

Mnaasged Child and Family Services



Family Circle of Care Policy and Procedure Manual

July 2019

*Acknowledging the Past
Serving the Present
Creating the Future*

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of Mnaasged Child and Family Services (hereinafter referred as Mnaasged) Family Circle of Care is to respond to Children and families in distress and to provide help and support that will serve to strengthen the Family and protect the Child.

Mnaasged Family Circle of Care Services include the Family Care Teams and the Family Care Support Programs. Together, these are designed to support Indigenous families in moving from situations of distress toward the restoration of health and well-being.

Children and families in distress are identified by one of three ways:

- a) Mnaasged-initiated contact with families at a stressful time in their lives
- b) Response to a family's or a Child's request for help
- c) Response to community concerns about a Child or a family

The Family Circle of Care is intended to help parents provide love, care, protection, and support for their Children to grow to their full potential within the larger network of their extended family, Clan relations, community, and nation. The Family Care Helper will reach out to families in distress. The Family Care Helper will support family members to become aware of how family distress has affected them and will then find sources of help and support in creating and following through on plans for family restoration.

The Family Circle of Care will support parents through the Child Safety Intervention process when Child protection issues have been identified. When parents cannot care for their Children, then the Family Care Helper will support them to make alternative care arrangements for their Children and to rebuild the family through the family restoration process. At the same time, the Family Care Helper will not have any Child Safety Intervention responsibilities, as these will be deferred to the Child Safety Intervention Helper who will make the safety assessment and any decision making.

Family Care Support programs provide additional and specialized support for parents and families.

Family Care Services relate closely with the Children's Circle of Care Services, including the Child Safety Team, the Children's Care Team, the Alternative Care Team, and the Alternative Care Families.

Department: Family Circle of Care	POLICY #:
Section: Introduction	
Subject: Family Care Teams	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

FAMILY CARE TEAMS

POLICY

Mnaasged Child and Family Services' Family Care Teams will provide care and support to families when child protection issues have been identified and when the family is asking for help. The Family Care Helper will support the family through the Child Safety Intervention and will work with the family to develop the Family Vision, to assess family relationships and functioning, to make decisions and plans, and to follow through in making the necessary changes toward family restoration.

PROCEDURE

1. The Family Care Team will help families with the following:
 - a) Understand child protection needs
 - b) Develop a family vision based on family hopes and strengths and on child safety
 - c) Identify family relationships and sources of support
 - d) Participate in family assessment and child safety planning
 - e) Participate in Family Circle gatherings and Circle meetings
 - f) Identify alternative care options when needed
 - g) Develop and implement the family restoration plan
 - h) Achieve family reunification once the Child returns from alternative care back to the family's home

POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Family Circle of Care	POLICY #:
Section: Introduction	
Subject: Family Care Support Programs	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

FAMILY CARE SUPPORT PROGRAMS

POLICY

Mnaasged Child and Family Services' Family Care Support Programs will include programs that are designed to provide more intensive support, training, and education to parents and their Children. Programs will include in-home parenting support, child mentoring, mutual support among parents, mutual support among families, parenting education, and addictions recovery support.

Many new parents need emotional support and training on caring for their newborn infant. Parents with addictions issues need specialized care, especially when faced with the challenge of caring for a Child with neonatal abstinence syndrome or a Child with fetal alcohol syndrome/effects. Many parents can change inappropriate and destructive parenting practices through culturally based parenting programs. Aunties, Uncles, and Grandparents can provide much needed supports for parents and mentoring for Children and Youth.

PROCEDURE

1. The Family Care Support Programs will provide intensive supports to families when child protection issues have been identified and when the parents are willing to engage in a radical change process. Intensive supports will include the following:
 - a) In-Home Care: where an Auntie, other relative, a community member, or a Mnaasged Helper stays with the family to provide co-parenting care to Children who would otherwise move to an Alternative Care Home, such as assisting a young mother struggling to care for an infant born with neonatal abstinence syndrome
 - b) Parenting Support: where an Auntie, other relative, a community member, or a Mnaasged Helper provides in-home support to parents who are struggling with caring for their Child. Help may include assistance with homemaking, Child management, budgeting, shopping, and other hands-on assistance

- c) Child Mentoring: where an Auntie, other relative, a community member, or a Mnaasged volunteer connects with a young girl or boy who is having difficulty. The Mentor will provide a special friendship of support for the Child
2. Family Care Support will also include group programs such as the following:
- a) Parenting Education: for parents who are willing to look closely at their own parenting issues and to seek guidance for healing and change
 - b) Addictions Recovery and Support: for parents who have been through addictions treatment and require ongoing support to sustain their recovery and for parents who are struggling with the early stages of addictions

POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Family Circle of Care	POLICY #:
Section: Introduction	
Subject: Reasons for Providing Family Care	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

REASONS FOR PROVIDING FAMILY CARE

POLICY

Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that Family Care will be provided to families in distress, when a child protection issue has been identified, or when a Child becomes at risk of harm and will need protection.

PROCEDURE

1. When a child protection concern has been brought to Mnaasged's attention, a Child Safety Intervention will be required.
2. Family Care will be provided alongside the Child Safety Intervention in order to support the family and to ensure that the family can be positively involved in protecting their Child, including their involvement in alternative care decisions and planning.

POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Family Circle of Care	POLICY #:
Section: Introduction	
Subject: Family Care Relationships with Other Mnaasged Services	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

FAMILY CARE RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER MNAASGED SERVICES

Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the Family Care Program will have a fluid relationship with all other services provided by Mnaasged Child and Family Services.

PROCEDURE

The following will show the relationships among the Family Care services with other Mnaasged services, flowing from the initial First Response through to the completion of involvement with families and their Children.

1. All requests for help will flow through the First Response Team.
2. The Community Circle of Care Programs and the Cultural Program will be available for all families and their Children that are involved with Mnaasged. This forms the outer ring of services.
3. The Family Care Teams and the Family Care Support will provide help for families while the Children's Care Team will provide help for Children who are in Alternative Care. The Alternative Care Team will support the Alternative Caregivers in caring for the Children in their care.
4. The Child Safety Intervention Team will identify the children in need of protection and will make decisions for Alternative Care, in collaboration with Family Care and Children's Care. All the services will come together in the Circle decision-making process.

POLICY REFERENCE

SECTION 2: FAMILY CIRCLE OF CARE

Department: Family Circle of Care	POLICY #:
Section: Family Circle of Care	
Subject: Who Can Help	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

WHO CAN HELP

POLICY

The purpose of Mnaasged Child and Family Services Family Care is to provide a caring response to Children and families in distress and to provide help and support that will serve to strengthen and restore the family toward the goal of health and balance.

PROCEDURE

1. When a Child must leave the family for protection reasons, the Family Care Helper will work with the parents to assist them in identifying who can help. Even when the parents are in severe distress, they may be able to suggest people within the extended family who could provide care, such as the following:
 - a) Extended Family Members such as grandparents, aunties, and uncles
 - b) Clan Relations
 - c) Other significant community members
2. If the Child must leave the family, the Family Care Helper will work with the family to identify sources of help in addressing child protection concerns. The family may need personal support, Child care, counselling, healing, ceremonial involvement, spiritual guidance, parenting education, life skills training, addictions recovery and support, or other kinds of help.
3. Sources of help will include one or more of the following:
 - a) Elders, Traditional Healers, Faith Community Leaders (e.g., church minister or pastor)

- b) First Nation Community Resources and Services
- c) Friendship Centre Services and Programs
- d) Addictions Residential Treatment, Addictions Recovery Program
- e) Counselling Services
- f) Mental Health Treatment
- g) Mnaasged Community Circle (Prevention) Programs
- h) Mnaasged Family Care Support Programs

POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Family Circle of Care	POLICY #:
Section: Family Circle of Care	
Subject: Family Care Responsibilities	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

FAMILY CARE RESPONSIBILITIES

POLICY

Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the responsibilities for Family Care will be based on the requirements identified from first contact through to the completion of Family Care.

PROCEDURE

1. If there is a need for a Child Protection Investigation and Assessment or an ongoing Child Protection intervention, responsibility for these aspects will rest with the Children's Circle of Care Services. The Family Care Helper will act as a support to the family.
2. If there are no Child Protection concerns that require intervention, the responsibility for providing services will rest with the Family Care Helper working with the family.

POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Family Circle of Care	POLICY #:
Section: Family Circle of Care	
Subject: Family Restoration Plan	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

FAMILY RESTORATION PLAN

POLICY

Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the Family Restoration Plan is developed to support and complement the Child Safety Plan, which will be developed and monitored by the Child Safety Intervention Helper.

PROCEDURE

1. The Family Care Helper will be responsible to help the family in developing and implementing the Family Restoration Plan. The Family Restoration Plan will include aspects that celebrate family successes, monitor change, and maintain ongoing supportive contact with the family through the restoration journey. This Plan will ensure the following:
 - a) Contacting people within the family's support network for assistance
 - b) Referral to community resources and services
 - c) Follow through on action steps in the Family Restoration Plan
 - d) Family progress on goals set out in the Family Restoration Plan will be monitored
 - e) Family participation in community programs as set out in the Family Restoration Plan will be monitored

POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Family Circle of Care	POLICY #:
Section: Family Circle of Care	
Subject: When There is a Child Safety Intervention	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

WHEN THERE IS A CHILD SAFETY INTERVENTION

In all situations when there is a Child Safety Investigation or a Child Safety Intervention, Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the lead responsibility will rest with the Child Safety Intervention Helper. The role of the Family Support Helper will be to assist the family in offering input into the assessment, planning, and any required interventions and to act as primary ongoing support to the family throughout the investigation and intervention process.

PROCEDURE

1. The Family Care Helper will be responsible to work with the family as follows:
 - a) Meet with the family as needed
 - b) Support the family through the Child Safety Intervention process
 - c) Listen to the family's perception on the concerns of Mnaasged involvement
 - d) Discuss the family's goals and planning for their health and well-being
 - e) Discuss the family's strengths, gifts, and resources
 - f) Find positive aspects of the family experience to acknowledge and celebrate
 - g) Hear the family story
 - h) Identify service options and make service referrals as appropriate
 - i) Support the family through the Circle processes
 - j) Provide ongoing Family Care support when a Child must be moved into Alternative Care
2. The Child Safety Intervention Helper is responsible for the *Notification of the First Nation*.

3. Family Care will normally continue beyond the Child Protection Phase. Even in situations where the child protection concerns are not substantiated, the Family Care Helper will assist the family through the trauma of the Child Safety Intervention involvement and will offer support toward the vision of family health and balance.
4. If the reported child protection concerns are found to be unwarranted (e.g., based on faulty information or from a malicious call), there are no child protection issues, and the family is not requesting help from Mnaasged, then the Family Care involvement may be completed at this point. Regardless of the outcome of the Child Safety Intervention, the Family Care Helper will still meet with the family to explain the services that are available from Mnaasged.

POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Family Circle of Care	POLICY #:
Section: Family Circle of Care	
Subject: Helping the Family Rebuild Capacity	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

HELPING THE FAMILY REBUILD CAPACITY

POLICY

Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the Family will have the capacity to protect their Children and to create family health and balance.

PROCEDURE

1. Working from the comprehensive Family Restoration Plan, the Family Care Helper will support the family in following through on the plans that were made, such as for addictions treatment, family counselling, parenting education, healing and recovery programs, participation in cultural programs and ceremonies, community resources, in-home support, and family care support.
2. If a Child has moved to Alternative Care, the Family Care Helper will be responsible to offer input to the Children’s Circle of Care Helper on decision making and Plans of Care for the Child together with the family.
3. The Family Care Helper will maintain contact with family members at least once every 30 days, or as required and in consultation with the family.
4. For the Child in Alternative Care, reunification with the family is a critical objective to be achieved as soon as it is possible and as safe to do so. Prior to reunification, the Family Care Helper will work with the family in preparing to bring the Child home, including providing counselling, together with the Child as appropriate, ensuring the family has adequate physical preparations, and gradually increasing Child and family visitations. The Family Care Helper will be responsible to complete the Family Reunification Assessment.
5. Following family reunification, the Family Care Helper will be responsible to work with the family and the Mnaasged Cultural Program Team to arrange for and participate in a Family Reunification Ceremony.

6. When Alternative Care for a Child may be required longer than 12 months (Child younger than six years of age) or 24 months (Child older than six years of age), the Family Care will be responsible to work with the family and others involved on developing the Long-Term Child Safety and Family Restoration Plan.

POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Family Circle of Care	POLICY #:
Section: Family Circle of Care	
Subject: When There is No Child Safety Intervention	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

WHEN THERE IS NO CHILD SAFETY INTERVENTION

POLICY

Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure there will be Family Engagement when there is no Child Safety Intervention. The Family Care Helper will help build an effective working relationship with the family that will address the needs of the family and the Child.

PROCEDURE

1. The Family Care Helper will take the lead responsibility in the following circumstances:
 - a) When there is no need for a Child Safety Investigation or Intervention
 - b) When the family requests assistance and the concerns fall below the intervention line
 - c) When the Child Safety response has been completed and the family requests further support
2. The Family Care Helper will be responsible to contact the family within 72 hours to make an introduction and to arrange for a meeting time and place. The first face-to-face meeting with the family will take place within seven (7) days or as determined with the family.
3. The Family Care Helper will be responsible for notifying the First Nation Band Representative when there is no Child Protection Investigation or Intervention. Where families are part of member First Nations, the Assigned Worker will work with the Band Representative according to the established protocol between Mnaasged and the First Nation.
4. Where families are members of a First Nation that is not a member of Mnaasged, contact and involvement with their Band Representative throughout the investigation will always

meet or exceed the requirements of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* and any protocol reached between the First Nation and Mnaasged.

POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Family Circle of Care	POLICY #:
Section: Family Circle of Care	
Subject: Completion and Transfer of Family Care Responsibilities	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

COMPLETION AND TRANSFER OF FAMILY CARE RESPONSIBILITIES

POLICY

Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that Family Care involvement is available to families whenever needed. When Family Care is no longer needed or requested by the family, it will then be discontinued.

PROCEDURE

1. At any time during the Family Care process the family does not wish to continue Family Care involvement, then Family Care may be completed at that time.
2. Family Care may be completed if a Child has moved to long-term Alternative Care or independent living, there are no other Children in the family home with current or potential Child protection needs, and the family is not requesting continued Family Care.
3. Whenever Family Care responsibilities are transferred from one Family Care Helper to another, then the current Family Care Helper will be responsible to introduce the family to the new Family Care Helper as well as with the following:
 - a) Complete an up-to-date Family Care Record
 - b) Complete the Family Care Information Change Form
4. Once transfer of responsibilities have been completed, the new Family Care Helper will be responsible for the following:
 - a) Review with the family the Family Vision and the full package of the Family Assessment tools

POLICY REFERENCE
