

# PACE Family Program

## Outline of Service



The PACE Program is an early intervention and educational centre for young children with emotional and/or behavioural challenges, and their families. The goal of each of the PACE Services is to promote the emotional health and well being of children and families within their community. We offer systemic, collaborative and innovative programs, working in partnership with parents, caregivers, and other professionals, to build capacity and strengthen educators community. The PACE Family Program is a CARF-accredited service.



### ABOUT THE PACE FAMILY PROGRAM

#### GOALS OF THE PACE FAMILY PROGRAM:

- To provide an early intervention and prevention program for children (aged 3 to 5) with significant emotional and/or behavioural challenges.
- To offer the child and family a range of supports, including a play-based preschool program that focuses on the emotional, social, cognitive and physical growth of the child.
- To build on the family's strengths and the child and parent/caregiver relationship and attachment, as well as supporting the overall growth of the child. Parent/caregiver involvement is essential and an integral part of this family program.
- To work in partnership with the child's family, caregivers and other professionals, developing goals and a plan based on strengths and needs.
- To support children whose placement may be at risk, due to behaviours exhibited, and help them continue to participate actively in natural settings within their community while participating in the preschool component of the Family Program (*e.g. also attending daycare, preschool or transitioning to school*).

#### WHO IS ELIGIBLE:

- Children aged 3 to 5 years
- Children with significant emotional and / or behavioural challenges (*e.g. children who externalize through anger and/or aggression or who internalize and are withdrawn*)
- Those identified as needing extra support such as a lower staff / child ratio, emotional outlets, and supportive behavioural guidance
- Ideally having had some previous experience in a daycare / preschool program
- Children participating in kindergarten may be considered
- Living in Vancouver and Richmond (*please note that bus service is available only in Vancouver and within certain geographic boundaries*).
- Parent/s and/or caregivers willing and interested in participating regularly

**COST:** The service is provided free of charge.  
It is fully funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

## LENGTH OF PARTICIPATION:

- Your child's progress is reviewed regularly with you. Together, we will consider what would be the best options for your child.
- When children are assessed as ready to leave PACE, outreach consultation and support is offered to preschool and/or daycare programs to help with the child's integration into these settings.
- PACE consultation is also offered for one year to the school system to facilitate the transition of children entering kindergarten or grade one.

## APPLYING FOR SERVICE:

- *Referral forms for Service* are available from PACE and from our website – [www.thepaceprogram.ca](http://www.thepaceprogram.ca). Parent/s and guardian/s must sign the *Referral for Service*.
- **Completed referrals for service can be sent via fax: (604) 266-3041 or by email: [admin@thepaceprogram.ca](mailto:admin@thepaceprogram.ca)**
- **Once referrals are received**, they will be reviewed by the intake team. The Intake Team will then contact the referral source to discuss the reason for the referral, clarify the needs and goals, and let them know when service from PACE may be available. At times, other support services in the community may be consulted regarding appropriate support.
- As there is often a waitlist, factors such as date of referral, needs of child and family, motivation of the family, current group composition and other placement options are considered. While on the waitlist, you may be contacted intermittently regarding the status of the referral and to update your family's current needs.
- **Once a space opens up**, you will be contacted by PACE staff to set up an intake process.

## PHILOSOPHY OF PACE FAMILY PROGRAM:

This program offers prevention based services provided through a play-based preschool program that focuses on the emotional, social, cognitive and physical growth of the child. Parental involvement is central to the program in working together to support the child's skill development and the child/parent relationships. Parents are offered a number of opportunities for involvement.

Why the importance of play? Play is the natural language of children. It is through play that children express themselves and "talk" to us. Through play, children learn at every stage of their development as well as gain an understanding of their world and their emotions.

The work with the children at PACE involves creating a safe, consistent and comfortable environment where they are able to express their feelings in constructive ways (e.g. through words, play, art and other appropriate expressive means). These experiences help children gain the inner control and self confidence needed for healthy development and the establishment of positive peer relations. Research has shown that early therapeutic intervention is critical to allow children to experience a more successful integration and continuation in the school system.



## FAMILY PROGRAM COMPONENTS:

### PRESCHOOL:

- There are child and family workers / teachers on the floor to support the child/ren and families, offering “hands-on” support to facilitate a range of skill development including the identified goals, developed with the parents/caregivers.
- The program operates Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m., September to the third week of July (including summer programming).
- Bus service to and from the preschool is available within certain geographic areas in Vancouver.



### FAMILY PARTICIPATION:

Family involvement is a crucial part of the program as it allows parents and staff to develop a partnership in working together and sharing information. Your wisdom and input regarding your child is critical. There are a number of ways/options available to families to share and explore the challenges, joys and strengths you experience in parenting your child/ren and to support and develop your skills. These include opportunities to discuss and address parenting issues.

These options may include:

- Observation of program** – Parents/caregivers, extended family and foster parents are encouraged to join one of the family support counsellor and/or teachers in observing their child and discussing challenges or concerns so as to gain new understandings and/or develop alternative strategies.
- In-home support** - This support is provided to parents and foster parents to address specific parenting issues (e.g. limit setting, bedtime, meal times...), and help access to community resources.
- Participation in the preschool** - This is an opportunity to share in the child's experience by either playing and/or bringing parents' own interests and skills (e.g. crafts, woodworking, cooking, etc.). This can also be a time to observe directly some of the strategies used at PACE, try new strategies in a supported environment and to come in and just have fun!
- Parent Support and Education Group** - Here is an opportunity for parents to come together to discuss parenting. Often ideas for these come directly from parents. These could include listening to a guest speaker, watching a video related to children / parenting or getting together to talk about a common issue. So bring along your ideas/questions and join us for informational and enjoyable adult gatherings.
- Family Sessions** – Parenting is one of the hardest jobs we will ever do and we believe parents and caregivers need some time to talk about the personal stresses and challenges (and of course joys!) of parenting. These discussions can be set up at times that work for you.

### CHILD THERAPY:

Each child has a weekly visit to the playroom where they receive individual playtime with one of the PACE child therapists. Your child's therapist is available to talk with you about your child's experience in the playroom and emotional issues that might come up, or to address any questions you may have. After an initial meeting with the child therapist has taken place and parent or guardian consent is obtained, the child's visits to the playroom begin.

## SUPPORT TEAM – WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP:

The PACE staff have a range of qualifications including training in Early Childhood Education, Counselling, Social Work, Fine Arts, and Special Education. All are highly skilled, experienced and trained in working with young children and families.



Each child and family is connected to a Family Support Counsellor and a Child Therapist, who will be there to offer more intensive support, both at PACE or, at times, in-home. To ensure the best possible support to your child and family, important issues that impact the work with your child are shared with the team. This allows for each member of the team to understand your child's needs and to have a consistent and appropriate approach to supporting them. Strict confidentiality is maintained at all times.

We value our connection with parents, foster parents, extended family and other significant people including related professionals and strive to provide a “wrap around” service that fits for each family. Our goal is to provide a service which is accountable to you and those involved with your child.

*In situations where the Ministry of Children and Family Development or Vancouver Aboriginal Child & Family Services Society is involved, PACE works closely with the foster parents as well as with the birth parents (if they are involved in the child's life, and with social worker approval). PACE also works in partnership with Social Workers and Family Counsellors from the Family Preservation Program.*

## DEFINING GOALS & BUILDING A PLAN TOGETHER:

- Once you and your child are more familiar and comfortable with the program, we will consider together areas of strength and challenge for your child and family. This will include information from the teachers in the preschool who will have had a chance to observe and note areas of strength and areas for development.
- Your input, along with ideas from other significant professionals will guide the process.
- Together, we will consider the areas of focus (goals) for your child and family, and then create an "individual plan" of how we will work together. We will review these throughout your participation.



## YOUR SATISFACTION:

- We will also be inviting parents/caregivers and other significant people involved in supporting the child and family to give their input about the program through a “*Satisfaction Survey*”.
- Your input helps PACE improve the services provided to children, families and childcare professionals. Thank you in advance for your feedback and participation.

## CONTACTING THE PACE PROGRAM

### About the PACE Program's office:

*Hours:* Monday through Thursday, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm and Fridays, 8:00 am - 1:00 pm

*Location:* 1524 West 65<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6P 2R1

*Phone:* (604) 266-3141

*Email:* [admin@thepaceprogram.ca](mailto:admin@thepaceprogram.ca)

*Fax:* (604) 266-3041

*Website:* [www.thepaceprogram.ca](http://www.thepaceprogram.ca)