



**Manitoulin/Sudbury DSB Network &
City of Greater Sudbury Best Start Network
Community Action Research Project
Expression of Interested**

September 7, 2012

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION LEADERS Expression of Interest Form					
Community Names:	City of Greater Sudbury (CGS) & Manitoulin/Sudbury DSB Best Start Networks				
Best Start Network Chair(s):	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Lois Mahon, Chairperson CGS Best Start Network Child Care Resources lmahon@childcare.on.ca (705) 525-0055 </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Megan Dumais, Vice-Chair CGS Best Start Network Sudbury District Health Unit dumaism@sdhu.com (705) 522-9200 </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="vertical-align: top;"> Jane Bauer, Chairperson MANITOULIN/SUDBURY DSB Best Start Network Children’s Community Network jbauer@ccnsudbury.on.ca (705) 566 5866 </td> </tr> </table>	Lois Mahon, Chairperson CGS Best Start Network Child Care Resources lmahon@childcare.on.ca (705) 525-0055	Megan Dumais, Vice-Chair CGS Best Start Network Sudbury District Health Unit dumaism@sdhu.com (705) 522-9200	Jane Bauer, Chairperson MANITOULIN/SUDBURY DSB Best Start Network Children’s Community Network jbauer@ccnsudbury.on.ca (705) 566 5866	
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<p>X INTER-PROFESSIONAL WORK CULTURE: developing processes, tools and training plans to develop and instill an inter-professional work culture across the child and family services sector.</p>					

Community Response
<p>1. How would you describe your community? (e.g. rural, urban, northern, remote, Aboriginal, Francophone, newcomer, low income etc.) (150 words)</p>
<p>The Manitoulin/Sudbury DSB catchment surrounds the City of Greater Sudbury. Though both have a unique make-up, many Network similarities are noted, most significantly, that the memberships include most of the same agencies, and we both work under the Partners for Children & Youth Committee. This committee mandate is to have both districts come together to co-ordinate and integrate seamless services. Our two Best Start Networks also share both the Specialized Services Committee and the Emergent Literacy Committee. Professional development and capacity building is the perfect project for collaborative work!</p> <p>The Manitoulin/Sudbury DSB represents a catchment of 45,000 square km’s comprised of 20 distinct communities with a total population of 28,025. It includes LaCloche, Manitoulin, Sudbury North, and Sudbury East. The City of Greater Sudbury is a northern urban centre with a population of 157,857 with over 27% of the population indicating French as their mother tongue, 38.9% of the population identifying themselves as bilingual, and 6.15% self-identified as Aboriginal.</p>

The Manitoulin/Sudbury DSB supports 11 school based child care centres, with two additional sites under development, and 4 Best Start Hubs with extensive outreach to surrounding communities. CGS has 21 child care centres across 82 sites and 14 Best Start Hubs with 2 additional Hubs under development. All our schools offer a full day of kindergarten, with almost half of those designated as FDK sites and one school board independently offers Extended Day and Before & After School Care. All are challenged with competition to hire RECEs with a drastic shortage, transient employee habits and lack of purposeful planning with management teams, boards of directors and curriculum. RECE are expected to be knowledgeable about the ELECT document, skilled in observation, documentation, and emergent curriculum. Others working in the sector, also have high expectation for knowledge and skills, with little if any support and training. This project would begin to address these challenges.

2. Briefly describe two examples that indicate a high level of integration among service providers in your community. (1000 words)

The service providers in our communities have demonstrated a high level of integration in many ways, most significantly within the Hub-child care-school relationship and in our collaborative model in providing parents with a single source of information and access to service.

In CGS, this hub-child care-school relationship is made up of a system of 14 hubs and 61 in-school child care sites, all within our 67 elementary schools. The Hubs are operated by 5 separate agencies which work together for French, English and aboriginal program distribution. All 14 hubs share promotional materials and attend community events on behalf of the system of hubs; they share professional development opportunities and are represented at the CGS Best Start Network as one, through a strong and active Hub Managers' Committee. In the Manitoulin/Sudbury DSB area, there are 4 Best Start Hubs, operated by 3 separate agencies. Both districts, use the same data collection system and are able to generate reports individually or as one. Many children service agencies and schools boards provide services across both districts.

Child care in our communities had a massive in-school expansion with the introduction of Best Start. They have collaborated with their funder to address child care priorities and, in CGS, uphold ELECT-based standards by participating in a quality assurance program. Child care operators have been extremely flexible with accommodating families and schools to provide wrap-around, B & A, and third-party care while maintaining standards for children less than 3.8 years of age. The CGS Early Learning & Child Care Supervisors' and EDs' Networks, collectively as a group and individually, have worked closely with schools and Best Start Hubs to support parents with school readiness, supported transitions into kindergarten, school registration, Welcome To Kindergarten, parent education and family activities. The CGS EDs' Network has established a Continuous Quality Improvement Strategy which facilitates the identification of community-wide professional needs including training, mentoring and recruitment/retention and both Best Start Networks have agreed to implement this strategy across the combined area, making PD available to all service providers. In Manitoulin/Sudbury, the Early Learning Supervisors' Network is working on many of the same projects. In 2011, a Local Child Care Employee Retention Survey was developed and the Networks will reflect on the results with their partners to facilitate change.

The French school boards have had full time kindergarten for 12 years, so when FDK was introduced, our English boards implemented a full time schedule as well. Each school board had the FDK program in the designated schools as set out by EDU, but one French board implemented FDK in all its schools at the onset. The introduction of this new program and extended hours to kindergarten, along with hiring RECEs and new space requirements, had most schools working closely with their on-site child care and Best Start Hubs. Schools have invited these community partners to kindergarten staff team training whenever possible. Neighbourhood Teams are being established in each of CGS's neighbourhoods and principals from all boards are coming together to participate with their community partners.

Co-location has fostered strong ties at the neighbourhood level and our Best Start Network's connectivity and commitment has lead to great examples of system-wide integration such as our new Best Start website. Our website, which will be launched officially this fall, includes topic based information, a community calendar, subscription to email information service and an 'Ask Us' option.

The information is a collection of parent-friendly topics, collected in a standard format from partners committed to this single site access for parents. Each topic is linked to expert websites, calendar events and related topics of interest. The topics were 'assigned' to partners according to their expertise and in doing this, a shared ownership was created. Each expert partner agency is responsible for the accuracy and ongoing review of that topic. Though this is a CGS initiative, with share agencies and services, the website is appropriate for families across both areas.

There is also a collective calendar which includes family activities and services as well as professional development opportunities for service providers. This will work in the same way with each agency inputting their activities and creating the appropriate links.

The subscription option will allow parents and professionals to receive notifications of new information or activities in an area of interest or an automatic info-blast of developmentally appropriate information and activities for children based on their birthdays. Partners will include their information, keeping it current and relevant. This service will be available to all families regardless of their home community.

The 'Ask Us' option will link parents to a Best Start Hub staff. This staff will act as the 'system greeter' and assist that family to navigate to the programs and services needed. It is understood that all partners will strive to be connected to this 'point person', through the Neighbourhood Team, in order to provide easy access to the services they provide.

High level integration evolves over time. The co-location of hub-child care-school fostered communication, cooperation and collaboration, each location at its own pace and heavily dependent on the specific people working there. All have enjoyed mutual benefits and endured setbacks, but all are present in the relationship and working toward further integration. The website is a result of increasingly integrated planning. The relationship between the two Best Start Networks and all the partners has also evolved to a point where joint ownership and sustainability are being discussed and agreed upon.

3. Briefly describe one example that demonstrates a high level of leadership and/or organizational capacity in your community. (500 words)

The best example of a high level of leadership and organizational capacity is within the structure of our Networks and the work and processes we produce. We have integrated leadership at the Partners for

Children & Youth Committee (PCY). Both Networks maintain their separate and distinct identity but both belong to PCY and contribute to the mandate of integrated, seamless service across both districts.

In our CGS Best Start Strategic Plan 2012-2015, our work is divided into three different levels and encourages leadership and collaboration at each. The interaction between these levels builds leadership capacity and partnership confidence. It allows the decision-makers to establish the direction and boundaries, the program managers to collaborate with our partners to determine the most effective way to implement programs or the most relevant initiatives, and finally, the frontline professionals to apply their experience in program delivery and their expertise in serving the unique families of their neighbourhood. The leadership and organizational capacity of our community has risen to new heights over the last two years. We have stronger partners from more organizations. Our capacity to work together and to organize our work clearly has greatly improved. During 2011, our Best Start Network enjoyed a year of reflective and deliberate re-thinking and re-organizing which came to be known as our 'learning year'. We methodically went through the 'Results Based Accountability' process and re-wrote our terms of reference and evaluation plans. Near the end of this same year, we became the CAR Community Integration Leader pilot site and were able to move forward quickly with three ambitious deliverables, a steady expectation for formal documentation and incredible sharing with the other pilot and demo sites. The BSIPN Strategic Plan is the result all we learned from these experiences. It is clear, inclusive, flexible and measurable. It demonstrates our community capacity to work together and our renewed commitment to an integrated system of children and family services.

The Manitoulin /Sudbury Best Start Network will be presenting their Strategic Plan to PCY this fall and will also demonstrate similar processes strengthening leadership and organizational capacity.

4. Briefly describe the governance and accountability processes that will be used to ensure successful completion of the project? (250 words)

As the call for Expressions of Interest forms stated "Measuring and monitoring common outcomes is central to developing shared accountability and contributes to continuous improvement. Outcomes could be measured at the child, family, community and/or system level." We will use the process developed in our CGS Best Start Strategic Plan to ensure Network governance and committee accountability in a tri-level format. We will also use the Results Based Accountability philosophy to ensure we have a strong evaluation plan with indicators, measurable objectives and client/neighbourhood outcomes. This will provide the framework for working groups to have ownership and accountability over their work while giving the broader planning groups the governance and accountability at that higher level.

To start we would review the aspects of the project and set parameters with expectations and timelines. These expectations or desired project results would be 'assigned' to different Networks, committees and sub-committees depending on the group's mandate or expertise. For example, we are interested in:

- Integrated training of the child care, Hubs, school and specialized services professionals in a six month blitz in **close collaboration with the Manitoulin / Sudbury Best Start Network**. Each event could be evaluated in regards to what is shared, accessible to both regions, inclusive etc.
- Developing processes to provide **positive & collaborative culture, support, coaching and mentoring to management / leadership**. Our expectation over the 6 month period might be to establish a

centre based plan with each child care centre and provide 2 PD opportunities (Management & Workplace Culture) for supervisors and EDs on their common needs.

- Incorporating **professional topic-based information** into website (develop an on-line tool box of resources). To develop the professional side of the website to mirror the family side, we could expect 100 professional topics on this site. We could also expect a specific # of PD events on the calendar and have the participants evaluate the event.
- **Expanding the PD calendar** by addressing **identified training needs and building sector capacity**. We could expect each identified training need to be tied to a specific % of PQI recommendations. We can review best practices and recommendations of the College of ECEs to determine what would build sector capacity and commit to a specific # of events or sponsor a specific # to participate in provincial activities.
- **Recruitment and retention of RECEs:** First, we would review our local landscape more thoroughly. We can review best practices, local surveys / on-line feedback and recommendations of the College of ECEs, Ministries, and other provinces/countries to determine what strategies would be most promising, have the least resistance and be realistic in our timeframe. We could commit to a specific # of events and/or sponsor a specific # to participate in provincial activities.
- **Aligning** our work with provincial movement of **MCYS, EDU** and **College of ECEs**. For this expectation, we could rely on documentation showing the connection or alignment.

With such short timelines, our expectations need to be kept realistic. We should also consider results with lasting, motivating or engaging effects that will outlast the project. Our Best Start Networks would have joint-governance over the project, and the measurable expectations would keep the committees accountable to a successful completion of the project.

5. Which organization would receive the project funding and how will funding decisions be made? (250 words)

The Community Action Research Project funding would be flowed through Manitoulin/Sudbury DSB. Funding decisions would be made at the on-set of the project at the Best Start Networks and signed off by both Network Chairpersons will be required.

6. Describe at least two potential research resources available to support your project (e.g. resources within partner organizations, academics/consultants available through procurement)? (250 words)

CGS Best Start Network research resources would include:

1. CAR – CIL 2011 Researcher who is experienced with this project and the Best Start Network. This would create consistency and flow with the second series of reports.
2. The two Data Analyst Co-ordinators, funded through the former OEYC, may also be a research resource. These positions are primary responsible for the collection and analysis of the Best Start Hub data as well as the Best Start evaluation, EDI reporting and Results Based Accountability work. Presently, housed with Social Planning Council, our community enjoys the advantage of SPC’s additional research, data and expertise. Again, they work closely with Best Start and would have expertise to contribute to the series of reports.
3. Within Children Services, City of Greater Sudbury, a permanent full-time researcher is employed. This position’s primary function is to present reports, literature reviews, statistic trends and evaluations to the CGS section and Best Start Network. The focus of this work is to provide information regarding RECE trends, child care waitlists, website utilization, quality standards and

rating, as well as parent satisfaction with child care and children's services / Best Start. These reports would guide the project and could contribute to the documentation of the series of reports.