



**FOOTHILLS ACADEMY SOCIETY**

A Leader in Learning Disabilities since 1979

Psychological Services & Programs

## **CONSENT FORM FOR ONLINE PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS**

Dear parents and guardians,

We are excited to be offering our Parent Support Groups online. We hope that the programs provide a safe forum for parents of children with Learning Disabilities and/or ADHD to share their challenges and concerns with other parents who share similar experiences. The programs aim to engage parents in topics related to the management of behaviors, with a particular focus on educating parents on strategies to better manage day-to-day challenges. The weekly sessions will combine a psycho-educational presentation on a subtopic before leading into a conversationally-based time of reflection, where the shared information can be processed and questions can be asked in a safe and nonjudgmental environment.

The group is structured to be a safe environment to allow you to feel respected as you learn and work through your feelings and experiences. To help everyone feel this safety, we suggest the following:

- 1/ When sharing personal experiences, make sure that they are within the scope of the topic/theme being discussed. We caution against the oversharing of personal experiences.
- 2/ Our facilitators are not able to provide directed guidance to you about your particular child, as they will not have met them. Outside of advice regarding immediate safety concerns, advice will be generalized based on what we know for most kids with learning and/or attention problems.

### **Risks & Benefits**

We must make you aware of the fact that such a program, which is considered to be very beneficial to you, does come with some risks. That is, discussions may involve difficult aspects of your parenting experience, which can possibly lead to some uncomfortable feelings, such as sadness, anger, or frustration. You may experience some regrets about sharing personal experiences with others. In addition, it is possible to become further overwhelmed by hearing others' problems. On the plus side, the group discussions can be very validating and can lead to you discovering ways to work with uncomfortable feelings, better your relationships with your children, find solutions to specific problems, and build your confidence as a parent. The group also allows you to connect with other parents for support.

### **Use of Telepsychology**

Our current Parent Support Groups will occur through video-conferencing, using the Zoom platform in particular. This platform was chosen due to its high-level security features. While such platforms have been used widely during the COVID-19 pandemic, there are certain points to be made to ensure this security:

- There are potential benefits and risks of video-conferencing (e.g., limits to patient confidentiality) that differ from in-person sessions. Confidentiality still applies for

telepsychology services, and to ensure it is kept, nobody will record the session. Furthermore, individual invites with passwords will be provided to each participant.

- You will need to use a webcam or smartphone during the session.
- It is important to be in a quiet, private space that is free of distractions (including cell phone or other devices) during the session.
- It is important to use a secure internet connection rather than public/free Wi-Fi.
- We need a back-up plan (e.g., phone number where you can be reached) to reconnect you, in the event of technical problems. Please provide your contact information here:

Phone numbers:

(c) \_\_\_\_\_ (h) \_\_\_\_\_

Home address:

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The use of telepsychology means that our communication with each other can sometimes be impacted and even misconstrued. There may be time delays or certain nuances or nonverbal cues may not be as clear as if we were meeting in person. Patience is certainly required, but we also ask that you clarify as necessary to ensure that the true meaning of everyone's communication is understood.

#### Working with Registered Provisional Psychologists

We must also make you aware that as a group facilitated by a provisional psychologist, the group is covered by confidentiality. Information revealed to the facilitator will be kept strictly confidential and will not be revealed to any other person or agency without written permission, with the following exceptions:

- Each week, the facilitators receive clinical supervision from a Registered Psychologist (**Melanie Reader 403-270-9400 ext. 239** and/or **Dr. Karen MacMillan 403.270.9400 ext. 238**) to gain assistance and insight in providing the best service to the group.
- In a few circumstances we are required by law or professional regulations to share information with other people whether or not we have your permission. For example:
  - We have reason to believe that there is immediate and grave risk to a young person's, or someone else's, mental or physical health or safety; or public safety
  - We are required to disclose confidential information due to a lawsuit

#### Commitment to Confidentiality

Each parent participating in the group makes the commitment to keep what is discussed in group in the group. You can certainly share what you have learned in the group (e.g., strategies taught) and the topics of discussion, but are asked to do so in a manner that respects everyone's privacy and does not compromise the confidentiality of the other members of the group.

If you have any questions or concern, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

*Melanie Reader, R. Psych, Manager – Psychological Services & Programs*

Program Facilitators (You will be notified about the program facilitators and provided with their contact information prior to the start of the program).

By signing below, you indicate that you have read and understood this consent form and that any questions have been answered to your satisfaction. This form **must be** signed before the start of the first Parent Group session. A separate consent form must be signed by each parent/guardian participating. You will be provided a copy of this document.

Parent/Guardian Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

As it will help us in determining the focus of the group, please share the following information as you feel comfortable. This information will not be shared with other group participants:

Age of your child: \_\_\_\_\_

Diagnosis(es) of your child: \_\_\_\_\_

Main reason(s)/concern(s) for registering for the support group:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions that your assigned Facilitators are unable to answer, please reach out to the Manager of Psychological Services & Programs, Melanie Reader, R. Psych, [mreader@foothillsacademy.org](mailto:mreader@foothillsacademy.org)



## 2023 Program Deposit and Payment Form

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Primary E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### PROGRAM PARTICIPANT REGISTERING FOR:

Online Parent Support Group: Supporting my child with managing emotions and behaviours (\$150.00)

### E-NEWS FROM FOOTHILLS ACADEMY SOCIETY COMMUNITY SERVICES

I would like to receive occasional communications from Foothills Academy Society which includes their E-News to let me know about upcoming programs and services offered. I understand that I can change my mind at any time and unsubscribe from the distribution list by clicking on the link in the email.

YES - Please sign me up to receive E-News at this email: \_\_\_\_\_

### DONATION OPTIONS

Donations are greatly appreciated! We want to ensure that our programs are accessible to all families who can benefit from them. If you would like to contribute to our bursary fund, please indicate your donation below. A tax receipt will be issued and sent to the above address.

Donation to Foothills Academy Society \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Charitable Registration #: 118927060RR0001)

Designate my donation to the Child & Youth Program Bursary Fund  Direct my donation to the greatest need

### PAYMENT

1. BALANCE of program fee(s) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ processed on program start date

2. DONATION \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (optional)

3. TOTAL (program fee & donation) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### PAYMENT

#### METHOD

Visa

MasterCard

Cheque

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



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## Frequently Asked Questions about accessing *Parent Support Groups* online

### **Q. What technology do I need to be able to participate?**

**A.** To participate, you need a device that has a camera and a microphone. The microphone in your computer or phone is enough.

### **Q. What programs do I need to know how to use for the Parent Support Groups being offered online?**

**A.** Program Facilitators will primarily use Zoom, but they may also share documents using Google Docs and/or PDF documents. Instructors will talk you through accessing documents. Any documents used will also be emailed out to all participants either directly after the session or upon request.

### **Q. How do I access Zoom, and is there a cost?**

**A.** There are mobile versions of Zoom you can download for iPhone, iPad, and Android found in the app stores. If using a computer or laptop, go to Zoom.us, sign up, and allow Zoom to access your camera and microphone. You also need access to a stable internet connection. If you are having a hard time with your Zoom connection, try to make sure no one else in the home is using Wi-Fi during your group session. This should resolve any issues. Zoom is a free service. Downloading and using the basic account will be good enough for the parent support groups.

### **Q. Are there security concerns with using Zoom?**

**A.** Our Tech team has done a great job to share ways in which our Program Facilitators can prevent "Zoombombing". For example, the room will be 'locked' at the beginning of each session so that no one else can enter. Zoom is regularly updating their security. Each week, your facilitator will provide you with a unique password for your session and a secure link. You can access the meeting either using the link or entering the meeting information into the Zoom app with the password.

### **Q. Do I need headphones to participate in the group?**

**A.** No. You do not need headphones. Some people prefer doing a video conference with headphones but it is really up to you and what you are comfortable with using.

**Q. Can my family members sit in on the session with me?**

**A.** No. These sessions are meant for paid parent participants only. Please try to have a quiet place to work that is comfortable and free of distractions including family members. But, you are welcome to share what you have learned in the group (like new strategies!) and the topics of discussion. We will ask each participant to make a commitment to keep what is discussed in group in the group.

**Q. What happens if I get kicked out of the Zoom session or I have technical difficulties?**

**A.** If your Zoom app closes unexpectedly, simply click on the Facilitator provided link again. This will relaunch your Zoom app and your Facilitators will admit you back into the session. Your Facilitators will have your contact information and one of them will call if you are not back in the Zoom session within a few moments.

**Q. What materials should I have ready for my sessions?**

**A.** Your Facilitator will have most of the materials online and will be sharing their screen with you. As noted above, any documents shared will be sent to participants.

**Q. If my Facilitator has shared their screen, can they see everything I am doing on my computer?**

**A.** No. However, please do not have other things open on your screen that could distract you during the session. An engaged learner is an active learner.

**Q. If I am frustrated in the session, can I just leave?**

**A.** No, stay in the session until it is done. Let your Facilitators know if you are struggling! Zoom allows for 'break-out rooms' and private chat rooms, so if needed, one of the Facilitators can meet with you outside of the large group discussion.

**Q. I am nervous about being on screen, do I have to show my face?**

**A.** Video conferencing is a different experience. Your camera needs to be 'on' and the Facilitators need you to see the screen to participate in the discussion and activities. However, you do not have to stare into the camera or always be in the frame.

**Q. What is the etiquette for using the online learning system?**

**A.** See infographic below.

# VIDEO CONFERRNCING

## Etiquette



### BE ON TIME

Be on time and prepared with your device charged. Close all materials and tabs of other classes. Make sure all tech works 5-10 minutes before the meeting.

### MUTE YOURSELF

Mute yourself right away to eliminate background noise.



### PRESENTATION

Consider your surroundings and attire. Find a good spot in the house with few distractions and make sure you're wearing something appropriate for school.

### HEADPHONES

Use headphones if you have them! If your headphones or earbuds have a microphone, even better!



### CHAT RESPONSIBLY

Use the chat function responsibly. Only type when needed so the teacher can respond to questions promptly.

### SIGNALS

Use hand signals:  
thumbs up = yes / thumbs down = no  
hand by ear = can't hear  
raise hand = have a comment

