

# London Family Centre Marketing and Communications Strategy

November 2020



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# Introduction

This guide was created by the 2019/2020 Marketing and Communications Sub-Committee of the Family-Centred Service System (FCSS), with content supported by experts in communications and marketing, and FCSS partners.

The purpose of this document is to provide valuable insight and direction with respect to brand awareness and promotion of Family Centres, ensuring alignment with the FCSS System vision, principles, and approach to supporting children, youth, and families in London.

## Section 1 - Family Centre Brand Identity

### Consistency

By sharing the cohesive FCSS brand consistently, Child and Youth Network (CYN) partners will generate brand awareness (through repetition), become more memorable, and will make sure the FCSS, and more specifically Family Centres, are viewed as a professional and trustworthy sources of information, support, and connection to what families need most across London, Ontario.

### Brand Attributes

Both the Family Centres and their Community Connectors exude attributes of the brand by being welcoming, knowledgeable, caring, connected, engaged, approachable, inviting, collaborative, active, and friendly.

As a single brand, all Family Centres exemplify integration, collaboration, and unity among the Lead and partner agencies involved with the FCSS.

The tone used in any marketing or communications (geared toward the public, to partners, or through partners) should not convey that Family Centre programming or services are exclusively for those “that have problems”; rather, it a source of programs, services, information, referral and support for all families in London.

### Tagline

A tagline is a memorable phrase that sums up the tone and premise of the brand, and aims to reinforce the individual’s memory of the service/product.

The Family Centre tagline is “Your Neighbourhood Connection”, connoting the ability for Family Centres to connect families with each other, as well as information, programs, and services in neighbourhoods that can help make life a little easier.

## Visual Identity

A strong visual identity and single brand strategy will represent access to a single door, physical and virtual, that affords individuals access to a multitude of opportunities. This identity is made up of a common name, logo, and colour scheme accompanied by neighbourhood specific identifiers.

The design elements presented in the *Brand Guide and Playbook* (see Appendix) convey a playful, lighthearted approach driven by simple shapes, lively imagery, and vibrant colours. The art direction and key elements build on the Family Centres' logotype, utilizing circular shapes and joyful illustrations that convey the positive and supportive experience of visiting a Family Centre. Headlines speak to target audiences in a friendly and conversational tone.

These design elements have been professionally created for flexibility, fluidity, and ease of implementation – allowing them to be refined based on the intended tactical execution. It is, however, important to note that while there is flexibility, all assets should be developed based on the guidelines outlined in the *Brand Guide and Playbook*.

The following are the elements, outlined in detail in the *Brand Guide and Playbook* that make up the Family Centre visual brand identity:

1. Logo (JPG, PNG, AI)
2. Typefaces
3. Colour palette (primary and secondary colour schemes)
4. Photography style
5. Brand elements (graphic devices, line elements, icons and other brand assets etc.)
6. Graphics (developed using provided templates)

## Photography Guidelines

When utilizing photography in any marketing or communications initiatives, consider the following:

- Any graphics or accompanying photos should be “real-life” pictures from the Family Centre, the community, or professionally-sourced photography matching the tone and style as outlined in the *Brand Guide and Playbook*.
- They should also be reflective of the community population, including diversity in ethnicity, race, family types, ages, genders, levels of ability and socioeconomic statuses, among others.
- They should feel local to London, Ontario (and not have landmarks, architecture or features that wouldn't be associated with our city).
- Written consent for pictures of individuals, families, and groups within the community is subject to the policies and procedures of the Family Centre Lead Agency.

## Sourcing Photography

There are many ways to find photos for sharing through marketing and communications tactics. In order to honour and maintain the integrity of the Family Centre brand, it is strongly recommended that all photography be sourced in the following ways:

1. Professionally curated photography (available through the Family Centre Marketing and Communications Online Platform). Access is provided to Family Centre staff directly responsible for marketing and communications activities. Access is provided by an Administrator (contact [cyn@london.ca](mailto:cyn@london.ca) to request access). The intention is to continue to build the library of sourced and approved photos housed on the platform
2. Taken during programs/events (with consent) – by professional photographer (in collaboration with Child and Youth Network)
3. Taken during programs/events (with consent) – by Family Centre staff
4. (Used sparingly) Copyright and royalty-free, no-cost images that align with the brand (sourced from [www.pexels.com](http://www.pexels.com), or [www.unsplash.com](http://www.unsplash.com))

## Branded Assets

The goal is to amplify the communication and community engagement efforts of Family Centres by ensuring a consistent and compelling visual presentation of materials through the use of accessible, usable, and compliant tools and templates.

The following are the branded materials created in consultation with families and FCSS partners using the expertise of marketing and communications experts. The expectation is that these assets are utilized by all Family Centres for the purpose of marketing and promotion of their programs, events, services and other offerings.

The online source for information about programs, services, and activities at Family Centres is [Familyinfo.ca](http://Familyinfo.ca). As such, all assets listed below are stored on the Family Centre Marketing and Communications Online platform. When current assets are updated or new materials are created, they will be made available through this platform.

All print assets (with the exception of the event poster) should be professionally printed using high quality ink and paper. Please contact [cyn@london.ca](mailto:cyn@london.ca) to request any print materials.

1. Creative assets for print use only\*:
  - a. Family-focused brochure (8.5" x 5", letter size folded)
  - b. Partner-focused brochure (8.5" x 5", letter size folded)
  - c. Poster (11" x 17")
  - d. Postcard (5" x 7")
  - e. Event poster (template for standard letter size 8.5" x 11" paper)

\*Available in English and French.

2. Assets for digital use only:
  - a. Social media (Facebook) templates
  - b. Facebook cover photos
  - c. E-blast headers
  - d. PowerPoint (for presentations)
  - e. New e-blast layout/template (built through Mailchimp)

Please find all brand guidelines and brand assets and their usage outlined in detail in the *Brand Guide and Playbook*.

## **Section 2 – Family Centre Marketing and Communications**

### **Objectives**

The purpose of effective marketing, communication, and promotions of Family Centres is to:

- A. Increase brand awareness of Family Centres within the targeted communities (logo recognition)
- B. Increase participation in Family Centre programs (on and off-site, as well as, virtually)
- C. Increase the number of visitors at Family Centres and to online/ virtual programs
- D. Increase the number of referrals from service providers

### **Audiences**

Family Centres engage the communities in London, and more specifically in the neighbourhoods where they are situated – this includes families, service providers, decision-makers / influencers, and the community at large. All strategies and efforts to engage audiences must consider equity, diversity, and inclusion.

#### **1. Families (Parents/ Caregivers i.e. decision-makers)**

The FCSS and Family Centres intentionally have not defined what it means to be a ‘family’. If you think you’re a family, then you’re a family. This provides opportunities for broad inclusion of all family units. The *families’* audience includes:

##### **A. Current families**

- Families currently being served through a Family Centre

##### **B. Prospective families**

- Families *not* currently being served through a Family Centre
- Families who are currently accessing information and services through primary care practitioners, child care providers, various professionals within the community, informal networks, settlement services, schools, Neighbourhood Resource Centres, libraries, governmental services, and social agencies

## ***Audience Summary***

The following list has been used to develop Family Centre brand assets. It describes many of the characteristics and traits of the audiences Family Centre marketing and communications efforts are intended to reach.

Families in London:

- May find they are constantly subject to pace, busyness, and “noise of life”
- Rely on social networks to amplify understanding and connections real-time, currency, trends are expected rather than frills and extras
- Can be dealing with exceptional circumstances
- Are as diverse an audience as we can imagine
- May be having trouble finding/accessing trusted supports
- May be combating feelings of isolation

## ***Types of Families and Their Needs***

While there are many types of families, through community research and consultation with FCSS partners, the following family profiles are examples of families who may access Familyinfo.ca. These profiles, though not exhaustive of all audiences who will access the site, provide an excellent focus in the development and implementation of Family Centre marketing and communications tactics.

### **A. Traditional families**

- Desire to be healthy in a holistic way
- Looking for activities, and parenting support
- Require ease to find and access information
- Accurate, reliable and locally focused content is important

### **B. Newcomer families**

- May be more conservative or introverted when seeking information, programs etc.
- May require a higher level of support to access information or programs
- Language barrier may be a challenge

### **C. Under pressure families**

- Under pressure from factors such as mental health challenges, or un/under-employment etc.
- Looking for services to support their needs
- Looking for stability, and a clear path to support

### **D. Single parent families**

- Want to ensure the best care and opportunities for their children and entire family
- May feel isolated from other parents (in similar situations)
- Doing their best and know there are likely opportunities they can access, but may be uncertain about where to start with seeking services to support needs

## ***How families interact with Family Centre materials***

Family Centre marketing and promotional materials can be used:

- At Family Centres to collect information about upcoming programs, visiting for programs etc.
- In the community (through events, local school, etc.)
- Online - through social media, virtual programming, email etc.

## ***What families need from Family Centre materials***

To be effective, Family Centre marketing and promotional materials need to be:

- Clean and consistent visual presentation that is easily identifiable as the Family Centre brand
- Timely, relevant, clear, and correct information
- Easy-to-understand language
- Provided in a format that aligns with their habits/needs (e.g. social media, email versus print) and reflects the brand attributes outlined on page 3

## **2. Community Partners and Service Providers**

A secondary audience of Family Centre marketing and communications efforts are community partners and service providers, including:

### **A. Current partners and service providers**

- Drawing from all members of FCSS (and more broadly, the CYN)

### **B. Prospective partners and service providers**

- Includes healthcare providers, librarians, child care providers, settlement workers, school boards and principals, etc. not already engaged in the CYN or FCSS.

## ***Audience Summary***

The following profile can be used when considering marketing and promotional strategies to engage current and prospective partners. These audiences may be interested in:

- Connecting families to peers that fit with them is important
- Making families aware of everything that's possible for them within the FCSS
- Sharing the value of strong parents = strong kids and healthy families

## **3. Community Advocates, Decision-Makers, Influencers, and Community at Large**

A third audience to consider for marketing and promoting Family Centres include:

## **A. Community advocates, decision-makers, and influencers**

- E.g. Funding, public sector, political, businesses, housing providers, realtors, etc.

## **B. General public who can help share the message**

### Key Messages

The following key messages have been developed with marketing experts, FCSS partners and families:

#### **1. Family Centres are for every family (with children birth to 17)**

- a. “Family Centres are for everyone – programming and services are geared towards children, youth, and families, helping them to achieve their full potential.”
- b. “Everyone is welcome!”
- c. “Your neighbourhood connection”
- d. “A family-friendly way to connect with your community.”
- e. “Get connected to your community – make friends and explore what your community has to offer.”
- f. “An Indigenous Family Centre is coming soon!”

#### **2. Family Centres offer a single door to many opportunities**

- a. “Family Centres are a single door to many opportunities - connecting you to the programming and services throughout London that your family needs.”
- b. “We make life easier for children, youth, and families by providing connection to child care, health and wellness, recreation and leisure activities, youth services and beyond
- c. “Find information you need.”
- d. “Family Centres make life easier for you.”
- e. “Come in and meet your Community Connector to learn more.”

#### **3. Family Centres offer no cost or low cost programming**

- a. Family Centre programming is:
  - i. free,
  - ii. accessible,
  - iii. available as a drop in program or service (please refer to Protocols and Guidelines as pre-registration and appointment bookings are required during COVID-19)

#### **4. Find us online at [www.familyinfo.ca](http://www.familyinfo.ca).**

## Tactics

The following are the primary marketing and communications tactics used by Family Centres. As the understanding of the needs of Family Centre audiences evolve, the tactics may expand as well.

### Facebook

Each Family Centre uses the Facebook platform as the primary source of digital promotion to key audiences. Through Facebook, content is either created or curated.

#### A. Content Creation

- Use templates for created content (programs, events, activities etc.) specific to the Family Centre
- Video content (e.g. songs, stories, activities etc.)

#### B. Content Curation

- Sharing relevant content from partner organizations– lighthearted, humorous, adding value
- Ensure the quality and accuracy of any content shared, prior to sharing
- Links will typically populate previews (taking an image from the link's webpage)

### Considerations for Social Media Marketing

Developed in partnership with marketing and communications experts and FCSS partners, the following list provides Family Centres with information, tips, and suggestions for effective content development and curation. Considerations include:

- Communicate using the Family Centre brand
  - Voice – your brand's personality
  - Tone – a subset of your brand's voice
  - Style – colours, visuals, words that make up your brand (how you present yourself)
  - Consistency helps define your brand, build trust, and amplify your message
- Add value
  - Every piece of content should serve a purpose for your audience, and provide them with something
  - Quality content is made up of three pieces:
    1. Copy/content
    2. Visuals
    3. Links/calls to action
  - Lead with the most relevant user-focused content first, then include context, and finally call to action (what you want them to do, and don't assume they know)

- Remember that social media is a two-way communication tool and respond to questions and comments in a timely manner
- Learn what’s “working” (what content your audience responds to) by tracking metrics and “key performance indicators” such as reach, impressions, comments, shares, and link clicks, and understand ‘the why’ by looking at what you did differently between two time periods
- How often to post?
  - Frequency – start with 3x per week
  - Look to metrics to know if you should post more or less
- On Facebook:
  - Engage in conversation and offer personalized responses (e.g. Hi Erin, Thanks for reaching out. Our hours are 9:00am until 5:00pm, Monday to Friday. For more information, such as location details, visit [www.familyinfo.ca](http://www.familyinfo.ca))
  - Content can be longer on this platform (but consider the attention-span of your audience when writing)
  - Include relevant hashtags, and tag other accounts (as applicable)
    - 3-5 hashtags per post (10 maximum)
    - Audience-focused hashtags could be words that someone type into the search when looking for your content.

## **E-blasts**

Family Centre E-blasts are distributed each month and connect families to program listings and details, activities, and events of interest taking place in the local neighbourhood. The primary audience for the monthly email notification is parents and caregivers, with community partners as a secondary audience.

The E-Blast is created using a common template on the Mailchimp platform. Submission protocols provide simple guidelines for community partners to share information about a local program, services, or event of interest to the audience. At the beginning of each month, every Family Centre electronically distributes a carefully curated notification to all those who have subscribed to the monthly newsletter.

In 2020, FCSS partners launched an E-Blast pilot initiative at two Family Centres to test a new, simpler, and more concise format that will provide some information about new or different programs or services, with links to [Familyinfo.ca](http://Familyinfo.ca) (which houses Family Centre program calendars and community-based programs and service information). Upon evaluation and refinement, this new E-Blast format will be launched with Family Centres across the system.

Please refer to the appendix for an example of E-Blast submission protocols.

## Considerations for Email Marketing

Developed in partnership with marketing and communications experts and FCSS partners, the following list provides Family Centres with information about the audience, content, and accessibility for consideration in email marketing in general, and for use when creating the monthly Family Centre E-Blast:

### A. Audience

- Segment/ categorize content by demographic for easier parsing
- Consider two types of emails: Partners, and. Families

### B. Content

- Define the goal of the email – what do you want people to do/ the action you want them to take
- Use short, concise, and clear copy
- Keep main points/ calls to action in the first 1/3 of the email
- Use summary points and make it easy for the reader to scan
- Content in the body of the emails should not exist only within imagery (e.g. flyer after flyer)

### C. Accessibility/ User 'Friendliness'

- Emails should be optimized for mobile, with bite-size, easy to scan content and a clear call to action
- Audience should be able to understand the purpose of the email in under 5 seconds without any additional context
- Be consistent in style and frequency
- Consider increasing frequency to 2x per month or more to maximize content
- Consider the rule of three (3 pieces of content feels balanced)
- Optimize for mobile and limit file sizes (for example, in photos)
- Continue to streamline and 'enforce' partner content submission protocol

## Print Materials

While sharing and accessing information online is becoming more and more popular all the time, there are many people within our target audiences who have little or unreliable access to technology and/or the Internet.

For this reason, materials available in print will be especially useful for people that occupy physical spaces (such the Family Centre and within partner organizations), and community events.

The print materials are designed to promote a Family Centre program or events (using the provided templates), or the Family Centres in general (using the professionally printed assets).

## **Google My Business**

Google My Business is a free tool that can make sure Family Centres are easily found through Google Search and Maps. Profiles include address, phone number, website, hours (if set), and photos. All Family Centres are required to have an accurate and up to date Google My Business profile in order to increase awareness and accessibility of their centre.

## **Reception Screens**

Reception screens are a great way to engage with families as they enter the Family Centre space. Keep content focused on Family Centre programs and activities, making use of photography and visuals to share key messages as the audience (parents, caregivers, and community partners) won't likely be looking at it for too long.

To develop the appropriate graphics for this use, it is recommended that you use the Family Centre branded PowerPoint template and export as a JPG for your carousel of images.

## **Promotional Products and Giveaways (Swag)**

Products featuring the Family Centre logo and branding are designed to help increase public awareness of the Family Centres. These materials can be shared with families accessing programming and services or in the community, and at community-based events. They can also be integrated into programming.

The selection, purchase, and distribution of these materials takes place regularly. Evaluation and monitoring of product usage and effectiveness is critical to make sure products are effective for promoting the Family Centre.

Available Family Centre promotional items often include Family Centre branded water bottles, pens, notebooks, and more. Available product can be accessed by contacting Family Centre staff directly.

## **Additional Marketing Materials/Needs**

In consultation with Family Centre and community partners, families, and marketing and communications experts, the following list denotes key items and features to support Family Centre brand awareness:

### ***For Building***

- Front door decal detailing “your connection to:” for programming and hours, please visit [Familyinfo.ca](http://Familyinfo.ca)
- Signage on exterior of each location (congruous with EarlyON branding where applicable)
- “We’re connected to London’s Family Centres” window decals (for FCSS partners)

### ***For Family Centre Staff***

- Business cards (Family Centre branded with reference to Lead Agency)
- Name tags (Magnetic and lanyard)
- Family Centre branded staff vests for programs and events (especially outdoor) (can be worn with any outfit, and easier to share between people than t-shirts)
- Family Centre branded buttons with logo and “ask me about Family Centres”

### ***For Giveaways***

- Ideas discussed with and endorsed by Family Centre teams
  - Pens
  - Water bottles (size for adults and size for young children)
  - Insulated travel mug for hot beverages
  - Umbrellas
  - Mini-gloves (stretchy)
  - Reusable bags with narrow base
  - Hand sanitizer (in response to COVID)
  - Flashlights
  - Buttons
  - T-shirts
  - Waterless tattoos
  - Mugs
- Ideas recommended by communications and marketing experts
  - Pop sockets, string backpacks, bandage packs, water bottles, mini gloves (stretchy), umbrellas, and (in response to COVID) hand sanitizer, surface wipes
- Other ideas
  - Reusable masks, pens, flashlights, backpacks, magnets, key chains

### ***For Events***

- Branded table cloths
- Branded tent (light, small, and portable)
- Retractable banner

## Roles and Responsibilities

This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Family-Centred Service System, Lead Agencies, Family Centres / Community Connectors, and Family Centres/Strategic Collaboration Teams in the promotion, awareness, and marketing of Family Centres. The criteria for each was developed with input from FCSS partners and marketing and communications experts.

### **Family-Centred Service System Governance**

The role of the FCSS Governance body is to define, create, and monitor the strategies and tools used for effective Family Centre marketing and communications.

Pertaining to marketing and communications, the responsibilities of the FCSS are to:

- Set the approach, vision, and intention for all marketing and communications initiatives (including, but not limited to the expansion of social media marketing strategy beyond Facebook)
- Determine the Family Centres 'brand' and approved/ agreed-upon brand usage guidelines (including use of logo, colours, fonts, messaging etc.)
- Outline expectations around marketing and communications tools and channels
- Manage media protocol and public relations expectations (who speaks, what do they say, etc.)
- Develop/ outsource, maintain, store, and distribute the original and/or design files pertaining to all Family Centre London and Family Centre specific marketing and communications materials including brochures, postcards, promotional product, etc.
- Establish procedure for revising and requesting marketing and communications materials
- Determine resource allocations for marketing and communication activities and materials
- Support [www.familyinfo.ca](http://www.familyinfo.ca) as the virtual Family Centre
- Problem-solve to fill gaps in marketing and communications strategies based on feedback provided by Lead Agencies, Community Connectors, and the public
- Provide training related to marketing and communications expectations, as required
- Develop any system-wide marketing and communications plans /campaigns (including by not limited to paid advertising)

It is the recommendation of the Marketing and Communications Sub-committee that there be a permanent body under the system governance that is accountable for monitoring these duties on an ongoing basis.

## **Family Centre Lead Agencies**

Lead Agencies for each Family Centre have the primary responsibility of overseeing the implementation of the neighbourhood-level marketing and communications strategies as outlined by the FCSS.

Pertaining to marketing and communications, the responsibilities of the lead agencies are to:

- Ensure quality assurance and adherence to the Family Centre brand
- Support the implementation of all system-wide marketing and communications plans/campaigns
- Relay and support the expectations surrounding Family Centre marketing and communications
- Gather impact stories, experiences, and feedback to share at the system-level
- Communicate and collaborate with other Lead Agencies regarding best practices and for consistency, as well as, opportunities for growth and expansion
- Promote Family Centres' programs/ resources/ opportunities (and Familyinfo.ca) through the Lead Agency organization's own marketing and communications tools such as: website, social media, intra-office networks, and more.
- Work with any associated school board in seeking collaboration/ promotion opportunities

## **Family Centre/ Community Connectors**

The Family Centre staff are responsible for implementation of all marketing and communications plans that support the promotion of the Family Centre, programming, and services to those who can benefit in the local neighbourhood and throughout London.

Pertaining to marketing and communications, the responsibilities of the Family Centre team are to:

- Develop and distribute up-to-date programming details through the calendar on Familyinfo.ca, outlining all programs/events available at the Family Centre to local residents interested in Family Centre programming and neighbourhood-specific programs, services, and events
- Post, maintain, manage, and contribute to up-to-date and valuable content on electronic/smart TV at reception area
- Develop strong presence on Facebook (and other social media platforms as directed), share local events/programs/services and content (e.g. activities or articles) that are of value to families in their neighbourhood.
- Contribute content to the bi-weekly CYN e-bulletin to update partners about programs, services, events, job postings, professional learning opportunities and more

- Share printed materials and promotional product within the community where applicable, such as with individuals, community partners, and neighbourhood businesses
- Contribute to and manage external listings e.g. southwesthealthline.ca (service profile changes made here will update Familyinfo.ca as well), Google profile, and Lead Agency websites, for example

## **Family Centre Partners / Strategic Collaboration Team**

Partner agencies and organizations assist the Lead Agency in neighbourhood-level promotion and promote Family Centres to their clients, staff, and stakeholders.

- Partners contribute to, subscribe to, and share the Family Centre e-blast and CYN e-bulletin
- Contribute to Familyinfo.ca, where appropriate (e.g. events)
- Promote Family Centres' programs/ resources/ opportunities (and Familyinfo.ca) through organization's own marketing and communications tools e.g. website, social media, and intra-office networks.
- Distribute Family Centre promotional materials to parents, caregivers, children and youth

## **Advertising Campaign**

A formal re-launch of Family Centres in London requires a marked increase in brand awareness among our target audiences.

Based on completed research with residents and families by FCSS partners and marketing and communications experts, very little is known about the existence or offerings of our neighbourhood Family Centres, and thus an effective advertising campaign would require a thoughtful omni-channel brand experience.

It is the recommendation of the Marketing and Communications Sub-committee that the creative strategy and deliverables for a large-scale awareness campaign be outsourced to a professional marketing and advertising agency, and implemented at a time when Family Centres have the capacity and availability to support an influx of interest and demand for programs and inquiries.

# Appendix

## Marketing and Communications Best Practices

The following best practices have been developed and shared to support FCSS partners with the promotion and awareness of Family Centres.

### Understanding the Audience

The needs and wants of your audience must come first. The audience is mainly concerned with information that directly impacts their lives. When determining the best way to communicate with a desired audience, make sure the following questions are addressed:

1. Who are they, as people?
2. What do they care about?
3. What are their needs and desires?
4. What are their pain points and perceptions?
5. How can you reduce friction for them in understanding this opportunity? (Remove barriers to them receiving the information and then acting on the message)

### Communications Best Practices

Communications best practices include:

- Start with the audience and what they need, and not 'us' and what we want
- Focus on a few key highlights and pieces of information we want to share, and not a multitude of things that may result in information overload (people are losing attention span)
- Be clear, simple, and focused
- Don't start with tactic envy e.g. our competitor is doing X, and so we should too, but instead build your tactics for your audience's needs
- Start with the "why", and not the "what" – what is the emotion, or impact?

### Seven Principles of Great Communication

The following principles of great communications were curated by marketing and communications experts and are foundational for engaging the audience:

1. "Position Story"
  - Develop a "high concept" or "position statement", your story, in 20 words or less (with a focus on the "why" and the outcomes)
2. Lead with your point
  - The opposite of bury the lead
  - The first thing you say is the most important thing
  - Headline helps people take notice, and gives them a promise

3. Emphasize your value without talking about you
  - What's in it for them? Focus on your audience needs
4. Be more brief than one ever thought possible
  - There is power in simplicity
  - Often, details are added in order to demonstrate value to the message. When creating content, think of the audiences. It is best to distill the message into something simple rather than give them a long list and lots of details
5. Use modern art to convey meaning
  - Photo, video, or infographics are generally more appealing than text alone
  - Visuals provide clarity and convenience
6. Reduce friction
  - Reduce barriers to people engaging with the message or content
  - Friction occurs when audience members are intrigued by a topic and encounter resistance on their quest to engage
7. If the audience can connect to a message quickly and it appeals to emotion, it will be easier to take action.
  - Most people want a bite, some want a snack, and a few will want the meal;

When in doubt, don't change your story – repeat it (7-10 times). “When you're sick of saying something, your audience is probably hearing it for the first time”.

## Sample E-Blast Protocols

The following example can be included in Family Centre E-Blast and when working with partners who wish to include content in the month notification:

### **Family Centre Name E-blast Protocol**

Hello E-blast Contributors!

The mission of our monthly e-blast is to bring the Westmount community closer together by promoting local services, events, and information with our community partners and local families in our neighbourhood.

### **Submission Content Criteria**

In order to contribute to our e-blast, your submission must be:

1. A program, event, or service (occurring in the month of submission)
2. Geared towards children, youth, or families
3. Offered in the Westmount area (or immediately surrounding planning districts)
4. Available for low-cost, no cost, or has subsidy available

## Submission Guidelines

### Format:

For any submissions, please include:

1. **A photo (.PNG or .JPG) related to your submission**
2. **A brief description of your program, event, or service**  
One paragraph - less than 100 words, consider who/what/where/when
3. **The desired action**  
What do you want community partners/residents to do? E.g. visit your website for more information, sign up/register, follow your page on social media, attend an event etc.
4. **Link related to action**  
E.g. website URL (such as [www.lcc.on/wfc](http://www.lcc.on/wfc)) they'd go to get more information or sign up/register

If any of these elements are missing, it will be far more challenging to share your content appropriately.

### Process

- Send your submission by email to [wfc@lcc.on.ca](mailto:wfc@lcc.on.ca) (or reply to the reminder e-mail) **by the last Monday of the month.**
- The email blast will be sent to all participating community partners and participating residents on the first Friday of each month.

### New Format

Family Centre Westmount is exploring a new layout for its e-blasts. With this new layout we have limited the available space for content with the hopes that this new format will increase readership and engagement.

If your submission cannot be included in the e-blast, it will be shared through our Facebook page.

### General Note

Information that does not align with the goals and purpose of the Family Centre Service System will not be distributed (at the discretion of the WFC administrators).

All stakeholder interactions and e-mails should maintain a positive tone and a high degree of professionalism. Personal opinions are not to be shared.

## **Supplementary Documents**

The following historical and contextual documents have been instrumental in the development of this strategy and guidance document:

- FCSS Participant Evaluation 2017 Summary Report
- Neighbourhood Child and Family Centres: Communication and Marketing Subcommittee Final Report, 2011
- Recommendations: Family Centre Marketing and Communications, November 2014 (and its Appendix A and Appendix B)
- Family-Centred Service System: System Participation Memorandum of Understanding

## **Additional Guides and Supports**

1. Brand Playbook and Guide
2. Tips for creating videos
3. Advertising campaign details and report (for Familyinfo.ca)
4. Training video