

Terms of Reference: The Ottawa Child and Youth Initiative Task Groups

The Ottawa Child and Youth Initiative (OCYI) is a collaborative of community organizations and agencies with a shared commitment to promote the healthy development of children and youth in Ottawa.

OCYI Vision: Ensuring all children and youth in Ottawa can reach their full potential and grow up great!

OCYI Mission: Recognizing the power of collective advocacy and collaborative community efforts and planning, OCYI provides a platform for organizations to work together to guide and influence practices, systems, and public policy, aimed at nourishing the positive, healthy growth of children and youth in our community.

OCYI Values

- Collaborative effort that represents diverse perspectives and maximize impact through programming, services, and resources
- Incorporating and advancing equity, diversity and inclusion in our messaging, membership, workplans, and initiatives to create a space of belonging
- Using the fundamental principles of equity, honesty, and transparency to guide our work, we will continue to partner with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis to achieve substantive equality and reconciliation for Indigenous Peoples
- The fundamental rights of all children and youth as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The voice and dignity of every individual is ensured so that each voice is present when making decisions, and developing actions that affect them
- Understanding the needs of and opportunities for children and youth in Ottawa

Task Groups Purpose

The OCYI Task Groups' purpose is to lead and carry out the work of OCYI in alignment with OCYI's overall vision and strategic direction, with an emphasis on a more specific focus of supporting children and youth.

Task Groups Objective

The OCYI Task Groups work as a collective for organizations supporting the children, youth and their families in Ottawa. Building upon resources and capacities that exist in our community as well as identifying how gaps can be filled to best respond to the ever-changing and ever-growing needs are a shared objective of each task group. Each individual task group has a specific objective for their specific focus.

Responsibilities of the Task Group Members

Individual task group members have the following responsibilities:

- Act as champions for stretching beyond traditional organization practices and looking for meaningful opportunities to work differently together in the broader system of services and supports for infant, children, and youth.

- Represent their organization's expertise and concerns to share with the group to guide the group's work.
- Regularly attend and participate in monthly task group meetings for one year.
- Participate and promote activities, project, and work of the task group.

Task Group Members

- The task group is made up of representatives of OCYI organizational partners.
- The organizational partner will select who will represent them at the task group, with recommendation to select individuals who can represent the diverse needs of Ottawa's children and youth.
- The task group will work to invite organizations to increase the diversity of the task group.
- Task Group Chairs:
 - The process for the determination of chairs will be by election from among the task group's members. Co-chairs encouraged.
 - Chair terms are for two years and may be renewed. Terms are staggered in the event of co-chairs.
 - The Task Group Chair has a seat on the OCYI Steering Community to represent the task group.
- Individuals may join the task groups without representing an organization at the discretion of the task group chair(s); and these individuals are ineligible to be chair.
- Multiple representatives from an organization may join a single task group should they represent different work from the organization (e.g., different departments), otherwise is it recommended that the seat be shared if no single individual can consistently represent the organization.
- Organizations may request to have an "email member" if they cannot commit to participate in meetings for a period (up to six months) and would like to stay actively informed of the work, and to contribute via email. This should be due to scheduling conflict.

Meetings

This section outlines the schedule and structure for Task Group meetings.

- Monthly meetings for 60 minutes, scheduled from September to June.
- A meeting schedule will be released in late summer for September-December, and at the new year for January-June, so that members can plan and arrange their regular attendance.
- The standing agenda items will be the progress of the work of the task group's action plan.
- An announcement time will be part of task group meetings to allow for networking and information sharing among task group members
- The Task Group Chair(s) will set meeting agendas, lead the meetings, and encourage all members to provide input throughout the meeting, and that all decisions or recommendations are resolved and agreed to by the members

Action Plans

Each task group will have an action plan to guide their work.

- Every one to two years, task groups will review the strategic direction of the OCYI and develop action plans supports the strategic direction within the individual task group's area of focus.
- These activities may be resourced by OCYI or build on activities being led by an organizational partner.
- The outcomes of the action plans will be regularly monitored and evaluated annually.

- To ensure alignment with OCYI's strategic direction, action plans will be shared with the OCYI Steering Committee for endorsement and support. Periodic progress updates will be supplied by the Task Group Chairs in their membership on the OCYI Steering Committee.
- The OCYI Steering Committee has the responsibility to support the task groups to accomplish their action plans, and the Steering Committee should be consulted to remove barriers or to grow projects.

Quorum and Decision-making

This section outlines how the task groups will make decisions and resolve conflicts.

Decision-making Process

OCYI will utilize consensus decision-making and will be based on the goals, values, and the active participation of the membership. Consensus decision-making is a dynamic way of finding solutions and reaching agreement that everyone actively supports, or at least can live with. This method includes dialogue to clarify issues, open discussion, exploration of ideas, proposals and amendments of solutions or decisions, and checking for agreement.

Conflict Resolution

In the event of conflict, the following guidelines will apply:

- The individual(s) with the conflict/concern will speak to the individuals to try to resolve the issue.
- If resolution is not achieved through direct dialogue, the parties will approach Task Group Chair(s) to support as a neutral third-party mediator. If a Chair is one of the parties involved in the conflict, the parties shall seek another third-party mediator from within the task group.
- If resolution is not achieved through dialogue or support from the Chair, the issue shall be brought by the parties to the task group for resolution by the group as a whole. The task group members may request to elevate to the OCYI Steering Committee for further resolution.