



Parent Coaching Intervention Research Project

Request for Expressions of Interest from Service Providers

**Expressions of Interest (EOI) must be received via email by
Monday, September 19, 2016 – 4:00 pm PDT**

Subject Line – EOI Submission: Parent Coaching Intervention Project

Attention: Deborah Pugh

dpugh@actcommunity.ca

In addition, two print copies should be postmarked by September 21, 2016, 4:00 pm

Attention: Deborah Pugh

ACT-Autism Community Training

#150 -2250 Boundary Road, Burnaby, BC V5M 3Z3

ISSUE DATE: August 2, 2016

Table of Contents

1. Purpose of this Request for Expressions of Interest.....	2
2. Background.....	2
3. Participating Organizations	3
4. Project Overview.....	4
5. Service Provider Expertise.....	4
6. Key EOI Dates.....	5
7. EOI Content	5
7.1 EOI Cover and Signatory Form	5
7.2 Cover Letter.....	6
7.3 Experience and Qualifications.....	6
7.4 Application Format	6
8. Submissions	6
8.1 Inquiries	6
9. Appendix A: Parent Coaching Research References.....	7
10. Appendix B: Privacy Statement	8
11. Appendix C: EOI Cover and Signatory Form	9

1. Purpose of this Request for Expressions of Interest

ACT - Autism Community Training, in collaboration with the British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), the Pacific Autism Family Centre (PAFC) and the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR), invites Expressions of Interest (EOI) from service providers with expertise and interest in collaborating to develop, implement and evaluate an evidence-based parent coaching intervention for children aged 15 to 30 months who are at risk of or diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). These activities are hereinafter referred to as the *Parent Coaching Intervention Research Project* (The Project).

The Request for Applications (RFA) for The Project invites submissions from applicant teams (each led by a Principal Investigator who is a BC-based researcher) comprised of both researchers and service providers who are together submitting an application for funding. The RFA is available at <http://www.actcommunity.ca/information/parent-coaching-intervention-research-project>.

Recognizing that working relationships relevant to The Project may not currently exist between service providers (both individuals and organizations) and academic researchers, this Request for Expressions of Interest is being issued concurrently with the RFA to facilitate ACT's ability to link researchers and service providers with an interest in collaboration on a team application.

All those who respond to the EOI agree that the information they provide may be used by ACT in the preparation and distribution of a list of potential service providers which will be shared with all registered researchers and service providers. (See 8.1.2 Researcher Registration in the RFA for details.)

Web Streamed Information Seminar

Only Service Providers who provide the information requested in this EOI (see Section 7 of this document) by September 19th will be invited by ACT to a web streamed information session, with the option to attend in person in Vancouver, scheduled for September 29th.

2. Background

In December 2015, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) announced one-time funding for a Parent Coaching Intervention Research Project for toddlers at risk of ASD. The funding was provided to ACT-Autism Community Training. ACT has fiduciary responsibility to MCFD for The Project.

In January 2016, ACT established a Steering Committee (SC) for The Project with designates from MCFD, PAFC and MSFHR (participating organizations are described further in Section 3 below). In addition to members who represent participating organizations, additional individuals have been appointed to the SC based on their lived experience, knowledge and expertise.

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to:

- Prepare an RFA to solicit applications from teams interested in undertaking The Project's activities, including this EOI process;
- Receive recommendations on the applications from an External Expert Review Panel, including a rank ordering of submissions based on the overall score of the RFA. Final decision on the funded Project will rest with the Ministry of Children and Family Development;
- Provide oversight for The Project and a forum for discussion of emerging issues.

The Project is grounded in emerging evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of interventions with very young children – specifically, toddlers aged 15 to 30 months – who are identified as being at risk of ASD. These emerging interventions are known as Naturalistic Developmental Behavioural Interventions (NDBIs).

NDBIs integrate behavioural methodologies and developmental considerations and target pivotal developmental domains. Skills are taught to children through systematic interactive and meaningful exchanges with caregivers in typical daily interactions, experiences and routines. Recent studies have demonstrated that a collaborative process known as parent coaching can help enhance NDBI delivery through parent-child interactions. (See Appendix A - Parent Coaching Research References).

Parent coaching, in the context of children who may have ASD, recognizes that many parents often require specialized coaching because of the significant social and communication challenges that ASD presents to the typical parent-child dyad. Parent coaching interventions focus on coaching parents to use NDBI techniques to help their children.

Research into the effectiveness of NDBIs (and parent coaching interventions generally) is still in its infancy, but a number of studies have demonstrated the efficacy of parent coaching interventions. In order to better understand the potential impact of the use of parent coaching to deliver NDBIs specifically in the BC context, the request for applications seeks researchers and service providers who will partner to develop, implement and evaluate a parent-coaching NDBI research project.

The Project has been funded as a one-time only initiative; the findings of this research program are intended to assist in informing the continuous development of the BC's autism service model.

3. Participating Organizations

Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) is the funder for The Project, and the primary intended user of research generated by The Project. The Government of British Columbia is committed to an integrated and coordinated range of services and supports for children and youth with ASD and their families. It has a no-waitlist policy for families to access on-going autism funding up to the age of 19 once their child or youth has a confirmed diagnosis of ASD. MCFD provides two autism funding programs to assist families with the cost of autism intervention services to improve their child's communication, social-emotional, pre-academic and functional life-skills development. With autism funding, families are able to choose the type of intervention, based on best practices, that meets the needs of their child. For details see www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/handbook.htm

MCFD provides autism funding to more than 11,700 children and youth diagnosed with ASD and their families. Currently, more than 1,800 children under age six and more than 9,900 children and youth age six and over are served, compared to only 600 children and youth in total in 2004.

It is anticipated that the evidence generated by this Project will inform the continuous development of the BC service model. A senior staff member from MCFD serves as a member of The Project Steering Committee. Learn more about BC's Autism Funding Program at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm.

ACT- Autism Community Training is a provincial information and referral service that supports individuals with ASD and their families across BC and maintains the Registry of Autism Service Providers on behalf of MCFD. A not-for-profit society, the mission of ACT is to provide excellent information and training, in accordance with international best practices. ACT's goal is to enable parents, professionals and para-professionals to support children and adults with ASD to live productive, satisfying lives within their families and communities. Learn more at www.actcommunity.ca.

Once a decision on the successful Applicant is made, ACT will flow funding to the Applicant. ACT also serves as the administrative home for The Project; a senior staff member serves on The Project Steering Committee.

The Pacific Autism Family Centre (PAFC) is a new centre of excellence and network of supports for individuals with ASD and their families across BC and beyond. The PAFC is scheduled to open in the fall of 2016, and plans to serve as a physical hub with spoke/satellite centres located in communities across the province. The PAFC's core purpose is to be a knowledge centre: bringing together state of the art resources for research, information, learning, assessment, treatment and support; and building capacity to address the lifespan needs of individuals with ASD, and their families, across BC.

Where available, the PAFC will provide facilities through its hub and spoke model that will support the Applicant to deliver the intervention or parts of the intervention. (At the time of issue of this RFA, PAFC's network is still in development.) The President and Board Chair of PAFC serves as a member of The Project Steering Committee. Learn more at <http://pacificautismfamily.com>.

The **Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR)** harnesses the power of health research to improve the health of British Columbians and their health system. It builds BC's capacity for world-class research by funding the best scientists; coordinating the sharing of health research resources across the province; and bringing people together for health research planning and action. See www.msfhr.org.

MSFHR's contribution to The Project reflects its role as an independent facilitator of policy- and practice-relevant research in health systems and services. MSFHR will contribute services related to convening an External Expert Review Panel to review and advise on responses to the RFA. A senior representative of MSFHR serves as a member of The Project Steering Committee.

4. Project Overview

Toddlers and their families will be identified as eligible for participation in The Project through an MCFD screening process. The screening process will include the use of standardized child development screening tools in combination with clinical judgement of a clinician with expertise in developmental assessment and experience with ASD and early social communication disorders in very young children. Respondents to the RFA are requested to consider the following project requirements:

- Select for implementation one or more manualized program model(s) from amongst approaches to evidence-based NDBIs that have demonstrated positive outcomes in other settings.
- How implementation will be guided by an articulated framework for parent coaching.
- The Project should follow approximately seventy (70) families with toddlers either at risk of or diagnosed with ASD, over a period of six to 12 months.
- The enrolment of families and children from urban and rural and remote communities in BC.
- The inclusion of families from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- It is anticipated that the intervention will use a "train the trainer" model.
- Consideration to be given to how The Project can build on BC's existing service structure for toddlers and their families.

5. Service Provider Expertise

ACT invites submissions in response to this EOI from service providers with relevant expertise willing to collaborate to design, implement and conduct a program of research and evaluation for The Project.

Specifically, The Project seeks applications from individuals and service provider organizations prepared to offer:

- Qualified and experienced professionals with demonstrated capacity to effectively implement the chosen NDBI model(s) with fidelity;
- Capacity to employ a “train the trainer” approach in The Project, or to employ such other activities that alternately will ensure fidelity of implementation of the selected parent coaching intervention;
- Capacity to collaborate effectively with researchers on the evaluation of the intervention;
- Capacity to implement the techniques of the specific intervention model to fidelity, including commitment to insuring the competency of staff who will deliver the intervention;
- Demonstration of strong past performance in the delivery of similar services;
- Appropriate leadership approach, governance, organizational and advisory structure for participation in The Project, in the case of Service Provider Organizations.
- Demonstrated commitment on the part of all participants in the project, both individuals and organizations, to ethical, respectful treatment of families seeking services for their children with ASD.

Participation requires that existing staff in any partner agency selected to engage in The Project will provide evidence of their capacity to learn the techniques of the specific intervention model to fidelity, particularly in relation to the competency of staff who will deliver the intervention (regardless of seniority).

6. Key EOI Dates

The timeline for this EOI is summarized as follows:

Action	Target Date
Issue EOI	August 2, 2016
Deadline for response to EOI	September 19, 2016
Information Session (web streamed or in-person)	September 29, 2016
Deadline for response to RFA	November 18, 2016
Applicants notified of funding decision	Mid- January 2017
Project start	February 2017
Project completion	January 2020

7. EOI Content

7.1 EOI Cover and Signatory Form

The EOI Cover and Signatory Form (Appendix C) must be completed and signed by the individual or service provider organization to demonstrate agreement with and willingness to adhere to the terms outlined in the Privacy Statement (Appendix B).

7.2 Cover Letter

The EOI must include a cover letter (maximum two pages) that:

- Outlines the type of expertise that the individual or service provider organization can bring to The Project.
- Describes the communities and/or geographical area in which the service provider organization is prepared to offer services as part of The Project.
- Highlights relevant qualifications and past experiences in the design, development and/or implementation of parent coaching intervention models.

7.3 Experience and Qualifications

Please provide brief CVs highlighting qualifications and experience of individual service providers that are most relevant to The Project.

7.4 Application Format

To be eligible for review, all EOIs must adhere to the instructions for presentation and content. Except for the appendices, all materials must be presented as follows:

- All materials, except appendices, must be a minimum 11 point size, Arial (regular), single spaced, on one side of a letter-sized (21.25 x 27.5 cm / 8.5" x 11") page, with a one-inch margin on all sides of the page.
- All pages should be consecutively numbered.
- All print must be black, of letter quality and easy to read.
- A header with the project name on the top left-hand corner, and footer with the page number on the lower right-hand corner of each page.

8. Submissions

The following section describes the conditions under which responses will be accepted from individual service providers and/or organizations.

Provide one electronic copy of the EOI in PDF format only no later than **September 19, 2016 at 4:00pm PDT**. EOIs received after this time and date will not be considered. Please send EOI submissions to Deborah Pugh by email at: dpugh@actcommunity.ca

In addition, two print copies should be provided in a sealed envelope mailed or postmarked by September 21, 2016 to:

EOI Submission: Parent Coaching Intervention Research Project
Deborah Pugh
ACT- Autism Community Training
#150 -2250 Boundary Road, Burnaby, BC V5M 3Z3

8.1 Inquiries

All inquiries regarding this request for EOIs are to be directed to Deborah Pugh by email at dpugh@actcommunity.ca

9. Appendix A: Parent Coaching Research References

Dawson, G., Jones, E. J., Merkle, K., Venema, K., Lowy, R., Faja, S., et al. (2012). Early behavioral intervention is associated with normalized brain activity in young children with autism. *Journal of the Academy of Child Adolescent Psychiatry*, 51, 1550–1559.

Dawson, G., Rogers, S., Munson, J., Smith, M., Winter, J., Greenson, J., et al. (2010). Randomized, controlled trial of an intervention for toddlers with autism: The Early Start Denver Model. *Pediatrics*, 125, 17–23.

Estes, A., Vismara, L., Mercado, C., Fitzpatrick, A., Elder, L., Greenson, J., Lord, C., Munson, J., Winter, J., Young, G., Dawson, G., & Rogers, S. (2013). The Impact of Parent-Delivered Intervention on Parents of Very Young Children with Autism. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 353-365.

Green, J., Charman, T., McConachie, H., Aldred, C., Slomins, C., Howlin, P., et al. (2010). Parent-mediated communication focused treatment in children with autism (PACT): A randomized controlled trial. *Lancet*, 375, 2152–2160.

Kasari, C., Lawton, K., Shih, W., Landa, R., Lord, C., Orlich, F., et al. (2014b). Caregiver-mediated intervention for low-resourced preschoolers with autism: An RCT. *Pediatrics*, 134, e72–e79.

Ingersoll, B., & Dvortcsak, A. (2006). Including parent training in the early childhood special education curriculum for children with autism spectrum disorders. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 8, 79–87.

Ingersoll, B., & Wainer, A. (2013a). Pilot study of a school-based parent training program for preschoolers with ASD. *Autism—International Journal of Research and Practice*, 17, 434–448.

Ingersoll, B., & Wainer, A. (2013b). Initial efficacy of Project ImpACT: A parent-mediated social communication intervention for young children with ASD. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 43, 2943–2952.

Rogers, S., Estes, A., Lord, C., Vismara, L., Winter, J., Fitzpatrick, A., Guo, M., & Dawson, G. (2012). Effects of a Brief Early Start Denver Model (ESDM)–Based Parent Intervention on Toddlers at Risk for Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *Journal of the American*

Rogers, S. J., Vismara, L., Wagner, A. L., McCormick, C., Young, G., & Ozonoff, S. (2014). Autism treatment in the first year of life: A pilot study of Infant Start, a parent-implemented intervention for symptomatic infants. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 44, 2981–2995.

Vismara, L., Young, G., Stahmer, A., Griffith, E., & Rogers, S. (2009). Dissemination of Evidence-Based Practice: Can We Train Therapists from a Distance?. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 39(12), 1636-1651. PMID: PMC2777219.

Vismara, L., McCormick, C., Young, G., Nadhan, A., & Monlux, K. (2013). Preliminary Findings of a Telehealth Approach to Parent Training in Autism. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, (43), 2953-2969.

Wetherby, A. M., Guthrie, W., Woods, J., Schatschneider, C., Holland, R. D., Morgan, L., & Lord, C. (2014). Parent implemented social intervention for toddlers with autism: An RCT. *Pediatrics*, 134, 1084–1093.

10. Appendix B: Privacy Statement

Completion and signing of the EOI Cover and Signatory Form indicates agreement to the ACT Privacy Agreement. All information submitted by the applicants for the *Autism Parent Coaching Intervention* research project will be governed and protected in accordance with applicable privacy legislation in the Province of British Columbia and the following terms.

As an ACT applicant, I declare and attest that:

- I authorize ACT, or other authorized assignee of ACT, (collectively “ACT”) who is responsible for the development and administration of the above noted research project to collect, use and disclose the information provided for the purposes of approval, monitoring, evaluating and/or administering applications for funding, management of all subsequent awards and business activities. In addition, ACT is authorized to share information that I provide with those persons who support, approve, monitor, administer and/or evaluate applications for funding and any subsequent awards, including the appropriate administrative representatives of the (host) organization, supervisors, co-applicants, peer reviewers, funding partners or authorized employee or assignee of ACT.
- I authorize ACT to also use the information collected for statistical, research and business purposes, to provide me with specific health research publications or to contact me in the future with respect to my possible participation in research related task forces, peer reviews, surveys, etc.
- I authorize ACT and its funding partners to use the information collected, including identifiable information, for the purposes of communicating successful applications to the general public through their media formats including websites, newsletters, publications, etc.
- I agree that ACT and its funding partners are not liable in any way for the subsequent use or misuse, by any member of the public, of any of my information that is published to the general public.

11. Appendix C: EOI Cover and Signatory Form

DETAILS OF INDIVIDUAL OR SERVICE PROVIDER ORGANIZATION					
Completion and signing of the form below indicates that the undersigned, have read the Privacy Statement, Appendix B, in the Request for Expressions of Interest from Service Providers for the Parent Coaching Intervention Research Project, and agree to the terms outlined.					
Service Provider Name (Individual or Organizational Representative)					
Title					
Department					
Organization (if applicable)					
Mailing Address					
City		Province		Postal Code	
Telephone					
Email					
Signature				Date	