

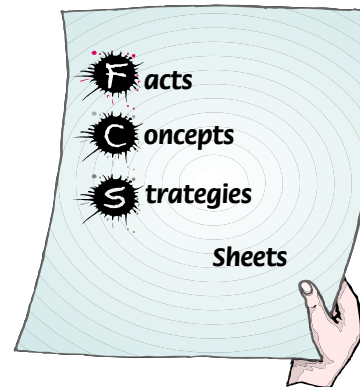
**This FCS Sheet is #5
of an 18 part series
on family-centred
service.**

**If you are interested
in this FCS Sheet, you
may also want to
read:**

FCS Sheet #4:
Becoming more family-
centred

FCS Sheet #18:
Are we really family-
centred? Checklists for
families, service
providers and
organizations

**Key definitions and a
list of the topics in
this series can be
found at the end of
this FCS Sheet.**



10 Things You Can Do to Be Family-Centred

This FCS Sheet outlines 10 “family-centred ideas” for families, service providers, and organizations. The ideas have been organized in columns to allow you to use the information in different ways. For example, the following three sheets could be posted on a bulletin board or the columns could be cut out and used as bookmarks. Regardless of how you choose to use this FCS Sheet, we encourage you to share your favorite “family-centred ideas” with other people.

10 Things You Can Do to Be Family-Centred

Family-Centred Idea #1

-Families-

Inform service providers of your preferences for meeting times and location.

-Service Providers-

Offer families a choice of location and time to meet. Ask what works best for them.

-Organizations-

Have flexible hours of operation with appropriate support staff available. Be flexible about where staff meet with families.

Family-Centred Idea #2

-Families-

Tell service providers about the things your child and family enjoy and do well.

-Service Providers-

Focus on strengths of the child and family, verbally and in writing.

-Organizations-

Have a newsletter and/or a bulletin board for parents with a section including family success stories.

Family-Centred Idea #3

-Families-

Tell service providers what you would like your child to be able to do. Encourage your child to do this when he or she is able.

-Service Providers-

Collaborate in goal setting with the child, the family and others, including pre-school or school personnel and other service providers

-Organizations-

Develop policies to promote collaborative goal setting. Ensure that these policies are implemented.

Family-Centred Idea #4

-Families-

Ask service providers if there are any other options for service before making decisions.

-Service Providers-

Present a variety of options to the family to allow them to make choices.

-Organizations-

Promote staff awareness of community resources. Provide opportunities for continuing education.

10 Things You Can Do to Be Family-Centred

Family-Centred Idea #5

-Families-

Ask for information and indicate the type of information you prefer (for example, verbal, written, video, or Internet).

-Service Providers-

Provide information. Have it available in a variety of forms, including written information, videos, and Internet resources.

-Organizations-

Develop and maintain a resource centre for parents. Include information about your organization and the services provided.

Family-Centred Idea #6

-Families-

Tell service providers what you are looking for from their service.

-Service Providers-

Ask families what they would like from you and your service.

-Organizations-

Get feedback from families and be responsive to their concerns.

Family-Centred Idea #7

-Families-

Write a list of questions you want to ask the service provider. Review it at the end of the visit to make sure all questions were answered.

-Service Providers-

Have enough time to talk to the family at each visit – make sure they don't feel you are rushing them.

-Organizations-

Monitor the amount of time service providers need to effectively carry out family-centred practices and assign caseloads accordingly.

Family-Centred Idea #8

-Families-

Be open with service providers. Make sure they know what is important to you and your family.

-Service Providers-

Listen to what families tell you. Believe and trust them.

-Organizations-

Include families on the Board of Directors, on steering committees, and on job interview panels for new employees.

10 Things You Can Do to Be Family-Centred

Family-Centred Idea #9

-Families-

Ask to be connected with other families to support one another, and to share experiences and resources.

-Service Providers-

Ask families if they would like to connect with another family. Have resources available for parents who would like to do this.

-Organizations-

Provide support for families to connect with other families, such as parent discussion groups, information sessions, or parent-to-parent linking.

Family-Centred Idea #10

-Families-

Involve your family and friends – take people up on offers and ask for support when you need it.

-Service Providers-

Ask about all family members and the ways that each member contributes to the family. Ask parents who they would like to involve in the service.

-Organizations-

Provide services for all family members – offer programs for siblings or grandparents.

Key Definitions

Family-Centred Service - Family-centred service is made up of a set of values, attitudes and approaches to services for children with special needs and their families.

Family-centred service recognizes that **each family is unique**; that the family is the **constant in the child's life**; and that they are the **experts on the child's abilities and needs**.

The family works with service providers to make informed decisions about the services and supports the child and family receive.

In family-centred service, the strengths and needs of all family members are considered.

Service Provider – The term service provider refers to those individuals who work directly with the child and family. These individuals **may** include educational assistants, respite workers, teachers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech-language pathologists, service coordinators, recreation therapists, etc.

Organization – The term organization refers to the places or groups from which the child and family receive services. Organizations **may** include community programs, hospitals, rehabilitation centres, schools, etc.

Intervention – Interventions refer to the services and supports provided by the person who works with the child and family. Interventions **may** include direct therapy, meetings to problem solve issues that are important to you, phone calls to advocate for your child, actions to link you with other parents, etc.

FCS Sheet Topics

The following is a list of the FCS Sheets. If you are interested in receiving any of these topics, please contact *CanChild* or visit our website.

General Topics Related to Family-Centred Service

- FCS Sheet #1 – What is family-centred service?
- FCS Sheet #2 – Myths about family-centred service
- FCS Sheet #3 – How does family-centred service make a difference?
- FCS Sheet #4 – Becoming more family-centred
- FCS Sheet #5 – 10 things you can do to be family-centred

Specific Topics Related to Family-Centred Service

- FCS Sheet #6 – Identifying and building on parent and family strengths and resources
- FCS Sheet #7 – Parent-to-parent support
- FCS Sheet #8 – Effective communication in family-centred service
- FCS Sheet #9 – Using respectful behaviours and language
- FCS Sheet #10 – Working together: From providing information to working in partnership
- FCS Sheet #11 – Negotiating: Dealing effectively with differences
- FCS Sheet #12 – Making decisions together: How to decide what is best
- FCS Sheet #13 – Setting goals together
- FCS Sheet #14 – Advocacy: How to get the best for your child
- FCS Sheet #15 – Getting the most from appointments and meetings
- FCS Sheet #16 – Fostering family-centred service in the school
- FCS Sheet #17 – Family-centred strategies for wait lists
- FCS Sheet #18 – Are we really family-centred? Checklists for families, service providers and organizations

Want to know more about family-centred service?

Visit the *CanChild* website: www.canchild.ca

Or call us at 905-525-9140 ext. 27850