Getting Started

Family Toolkit for Public Safety Organizations

The Family Toolkit will help you create a family program or initiative at the right level for your public safety organization, right now. Whether you are including families for the first time in your organization or considering a new initiative, the toolkit is designed to help you to match your capacity and readiness to your next step. Please answer a short set of questions and receive a tailored set of recommendations to assist you in your planning.

Building Belonging

		Notes
Building Belonging  	**What is the goal of your program, initiative or action?** ☐ Building relationships between families and the organization ☐ Building relationships between families and other families ☐ Gaining access to families ☐ Families becoming familiar with the people/ workspace ☐ Sharing some information with families ☐ Building trust with families	

These are some examples of what you can do to target different audiences. Many of these examples can include more than one audience.	**Who is Your Target Audience? (It can be more than one)**
	☐ New members
	• Christmas/Holiday parties
	  • Likely able to build on a current event, able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information. Mostly attended by younger families and newer members.
	☐ Existing members
	• Sports days
	  • Likely able to build on a current event, able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information.
	☐ Members close to retirement
	• Celebration Events
	  • Invite families to moments of celebration, 5/10/20/30 years with the organization. Able to target entire families, builds relationships and trust, and share information.
	☐ Young families
	• Family day BBQs
	  • Likely able to build on a current event, able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information.
	☐ Spouses only
	• Valentine's day dinners
	  • Able to target spouses or dating partners, builds relationships and trust with spouses/dating partners, and share information.
	☐ Chosen family (close friends, dating partners, etc.)
	• Sports days
	  • Likely able to build on a current event, able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information.
	☐ Children (young children, school age, adult)
	• Family fun days
	  • Able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information. Allow younger children to tour the station or public safety vehicle, some age appropriate education about the job, etc.)
	☐ Parents
	• Family day BBQs
	  • Likely able to build on a current event, able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information.
	☐ Other _____	

	Resources • Low-Medium • May require funds for food, decorations, prizes, etc. Tips: • Utilize public space if possible • Approach your union for funding	
	Readiness • Requires some preparation from organization • Requires little cultural readiness from members • Requires little trust or readiness from families Tips: • You are able to engage entire families	

Are you improving on another program, initiative or action?

	What are you currently doing?	What are you planning for the future?
What is the point of your program, initiative or action?		
Who does it target?		
What resources does it require?		
What level of readiness does it require?		

Personal Notes:

_____

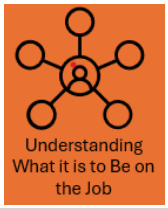
_____

_____

Want to plan or improve on your own?

Some Things to Consider

Understanding What it is to Be on the Job

		Notes
Understanding What it is to Be on the Job 	**What is the goal of your program, initiative, or action?** ☐ Families will be informed of the job requirements of their PSP ☐ Families will understand their role in a PSP family ☐ Building relationships between families and the organization ☐ Early engagement of new members ☐ Normalizing healthy behaviours for the whole family ☐ Understanding available supports for PSP and families ☐ Sharing information with families ☐ Gaining access to families ☐ Building trust with families	

These are some examples of what you can do to target different audiences. Many of these examples can include more than one audience.	**Who is Your Target Audience? (It can be more than one)**
	☐ New members
	• Graduation nights
	  • Likely able to build on a current event, able to target the support systems of new members, gain access to families, build relationships, and share information about the realities of the job. Mostly attended by younger families and newer members.
	☐ Existing members
	• Family nights
	  • Able to target the support systems of new and existing members, gain access to families, build relationships with families, and share information about the realities of the job. Allowing for families to make connections with other families.
	☐ Members close to retirement
	• Panel discussions
	  • Able to target members' support systems, build trust with families and the organization and share information about the realities of the job.
	☐ Young families
	• New recruit family nights
	  • Able to target the support systems of new members, gain access to families, build relationships, and share information about the realities of the job. Mostly attended by younger families and newer members.
	☐ Spouses only
	• Ride-Alongs
	  • Able to target mostly spouses, build trust with families and the organization and share information about the realities of the job.
	☐ Chosen family (close friends, dating partners, etc.)
	• Panel discussions
	  • Able to target members' support systems, build trust with families and the organization and share information about the realities of the job.
	☐ Children (young children, school age, adult)
	• Getting familiar with the workplace
	  • Able to teach children about the work at age appropriate levels. Tours of the station or public safety vehicle, some age appropriate education about the job through a reading corner, discussions, etc.)
	☐ Parents
	• Family nights
	  • Able to target the support systems of new and existing members, gain access to families, build relationships with families, and share information about the realities of the job. Allowing for families to make connections with other families.
	☐ Other _____	

	Resources • Low-Medium • May require funds for food, speakers, etc. Tips: • Can build upon already established events • Many speakers will volunteer their time	
	Readiness • Requires some preparation from organization • Requires some cultural readiness from members • Requires little-some readiness and trust from families Tips: • You are able to engage entire families	

Are you improving on another program, initiative or action?

	What are you currently doing?	What are you planning for the future?
What is the point of your program, initiative or action?		
Who does it target?		
What resources does it require?		
What level of readiness does it require?		

Personal Notes:

_____

_____

_____

Want to plan or improve on your own?

Some Things to Consider

Building Skills & Awareness

		Notes
Building Awareness & Skills 	**What is the goal of your program, initiative, or action?** ☐ Building awareness/ knowledge/ skills on topics relevant to your members and families ☐ Building relationships between families and the organization ☐ Building relationships between families and other families ☐ Targets specific needs of families and members ☐ Normalizing experiences of families and members ☐ Sharing available supports and programs for families and members ☐ Building trust for families	

These are some examples of topics that may be relevant for different audiences. Many of these examples can include more than one audience. Please select a topic that is relevant to your members and their families.	**Who is Your Target Audience? (It can be more than one)**
	☐ New members
	• Building Resilience
	  • Panels, discussions, and trainings for members and families, build further trust with families, and share information about resources available to members and families.
	☐ Existing members
	• Understanding trauma
	  • Panels, discussions, and trainings for members and families, build further trust with families, and share information about resources available to members and families.
	☐ Members close to retirement
	• Suicide awareness
	  • Panels, discussions, and trainings for members and families, build further trust with families, and share information about resources available to members and families.
	☐ Young families
	• Coping strategies
	  • Panels, discussions, and trainings on suicide awareness for members and families, build further trust with families, and share information about resources available to members and families.
	☐ Spouses only
	• Occupational stress injury awareness
	  • Panels, discussions, and trainings on suicide awareness for members and families, build further trust with families, and share information about resources available to members and families.
	☐ Chosen family (close friends, dating partners, etc.)
	• Understanding the change in your member
	  • Panels, discussions, and trainings for members and families, build further trust with families, and share information about resources available to members and families.
	☐ Parents
	• Understanding the change in your member
	  • Panels, discussions, and trainings for members and families, build further trust with families, and share information about resources available to members and families.
	☐ Other _____	

	Resources • Medium-High • May require funds for food, speakers, venues Tips: • Utilize public space if possible • Approach your union for funding	
	Readiness • Requires medium-high preparation from organization • Requires medium-high cultural readiness from members • Requires medium-high trust from families Tips: • Consult your community for the subject matter	

Are you improving on another program, initiative or action?

	What are you currently doing?	What are you planning for the future?
What is the point of your program, initiative or action?		
Who does it target?		
What resources does it require?		
What level of readiness does it require?		

Personal Notes:

_____

_____

_____

Want to plan or improve on your own?

Some Things to Consider

Communication Channels

		Notes
Communication-Enhancing  	**What is the goal of your program, initiative, or action?** ☐ Building trust for families ☐ Building relationships between families and the organization ☐ Building relationships between families and other families ☐ Gaining access to families ☐ Sharing information with families ☐ Sharing available resources for families and members	

These are some examples of what you can do to target different audiences. Many of these examples can include more than one audience.	**Who is Your Target Audience? (It can be more than one)**
	☐ New members
	• Social media (Facebook)
	  • Able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information. Mostly used by existing members and younger families.
	☐ Existing members
	• Websites/information hubs
	  • Able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information.
	☐ Members close to retirement
	• Email lists
	  • Able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information. Mostly used by existing members and those closer to retirement.
	☐ Young families
	• Newsletters
	  • Likely able to build on current communication methods such as corporate communications. It is able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information.
	☐ Chosen family (close friends, dating partners, etc.)
	• Websites/information hubs
	  • Able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information.
	☐ Children (young children, school age, adult)
	• Children groups
	  • Occasional meetings with other children in the organization so they have friends that understand the public safety family life.
	☐ Parents
	• Websites/information hubs
	  • Able to target large audiences, gain access to whole families, and share information.
	☐ Other _____	

	Resources • Low-High • May require funds for online platforms, publication, dissemination • Requires 'in-kind' resources to produce the materials	
	Readiness • Requires medium preparation from organization • Requires low-medium readiness from members • Requires low readiness and trust from families	

Are you improving on another program, initiative or action?

	What are you currently doing?	What are you planning for the future?
What is the point of your program, initiative or action?		
Who does it target?		
What resources does it require?		
What level of readiness does it require?		

Personal Notes:

_____

_____

_____

Want to plan or improve on your own?

Some Things to Consider

Some Things to Consider

TAKING STOCK			
Something to consider:	**Answer**	**Thoughts for next steps**	**Example**
Will planning a new program, initiative or action be better than what you have in place now? • Are you planning something new or improving a current program, initiative or action?	□ Yes □ No		Families are rarely included in my organization, so anything I put in place will be better.
Do you have access to resources for these programs, initiatives or actions? Do you know your budget? • If not, are there other avenues to gaining the necessary resources? (i.e., unions, partners, grants, etc.)	□ Yes □ No		I have a budget of _____ for wellness programs, I can allocate _____ for family activities.
Do you have dedicated personnel time to plan, develop, work on, and implement these programs, initiatives or actions within their roles? • If not, do you have personnel willing to do this as a 'side of desk' task? • Who else can help plan and run this program, initiative or action?	□ Yes □ No		I have a wellness team that can spend some time on family initiatives.
Do you have resources to market your program, initiative or event? • Consider corporate communication methods, union messages, etc.	□ Yes □ No		I planned a holiday party and told everyone through corporate communications and the union sent out emails.

EXTERNAL FACTORS			
Something to consider:	**Answer**	**Thoughts for next steps**	**Example**
Have you looked into what other organizations are doing and if those programs, initiatives or actions could apply to you? • If not, consider Garnet Families or PSPNet Families for new research, programs and highlighted family programs across Canada.	□ Yes □ No		I want to plan a family information night and I like the way another Fire Station ran theirs so I will model mine after it.
Can any external factors disrupt your programs, initiatives or actions and how? • Have you considered the geography of your members and families, scheduling due to shift work, online vs. in person, etc.?	□ Yes □ No		Before scheduling my event I noticed that the night I wanted was the Superbowl, so I rescheduled.
Are there any policies or legislation that can impact your program, initiative or action? • What are the eligibility requirements of those policies? (i.e., EFAP only include some family members. • Have you checked your program, initiative or action with relevant people? (i.e., legal, professional standards, HR, training, etc.)	□ Yes □ No		The CSA Standard for psychological health and safety in paramedic organizations has a line about families to help me get funding.

INTERNAL FACTORS			
Something to consider:	**Answer**	**Thoughts for next steps**	**Example**
Do you have direct access to the families of your members? • If not, consider a Building Belonging Program or a Communication Channel action to build a rapport with the families and collect contact information.	□ Yes □ No		My current access to the families of my members is through my PSP employees. I need to do something to get better access to them directly.
Do you have a culture in your workplace that supports families and family-forward practices? • Have you spoken with your members? Are they ready and willing to have this type of program, initiative or action added to your organization?	□ Yes □ No		My leadership and the culture of the organization is shifting towards positive mental health and family inclusion making now a good time for an event.
Do these family-forward practices align with your organization's goals and values? • Have you discussed this program, initiative or action with your leadership?	□ Yes □ No		The goals and values of my organization are around positive mental health and resiliency so family initiatives align.

IDENTIFYING AN INITIATIVE LEADER			
Something to consider:	**Answer**	**Thoughts for next steps**	**Example**
Do they see a need for family-forward initiatives? • Is this person you, someone else, a team, etc.? ○ If others need to be involved, who are they, are they in your organization, your union, a family member, etc.?	□ Yes □ No		The person leading these programs has a family and wants them to be more involved.
Do they have the opportunity to implement a family-forward-initiative? • Is this person you, someone else, a team, etc.? ○ If others need to be involved, who are they?	□ Yes □ No		The person leading these programs has permission from leadership to spend some time on these programs as a side of desk task.
Are they motivated to implementing a family-forward initiative? • Is this person you, someone else, a team, etc.? ○ If others need to be involved, who are they?	□ Yes □ No		The person leading these programs is motivated to implement these programs because they want their family to see the benefits.

Ready to take action?

Putting Your Plan Together

Putting Your Plan Together

All previous responses and all personal notes from previous pages will appear here for download.

In the survey you have already established your:

- Readiness baseline,
- Resources,
- Leadership, and
- Priorities.

You then considered a type of program, initiative, or action. There you identified:

- A specific goal,
- A target audience,
- A specific event or action you plan to take, and
- The resources and readiness required.

Then you did some brainstorming about what details and factors of your program, initiative or action. You considered:

- The individual characteristics of the program, initiative or action,
- The internal factors,
- The external factors, and
- Who should plan and run your program, initiative or action.

Now that you have your plan, Copy all the barriers you identified on the previous page and **write down some next steps and plans** that you will do today, in 1 month, 6 months, and a year+.

Barrier Identified	Next steps for today	Plan for 1 month from now	Plan for 6 months from now	Plan for 1 year+ from now

After the program, initiative or action you may want to ask yourself:

- What went well?
- What challenges or obstacles did we face, and how did we address them?
- Were the goals and objectives met? If not, what could have been done differently?
- How did the families and members experience the event? Were there any common themes in their feedback?
- What aspects of the event could have been improved in terms of logistics, communication, or resources?