

Dear parents and caregivers,

You're receiving this letter because you are the parent or caregiver of a child or youth who has complex medical, educational and/or social needs. We are writing to invite you to take part in a new 'wraparound' program being tested in the West Kootenay region. The program will be delivered and evaluated over the next six months and initially 10-12 families will be accepted into the program.

A Wraparound model of care holds the belief that parents, families, and caregivers know what's best for their child or youth. Also, it holds the belief that given the proper support and services, you can tailor the services you receive to better reflect the support you and your child are seeking. This makes getting services easier and coordination more effective.

The world of health care, education and social services can be bewildering. You can be introduced to a range of doctors, counsellors, social workers and teachers, who all offer different kinds of services. It can be frustrating and exhausting just trying to keep track of all the people and programs making up your child or youth's services and supports. Often it can be difficult just to find the time to properly communicate with the many players.

It can take a real personal toll on families. We've been told that having to tell your story over and over again to different professionals is frustrating and often wastes time better spent on actual support and service. Then there is the confusing world of resources, knowing what's available and who has access to them. Programs and funding aren't always consistently available, or can come with conditions that can make a family ineligible for them.

Wraparound is designed to cut through this red tape and centralize information and resources for the family, with the family at the centre of the network of services.

A local parent who took part in a wraparound process with us a few months ago told us that *"before [wraparound], I did not know about the resources available to me. People didn't tell me I could ask for respite, or that we could work with a social worker. I didn't know about Hope Air. I thought I was on my own, I feel like I have grown more than my son by having people who listen, and I have learned so much about the system and the resources out there."*

## What happens when your family tries this new service?

- First we offer your family a wraparound 'coach'. The coach is there for you, her job is to listen to you and ask about your child's and family's strengths, as well as your needs.
- That coach will also ask you who you want to be on your family's wraparound team. In the wraparound process, it's not necessarily the 'usual' people involved (for example, only doctors and counsellors). On the wraparound team, there will be professionals, but you may also choose family members and supportive friends. You are the expert in your child's life and the best one to determine who should be on your team.
- You will then work with your Coach and the wraparound team to set service goals. You help guide the team and make decisions on how best to accomplish your goals, and find the right people that might assist. Everyone works together towards meeting those goals, establishing supports and programs for your child or youth.
- We will work side by side with you throughout the wraparound process, and review it on an ongoing basis. This is so you can make a good assessment of what is working and what can be improved. If necessary, we can change the service and support strategy according to those reviews.
- We will also ask you to fill out some questions before and after the wraparound process so we can measure if this model of care made a difference for you, your child and family.

To try the wraparound process, please read, fill in and sign the attached consent form and hold onto to it while we review your family's referral. You can ask a trusted service provider to fill out the referral form and email it to me at [rschmidt@divisionsbc.ca](mailto:rschmidt@divisionsbc.ca). This allows for an exchange of information and better service coordination between you, us and the various professionals you'll be working with.

We believe wraparound services are a powerful tool for empowering families, and in the best interest of the child or youth with complex needs. We hope you will join in.

Sincerely,



Rachel Schmidt  
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