

Positive Connections

Program Handbook



“BELIEVING IN POTENTIAL”

#3 - 3800 72nd Street,
Delta, BC V4K 3N2
604.946.6622
www.reachdevelopment.org



reach
CHILD AND YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

Vision Mission & Values

VISION *Communities where all children, youth and families are welcomed, included, and leading lives of well-being based on their own individual strengths, interests, and values.*

MISSION *To provide timely, accessible and supportive community programs and services for the optimal development of children and youth, where children, youth and families flourish and reach their potential.*

VALUES

Respectfulness

Excellence

Attitude of sharing

Collaborative spirit

Honesty

Continuous improvement

Handle resources efficiently

Integrity

Learning

Diversity

Guiding Principles

1. Appreciating childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle and basing our work with children and youth on the knowledge of children development.
2. Appreciating and supporting the bond between the child or youth and family.
3. Recognizing that children and youth are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture, community and society.
4. Respecting the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each individual (child, youth, family member, and colleague).
5. Helping children and youth achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust, respect, and positive regard.
6. That children are best nurtured by a family that knows, loves and honors them for who they are.
7. That all children have the right to play and learn in an inclusive environment that meets the needs of children with and without disabilities.
8. That relationships and friendships are essential to enrich our lives.
9. That all individuals are entitled to the services and supports required to ensure their full participation in our society.
10. That the involvement of families and support networks contributes to everyone's safety and well-being.
11. That services and supports must be delivered in a way that respects an individual's diverse history, culture, race, religion and sexual orientation.
12. That inclusive communities enrich the lives of all citizens.

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Reach Positive Connections

- Reach Positive Connections provides service to families who have children 0-19 who meet the criteria for Child and Youth Special Needs Services within the Ministry of Child and Family Development.
- We serve the communities of Delta, Surrey, White Rock and Langley.
- Reach Positive Connections is a free, family-centred service, funded by the Ministry of Child and Family Development.
- Reach Positive Connections has three key components, two mandatory (for parents) which work in conjunction with each other: Parent Education, Home Education Sessions, and then the one which is optional/applicable is sibshops, for the sibling of your child with a diagnosis.
 - **Parent Education Classes *for parents* (mandatory)**
 - Families can choose if they prefer day or evening classes
 - Day Classes are 5 hours (½ hour lunch) each and run for 4 weeks
 - Evening Classes are 2.5 hours in length and run for seven weeks
 - Both parents are encouraged to attend.
 - Childcare is available in the evening for families who require this service. The ratio for child-minding is 3 children to 1 staff. If your child requires 1:1 support, please speak to your behavioural consultant. **Pre-registration is required.**
 - The curriculum includes such topics as: parenting styles, information on positive behavioural supports, how to prioritize goals, sensory information, visual supports, asset building, advocacy, community supports, transition planning, sharing the diagnosis, sexuality, safety, and parent connections.
 - **Home Education sessions *for parents* (mandatory)**
 - In conjunction with families, Positive Connections Behavioural Consultants identify the strengths of the child and the family and utilize these strengths to work on challenges. Behavioural Consultants assist parents to integrate skills learned in the Parent education classes. You will meet with your consultant 8-14 times for about an hour each time within your 4 month cycle.
 - Behavioural Consultants understand that families are the expert on their child and we work together, one on one with parents to determine not only what strategies will work best in their family but also to prioritize goals and plans.
 - Together we will do some assessments and prioritize what you need to improve the quality of life for you and your child. We'll also discover what supports or community services are available and how to utilize these supports to sustain your new learning.
 - As Positive Connections Behavioural Consultants we have been trained to understand child development and the scientific principles of behaviour. We also understand that families are at different stages in their own understanding. We respect where you are in your parenting journey and aim to help you move forward towards your objectives.
 - If you wish, we will provide information on how to set up Careteam meetings. Careteams differ from Individualized Education Plans (IEP's) and other meetings as they bring together everyone in the child's life, ensuring continuity and consistency in goal planning and tactics. They are strength based positive meetings and are best held proactively. These kinds of groups help to sustain families over a long period of time.

➤ **Sibling Group for children (optional/applicable)**

- ☀ Your 6-12 year old, typically developing sibling may attend one of our sibling groups. Sibling groups might vary in structure from year to year based on the needs of each unique group. We have had great success offering this as a “Camp” to the siblings. Sibshop is approximately 20 hours in length.
- ☀ This group is based on the “sibshops” model and will support and educate siblings while providing a forum for siblings to meet and share experiences.
- ☀ Staff at Sibshops cannot drive children as this requires special insurance and additional ratios, etc. We typically hold this at a location where we can walk to community based activities.
- ☀ Parents are included in the last portion of the Sibshops where the thoughts and feelings are the children are shared with you, their parent.



Positive Connections Philosophy and Best Practices



This program draws upon research based practices that have been shown to be effective in the study of behaviour as well as other fields, such as education, biomedical sciences, social sciences and developmental psychology to assist families to:

- reduce or prevent problem behaviours with a focus on a proactive approach,
 - support the optimal development of their child,
 - and to enhance the quality of life for their child and themselves.
- We take a positive perspective and begin with the strengths of the child and the family and our approach is guided by the values of inclusion and respect.
 - Our role is to partner with families, rather than to give advice. We recognize that families will know their child best and that combining their knowledge of their child and our knowledge of the science of behaviour, will result in effective and meaningful plans and strategies.
 - Consistent with the positive focus, we also recognize that the attachment relationship of the child to his or her parents and family is paramount and that plans and strategies must always, ultimately, respect and/or enhance this bond.

The Positive Connections is based on current best practices. This includes a strength based plan based utilizing the child’s preferences and family needs. The Positive Connections will always recognize the expertise of the family and offer suggestions that promote moving forward towards a family’s goals. Suggestions will be positive in nature and will always uphold the adult / child attachment.



Family Involvement

- Family involvement is essential to Positive Connections Consultant service. Our roles, visits and direction are determined by the families we serve. Parents are the key component of our service. We work with you because you are the constant in your child’s life and you have the greatest impact in the life of your child.

- Positive Connections is a short term intensive PBS (Positive Behavioural Support) model. (Parent portion is about 4 months) Generally, PBS is offered for approximately 1 year of service.
- Your family has been selected to receive the short term intensive program because you have some good knowledge already of how best to support your child and you have indicated that you currently have the capacity for an intensive service.
- This is a wonderful opportunity to experience PBS in only a 4 month period. The information you gather will be something you can draw on in the future when new challenges arise. Our goal is to give you information you need now as well as information for your child's future.
- Families must be able to commit to full participation in both the classes and the home consultation portions of this program. This will offer you the full benefits of this program which include: appropriate formal and informal support, educational opportunities and resources to provide a highly supportive environment in which your child can grow and develop and to condense the information into a short time frame.
- To help facilitate ongoing support for your family, we also want to ensure that you are well connected to, and supported by, your community. Meeting other parents in your class will aide in this process.



Our Role with Schools

The Positive Connections program is a home based program where staff works with families. The program is not intended for support or consultation to school personnel. However, when school matters also relate to the family priorities and goals, and when parents would like it, consultants may visit your child's school, to share information. This will take place only after the school principal and classroom teacher have agreed to a meeting and invited the consultant into the school. Sharing information as to what strategies are successful in each domain is often very useful for the best outcome for the child. The total time a consultant spends with the school should not exceed a few visits. For more assistance with school liaison, consultants can refer families to other sources.



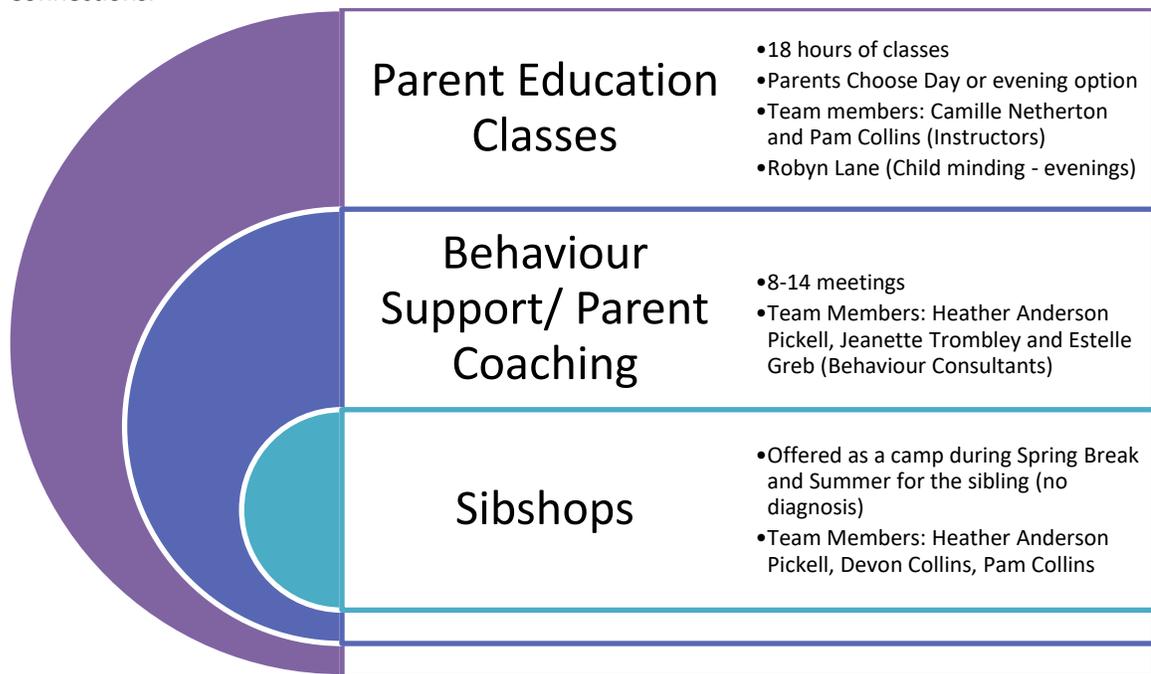
Eligibility

Eligibility for the Reach Positive Connections is determined by the family's Social Worker. Once the Social Worker determines that a family might benefit from this program they are referred to the Program Coordinator who then contacts the family to arrange intake and orientation.



Referral and Waitlist Procedure

All families are referred through the Ministry of Child and Family Development. Waitlists are held by the Ministry. Once a family is on the waitlist for a Behavioural Support program they will be referred to the Program Coordinator who will contact them about space available within the Positive Connections.





Reach Positive Connections – Team

The Reach Positive Connections is dedicated to hiring multitalented, well qualified staff. All staff must have training and extensive experience in the following areas:

- Child and Youth Development
- Early Childhood Education
- Attachment Theory
- Positive Behavioural Support
- Counselling
- Brain Based Disabilities / Mental Health issues
- Family Support
- Community / Professional Resources

	Name	Email	Phone
	Camille Netherton <i>Program Coordinator/ Instructor/Behavioural Consultant</i>	Camillen@reachchild.org	604.946.6622 ext. 302
	Pam Collins <i>Instructor/Behavioural Consultant</i>	Pamc@reachchild.org	604.946.6622 ext. 341
	Robyn Lane <i>Administrative Coordinator/ Child- Minding</i>	robynl@reachchild.org	604.946.6622 ext. 328
	Heather Anderson- Pickell <i>Behavioural Consultant</i>	Heathera@reachchild.org	604.946.6622 ext. 332
	Jeanette Trombley <i>Behavioural Consultant</i>	jeanettet@reachchild.org	604.946.6622 ext 364
	Estelle Greb <i>Behaviour Consultant</i>	estelleg@reachchild.org	604.946.6622 ext. 365



Annual Picnic

Each year in July or August we will hold a picnic for all past and current families. The location will be announced via invitation. Due to allergies and preferences **families bring your own picnic meal** and we will supply games and fun! It is a great way to catch up and reconnect. Please plan to come and join us each summer.



Individualized Service Plans

Through functional assessment, direct observation, history and current assessments, Behavioural Consultants will work with families to develop plans that suit their unique needs. A Positive Connections Plan will focus on teaching the parents new ways of being proactive and reactive with their children's behaviours. They will also build in community services and connections and add goals for each member of the family. The goal of the Positive Connections plan is to assist the family to action, to move forward to their unique goals and to sustain their learning. We strive to create a better quality of life for all members of the family, utilizing each person's strengths.

Behavioural Consultants will provide families with meeting notes at the time of the meeting or within a reasonable time frame. Families will be provided with articles, suggestions of book and/ or DVDs to assist with their learning. You will also work with the consultant to determine a plan for your family. This will include future ideas for how to move forward in your goals. At the end of service you will be provided with future recommendations to keep you connected, moving forward and transitioning to the next phase of life.



Reach Positive Connections Policies and Procedures



Phone Policy

To protect and maintain personal and professional boundaries, staff at Reach are not permitted to return phone calls from a private line. All phone calls must be made from a work related cell phone or from a line where the incoming number is hidden. Many families have a feature on their phones which do not allow for blocked calls or calls from a cell phone. The nature of working out in the community often prevents staff from being in an office environment and ideally, their work related cell phone number should be added to the family's list of allowable numbers to avoid delays in communication. Many staff members have personal cell phones that are also used at work. Staff members are not permitted to give out their personal cell phone numbers.



Inclement Weather

In the event of extremely inclement weather, the Positive Connections Consultant or the family may opt to cancel a meeting. Behavioural Consultants will do their best to notify a family as soon as possible and by all contact means possible; giving 24 hours' notice is preferred.



15 Minute Grace Period

When a meeting time is set, it is expected that all parties will arrive at the predetermined time; however, we understand that sometimes, due to unforeseen circumstances, this may not always be the case.

Behavioural Consultants arriving at a family's home and finding that family absent will:

- will wait for 15 minutes to allow for lateness
- call the family and leave a message and /or send an email informing the family that they arrived for a scheduled meeting and did not find them at home

If a Positive Connections Consultant should not arrive at the specified time, we would request a 15 minutes grace period as well to allow for lateness. The family should then either call or email the Positive Connections Consultant to let them know the appointment was missed. If the Positive Connections Consultant is late on a regular basis, the family should discuss this with their Positive Connections Consultant. If they do not feel comfortable doing so, the family may also follow the grievance procedure listed below.



Missed appointments/ missed classes

To ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the Positive Connections Program, if there is a lapse in communication with your behavioural consultant for 2 weeks, or if more than 7 hours of class time are missed and cannot be made up within that wave of service, service **will** be discontinued.



Reinstatement requests

Should a family who has been discontinued, wish to be reinstated into a different wave of service; they should contact both their social worker and the program coordinator. Families will have to have a written plan to address all the concerns of the previous discharge.



Cancelling appointments

Should you or your Positive Connections Consultant, need to cancel an appointment, 24 hours' notice is preferred. We understand this is not always possible, but timely notice, by all contact means possible is always best.



Sick Policy

Families are expected to notify their Consultant when **anyone** in the household is sick with an illness including colds, flues and infections. Because Behavioural Consultants work with multiple families, some who are medically fragile, it is important that contagious illnesses be contained. Meetings will be cancelled until the child or family member has either recovered or passed the contagious phase of the illness.

If a child is too sick to attend daycare/playgroup/school, then he is too sick for intervention. Visits must be cancelled if the child or any family member has the following conditions:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Ear infections
- Mumps
- Sinus infections
- Influenza
- Scabies
- Meningitis
- Cold
- Lice
- Excessive coughing and runny nose
- Tonsillitis
- Eye infections
- Chicken Pox
- Strep throat
- Lung infections, bronchitis, pneumonia
- Measles
- Hepatitis A
- Whooping Cough (pertussis)
- Scarlet Fever
- Fifth Disease
- Hand/Foot/Mouth Disease
- Mononucleosis
- Pink eye
- Roseola Infantum
- Giardiasis (Beaver Fever)
- Ring Worm
- Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)
- Impetigo
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
- Rubella
- If bed bugs are present in your home

Once a person in the family begins taking antibiotics for a condition, meetings will not resume until at least 24 hours has passed since beginning antibiotics or Diarrhea and/or Vomiting has ceased.



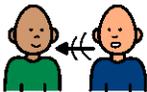
Release of Information

The Reach Positive Connections is funded by the Ministry of Child and Family Development is governed by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act. As such, guidelines for the maintenance, safekeeping and release of documents must be observed; therefore, all children's records are stored at Reach or with the Ministry of Child and Family Development. The child's records, including reports, videos, photos, and family contact information may only be released to third parties with the written consent of the child's legal guardian or by court order.



Videotaping

Videotaping is occasionally used for assessment and intervention planning purposes. This will only be done with consent of the family. Optional consent may be provided by families for Behavioural Consultants to show the videotapes at team meetings or for teaching purposes or at workshops.



Reach Grievance Policy

Reach is a family-centered organization. Should a concern regarding Positive Connections Behavioural Consultants or other issues arise, families are asked to communicate these concerns to their Positive Connections Consultant. If you are uncomfortable settling the issue with your Positive Connections Consultant, you may contact the Program Coordinator: Camille Netherton at 604.946.6622 ext. 302 or by email at camillen@reachchild.org. If families feel the concern is not resolved to their satisfaction, they can contact Reach's Executive Director, Renie D'Aquila at 604.946.6622 ext 301 or by email at reined@reachchild.org or families may complete a "Family Grievance" form. "Family Grievance" forms can be obtained from the Reach front desk or from our website and will be forwarded to the executive director. The executive director will:

- A) Speak with the family filing the complaint
- B) Conduct an investigation into the complaint

C) Take disciplinary action if required

D) Contact the family filing the complaint to follow up with a proposed solution or to update the family within seven business days.

The Executive Director shall notify Reach's board of directors of any complaints which have not been resolved to the family's satisfaction through the above grievance procedure. The executive director will advise the family of the Ministry of Child and Family Development's procedures if they are not satisfied with Reach's response.

Reach is committed to ensuring that no barriers to service or any negative consequences result from families bringing their concerns forward.



Personal and Professional Boundaries

As families and consultants are discussing information which involves trust and confidentiality, it is natural for both the family members and staff persons to become comfortable and informal with each other. Staff are expected at all times, however to maintain confidentiality and professionalism. It would violate the Code of Ethical Conduct for the staff person to discuss other children or families by name.



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Health and Safety

WorkSafe BC gives all British Columbians the right to refuse to work in settings or situations they believe to be unsafe. As an employer, Reach is obliged to respect the right of its employees in this regard and will take steps to manage any safety concerns raised by staff.



Pets

Due to allergies in staff and clients, please ensure that all pets are kept in a separate room for the duration of the time that Positive Connections staff are in your home.



Smoking

Positive Connections staff have the right to work in a non-smoking environment. Because of this, families are asked to smoke only in areas that are separated by a physical barrier where they might meet with Behavioural Consultants. Families are asked to refrain from smoking in a home for a full hour before a meeting is to take place.



Indoor Shoes

WorkSafe BC requires that employees wear shoes at all times. Behavioural Consultants are asked to have clean shoes that have not been worn outside or hard soled slippers available to wear during meetings inside a family's home.



Driving and Community Meetings

Behavioural Consultants cannot drive children or families in their own vehicles nor can they travel in families' vehicles. Should Behavioural Consultants be required to travel during a meeting, they can follow behind the family's vehicle in their own vehicle or meet the family at the destination.



Abuse and Neglect

Positive Connections staff are required by law to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the Ministry of Child and Family Development immediately.

If **any kind** of abuse is known to occur in the home, Positive Connections staff will not be able to enter the home and meetings will be set at one of the Reach offices.



Discipline

The Reach Positive Connections uses a Positive Behaviour Support approach to address challenging behaviours and to help children develop socially acceptable and appropriate behaviours. Only proactive positive methods for teaching appropriate behaviour will be suggested. Discipline which is **not** considered to be useful or productive in teaching children acceptable behaviours will not be used. Some of the unacceptable methods are:

- Spanking
- Humiliation using degrading words, name calling or sarcasm
- Denial of basic needs (foods, clothing, shelter)
- Confining of a child in a locked room
- Biting / the use of noxious substances
- Long periods of isolation

*Adapted from the BC Ministry of Health handbook "Guidance and Discipline with Young Children".



Ending Service with the Reach Positive Connections Program

The Reach Positive Connections is a short term intense program. Families are engaged in a wraparound service that incorporates their Education into home sessions for a group and individual approach. Families will have the opportunity for 18 hours of group education and approximately 8-14 home education visits. All families will receive a plan that will outline the recommendations for their future needs. Families will then be placed on Monitor service. Monitor is a transition service that allows families to contact their Behaviour Consultant by phone or email for 3 months after service has ended, should they have any questions or need guidance.

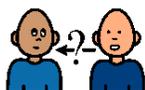


Reach Resources for Parents



Book Library

Reach maintains a growing book library on a variety of topics including autism spectrum disorders. Books can be signed out by families who are receiving REACH services and are due for return or renewal after 2 weeks. Families may also book an appointment with the Reach Librarian, Pam Collins. Pam has many years as a Behavioural Consultant and can offer advice, strategies, books or articles to read and referrals to some programs.



Parent Support Network for Parents of Children with Special Needs

The Parent Support Network offers a weekly e-newsletter that shares up-to-date information that is relevant to parents of children with special needs. It focuses on sharing pertinent information and connecting parents with other parents. Topics covered include: changes at CLBC and MCFD, policy changes that parents should be aware of, education issues, and upcoming courses and workshops. Parents can also make or reply to postings and arrange to connect with other parents. The newsletter is published on the Reach website (www.reachdevelopment.org) or families can subscribe to the email list by emailing Pam Collins at parentnetwork@reachchild.org



Workshops

Reach is pleased to offer workshops to families on a variety of topics. Information for upcoming workshops is mailed out with children's monthly intervention schedules. For a calendar of upcoming workshops, families can check the Reach website at www.reachdevelopment.org. To sign up for a workshop, families can contact Pam Collins at Pamc@reachchild.org



Other Programs at Reach

Reach offers many other programs from which your child or family may benefit. They are:

- IDP – Infant Development program for children 3 and under, in Delta
- Reach offers two integrated preschool programs, one in North Delta and one in Ladner. Contact Oshrat Zemel at 604.946.6622 ext. 308 or Oshratz@reachchild.org for more information or to register.
- Counselling services – Up to 5 sessions may be provided for families living in Delta, who have a child with special needs and are already connected with our other services. Reach also provides play therapy and parent/child interaction guidance for children with special needs up to age 12. Reach counselling is neither a long term nor emergency service. If the situation is an emergency, the crisis line should be called at 604-951-8855.

- SCD- Supported child development for children 3- 19 who attend centre based care, in Delta
- ASCD –Aboriginal supported child development for children birth through 12 who attend centre based care and services for 13-19 may be provided on an individual basis. ASCD serves the areas of Surrey and Delta.
- PBS- for children 3-19 with a diagnosis of Autism or who meets CYSN requirements, in Delta, Surrey and Langley
- PBS – IF- Positive behaviour support Individual Funding – a fee for service program
- Delta Connex – for parents of children birth-19 with Complex Developmental Behavioural Conditions, in Delta
- SocialSmart– social skills training groups for children with Autism- held in Delta
- RESPITE – for children 0-19 in Delta, who meet the CYSN requirements – group respite is also available
- TEENS- teens social Saturdays a spin off of group respite, held in Delta
- ABA Program – for children 0-19 with Autism, living in the lower mainland
- Connect with Reach and be advised of new and continuing programs in house and in the community by checking our website www.reachdevelopment.org From the website you can also connect with us via social media links to facebook (Reach, Positive Connections and Delta Connex pages) and twitter on our homepage.
- Parent Orientation: for parents with children who have been newly diagnosed with Autism. This once per month session will help you navigate the world of Autism and connect you with supports.