population of your community, including number of families and children, projected growth, family structure, languages, housing, mobility, etc. |
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| |

| What are the socio-economic characteristics of your community, including the education, employment and income characteristics of families? |
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| Based on population characteristics, are there neighbourhoods or parts of your community that have more risk factors affecting children's early development? Describe. |
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| Describe the Early Development Instrument (EDI) results for your community. Are there neighbourhoods or parts of your community with a greater percentage of children vulnerable on one or more domain of the EDI? |
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| |

| What other information is available to describe your community (e.g. Kindergarten Parent Survey, birth data, crime data, administrative data from programs, etc)? What are the key findings or results from these data sources? |
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## Early Child Development Planning Funding Deliverables - Appendix H

| Region | |
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| Network | |

| Phase | Community Planning Phase |
|-------|--------------------------|
| **Deliverable #8** | **Community Plan for Child and Family Services** |
| Description | This template asks your community planning network to describe your plan to develop an integrated child and family services system.  Using the format of your choice, please respond to the following questions. |

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| How will your community ensure information about child and family programs, services and supports is accurate, reliable and easy to find for parents, caregivers and professionals? |
| How will your community make it easy for families to find and access the services they want and need? |
| How will children and families be seamlessly connected across different programs and services in the integrated services system? |
| How will you minimize the number of times families are asked to provide information? How will you minimize the number of times children must complete similar screening or assessment tools? |
| How will the integrated system respect the diverse needs of different populations? |
| Does your plan for integrated services include delivery of multiple services at a shared physical location (permanent or occasional)? If yes, describe what service functions would be co-located and the types of facilities/buildings that will house the co-located services. |
| What information technology tools and structures are required to support your integrated system? |
| What are the next steps your community will take in the next 12 – 24 months to implement your plan for integrated services? |
| What are the key innovations or solutions that must still be developed to fully realize your plan for an integrated child and family services system? |