

The PACE Program – Supporting Healthy Transitions

Outline of Service



The purpose and mandate of the *Supporting Healthy Transitions* program is to reduce the emotional impact on children, birth parents, adoptive parents, or foster parents when there is a plan for a child to move from one family to another. The program is steered and guided by an Advisory Committee comprised of Managers and/or Clinical Supervisors from the Ministry for Children and Families (MCFD), Family Services of Greater Vancouver, and the PACE Child & Family Society (The PACE Program).

PHILOSOPHY OF SUPPORTING HEALTHY TRANSITIONS SERVICES

To nurture the development of sustainable relationships between the foster, birth, adoptive and extended families to ensure attachments formed with the children remain intact. When children move homes, challenges can present themselves that can cause family systems to break down. Through the guidance of a Family Counsellor providing strategic and emotional support to all parties, capacity and connection is promoted. Close collaboration is maintained with both Ministry workers as well as other related professionals.

ABOUT SUPPORTING HEALTHY TRANSITIONS PROGRAM

GOALS OF THE PROGRAM:

- To facilitate communication and connection between the homes prior to the child(ren) moving.
- To support the child / children's attachment needs.
- To provide support around grief and loss through counselling to children, foster parents and the foster family.
- To increase collaboration between the systems surrounding the child.
- To facilitate appropriate resources are in place to support the transition (e.g. childcare, counselling, housing).



SERVICE PROVIDED:

- Support and counselling the families and children involved.
- Joint sessions with the birth parents and foster parents.
- Joint sessions with the foster parents and adoptive / foster parents.
- Liaison with Social Worker, Resource Worker / Guardianship Worker.
- Liaison with other professionals involved.

REFERRAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVICE:

Anyone can request this voluntary service; however please note the following requirements for referrals:

1. There must be an open family services file with the Ministry of Children & Family Development.
2. The date of transition must be within 3-6 months.
3. All caregivers involved in the transition must be willing to participate.
4. Children should be 12 years and younger (exceptions to be reviewed by Advisory Committee).

REFERRAL REQUIREMENTS – CAREGIVERS:

A. Birth Parent/s (of child/ren in foster care):

- Visiting regularly with child/ren and complying with the expectations around the transition plan.
- If needed, have a mental health plan and/or a substance abuse plan in place in order to access the program.
- Ideally, having counselling during period of apprehension.
- On-going specialized supports in place, if needed.
- Interest in ongoing contact with foster home.

B. Foster Parents

- Experience in fostering.
- Belief in the importance of the biological family.
- Belief in the importance of the adoptive family.
- A desire to stay connected to the foster child.
- Strong parenting skills.
- Ideally, (if applicable), both parents involved.



C. Adoptive Parents

- Belief in the importance and value of continued contact for child with foster home.

LENGTH OF SUPPORT: Is not time limited but rather guided by the identified needs and requests of clients served, as well as PACE resources available. Generally, service utilization ranges from 3 months to 1 year.

TIME OF SUPPORT: Is coordinated in collaboration between the families and Family Counsellor.

COST: Service provided is free of charge to clients. It is fully funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

SERVICE AREA: Referrals from Vancouver – MCFD offices.

SERVICE DELIVERY

- Service provided is client driven and determined based on identified needs and goals established. All foster, birth and adoptive parent/s engaged in the program receive an orientation package to PACE Program as well as this outline.
- All foster, birth and adoptive parent/s interested in participating in the Supporting Healthy Transitions Program are expected to sign a “*Consent for Services*” prior to service commencing.
- During and at the end of service, foster, birth and adoptive parent/s as well as Ministry staff and other professionals involved are invited to complete a “*Satisfaction Survey*”. Your input helps PACE improve services provided to children, families and the community. Thank you in advance for your feedback and participation.

QUESTIONS & CONCERNS

The PACE Program is committed to providing a caring and supportive environment for children and families. We respect the right of all children and families to be heard, updated and involved in planning and decisions affecting them. Parents / guardians are encouraged to raise any questions, concerns or complaints about the services or our procedures. We also support individual’s right to raise concerns about actions or decisions impacting them.



COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

- All clients are encouraged to first talk with the PACE staff person directly to try and find solutions. If you prefer, you can put your request for a meeting in writing and note who you would like to attend (including any support person you choose to invite).
- Should speaking to the staff directly not be possible or not be satisfactory, you can also present your concern to the *Program Director, Barbara McEachern* or to the *Executive Director, Michele Aderem*.
- Please also see “*Agency Overview*”, available on PACE website for more details.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM OR THE REFERRAL PROCESS,
please call PACE at: (604) 266-3141 or visit our website: www.thepaceprogram.ca