

Supporting Youth and Families on Leadership Tables

Foundry values the contribution of their expert youth and family partners. Leadership tables are an excellent opportunity to provide meaningful engagement of youth and their families to support the development of operations from the lens of those using Foundry services. It is highly recommended that leadership tables have representation from a minimum of two youth and one family member. The following are some brief recommendations to support Foundry centre leadership in providing clear orientation to the youth and family leadership role. It also shares strategies that have been identified as helpful in creating an ongoing safe space to empower and support youth and family participation on leadership tables. Foundry Central Office's Youth and Family Engagement team can also provide further support to centres.

Orientation

1:1 call or meeting – possible discussion questions:

- What do you hope to contribute as part of the group?
- What is important to you as a youth or family member attending?
- What do you need to be safe in the room?
- Who would you identify as an ally within Foundry centre staff who would also be at the leadership table?
- Do you have questions about how this impacts you receiving services?

5 W'S

- **WHO:** names of participants in the room, from what organization, consider providing a document that has a blurb about each organization, more than one youth for peer-to-peer support when/if needed, sense of comradery and debriefing
- **WHAT:** how long has group been meeting, Terms of Reference, Community Agreement
- **WHERE:** meeting location, youth-friendly spaces preferred – avoid overly formal spaces like stuffy business rooms or golf courses
- **WHEN:** meeting schedule, inclusive time for youth and families to attend, time commitment
- **WHY:** context, purpose of meeting

Confidentiality

- Ask permission from the young person or family member if you are wanting to share something they said during a meeting in another context as it most likely will involve their lived and living experience. Other specific confidentiality agreements can be incorporated into a Community Agreement or Terms of Reference.

Honoraria

- Considers equity of time and contribution
- Communicates the value of expert partners with lived and living experience to inform direction
- Provide a clear understanding of what honoraria will be
- Assign a designated person to manage and communicate with youth and family member around honoraria
- Suggested honoraria of \$25/hour – align and provide consistency with the BC Centre for Disease Control and Frayme payment standards
- Other compensation to consider: mileage, parking, public transportation, childcare, etc.

Support

- Identify an internal ally to support before, during and after meetings
- Provide orientation and introduction to other members
- Schedule regular check ins and feedback opportunities
- Open the opportunity to connect with ally during the meeting – texting has been helpful in the past
- Be mindful and aware of any non-verbal communication and what that could mean (body language, gaze, etc.)
 - Young person or family member may be trying to speak up but cannot find the right time to jump in. If you notice them trying to contribute, be the one to help open up a space for them to do so. You could say “Nancy, what are your thoughts on this?” or “Nancy, do you have any questions?” Also be mindful of not putting them on the spot when they weren’t intending to share.

Resources to Create and Share

- Acronym sheet of local organizations to share and have available in the meeting for reference. Ask youth and families to add missing information to the list during the meeting as acronyms are used. (Avoid use of acronyms during meetings as much as possible!)
- Create a who’s who document to have available in the meeting for reference.