**BC Society of Transition Houses**

**Promising Practices Examples for PEACE Programs Responding to the Health Crisis**

This document provides an overview of best practices at different stages of service for the PEACE Program, when working remotely or in-person in accordance with social distancing guidelines in response to managing the spread of Covid-19. For each stage of service listed in the table below, the relevant pages of the PEACE Program Toolkit are also referenced.

The information provided in this document is intended to be a set of guidelines and does not replace the procedures and protocols for working with children and youth that each agency has in place.

Further information in relation to Covid-19 can be found at https://bcsth.ca/blog/health-safety-covid-19/

| Stage of Service | PEACE Toolkit | Method of Service Delivery | Promising Practice |
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| • Initial Contact / Eligibility Assessment | P48-51 | • Phone / online | • Check in beforehand with the program participant and/or non-offending caregiver to ensure it is safe to contact<br>• Establish which platform will be used for sessions going forward if they will be taking place remotely e.g. online video platform; phone; online chat etc.<br>• Discuss technology safety, privacy and confidentiality – see relevant section below. |
| • Orientation | P52 | • Phone / online<br><br><br><br>• In-person | • Check in beforehand to ensure it is safe to contact<br>• Conduct orientation using identified platform for services<br>• Discuss safety considerations, privacy and set parameters for the session. See Example of Setting Up for a Remote PEACE Session<br><br>• See BC Restart guidance for PEACE Programs<br><br>• See Work Safe BC Guidance for Community social services (non-residential) and COVID-19 safety |

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| • Intake/First Meeting<br><br>• Informed Consent | P53-56<br><br>P69-70 | • Phone /online | • Intake should be completed when a program participant is moved off the waitlist and will begin service to avoid collecting personally identifying information until consent for service has been obtained.<br><br>• Check in beforehand to ensure it is safe to contact<br><br>• Develop informed consent form specific to offering virtual services. See BCSTH's Informed Consent for Digital Services Template as an example.<br><br>• Develop a policy that *in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic clients are permitted to indicate they give verbal consent* for forms such as confidentiality etc.<br><br>• Follow up informed verbal consent in writing and share a copy with the non-offending caregiver / program participant.<br><br>• For further information about obtaining consent remotely see BCSTH webinar: Family Law During Covid-19 for BC's Anti-Violence Workers<br><br>• While in session with a program participant where no camera is being used/you can't see each other (e.g. if doing the session via phone), check in frequently to ensure they are comfortable and continue being attentive to their safety |

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| | | • In-person | • See BC Restart guidance for PEACE Programs and the Work Safe BC Guidance for Community social services (non-residential) and COVID-19 safety<br><br>• It may be helpful to establish in advance what program participants want to do e.g. select a few toys/activity/art supplies to minimize cleaning afterwards<br><br>• Provide clear communication in advance of the session with the non-offending caregiver and/or program participants about social distancing requirements and setting boundaries |
| | | • In-person outdoors | • Consider confidentiality risks associated with holding sessions in outdoor spaces. Discuss these issues with program participants and come to an agreement you are both comfortable with and that aligns with your organizational policies and procedures.<br>• Check in with the family to establish what they are comfortable with including if there are any particular public places that you should avoid<br>• Consider your surroundings and how much may be safe to talk about |
| | | • Home visits | • Some PEACE Counsellors may be seeing a few program participants who haven't been able to transition to remote sessions in the program participant's home. If this is the case, some considerations include: |

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| | | | ○ Assessing risks with the non-offending caregiver<br>○ Setting boundaries if siblings are present – have conversations with parents regarding how best to manage this prior to going to the home. For example, you may explain this is the child's special time and then invite any sibling(s) and the non-offending caregiver to share some of what you have been doing at the end of the session.<br>○ Don't close the door of the room you are using in the house<br>○ Try to avoid transporting materials and supplies back and forth as much as possible. For example, use a "counselling Box" with toys / art supplies etc. in it that you leave at the program participants house.<br><br>• See Work Safe BC Guidance for Community social services (non-residential) and COVID-19 safety |
| • Safety Planning | P57-65 | | • May need to review safety plan during pandemic times e.g. due to social isolation measures such as school closures, and challenges practicing 911 calls during remote PEACE Program sessions<br><br>• For more information see **Safety Planning** in Information and Resources to Support PEACE Counsellors during Covid-19 |
| | | • Phone / online | • Promising practices may include:<br>○ Establishing program participant has a private place to talk<br>○ Establishing which topics are safe to talk about<br>○ Developing a code word or hand signal the program participant can use to let you know if they feel unsafe or want to change the subject |

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| | | | <ul><li>Deciding in advance how you will end the session / how you will check in if the session ends abruptly</li><li>Establishing what the non-offending caregiver is comfortable with e.g. for younger program participants they may want to be in the room / able to overhear</li></ul><br>• While in session with a program participant where no camera is being used/you can't see each other (e.g. if doing the session via phone), check in frequently to ensure they are comfortable and continue being attentive to their safety<br><br>• For more information see the BCSTH webinar Delivering Peace Program Support Sessions Remotely During Covid-19 |
| • Privacy, confidentiality and Technology Safety | P66-68 | • Phone / online | • See BCSTH Technology Safety Project's resources, including the Digital Services Toolkit<br>• See the following sections in the BCSTH document Information and Resources to Support PEACE Counsellors during Covid-19:<br><ul><li>Considerations for communicating with women, children and youth</li><li>Technology Safety information to share with women, children and youth</li><li>Helping kids stay safe online</li></ul>• See Use of Technology Policy Template Guide for PEACE Programs<br><br>• See BCSTH Webinar: Considerations for Anti-Violence Programs Using Technology During the Covid-19 pandemic<br>• See BCSTH Webinar: Considerations for Anti-Violence Programs Starting an Online Chat Crisis Line |

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| | | • In-person outdoors | • Consider confidentiality risks associated with holding sessions in outdoor spaces. Discuss these issues with program participants and come to an agreement you are both comfortable with and that aligns with your organizational policies and procedures.<br>• Check in with the family to establish what they are comfortable with including if there are any particular public places that you should avoid<br>• Consider your surroundings and how much may be safe to talk about |
| | | • Home visits | • Leaving the door open when providing PEACE sessions in the participant's home is recommended as a best practice. It is therefore important to remain mindful of who else is at home and may be able to overhear your conversation.<br>• You may choose to come up with a code word or hand signal so that the program participant can indicate to you if they are feeling unsafe or want to change the subject. |
| • Individual Support<br>• Group Support | P71-196 | • Phone / Online Individual PEACE Program Sessions | In addition to the safety planning and privacy/confidentiality measures provided above, some considerations for individual support sessions being offered by phone/online may include:<br>• For younger program participants it can be helpful to ask the non-offending caregiver to e-mail/text what the child wants to do in the session (you can frontload suggestions).<br>• Asking the non-offending caregiver to be near their phone so that you can text them if the child is struggling with co-regulation over the screen/phone. |

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| | | | <ul><li>Offering a pre-coaching session with the non-offending caregiver, with concrete actions they can use to help child regulate during and after the session.</li><li>When the non-offending caregiver is with the child, moving into parent coach role and supporting the connection between parent and child.</li><li>Introducing a clear and consistent greeting ritual</li><li>Asking the same/similar questions at the start of each session can build in rituals can support connection and safety</li><li>Not having more supplies than the program participant – check the extent and limits of what the program participant has to use</li><li>Offering choice e.g. "do you want me to build/do art with you or do you want me to watch you and talk with you?"</li><li>Warning how much time is left about 10mins before end and informing in intervals according to how well the program participant is able to end sessions</li><li>Asking the non-offending caregiver to join for last 5mins.</li><li>Informing the non-offending caregiver of some useful information the program participant wants you to share/has given permission for you to share</li><li>Asking the program participant to share with the non-offending caregiver what they have done/made</li><li>For more information see the BCSTH webinar Delivering Peace Program Support Sessions Remotely During Covid-19 and supporting document Example of Setting Up for a Remote PEACE Session</li></ul> |

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| | | • Phone/Online Group PEACE Program Sessions | • Some additional privacy, safety and confidentiality considerations for online group sessions may include:<br>  o Restricting group members to existing program participants<br>  o Keeping groups small<br>  o Expanding confidentiality agreement e.g. will not record the session<br>  o Holding individual conversations prior to group e.g. how to manage if triggered; how to check in if leave group / after group if needed; how to notify if need to step out momentarily<br><br>• For more information see the BCSTH webinar Delivering PEACE Program Group Sessions Remotely During Covid-19 and supporting document Delivering PEACE Program Support Groups online during Covid-19 |
| | | • In Person Individual and Group PEACE Program Sessions | • See BC Restart guidance for PEACE Programs<br>• See Work Safe BC Guidance for Community social services (non-residential) and COVID-19 safety<br>• Additional consideration to maintain social distancing during group sessions may include:<br>  o Holding smaller group sessions than usual<br>  o Holding sessions outdoors where possible e.g. at the beach or in the park<br>  o Holding group sessions that are half indoors, half outdoors<br>  o Setting up a gazebo in an outdoor space<br>  o Meeting in circles<br>  o Providing individual blankets to sit on |

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| | | |     o  If space allows, taping squares on the floor and creating a game where program participants have to stay in their 'zone' |
| | | • Activities Suggestions | • For activity ideas for remote and socially distanced PEACE Program sessions, see BCSTH resource: Activities for Virtual and Socially Distanced PEACE Program Support Sessions and Summer Camps<br><br>• For remote session videos and activity ideas, see BCSTH PEACE Programs Video Library (email nicky@bcsth.ca for the password) |
| | | • Families not contactable by internet or phone | • Consider whether it may be safe to mail a package of PEACE Program materials to the family's home, or to another safe person. If not, consider whether there is somewhere you could meet the family to give them the materials / somewhere in the community you could leave it for them to collect.  Examples of what other PEACE Programs have done include:<br>    o  Mailing or dropping off info / resource packages with activities, worksheets and games<br>    o  Partnering with schools for children to deliver packages to children<br>    o  Putting packages at the front of your agency building and having families pick them up<br>• See PEACE At Home Package. More worksheets like this have been shared via the PEACE listserv. Please email nicky@bcsth.ca if you would like to be sent a copy of these. |

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| • Supporting Parents and Caregivers | P253-272 | • Phone/Online | • During times of crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the services provided by PEACE Programs may look different. With in-person service closures and necessary time taken to establish safe remote service delivery many PEACE Programs have reported working predominantly with the non-offending caregiver to help meet their immediate needs, and less so with children and youth, particularly less so with young children who can be harder to engage in a session taking place online or by phone. Some tips for working remotely with non-offending caregivers include:<br>   o Reassuring them that what they are doing is enough<br>   o Checking in rather than providing PEACE program sessions<br>   o Connecting them to resources first e.g. food, technology, helping to meet their basic needs<br>   o Making packages of materials for parents, especially those without internet to engage in online meetings.<br>   o Being mindful not to add extra stress on kids and parents<br><br>• See BCSTH webinar Delivering Peace Program Support Sessions Remotely During Covid-19<br><br>• See Information and Resources to Support Parents during Covid-19 |
| | | • In person | • See BC Restart guidance for PEACE Programs<br>• See Work Safe BC Guidance for Community social services (non-residential) and COVID-19 safety |

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| • Administrative and Legal Issues | P333-392 | • Working from home | • Considerations for working from home include:<br>  o Using own computer / log in and not sharing password<br>  o Ensuring access to remote work log in is password protected<br>  o If you have physical files at home, keeping these in a locked bag, or locked cabinet and informing persons in shared residence that these are confidential<br>  o Confirm verbal consent in writing<br>  o Managing program participant expectations and communicating effectively regarding service provision changes<br>  o Doing your best to answer questions comprehensively<br>  o Tracking use of personal printer/cell phone for agency reimbursement |
| | | • Co-Parenting during Covid-19 | • See BCSTH webinar: Family Law During Covid-19 for BC's Anti-Violence Workers |
| | | • Protection orders, Peace bonds and Access to BC Courts | • BCSTH webinar: Going Forward: Protection Orders, Peace Bonds and Access to BC Courts During Covid-19 |
| • Other Aspects of Service Delivery | | • Transportation & snacks | • See BC Restart guidance for PEACE Programs<br>• See Work Safe BC Guidance for Community social services (non-residential) and COVID-19 safety |
| • VIP and BELIEVE Projects | | • Facilitation when schools are closed | • BCSTH will be developing materials to support facilitation of the Violence is Preventable (VIP) Program during the 2020-2021 school year, while schools are operating remotely. |

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| | | | • VIP sites can use the VIP listserv to connect with each other for supports in relation to delivering the VIP Program (vip@npogroups.org)<br>• All VIP resources and materials, including pre-existing videos for educators are available on VIP project page<br>• Some examples of short VIP videos geared towards students are available on the BCSTH PEACE Programs Video Library (email nicky@bcsth.ca for the password) |
| • Burnout and Vicarious Trauma | P325-332 | • Self-care for PEACE Program Counsellors | • Try to take breaks in between sessions - breathe, stretch, go for a walk, make a cup of tea<br>• See BCSTH webinar Yoga, self-care and grounding practices<br>• The following resources may be of help:<br>• Regulating Through the Coronavirus - Free 2-part webinar series (Synergetic Play Therapy Institute)<br>• Crisis and Trauma Institute: Stress Reduction Exercises for Adults and Kids<br>• Charity Village: 7 Important Tips If You've Never Worked From Home<br>• Charity Village: Pro Tips From Charity Village Staff On Working From Home |