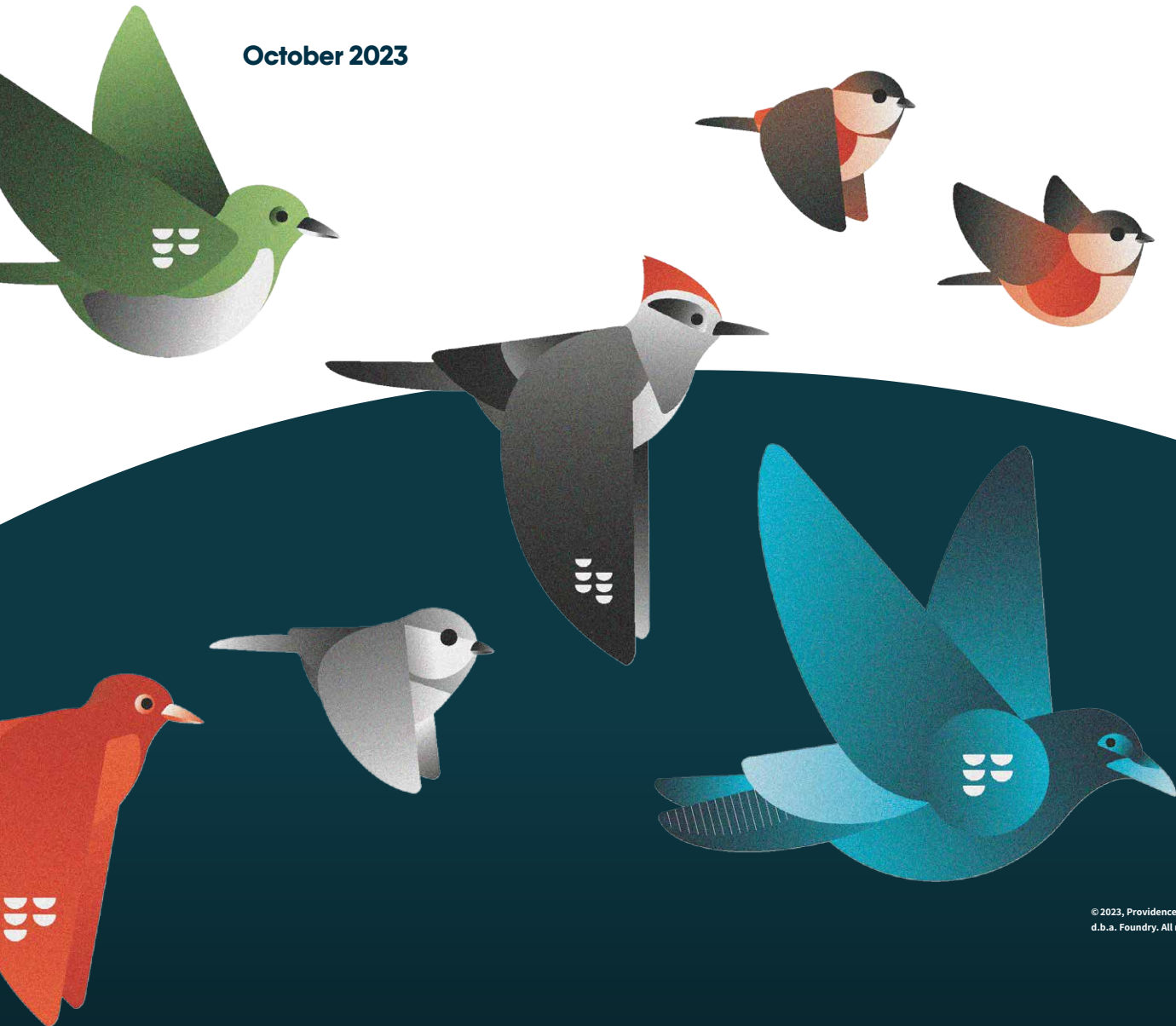


· FOUNDRY ·

# Family Services

October 2023



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**A young person shares their thoughts  
on the value of family support in their life:**

**“At the time that I was really unwell, my mom came through for me in such a big way. She is amazing, she’s the best person to me. She was such a huge part of my recovery journey.**

**When I was in active addiction, my mom started going to parenting classes for parents who have youth who use substances. She was supported to see where her role in the whole situation was and she shifted so profoundly because of that. She stopped yelling, she worked on her communication and now she supports other parents who are going through similar situations and tells them to love their kids through it and not make them feel bad, and also how to set healthy boundaries.**

**She completely changed our whole family dynamic, she was so open with my siblings about everything going on and I think that really taught them to trust their intuition and also to trust my mom like being able to come to her with things.”**



# Introduction

**At Foundry, we know that supporting the families of our young clients can be key to their wellness journey. Research shows that improvement rates rise dramatically when family is involved. Offering education, skills and tools to families promotes better wellness outcomes for everyone.**

At Foundry, family is defined uniquely by each young person and can include anyone supporting or advocating for their wellness. Family, whether by birth, choice or circumstance, holds a significant role in supporting a young person by fostering a sense of belonging and hope through their shared experience.

We recognize the common tension in serving youth — including young people with fractured family relationships — and supporting families who want to be involved or may be struggling themselves. There is a delicate balance between maintaining a youth-friendly space, meeting young people's needs for privacy and confidentiality, and involving families as partners in care. We support young people and families whether they come to Foundry as a family unit or on their own.

**“I believe family services are youth services. When we support families and caregivers, we support young people, and outcomes are better for all.”**

Foundry Family  
Engagement Coordinator

**“We are all family members, whether our family is natural or chosen, large or small, temporary or permanent, conventional or unconventional, resilient or fragile.”**

Families at the Centre<sup>1</sup>

**Foundry's work includes ensuring we create culturally safe and respectful environments for equity-denied groups including IBPOC (Indigenous, Black and People of Colour) communities.**

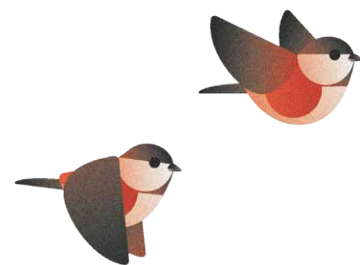
We recognize our role and responsibility as a white settler organization in calling out and dismantling colonialism and racism in the work we do.

Our journey includes committing to the implementation of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Calls to Action, the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) and the recommendations of the report “In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in BC Health Care.”

# The Role of Families at Foundry

While Foundry is a youth-focused service, we value the role, impact and experiences of families. Many youth live in family homes, which may include multiple generations and extended families. Some youth come to Foundry with their parents, aunt, uncle, sibling or partner, and some may bridge to Foundry through their connections with mentors, Elders, social workers, school counsellors and other caring adult allies in their circle of support. Any one of these people in a youth's life may be supporting them in their wellness journey every day. Some youth who are living on their own may still be supported by a parent who may be driving them to their appointment or contributing to their rent. As young people may be connected, impacted and supported by their families, understanding and involving youth-identified family supports can be key to the young person's wellness.

**At Foundry, family involvement includes both formal engagement through advisory committees and a continuum of services for families that includes services provided by counsellors and Family Peer Supporters. As part of the focus on youth wellness at Foundry, service providers are encouraged, where possible, to include families as partners in care.**



According to the Government of British Columbia's *Families at the Centre*:

**Families are often an essential and enduring support to people with mental health and substance use challenges. Family mental health is a resource for personal and collective growth and transformation. It is holistic, multigenerational and embedded within a web of sustaining relationships with kin and community. Since people with mental health and substance use challenges are often cared for by family members, systems need to recognize the importance of families and their unique role in building and sustaining resilience in a complex world.**

**When the supportive role and needs of families impacted by a family member of any age with mental health and/or substance use problems are not acknowledged and facilitated, and the context of family is absent from the care provided to the affected family member, the health, well-being, and functioning of both the individual family member and the whole family itself may be compromised. Not only does this potentially undermine the effectiveness of the care and treatment provided, it can increase the risk of mental health and substance use problems for other family members.<sup>1</sup>**

Many families have living or lived experience of supporting a young person who has experienced mental health or substance use challenges. Integrating these families into the Foundry service delivery model may be a new experience for Foundry leaders and service providers. Consequently, this may involve a learning curve in which beliefs, attitudes and team culture must change. Foundry Central Office (FCO) will support this learning and adaptation.

**Families are part of the circle of care identified by each Foundry client and acknowledged as contributing love, connection, a belief in capacity, shared experience, influence, support, helpfulness, belonging, well-being, attachment, emotional bonds and intimacy.**

Adapted from *Disrupting Standard Mode: A Big Picture Story of Family Inclusion in Substance Use Services*<sup>2</sup>

# The Family Services Continuum

**Foundry offers services and support to families who are looking for ways to support their youth and themselves, with the belief that supporting families with knowledge, skills and tools promotes better wellness outcomes for all. Families do not need to have a youth accessing Foundry's services to seek support for themselves. A secondary goal of family services is supporting a family member's own recovery path.**

## **Families can be involved in services in a variety of ways:**

- Providing information and perspectives as part of a young person's assessment;
- Accessing education and support aimed at understanding their own needs and their young person's health concerns;
- Receiving support in their efforts to engage a young person in care when they are reluctant to access services; and
- Engaging in family coaching or therapy to build family resilience and mitigate fatigue and burnout.

The core continuum of family services to implement at your centre includes peer support, support and education groups, and direct therapeutic interventions. Family services may be expanded beyond this core continuum based on your community's specific needs.



# Family Peer Support

**Family Peer Support (FPS) is the empowered relationship of families helping families. FPS is a core service at Foundry centres and has been recognized by families as one of the most valued services that Foundry offers. FPS is identified as the highest priority when implementing family services at a centre.**

FPS is offered by family members who have direct experience supporting a young person with mental health or substance use challenges. FPS offers non-clinical practical, emotional and social support, including mentoring, connection to other families and navigation of the health system and other systems.

One major value of FPS is providing services based on hope and self-disclosed understanding that comes from a shared experience. FPS is a different designation from a family services worker, a family navigator or a therapist, who might have lived experience but do not bring it into their professional practice. FPS offers hope through a recovery-oriented framework, providing a family service that works alongside the clinical care team.

Family Peer Supporters are integral members of the Foundry care team. They support with service navigation, education and resources, while providing individualized peer-based practical, emotional and social supports. Delivering services in alignment with Foundry's Service Model, they promote wholistic family health and well-being by fostering the development of respectful, collaborative relationships with families, youth and service providers.

## What is recovery-oriented?

According to Patricia Deegan, "Recovery-oriented practice acknowledges the unique nature of each person's journey of wellness and everyone's right to find their own way to living a life of value and purpose in the community of their choice. A recovery orientation encourages everyone to take charge of improving their own mental health and well-being and understands the very exercise of this ability to be an important contributor to achieving well-being."<sup>3</sup>



**The power of peer support lies in hope, connection, and the bonds of shared experiences. This has sometimes been defined as “expertise by experience” in the peer community.**

**Key features of the Family Peer Supporter role include:**

- Trained support person with lived and/or living experience;
- Integrated care team member in paid staff position;
- Primarily focuses on supporting the caregiver’s recovery journey;
- Offers supportive, non-clinical coaching, emotional and social support services based on a recovery-focused model;
- Provides direct on-site and virtual services to families by sharing hope, connection and mentorship in the areas of information, education, navigation, resources and skill development;
- Supports and engages families as expert partners in their self-identified wellness goals;
- Works collaboratively, acting as a bridge between families, youth, service providers and community partners; and
- Connects families to Foundry’s provincial network, [Families at Foundry](#).

Family Peer Supporters are supervised by the Foundry centre’s peer support supervisor. If a centre does not have this position, the centre manager supervises the Family Peer Supporters.

For more information on peer support, please see “Tools and Resources” on page 15.

**How is family navigation different from Family Peer Support?**

Some centres may have a family navigator or family empowerment coordinator role. This service provider supports, educates and helps navigate services in a professional and sometimes clinical assessment capacity. Often family navigators provide counselling.

Our preference at Foundry is to have Family Peer Supporters provide family navigation as a service deliverable within their role, rather than having a separate family navigation role. For centres with a family navigator role, it is important to also add Family Peer Supporters to the service provider team.

# Family Groups

**A range of groups are made available for families and may be facilitated by Family Peer Supporters, family empowerment or engagement coordinators or counsellors:**

- **Family support groups** are offered as informal or drop-in groups. Support groups focus on hope, connection and recovery through the shared experiences and understanding of supporting a young person experiencing challenges. Family support groups do not require any registration and may or may not have a psychoeducational component to them. Family support groups have been identified by families accessing Foundry services as a safe, non-judgmental place to be heard and to focus on building resilience and capacity.
- **Family education groups or workshops** are formal programs that typically require registration and have a schedule of topics that are relevant to families. These groups and workshops may have guest speakers and include topics such as community resources, communication skills, self-care and disorder-specific information (e.g., depression, anxiety).
- **Emotion-Focused Family Therapy (EFFT) Caregiver Workshops** are being offered in many Foundry centres (see “Emotion-Focused Family Therapy” on page 12).

FCO recommends that a Family Peer Supporter or family peer co-facilitate groups when possible.

Centres may also offer specialized family groups, depending on the needs and availability in the community. Examples of specialized groups include Ministry of Children and Family Development Parent Connect groups; young parents’ groups; groups specifically for fathers, siblings or grandparents; overdose prevention or Naloxone training groups; and TransParent groups (for families with transgender youth). Some centres have co-located specialist services such as the Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI) program, which offers family groups specific to psychosis.

# Family Therapy

**Family therapy is offered by trained counsellors or clinicians at Foundry centres to families who are needing therapeutic support and intervention as they care for a young person with health concerns. The young person may or may not be included in family therapy, depending upon the focus of the intervention. Foundry has adopted an Emotion-Focused Family Therapy (EFFT) approach in providing family intervention, and staff are offered training in EFFT. (See “Emotion-Focused Family Therapy” on page 12)**

Families can access Walk-in Counselling (WiC) services if they are struggling themselves, as well as to support a young person who is reluctant to engage in services. WiC can be a bridge for families to support their youth to eventually come to Foundry for support.

Centres with co-located specialist services often include family interventions such as family therapy in the Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI) or Eating Disorders programs.

Some Foundry centres have partnering family therapy agencies that may offer family therapy at the centre or through referral to their location. Services outside the Foundry centre may have a cost on a sliding scale.

## Other Family Services

Some Foundry centres offer additional family services outside the core continuum that is expected of all centres. Examples may include family mediation and conflict resolution.

As a centre's family services program evolves, additional services may be added to meet the needs of their specific community.

**“Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of Indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities... to ensure that Indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.”**

Article 22, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



# Emotion-Focused Family Therapy

**Supporting a youth who is struggling can be very challenging for everyone involved. Recognizing this challenge, Foundry has adopted Emotion-Focused Family Therapy (EFFT) as the core family therapy approach in alignment with our model and vision.**

EFFT is a transdiagnostic model of family therapy that actively involves caregivers in supporting their young person. EFFT is an extension of Emotion-Focused Therapy for individuals and couples and was initially developed for parents supporting children with eating disorders. EFFT has since been expanded to support the treatment of various mental health and substance use concerns, including depression and anxiety.

Consistent with the growing body of research supporting the effectiveness of caregiver-based interventions, the primary aim of EFFT is to support and empower caregivers to increase their role in their young person's recovery from mental health issues. Underlying EFFT is the belief that it is most therapeutically worthwhile to empower caregivers to help the person they are caring for, regardless of age, and that the EFFT clinician's main responsibility is to support caregivers to become active agents of healing. We believe that EFFT is an effective therapeutic approach to utilize with a variety of caregivers who are providing support to young people.

**EFFT can be delivered in individual, family and multi-caregiver group therapy formats. Within each mode, there are four main areas of intervention which include supporting and educating caregivers in:**

1. Behavioural coaching by supporting their young person with symptom interruption and increased adaptive behaviors;
2. Emotion coaching by supporting their young person in the processing of emotions;
3. Engaging in a process of therapeutic apologies in order to help individuals to let go of the weight of old injuries; and
4. Working through and resolving the fears and obstacles that surface in the caregiver during this challenging and novel journey.

EFFT is a lifespan approach that can be delivered with entire families, in caregiver-child dyads or with caregivers only. One of the key strengths of the EFFT approach lies in the fact that clinicians can support caregivers to take on these roles regardless of their young person's involvement in formal treatment themselves, creating hope for those caregivers whose young person refuses service. EFFT can be integrated into existing treatment models and at various levels of care to empower families, caregivers and clinician teams.

# Implementing Family Services in Your Centre

**In order to improve access and provide services for families at Foundry, there are practical requirements in terms of hours of operation and space planning.**

Family members tend to work regular office hours, so centres need to offer services to families during times that promote access, such as:

- Last appointment at 6pm or later a minimum of twice a week to accommodate family members (as well as youth) after regular office hours;
- Family groups offered in the early evening hours with accommodations for childcare where possible; and
- Reception (Medical Office and Administrative Assistants) available during early evening hours when possible, to support after-hours appointments and groups.

When space planning for family services, there are specific requirements to consider, such as:

- Meeting spaces with capacity for four or more people;
- Breakout space for separate meetings within family meetings;
- Designated Family Peer Support space for meeting with families, ideally located near waiting room; and
- Designated administration space for Family Peer Supporters, ideally located within the care team hub.

In order to capture family data, FCO has implemented a database in Toolbox specific to families so that we can capture family demographics, service utilization and outcomes. The family forms were co-designed with the Provincial Family Ambassadors and local family advisory committees.

# Family Engagement

**Families are also invited to participate in the work of Foundry through family engagement. Foundry recognizes that family voices are key to enhancing the service experiences of young people and families across BC, so we have formed two advisory groups – the Provincial Family Representatives (PFR) and the Provincial Family Ambassadors (PFA). These groups represent the voices of lived and living experience from BC communities, those that have Foundry centres and those that do not.**

The PFR group has family representatives from each Foundry centre. The vision for this group is to bridge the local family advisory committees across the Foundry network to each other, connect this group directly to FCO and bring a collective provincial family voice to all aspects of the work at Foundry.

The PFA group has members from across the province who are not associated with a particular Foundry centre. This group brings the family voice of lived experience to a variety of projects and working groups at FCO, with opportunities to consult, co-design and co-lead local and provincial projects involving services, resources, research and best practices at Foundry.

**“Indigenous peoples have the right to determine their own identity or membership in accordance with their customs and traditions.”**

Article 33, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

**Supported in the centres by family engagement and peer support, the PFR and PFA groups engage and support the development and implementation of family services at Foundry in a variety of ways including:**

- Working directly with FCO, ensuring a collective family voice and representation from across Foundry’s provincial network;
- Sharing their living and lived experience, participating in engagement opportunities, promoting Foundry and mental health and substance use literacy in communities;
- Meeting families as an informal greeter in Foundry centres, providing a warm welcome and orientation to Foundry; and
- Co-creating family-specific resources and training.

As Foundry continues to grow and evolve, we are committed to building out our responsiveness to family needs.



# Tools and Resources

Visit [The Foundry Learning Centre](#) to access these tools and resources.

- [Welcome to Foundry: Families and Caregivers \(Canva\)](#)
- Family Services Roles Defined
- Sample and Template: Additional Services for Youth up to Age 18
- Sample and Template: Additional Services for Young Adults 18+
- Taking Care of Yourself When Taking Care of Others (available in English, French, Punjabi, Simplified Chinese and Traditional Chinese)
- More resources about Family Peer Support in the Peer Support section of the [Service Model Guide](#)

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