

# **GUIDE TO EVALUATING THE CONNECT PROGRAM**



**Maples  
Adolescent  
Treatment  
Centre**

**Program Evaluation Office  
Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre  
3405 Willingdon Avenue, Burnaby, BC**



Ministry of  
Children and Family  
Development

## Table of Contents

|                                                                                  |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction to Connect Program Evaluation .....                                 | 2  |
| Youth Participation in Program Evaluation (Optional) .....                       | 2  |
| What's on my CD? .....                                                           | 3  |
| Timeline .....                                                                   | 4  |
| Who Should Distribute, Track, and Collect the Program Evaluation Measures? ..... | 5  |
| Consent Forms .....                                                              | 5  |
| Data Collection .....                                                            | 5  |
| What Should be Sent in and When? .....                                           | 6  |
| Who Should Complete the Questionnaire Packages? .....                            | 6  |
| Before Connect .....                                                             | 7  |
| Time 1 - Beginning of Connect .....                                              | 7  |
| Time 2 - End of Connect .....                                                    | 8  |
| Debriefing and Feedback Session .....                                            | 9  |
| Connect Program Evaluation Do's & Don'ts .....                                   | 9  |
| Frequently Asked Questions .....                                                 | 9  |
| Help! Contact Information .....                                                  | 10 |

## Introduction to Connect Program Evaluation

To determine whether participating in the Connect Program changes parent and child relationships, we need to collect questionnaires at two points in time: 1) prior to the beginning of the Connect Program (Time 1), and 2) at the end of the Connect Program (Time 2).

The information gathered from questionnaires at Time 1 and Time 2 will be compared at the end of the program to see if and what kind of changes in behaviours and/or attitudes may have occurred over the course of the program.

With many Connect Parent Groups conducting program evaluation, over time and with sufficient numbers we will be able to pool and analyze all of the data together. As a result, we will be able to summarize information about group participants, their feedback and satisfaction with the group, and the effectiveness of the Connect program both for your locally delivered group and provincially.

All the steps and materials needed are laid out in this document and accompanying CD. If you have any questions about the procedures or documents that we have included, please call the Maples Program Evaluation Office at 604-660-0488 or e-mail the Maples Program Evaluation Officer: [Russell.Ball@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Russell.Ball@gov.bc.ca).

## Youth Participation in Program Evaluation (Optional)

One of the decisions required of your Local Working Group before your Connect Program begins is to determine if your community will be including Youth Questionnaires as part of Program Evaluation. Having the youth complete questionnaire packages at Time 1 and Time 2 is optional and not required for CPG program evaluation. Choosing to involve youth in program evaluation by providing Youth Questionnaire Packages offers the possibility of valuable information being gathered, but also presents additional considerations that must be taken into account, as outlined below:

- Caregivers should not be put in the position of providing their youth with the questionnaire package and ensuring that it is completed - this can lead to conflict. Assign this task to a Connect Leader or a community member involved with the program.
- Caregivers should not assist youth with their questionnaires, as this may compromise the confidentiality of their responses.
- If youth need assistance, it should come from a Connect Leader or a community member whom the youth trusts.
- Youth packages should be returned sealed to ensure that youth are comfortable with the confidentiality of their data.
- If your group consists of youth younger than 12 years or with cognitive delays, please check with Maples Program Evaluation Office about the appropriateness of measures in the Youth Questionnaire Packages (e.g., reading level).

## What's on my CD?

The materials on the accompanying CD include: a) readings to accompany the Connect manual; b) materials that you will need for Program Evaluation specifically and c) other supporting documents required for program implementation. Materials are provided in Adobe Acrobat format, which requires the free Adobe Reader software ([www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)).

### Materials for Program Evaluation include:

- Evaluating the Connect Program (this guide)
- Pre-Group Materials:
  - Pre-Inclusion Interview
  - Youth Experiences Questionnaire
- Time 1 Materials:
  - Consent Form 1A: Consent to Participate in Program Evaluation (Caregivers)
  - Consent Form 1B: Consent to Participate in Program Evaluation (Guardians)
  - Consent Form 1C: Consent to Participate in Program Evaluation (Youth)
  - Time 1 Caregiver Questionnaire Package
  - Time 1 Youth Questionnaire Package
  - Time 1 Questionnaire Package Tracking Log
  - Time 1 Courier Checklist
- Time 2 Materials:
  - Time 2 Caregiver Questionnaire Package
  - Time 2 Youth Questionnaire Package
  - Time 2 Questionnaire Package Tracking Log
  - Connect Feedback Form (used in Session 10)
  - Consent Form 2: Consent to use Videotape
  - Time 2 Courier Checklist

### Support Documents for the Connect Parent Group include:

- Session Adherence Form (used for session reviews and supervision)
- Incentive Checklist (to track supports for program attendance and evaluation tasks)
- Client Progress Notes
- Group Session Description
- Attendance Record

| Timeline                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Three weeks before Information Session</b>                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Print and prepare Pre-Inclusion Interview and Youth Experiences Questionnaire</li> <li>• Print and prepare Time 1 Questionnaire Packages, Time 1 Questionnaire Package Tracking Log, Consent Forms 1A (as well as 1B and 1C if applicable)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Pre-Inclusion Interview (2-3 weeks before Information Session) with potential group members</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Pre-Inclusion Interview</li> <li>• Complete Youth Experiences Questionnaire</li> <li>• Distribute and collect Consent Forms 1A, as well as 1B and 1C if applicable (if providing Youth Questionnaires)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Information Session</b>                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute Time 1 Questionnaire Packages</li> <li>• Begin Time 1 Questionnaire Package Tracking Log</li> <li>• Collect any outstanding Consent Forms</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Connect Session 1</b>                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make two copies each of signed Consent Forms 1A, 1B, and 1C; return one copy of each to participants</li> <li>• Collect Time 1 Questionnaire Packages (allow extra time after Session if needed for completion)</li> <li>• Complete Time 1 Package Tracking Log</li> </ul>                                                                                              |
| <b>Week following Connect Session 1</b>                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courier to Maples all of Time 1 materials (see <b>Time 1 Courier Checklist</b>)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Week before Connect Session 9</b>                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Print and prepare Time 2 Questionnaire Packages, Time 2 questionnaire Package Tracking Log, Connect Feedback Forms, Consent Form 2</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Connect Session 9</b>                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute Time 2 Questionnaire Packages</li> <li>• Begin Time 2 Questionnaire Package Tracking Log</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Connect Session 10 (Feedback Session)</b>                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute AND collect Connect Feedback Forms</li> <li>• Distribute AND collect Consent Form 2</li> <li>• Make two copies of signed Consent Form 2; return one copy to participants</li> <li>• Collect Time 2 Questionnaire Packages (allow extra time after session if needed for completion)</li> <li>• Complete Time 2 Questionnaire Package Tracking Log</li> </ul> |
| <b>Week following Connect Session 10</b>                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courier to Maples all of Time 2 materials (see <b>Time 2 Courier Checklist</b>)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

## Who Should Distribute, Track, and Collect the Program Evaluation Measures?

Your local Connect Working Group will determine who will be responsible for these tasks. In some communities, this may be the Connect Group Leaders; in other communities, there may be a separate individual who is assigned this role. However, everyone involved with the Connect Program should be familiar with the program evaluation process.

## Consent Forms

There are two different types of consent forms to be used for Program Evaluation. Please read and familiarize yourself with each of these documents:

- Consent Form 1: Informed Consent to Participate in Program Evaluation
  - Consent Form 1A is always to be completed by the caregiver(s).
  - Consent Forms 1B and 1C are to be used only when youth are participating in program evaluation (by completing Youth Questionnaire Packages). Form 1B is completed by the youth's legal guardian (usually the same caregiver who completed Form 1A) and Form 1C is to be completed by the youth.
- Consent Form 2: Informed Consent to use Videotape for Educational Purposes

Consent Forms 1A, 1B, and 1C must be completed **before** the Connect Program begins. Consent Form 2 is given in the final session (Session 10: Debriefing and Feedback Session). When the consent forms are returned, check for completion (i.e., check-marks, signatures, witnesses, dates) and make two copies: give one copy to the participant and send in the other copy to the Maples (as specified below). Keep the original completed consent forms for your records.

All participants will also complete a consent to participate in the Connect Parent Group; this is a separate consent form provided by your local working group and sponsoring agency (CYMH), and is not included on the accompanying CD.

## Data Collection

Data collection for program evaluation consists of several questionnaires provided at different times during the Connect timeline:

- Pre-Inclusion Interview and Youth Experiences Questionnaire (completed for all youth and families who complete the Pre-Inclusion Interview; whether or not they become Connect Group members).
- Questionnaire Packages completed by caregivers at Time 1 AND Time 2.
- Questionnaire Packages completed by youth at Time 1 AND Time 2 (if applicable).
- Connect Feedback Form completed by Connect participants during the last session.

All questionnaire packages should be returned in sealed envelopes to ensure participants that their information is kept confidential.

## What Should be Sent in and When?

The following are to be sent to the Maples Program Evaluation Office for data analysis and summary reporting, at the address below:

Program Evaluation Office  
Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre  
3405 Willingdon Avenue  
Burnaby, B.C., V5G 3H4

### First Courier - Time 1:

1. Time 1 Courier Checklist
2. ALL Pre-Inclusion Interviews
3. ALL Youth Experiences Questionnaires
4. Copies of Consent Forms 1A, 1B (if applicable), and 1C (if applicable)
5. Time 1 Caregiver Questionnaire Packages
6. Time 1 Youth Questionnaire Packages (if applicable)
7. Time 1 Questionnaire Package Tracking Log

### Second Courier - Time 2:

1. Time 2 Courier Checklist
2. Copies of Consent Form 2
3. Time 2 Caregiver Questionnaire Packages
4. Time 2 Youth Questionnaire Packages (only if collected at Time 1)
5. Time 2 Questionnaire Package Tracking Log
6. Copy of the Attendance Record
7. Connect Feedback Forms (completed during Session 10)
8. Record of the Connect Feedback and Debriefing Interview (Session 10) Responses

## Who Should Complete the Questionnaire Packages?

There should be at least one caregiver package for each primary household. Within a household there can be two or more packages if more than one caregiver requests them (e.g., one the mother and one for the father). We expect that different caregivers will have different views about their child and their Connect experience. Further examples include:

- A youth living with one of his/her divorced biological parents, whose mother and father are attending, would require at least two caregiver packages (one for each household).
- A youth temporarily in foster care, whose foster parent(s) and biological parent(s) are both attending, would require at least two caregiver packages prepared (one for each household).

Within a household, the person who completes the Time 1 questionnaire package should be same person who completes the Time 2 questionnaire package.

## Before Connect

- Print the following Adobe Acrobat files from the accompanying CD:
  - **Connect Pre-Inclusion Interview.pdf**
  - **Connect Youth Experiences Questionnaire.pdf**
- Conduct the Pre-Inclusion Interview and complete the Youth Experiences Questionnaire with families who are prospective candidates for the Connect Parent Group program.
- The Pre-Inclusion Interview is both a clinical tool and a program evaluation measure. This tool prompts the Group Leader to describe the Connect Program and its fit with potential participants. It also prompts a review of various barriers that might interfere with optimal participation, and the need to consider strategies to reduce these barriers.
- The Youth Experiences Questionnaire is not intended to be personally completed by the youth; it should be completed by the interviewer - likely a Group Leader. The information can be obtained from any reliable source such as the referral source or file review, or by asking the caregivers during the Pre-Inclusion Interview.
- The information gleaned from the Youth Experiences Questionnaire helps to describe the youth and families who are referred to and/or join Connect, so that we can summarize characteristics of the youth referred to Connect. Together with the Pre-Inclusion Interview it helps us determine how Connect best fits these families, and the kinds of supports needed for these families to most benefit from the Connect Program.

## Time 1 - Beginning of Connect

**Prepare Time 1 Questionnaire Packages well in advance of the beginning of Connect.**

- Prepare copies of the Time 1 Packages by printing from the Adobe Acrobat files on the accompanying CD (double-sided copying is encouraged):
  - **Connect Time 1 Caregiver Questionnaire Package.pdf**
  - **Connect Time 1 Youth Questionnaire Package.pdf** (if youth are to be included)
- Put the printed questionnaire packages in large (e.g., 9" x 12"), unsealed self-addressed envelopes. These envelopes will be used as return envelopes, so participants should be asked to return them to the address/person specified on them (e.g., local Connect Project Lead or Maples Program Evaluation, as determined).
- Hand out the Time 1 Packages to caregivers at the Information Session and ask for them to be returned at or before Session 1. At the Information Session, let parents know that should they wish, Group Leaders can stay after the first Session to allow them time to complete their Packages.
- Hand out the Time 1 Packages to the youth (if youth are to be included) before (i.e., at least one week) the Connect group sessions begin and ask for them to be returned at or before Session 1.

- Ask that packages be returned sealed (to emphasize the confidentiality of the data being collected). Point out that all identifying information will be removed from the questionnaires during data entry (to emphasize anonymity). Identifying information is requested solely for tracking purposes, to match Time 1 and Time 2 Packages.
- Keep track of how many Packages have been handed out and to whom, and record which ones have been returned. A tracking log is included on the accompanying CD: **Connect Time 1 Questionnaire Package Tracking Log.pdf**
- Ideally the packages should be returned at the first session of Connect. If Packages are not returned prior to Session 3, we will have to exclude them from analyses: we want to know about behaviours and attitudes before the possible influence of the Connect program; at this point, we are not certain at what point in time attitudes, behaviours, and relationships begin to shift.
- Generally, caregivers and youth will need gentle reminders and/or support to return their respective Packages. Your local Connect Working Group will need to develop an incentive plan to support package completion.

## Time 2 - End of Connect

- Prepare copies of the Time 2 Packages by printing from the Adobe Acrobat files on the accompanying CD (double-sided copying is encouraged):
  - **Connect Time 2 Caregiver Questionnaire Package.pdf**
  - **Connect Time 2 Youth Questionnaire Package.pdf**  
(if youth were included at Time 1)
- Hand out the Time 2 Packages in envelopes to caregivers at Session 9 and ask for them to be returned by the next week (Session 10 - Debriefing and Feedback). Consult your tracking log from Time 1 and distribute the Time 2 Packages to these same participants.
- Hand out the Time 2 Packages to the youth (if youth were included at Time 1) at Session 9 and ask for them to be returned by the next week (Session 10 - Debriefing and Feedback).
- If a low functioning youth had extensive difficulty completing the Time 1 Package, there is no need to provide him/her with a Time 2 Package that would likely cause additional hardship.
- It is even more important that Time 2 Packages be self-addressed (for mailing), in the event that caregivers and youth miss their only opportunity to return the Packages in person at the final session.
- Use the Time 2 tracking log (**Connect Time 2 Questionnaire Package Tracking Log.pdf**) to record how many Packages have been handed out and to whom, and record which ones have been returned.

## Debriefing and Feedback Session

- Prepare the Connect Feedback Forms for Connect group members: **Connect Feedback Form.pdf**
- After the Feedback Forms are completed during the final Connect session, seal them in an envelope along with a record of the Feedback and Debriefing Interview responses; and submit to the Maples Program Evaluation Office.

## Connect Program Evaluation Do's & Don'ts

- DO emphasize the anonymity and confidentiality of the data: once collected, it is sent directly to Maples Program Evaluation and not viewed by the local Group Leaders.
- DO ensure the completion of Time 1 Packages as soon as possible at the beginning of Connect: doing so ensures that participants' responses accurately reflect their reality before attending the Connect Group.
- DO use the tracking logs to keep track of Packages and to whom they have been given, and update the list as packages are returned. This information allows for the calculation of return rate statistics, and should be completed in full to allow for The Maples to determine the number of clients being served by Connect.
- DON'T allow caregivers to assist youth with their questionnaires or see their data.
- DON'T show questionnaire data to others unless justified in the context of program evaluation; caregivers should never be allowed to see anyone else's information.
- DON'T allow Time 2 Packages to go missing or uncollected, as doing so reduces the value of Time 1 packages. We can only examine data from group members who completed both the Time 1 and Time 2 Questionnaire Packages (when we are looking for changes that may have taken place through participating in the Connect Program).

## Frequently Asked Questions

*If there are multiple children in a family, to whom should we provide a Youth Package?*

Caregivers are referred to Connect with a specific "identified child" and it is this child who should receive a Youth Package, and whom caregivers should keep in mind when completing the Caregiver Package.

*If a couple wants two Caregiver Packages, one for each of them, what should we do?*

We appreciate and expect that different caregivers will have different perspectives on their child. Therefore, feel free to provide Caregiver Packages to whomever seriously requests one and intends to complete the Package.

*A youth (or caregiver) is refusing to complete the Questionnaire Package despite consenting to do so at the beginning, is there any way to get them to do it?*

As stated in the Consent form, individuals are free to discontinue their involvement in evaluation any time, and deciding to stop participating will not change the services the family may be receiving.

With that said, many individuals intend to complete their questionnaires; that is, they still consent to participate in the evaluation, but are having some difficulty actually doing so. It is up to the Group Leaders to determine what might be interfering and how best to support them to complete their questionnaires within a reasonable time frame.

This may consist of friendly reminders by the Group Leaders and Project Lead, and/or perhaps home visits to collect the packages. It may be helpful to offer childcare for the time it takes to complete the Package. Use of an incentive plan, which will be developed by your local Connect Working Group, usually improves package completion. Such incentives may be cash incentives or gift certificates (e.g., Starbucks, Tim Hortons, Rogers Video), small gifts such as mugs or food snacks (e.g., chocolate), or a draw for a larger gift. Doing so shows participants that you recognize that the questionnaires are time-consuming and you are thankful for their efforts.

Try to get as many Questionnaire Packages completed as possible without heavy incentives or compulsion. Although incentives can be useful, make sure that doing so does not bias the data by providing “too good” of an incentive.

*What if a participant (caregiver or youth) loses their Questionnaire Package, either before or after completing it?*

If the Package cannot be found after intensive searching on the part of the participant, the best solution is to provide a new Package to be completed as soon as possible.

*What if a caregiver arrives at the designated Group Session without their Questionnaire Package (Time 1 or Time 2) completed?*

Encourage the caregiver to complete the Package at the end of the session so it can be returned in person that day.

## Help! Contact Information

We're here to help guide you through what we consider to be an important component of the Connect Program. If you have any questions about this guide or any of the program evaluation process, please call us at Maples Program Evaluation: 604-660-0488 or e-mail the Maples Program Evaluation Officer: [Russell.Ball@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Russell.Ball@gov.bc.ca).