



Section 2-Voluntary Support Services Agreements

Tool 2.1.1

Voluntary Services Agreement Checklist

Before entering into an Agreement, the Child Protection Worker/Designate:

- Determine the cultural identity, i.e., Indigenous etc. of the child/youth, parent(s)/care provider(s)/caregiver(s) or expecting parent(s);
- Determine the Indigenous Governing Body(s)(IGBs), Applicable Aboriginal Organization(s) (AAOs) or other cultural organization that the child/youth, parent(s)/care provider(s)/caregiver(s) or expecting parent(s)belong to and make documented attempts to connect them to the child/youth, parent(s)/care provider(s)/caregiver(s) or expecting parent(s). AAOs can be found [here](#).
- Determine who has lawful custody of the child/youth or who provides the day-to-day care of the child/youth;
- Determine the parent(s)/care provider(s)/caregiver(s) or expectant parent(s)' strengths and needs, and
- Ensure the child 12 years of age or older, if appropriate, parent(s)/care provider(s)/caregiver(s), or expectant parent(s) understands they have rights and responsibilities under the **Voluntary Services Agreement (VSA) and Case Plan** and is prepared to assume them.

Additional factors to consider before entering an Agreement:

- Obtain consent from the child 12 years of age or older, if appropriate, parent(s)/care provider(s)/caregiver(s), or expectant parent(s) to consult with their IGBs, AAOs or cultural organization in the development of their **VSA and Case Plan** as they may be aware of people, services, and programs that may be of benefit to them.
- If required, determine a suitable out of home placement as outlined in **Standard 7.1 Placement Priorities for Children and Youth** in consultation with the child 12 years of age or older (if appropriate), parent(s)/care provider(s)/caregiver(s) and IGB(s), AAO(s) or cultural organization, if applicable.
- Interview and consult the child 12 years and older (as developmentally appropriate; and/or in a manner that is responsive to their developmental understanding) if the services within the **VSA and Case Plan** pertain to them. Moreover, ensure conversations with them are developmentally appropriate; and/or in a manner that is responsive to their developmental understanding.
- Discuss the length of the **VSA and Case Plan**, which can be up to **six (6) months** in duration and renewed until it is no longer needed, is terminated, or the child/youth turns 19 years old.
- Ensure that the child 12 years of age or older (if appropriate), parent(s)/care provider(s)/caregiver(s), or expectant parent(s) is aware of how to cancel or have the **VSA and Case Plan** amended.

Support services may include:

- Counselling;
- Babysitting;
- Services for improving the family's financial situation;
- Services for improving the family's housing situation;



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- Providing traditional food, clothing, etc.;
- Providing transportation to assist the child or youth to meet their commitments in the Agreement;
- Providing medical/dental coverage;
- Mediation of disputes;
- Payment of recreational fees; or
- Any other services agreed to by the Director of Child and Family Services



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Tool 2.1.2

Philosophy of Voluntary Support Services and Agreements

Voluntary Support Services Agreements are intended to promote the safety, health and well-being of families and/or individuals. Voluntary Support Services Agreements can be provided for many reasons such as:

- Ensuring the health and well-being of children, youth and families;
- Providing services to an expectant parent before the birth of their child
- Preventing or reducing the risk of child maltreatment;
- Improving parenting capacity;
- Providing support services to youth 16 to 18 years old who cannot live safely with their parent(s)/care provider(s)/caregiver(s) and are making efforts to care for themselves; and
- Extending voluntary services to youth with a Permanent Custody Order up until their 23rd birthday to assist with their independent adult living needs (ESSA).

Early intervention with families is critical to promoting positive outcomes for children and youth. The provision of support services that identify and build on strengths and resiliency of the family may assist them in allowing the child/youth to remain safely at home is of utmost importance. When it is impossible to keep children in the home, it is important to ensure that the child/youth has an ongoing connection to their siblings, family, community and culture. It is important to explore what type of supports may be helpful in mitigating any risk factors while considering the safety, health and well-being of the child/youth as the primary consideration.

When assessing what support services would best meet the child/youth, young adult, expectant parent(s) or families' needs, you will need to explore formal and informal supports such as housing, income support, self-help groups, extended family, friends, neighbours, the family's spiritual and cultural community and educational and recreational programs. When providing formal supports such as treatment, counselling, respite, etc., approval must be provided by the Supervisor/Manager.

Service delivery should be tied to specific outcomes and monitored by the Child Protection Worker/Designate to determine if the services are having the intended effect, and if they continue to be needed or adjusted.



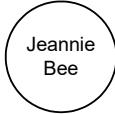
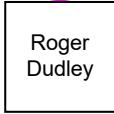
Genogram Code Key



Male Applicant – should be indicated by a double square and is placed on the left



Female Applicant – should be indicated by a double circle and is placed on the right



Other males and females should be indicated by a single square or circle – males are placed to the left and females to the right. Siblings are placed in order of birth.



Solid line connects individuals and also represents marriage – date of marriage is placed above the line



Dotted line connecting individuals horizontally is indicative of a common law relationship - date of the relationship started can be placed above the line



Solid line with two slashes through it represents a divorce – date of divorce is placed above the line



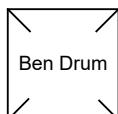
Solid line with one slash through it represents a separation – date of separation is placed above the line



Dotted line with solid line vertically indicates an adoption – date of adoption is placed beside the lines



Vertical single dotted line indicates a foster child



Either box is acceptable to indicate a death – the date of death should be placed above the box



A triangle is used to represent a miscarriage