



Conflict of Interest Guidelines

A group of individuals who have a strong commitment to the importance of early childhood development have come together as a Coalition;

And the constituency of the Coalition includes parents, professionals, stakeholders, educators, and consumers who want to focus attention on the importance of early childhood development;

And some of those individuals have committed themselves to be part of the Leadership Council and attend regularly as members of the Coalition;

Therefore, the Coalition has determined the necessity to develop a set Conflict of Interest Guidelines to provide guidance to the all members of the Coalition and the Leadership Council to ensure clarity, fairness, absence of bias and commonality of purpose.

The Requirement for Guidelines:

The Coalition, the Leadership Council and the Task Forces are made up of people who are well informed in the field of early childhood development. It is anticipated that many members will be associated with other organizations, which from time to time, may apply for funding or seek endorsement of the Coalition. In turn, members of the Coalition may seek funding from outside agencies or public authorities that may be represented on the Coalition.

Definitions of Membership:

The membership for the Coalition is defined by the following categories:

- a representative of a non-governmental organization ["agency"] that represents that agency;
- a professional working in the field as part of their employment but is not a member of the Coalition as a representative of a particular agency;

- an employee of or contractor for a department or ministry of the provincial government, local government or local health authority [“public authority”];
- interested parties including parents, youth, grandparents.

Relationships of Coalition members:

These members may have the following relationships within the Coalition:

- be an employee of a public authority or representative of an agency that provides funds to the Coalition on an ongoing or one time basis;
- an individual parent, an employee of a public authority or a representative of an agency or public authority who seeks the approval or endorsement of the Coalition;
- an individual parent, an employee of a public authority or representative of an agency or public authority who seeks financial support for a project, sponsored by that organization, from the Coalition.

Commitments of the Coalition:

The Coalition wishes to be accountable with policies, procedures and practices in place that are fair, unbiased, and transparent;

While the Coalition wishes to avoid conflict of interest, its principal concern is with actual conflict of interest as to design rules based on ostensible or apparent conflict would restrict the work of the Coalition to its detriment; and

Because the Coalition recognizes that it is unique in its constitution and membership, the Coalition wants to design Guidelines that focus on the primary issue being the importance of early childhood development, the commonality of purpose of its members and the need to have rules that recognize this congruence as well as dealing with potential conflict of interest.

Therefore;

The Leadership Council and Coalition commits to making the best decision possible based on all of the information available free from inappropriate influence;

All Coalition members agree to comply with these Guidelines in making decisions in order to monitor the way in which it conducts itself as an organization in its own right and the involvement of each of its members, both as individuals and corporate entities:

General Decision Making Requirements:

- All funding and endorsement decisions by the Coalition and the Leadership Council will be made in a manner consistent with the Charter, the Community Plan and the best research;
- It is the policy of the Coalition that its members who may, directly or indirectly, benefit from a decision of the Council or Coalition, declare their interest and absent themselves from any meeting or portion thereof that is dealing with that particular issue;
- The Coalition and its members agree to abide by the following procedures:
 - Any and all information provided to the Coalition by an applicant agency will be used with discretion and not used for any inappropriate purpose;
 - If the information is provided by the applicant agency on a confidential basis, the Council will do its utmost to respect that request;
 - Council members who receive copies of applications or requests in advance of meetings may make enquiries through their own contacts but under no circumstances can the information contained in the application be shown to anyone outside of the Council and no specific data should be quoted or shared;
 - Any member of the Council who is directly employed, contract with or a volunteer of any agency or public authority that is making a request to the Coalition for funding for, or endorsement of, an early childhood development project, will step out of all meetings of the Council during the time the request is being considered, discussed or voted upon;
 - This general rule does not preclude the **Leadership** Council or Coalition from obtaining the information it requires to make the best decision;
 - It is open to the Council and the Coalition, however, to request that the member who is affiliated with the requesting agency or public authority attend meetings to provide information, share expertise and respond to questions regarding the request;

- The Council will provide reasons in writing to the member agency or public authority in any case where the request for funding or endorsement has been denied;
- As the Leadership Council's role is to make a recommendation on a funding request to the Coalition, there should be no disclosure about the Council's deliberations or the recommended outcome prior to the matter being heard by the Coalition.

Requirements for Endorsement Requests:

- All requests for a written, public or specific endorsement from an individual, agency or public authority for an early childhood development will be directed to the Council;
- The Council will have the authority to approve an endorsement requests in its own right and will made in accordance with the procedure described below;
- The Coalition will be made aware of all written, public and specific endorsements issued by the Council at its monthly meeting;
- Where the Council has concerns about any request for an endorsement, it will consult with those Task Forces that could be of assistance or take the matter to the Coalition as a whole at its monthly meeting, prior to deciding.

Requirements for Funding Requests:

- All funding requests will be vetted by the Leadership Council ["Council"] in advance of going to the Coalition as a whole for final approval;
- The Council will consider the funding request in accordance with the procedure described below in order to come to a conclusion as to its recommendation to the Coalition;
- All funding requests will be approved by the Coalition as a whole at its monthly meetings in advance of the Council acting upon the request unless it is impossible to do so in which case it will be presented to the Coalition at the earliest possible time;

Requirements when Coalition is Requesting Funds:

When making requests to an agency or public authority for funding or endorsement, the Coalition and its members commit to:

- respecting the individual members who are employees, contractors, consultants or volunteers of that agency by being clear as to its

expectations of that individual and not to hold them personally responsible in any sense for a decision of the agency or public authority;

- not encouraging or requesting the individual member to do anything outside of their ordinary professional role to influence the request by the Coalition;
- ensuring that the member who is acting as the main spokesperson for the Coalition with the outside agency or public authority is a person in a position of the least conflict;
- making all applications in a strategic manner that is consistent with the Charter, the Community Plan and the best research.

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